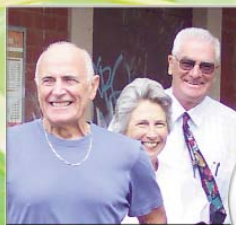


Central Victorian *Liberal*



opportunity

enterprise



community



liberty

family

No 31 May 2009



Developers of the card game TAOC, Louise Howland and Keith Lamb, explain the concept The Art of Conversation to Steve Ciobo and Senator Ronaldson during their visit to central Victoria this week.

Report: PAGE 4

A real plan for our small businesses

Central Victorian small businesses would develop greater resilience against economic threats under the Coalition's policy to support local shop owners, Shadow Small Business and Tourism Minister Steve Ciobo said after a tour of the region this week.

Mr Ciobo and Senator Michael Ronaldson met business and tourism operators in Malmsbury, Harcourt, Bendigo and Heathcote during the visit.

"I'm impressed with the vision and creativity of businesses in central Victoria," Mr Ciobo said.

"They have great ideas, work hard to sustain their viability and are committed to the future of their towns and

cities. But the economic engine rooms of regions are being hampered by the Rudd Government's disastrous management of the economy."

Mr Ciobo said the region continues to develop its tourism industry even in the face of drought and the current economic downturn.

"Having met with representatives from the City of Greater Bendigo and Bendigo Tourism I can identify with the determination these groups have to make this region a place to learn, play and stay."

"Small business will be the key group which will need to take advantage of the vision I have been presented."

Mr Ciobo said the Coalition's six-

point plan would strengthen the ability of local businesses to grow trade and patronage.

He said small business was the most critical part of our economy – the source of much of our innovation, economic growth and job creation.

"Our plan offers a direct financial lifeline to firms in difficult times and moves to get government out of the way of the entrepreneurial sector of the economy," he said.

The Coalition's six-point stimulus for small business includes a two year window for businesses to offset the tax value of any operating losses they suffer in the 2009 or 2010 years against up to \$100,000 of taxes they paid over the past three years.



Malcolm Turnbull
Federal Leader



Ted Baillieu
State Leader



*A monthly newsletter
supporting the Pillars of
Liberalism - Enterprise,
Freedom, Community and
Liberty and Opportunity - in
the communities of
central Victoria*



Drip-feed treatment hampers future

Budget tipped to keep our region waiting

A NEW hospital to service Bendigo and central Victoria tops the bill for the region's Victorian Budget "wish list".

A decade of drip-feed promises have left local communities frustrated by inaction from the Brumby Government as the region's population continues to grow in the 21st century.

"The centrepiece of budget allocations for Bendigo must be meaningful funding for the city's public hospital redevelopment," said Northern Region MP Wendy Lovell. "The Bendigo community deserves infrastructure and services equal to those offered in Melbourne."

The region's list of needs to be met in Tuesday's Budget:

HEALTH

- A commitment of meaningful funding for the redevelopment and expansion of Bendigo Hospital to enable the redevelopment to progress to at least the pre-construction stage

- Additional funding for the emergency department and to keep the hospital running in the interim

EDUCATION

- Allocation of at least \$11 million to fill Labor's 'black hole' in the Bendigo Education Plan which has bipartisan support.

- The State Labor Government must honour its 2006 promise to build permanent classrooms at Lockwood South Primary School to replace portables.

WATER

- Allocation of funding to accelerate works to enable Coliban Water to begin piping its crumbling 19th century channel system, which currently wastes water through seepage and evaporation

- The Brumby Government must also immediately honour its promise to improve water security for irrigators in the Harcourt area by providing funds to start the Harcourt recycling pipeline project

- Allocation of funding to accelerate Coliban Water's small towns pipeline projects to supply drinking water to towns including Sebastian, Raywood, Bridgewater, Inglewood and Goornong

POLICE AND FIRE

- Additional police resources to fill vacancies at police stations in the region.

- Funding for improvements to CFA stations including Kangaroo Flat, and Golden Square that do not meet 21st century requirements.

TRANSPORT

- Funding for the upgrade of the Calder interchange at Ravenswood, which is estimated to cost about \$60 million, and was first promoted by the Howard Government

- Advance the Bendigo Transportation Study - which has stalled since it began in 2006 - to identify options to alleviate traffic problems in Bendigo's CBD

Borough in push to end rail neglect

A COMMUNITY campaign has been launched in Eaglehawk to have the community better connected to the rail network.

