

Minister invites Waterfront investors

Albany foreshore lots available

Albany's foreshore transformation is a step closer to completion with the opening of the \$42 million Albany Waterfront project by Regional Development and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls on Thursday 14 July.

At the start of a busy day in Albany, Mr Grylls formally handed over Landcorp's ownership of the marina to the Department of Transport and the management of the public open spaces to the City of Albany.

Mr Grylls lauded the collaboration between State Government agencies and local groups as the Waterfront project developed.

"The development of the Waterfront has been achieved with input from the City of

Albany, the Albany Port Authority and the Great Southern Development Commission along with a community reference group and the communities of Albany and the wider Great Southern," Mr Grylls said.

"Combined with the new \$70 million Albany Entertainment Centre and the adjoining ANZAC Peace Park, this area provides an exciting and vibrant location for locals and visitors," Mr Grylls said.

Adding a sales pitch to the official opening, Mr Grylls invited investors to consider the prospects of the commercial lots now for sale at the Waterfront.

Following the Waterfront opening, Mr Grylls

visited the \$170 million Albany Health Campus project to inspect progress on the construction of the State's biggest public country hospital development.

He said he was pleased to find the project was solidly on track and described it as an important development for the region.

At a business luncheon, Mr Grylls urged the Albany community to take a positive and flexible approach to gaining investment at the Waterfront and for the Esplanade Hotel site, negotiating with developers to ensure reasonable investment returns were possible.

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Job well done

Project opening rewards years of work

Albany Waterfront project manager Jon Bettink is almost ready to move on from the focus of his attention for most of the past decade.

Mr Bettink, a Landcorp employee working through the office of the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC), took the Albany Waterfront project from concept design to completion.

A couple of finishing touches remain before he moves to Mandurah to pursue a consultancy role.

GSDC Chief Executive Bruce Manning said Albany owed Mr Bettink a great deal for his personable and professional approach to his work at the Waterfront.

"Jon has made a major contribution to Albany at the Waterfront, and to the wider region through other projects," Mr Manning said.

"Anyone who has dealt with Jon would testify to his good humour and approachability while delivering efficient and professional



Landcorp's Waterfront project manager Jon Bettink looks over the marina.

project management, and I thank him on behalf of Albany and the Great Southern."

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888

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Katanning hosts State leaders

State Cabinet hears of regional issues

Katanning hosted Western Australia's political leaders for two days in July when Premier Colin Barnett and Ministers visited for a regional Cabinet meeting.

Local community members got the chance to make appointments for individual meetings with Ministers on Sunday 3 July.

At a sundowner that evening, hosted by

Wagin MLA Terry Waldron, Katanning's diverse cultural make-up was on show in a fashion parade presenting national dress from 13 cultural backgrounds.

On Monday 4 July, the Premier and Cabinet took advice on local and regional issues from the Shire of Katanning and the GSDC before conducting the formal Cabinet meeting.

At a community luncheon, guests were invited to raise questions for immediate response from the relevant Minister.

Ministers later visited various facilities in the town and Health Minister Kim Hames confirmed details of the Southern Inland Health Initiative, which includes a \$35.4 million upgrade to the Katanning District Hospital.



Left: Premier Colin Barnett led a question-and-answer session at a community luncheon following the Katanning Cabinet meeting.

Below: Fashions from 13 cultures represented in Katanning were presented at a sundowner held for the Premier and ministers.



GSDC Chair Peter Rundle (left) with Premier Colin Barnett and Katanning Councillor Alep Mydie.



Right: Katanning resident Mukunde Shabani shows the colourful dress of her Congo homeland.

Left: Locals Peter Kerin (left) and Bronte Rundle had a chat with Regional Development and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls.



Minister invites Waterfront investors

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He took questions from the floor and outlined his response to the review of the State's nine Regional Development Commissions (RDCs), including the GSDC.

He said the RDCs will remain as statutory

authorities but will take a renewed State-wide focus on setting strategic directions, policy prioritisation and common strategies. The RDCs will be asked to work closely with the WA Planning Commission to produce detailed blueprints to identify service gaps and investment opportunities.

The Government's response to the development commissions review is available through a link at www.rdl.wa.gov.au/RDCreport

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888

Shovels in action at saleyards site

New trading complex to replace ageing facility

Katanning's new saleyards project officially kicked off at the start of July when Premier Colin Barnett turned the first shovel of dirt.

Mr Barnett shared the shovelling duties at the saleyards site with Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman, Wagin MLA Terry Waldron and Katanning Shire President Richard Kowald.

The new saleyards will be built a few kilometres out of Katanning's town centre, allowing the town to decommission the centrally located yards that were first developed in 1922.

Katanning has long sought support for the relocation of the yards, which are subject to problems with waste water processing and transport access.

The Shire of Katanning has received assistance from the GSDC to build the case for the new site.

In this year's Budget, the State Government allocated \$17 million to the \$21.5 million saleyards project, which will provide up-to-date facilities for the region's sheep trading.

