



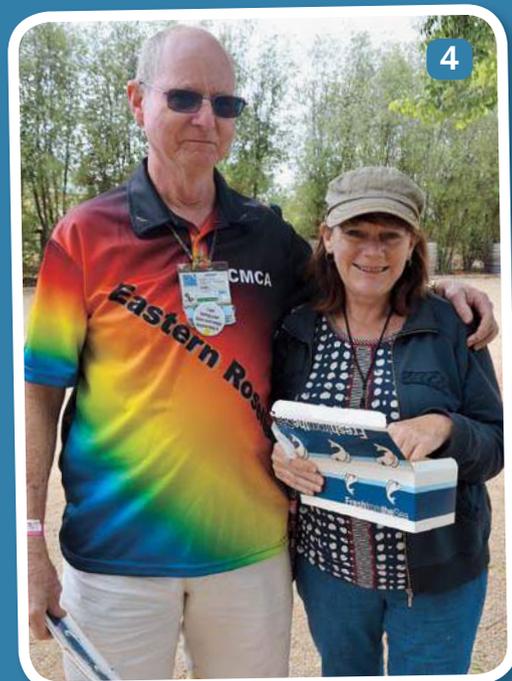
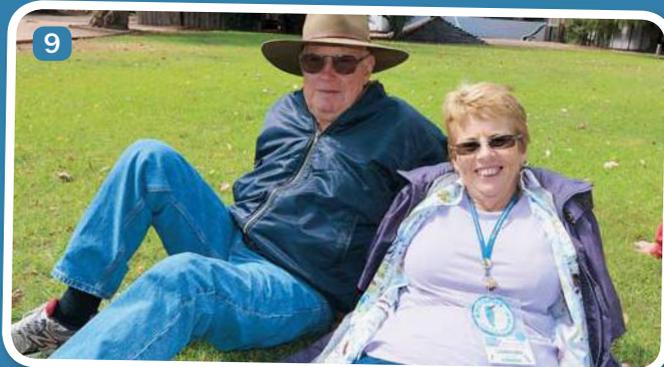
SOCIAL SNAPSHOTS

The Penola Pennant encourages readers to submit photographs from events not covered by a Pennant photographer. Send photos and captions with the name of the event to alex@tbw.com.au

CAMPERVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB OF AUSTRALIA SOLO NETWORK RALLY IN PENOLA

- 1: Dennis Fitzgibbons, Judith Di Lenardo and Nancy Mulrooney stop for a snack during their Coonawarra wine tour.
- 2: Karin Kirk and Kit Hall-Johnston sample wines at DiGiorgio Family Wines.
- 3: Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia solo network campers Catherine Breen and Fay Byrnes enjoying the Coonawarra wine tour.
- 4: John Cridland and Karen McDonald stop for lunch in Coonawarra.
- 5: Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia solo network members Colin Cattle, Kay Burke, Alan Hill and Colleen Schiller.
- 6: Barry Watts and Christine Cousins taste wine at DiGiorgio Family Wines in Coonawarra.
- 7: Cate Tosold and Kaye Page relax in Coonawarra Park.
- 8: Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia solo network members Anja Dewar, Margret Buckley and Desley Buchanan kick back on the grass after lunch.
- 9: Bill Lyons and Lorraine Kirkwood enjoy a break before exploring more of the Coonawarra Wine Region.
- 10: Brenda Cook, Barry Watts and Coralie Walker at Coonawarra Park.









Visitors roll out

Motorhome club members to depart Penola region following jam-packed week of district exploration



KYRA SYKES

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MOTORHOME club members will leave Penola today with many memories, experiences and wines.

More than 200 motorhomes will roll out of McCorquindale Park after a week-long stay.

The Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) solo network set up camp for its annual rally keen to explore the region and what it has to offer.

Retailers and wineries experienced a boom in sales throughout the week.

Traditionally CMCA members keep all receipts from purchases made in the region and will calculate how much was spent.

Figures will be available in coming weeks.

CMCA solo network president Lynn Rees said the group was impressed with Penola and its surrounds.

"It was absolutely amazing, we love it here," she said.

"There is so much to do, despite Penola's

size, and plenty of interesting shops to look at and places to go."

Members were entertained with a jam packed itinerary lined up for the week.

Highlights included the wine tour, a trip to the Naracoorte Caves, the members forum, annual dinner dance, poetry, photography and the open day market.

Ms Rees said the group was always busy.

"From playing disc bowls, learning about iPads and touring the region, we were always busy and had an absolute ball," Ms Rees said.

"There was such a variety this time around, which is fantastic."

The rally included people of diverse backgrounds.

"We have people from all over of all ages," Ms Rees said.

"Our eldest member is 90 years old and is extremely active.

"Our members had a great time in Penola and I am sure many will return soon."



GOOD DROP: Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia solo network member Chloe Hartner was front and centre during the wine tasting tour of Coonawarra. Around 250 motorhomes will leave Penola today after a week-long stay exploring the region and its produce. Picture: KYRA SYKES



EDITORIAL

PENOLA may only be a small town, but there is always plenty going on in the bustling community and neighbouring wine region.

With vintage in full swing, workers have been kept busy at wineries and throughout vineyards, but while the peak in annual activity continues, a raft of social activities have also been planned for visitors and residents alike.

This weekend, the Katnook Estate Penola Cup will prompt people to enjoy fashions, socialising and the thrill of the racecourse at Coonawarra, with people from across the region to flock trackside.