Local residents are throwing their support behind the campaign started by businessman Scott Harris.

A petition is being signed in Eaglehawk shops calling on the Brumby Government to end its neglect of the rail system in the proud community. Currently, not even a handful of trains are stop at Eaglehawk.

Scott believes that Eaglehawk residents can share the same benefits of train travel won by Kangaroo Flat in

its campaign over recent years. "There's no reason we can't have more trains stopping at Eaglehawk.

"It would be fantastic for young people, for families, for older people who need to travel into Bendigo or onto Melbourne. We've got a great station precinct in Eaglehawk that's hardly being used."

Scott's campaign has the backing of students in the community and at celebrations in Kangaroo Flat on the first anniversary of that community's win over a rattled and rumbled Government, support was given to the efforts now underway in Eaglehawk.

Locals make most of train birthday party

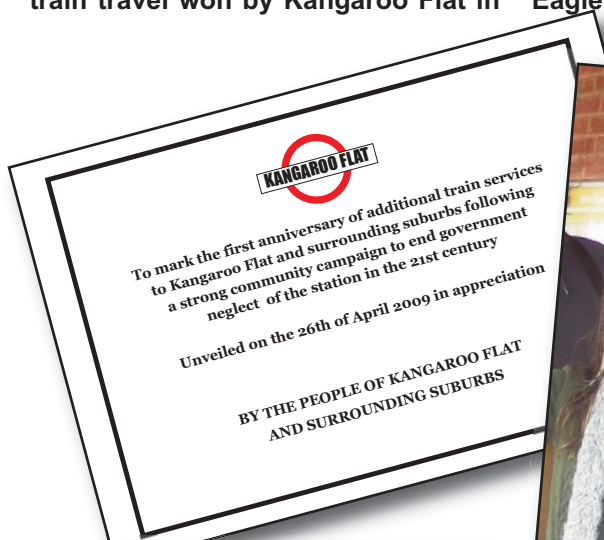
KANGAROO FLAT celebrated last weekend.

It was a year since the community won its campaign for more trains, ending Brumby Government neglect of the railway station in the 21st century.

And the community did something the Government and Bendigo West MP will not - residents conducted their own official opening ceremony.

The community enjoyed a sausage sizzle and entertainment to celebrate the partnership with local Liberals and Shadow Transport Minister Terry Mulder in the campaign.

But their job is still to be finished. They are wanting the Government to finally finish landscaping works, longer opening hours at the station and developing the goods shed for community use.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT - The Kangaroo Flat community unveils a plaque marking the anniversary; Hayley Spicer, Francis Reichelt, Jane Reichelt and Ivy Reichelt, enjoy the celebrations; local guitarist Jason Morrison entertains on the station platform while the community enjoys a sausage sizzle..



Senator Ronaldson and Shadow Small Business Minister Steve Ciobo in Heathcote with community representatives and local legend Jock Granter who is a former long-serving MP and minister in the Victorian Parliament.

International talking game starts up quick banter between MP and pop star

The ice was quickly broken when Shadow Small Business Minister Steve Ciobo met Australian pop legend and Bendigo businessman Keith Lamb this week.

Banter between the two was instant as they discussed the days of music fame when Keith fronted 70s glam band Hush and development of his card game The Art of Conversation.

Steve, who says his musical appreciation roots were more firmly embedded in the 1980s, had heard about the game from his colleague Senator Michael Ronaldson and requested to meet Keith during the visit to central Victoria.

"The art of politics goes well beyond a

few boisterous minutes in Parliament during Question Time. It's needs good conversation with people and being able to talk with others is an art we must never lose," Steve said. "Conversation is the original and best way to communicate."

Steve said Keith Lamb and Louise Howland had developed a national and international business success with the launch of TAOC four years ago.

"They have not only come up with a great business idea, they are boosting the reputation overseas for Australian creativity and innovation and keep alive the arts of conversation among people of all ages," he said.

"TAOC is a great example of the small businesses in central Victoria where ideas flow and opportunities are created."

This week's visit also included meetings with representatives of business and tourism in Malmsbury, Harcourt and Heathcote.

Steve and Senator Ronaldson heard about the challenges facing businesses in Harcourt and Malmsbury, including apple orchardists, following completion duplication works on the Calder Highway with funding from the former Howard Government. These towns have been bypassed and businesses are seeking to re-badge communities to attract visitors.

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