Meanwhile, the annual After Dark event is rapidly approaching with a range of activities planned, focused on gourmet food, live music and showcasing the valued wine industry.

It is no surprise visitors from the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia were impressed by what our picturesque part of Australia has to offer as they enjoyed the taste of our wines and other attractions across the South East.

But as Koonara Coonawarra Wines director Dru Reschke pointed out to a conference in Mount Gambier last week, more can still be done to promote tourism in the South East and ensure visitor numbers continue to grow, particularly by attracting people from metropolitan areas to enjoy our peaceful lifestyle.

It is easy to take the beauty of Coonawarra and Penola for granted and feel isolated from the city hustle and bustle, but the hectic urban life is what many people look to escape during holidays.

As the motorhome group will demonstrate in the coming weeks as they tally up the receipts from their spending in the South East, the result is a welcome boost to our economy that can help sustain jobs and business activity.



Passion for Somerset

by local resident Paul Heymans

Inciting Community Debate



Wake Up Stand Up

fueled by caffeine

Will the name of the replacement Councillor be drawn out of a hat?

Wow. Thirty-three candidates have nominated to replace popular former Cr Jim Madden following his election to State Parliament, including some high profile names such as former State members Sean Choat and Ray Hopper.

It also seems to be public knowledge that former Somerset councillors, Bruce Pearce, Robin Caddy, Noel Kamholz and Bob Whalley have thrown their hat into the ring.

The \$62,434 pay with excellent working conditions clearly makes the job very attractive.

Somerset Regional Council has cited the Privacy Act as a reason for not publishing names of the nominees, yet in an election the voters would obviously have the right to know the names of all the candidates. The Privacy Act provides convenient cover for a multitude of evils.

Many Somerset residents may be wondering why we don't have a by-election since we live in a democracy in which our local government representatives are normally elected by the voters.

The Queensland Local Government Act 2009 states, "If the office becomes vacant during the final part of the local government's term, the vacant office must be filled by the local government appointing, by resolution, a person who is...qualified to be a councillor."

The final part of the local government's term is the period that starts 30 months after the last quadrennial elections.

In other words, at this late stage of the electoral cycle the legislation precludes a by-election and Councillors are required to appoint a replacement within 12 weeks if there is a vacancy.

The qualifications to be a Councillor are simple: The candidates must be an Australian citizen of adult age, a resident of the local government area, and must not have a criminal conviction or be an undischarged bankrupt. No MBA or similar education qualifications are required.

As Somerset Regional Council posted on their Facebook page, "Councillors (your elected representatives) will make the councillor appointment. Councillors must make the appointment at an open Council meeting by a majority resolution of those Councillors in attendance."

I think most right minded members of the community have a very high expectation that the selection process will be both transparent and equitable.

However, nowhere in the legislation does it offer any instructions or advice about the conduct of the selection process. Our "elected representatives" could choose to draw names out of a hat and it would comply with the "legislative requirements." There are even mobile phone apps that will do the job for them.

Reading between the lines, there appears to be a concerning lack of consensus between our Councillors about the process:

In the agenda for the next Council meeting on Wednesday 25 March 2015 there is a report that appears to assume "Councillors have undertaken a selection process and a council resolution is now required to appoint the selected candidate." It only requires that a name be added to fill in

the blank.

Then there is a Notice of Motion received from Cr Kirsten Moriarty that's been tacked onto the end of the Agenda:

"THAT Somerset Regional Council invite each nominee for the vacant councillor position to attend council to address the councillors as a group, for five minutes each to support their application for the vacant position"

And finally, in a recent article by Joel Gould in the QT, Mayor Graeme Lehmann is quoted as saying, **"We've had 33 applicants and now we will short list them down to about four," he said.**

"...the short listed applicants would then make a presentation to the councillors before a final decision was made at a date to be determined."

So that's three different statements about the process and that's only the ones in the public domain.

Which brings us to the crux of the problem: Somerset Regional Council invited nominations from persons who are qualified to be a Councillor, but to date they have not requested any supporting information.

Without supporting information there is absolutely no fair and equitable basis on which anyone can make a short list.

Councillors would be working purely on the basis of their personal knowledge of the candidates - prejudices and all.

I mean, can you imagine how it would go if yours truly was one of the nominees (which I am not, by the way)?

I've repeatedly asked for information about the actual selection process on the Somerset Regional Council Facebook page and in emails to Bob Bain CEO, but I just get stone-walled by Council quoting the legislation.

As a local resident commented in a discussion about the process on the Somerset Regional Council Facebook page: **"I think we can already see that the legislation makes no demands for an open and equitable selection process.... But perhaps leadership calls for going beyond the bureaucratic word and pursuing best practice, the two are not always synonymous, but neither are they incompatible."**

In the private sector its accepted good practice to develop a job description and the candidate is then asked to provide material that can be assessed against the criteria using a standard evaluation form to make the process consistent.

However, there's no clear job description for the role of councillor that can be used to develop a set of criteria except in broadest terms:

"Councillors are responsible for planning for the future of their communities, and developing strategies and policies to achieve those plans. Councillors need to demonstrate strategic vision and leadership by putting in place principles, policies and local laws. A strategic focus helps ensure that the council can plan for and meet the future needs of its community." (Councillor Responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2009; Dept. of Local Government, January 2015).

Despite the obvious difficulties, the community has a