More than a million sheep a year are



Premier Colin Barnett (left) and Ministers Terry Redman and Terry Waldron, along with Katanning Shire President Richard Kowald, break the ground to launch the construction of the new Katanning saleyards.

expected to be traded through the new saleyards when they open in 2013.

The project site covers 10 hectares and includes 2.7 hectares of roofing over the yards. Rainwater from the roof catchment will be used at the saleyards and any

excess will be diverted to reticulation needs in Katanning.

Waste water will be contained on-site and recycled for use at the yards.

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888

New look for town centres

Great Southern program enhances streetscapes

A million-dollar program to enhance townscapes in the Great Southern is now under way and every local government area in the region will benefit.

The Great Southern Town Centre Enhancement Program (TCEP) was announced by Regional Development and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls in February and drew applications from the Great Southern's eleven local governments.

TCEP grants are unique to the Great Southern and provide a means for local governments in the region to

upgrade townscapes by providing better landscaping, roads, paths, gardens, lighting and signs.

Denmark gained funding to upgrade the Strickland Street area north of South Coast Highway, establishing caravan and trailer parking bays and improving pedestrian access by providing dual-use paths.

Jerramungup will beautify its town entry, create a new community park and continue streetscape improvements.

Mount Barker will undertake a project in

Short Street to deliver underground power and provide footpaths, better parking and new street furniture.

The TCEP provides up to 50 per cent of design costs up to a maximum grant of \$30,000 and/or up to 50 per cent of the cost of on-site works up to a maximum grant of \$150,000

A full list of the projects funded under the program is available at www.gsdc.wa.gov.au.

Contact: Christine Grogan ph. 9842 4888

Forum outlines migrant employment

Skilled migration program in focus

Employers caught up on the latest developments in hiring workers from overseas when the GSDC and the Albany Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted a migration forum recently.

Representatives from Federal and State Government agencies attended the forum to explain current practices.

Regional Outreach Officer Steve Lanyi, from the Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship outlined the skilled migration program and the agency's focus on securing permanent residents in regional areas.

WA Department of Training and Workforce Development representative Paul Gale gave an overview of the Skilling WA strategy.

The GSDC is a regional certifying body for the skilled migration sponsorship program, which is aimed at helping employers fill particular vacancies when suitably skilled



The skilled migration forum was addressed by agency representatives Russell Pritchard (GSDC, left), Steve Lanyi (Department of Immigration and Citizenship) and Paul Gale (WA Department of Training and Workforce Development).

workers cannot be found within the Australian workforce.

The GSDC service does not address

general immigration issues but enquiries about hiring skilled workers are welcome.

Contact: Linsey McFarlane ph. 9842 4888

Support for science studies

Better facilities for students, researchers

Contractors Emco Building have started civil works on the \$6 million sciences centre next to the University of Western Australia Albany Centre at the Old Post Office in Stirling Terrace, Albany.

The sciences centre project, due for completion in 2012, is supported by

Royalties for Regions funding of \$1.5 million over three years through the Great Southern Regional Grants Scheme.

Tertiary education in the Great Southern will be enhanced by the centre's provision of extra classrooms, laboratories and scientific equipment.

The building, designed to complement the historic Old Post Office and to fit unobtrusively on the steep site, will also house the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management and the Rural Clinical School of WA.

Contact: Duane Schouten ph. 9842 4888

Judging starts for tenth NRM medal

Winner to be announced in August

Three finalists are under consideration for the 2011 GSDC Medal for Excellence in Natural Resource Management.

This year marks the tenth award of the medal, which carries a \$10,000 grant to further the winner's NRM work. Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman will

announce the winner at a gala dinner to be held at the Albany Entertainment Centre on August 18.

The three finalists are WOW Wilderness proprietor Gary Muir, weed expert John Moore and the late Andrew Marshall, a former catchment group leader.

Mr Marshall had been battling a serious illness, and passed away after the short-listing of nominees. A family member will represent Mr Marshall in the assessment process.

Contact: Jessica van der Waag Ph. 9821 3211

Regional overview of Royalties projects

Regional Development Trust Chair inspects developments

Western Australian Regional Development Trust Chair Andrew Murray toured the Great Southern over two days in June to hear about major infrastructure proposals and to inspect projects funded through Royalties for Regions.

The Trust is a statutory body providing advice to Regional Development and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls on the management of the Royalties for Regions Fund.

Mr Murray, a Rhodes Scholar and former Senator for Western Australia, gained an overview of the benefits that the Great Southern Regional Grants Scheme had brought across the region.

In a tight itinerary, he visited projects funded through the GSDC in Walpole, Denmark, Albany, Mt Barker, Kendenup, Katanning and Kojonup. He said the projects aligned with the values of the Royalties for Regions initiative, and many showed strong community involvement and were backed by inspiring long-term visions.



Regional Development Trust Chair Andrew Murray (left) is briefed on the Floracopia project at Whale World by landscaping consultant Jack Mercer.

"I was pleased to be able to visit a significant portion of the Great Southern and see the projects under way, and I was briefed on the work taking place in areas beyond my tour," Mr Murray said. "Initiatives such as Floracopia at Whale World surprised me with their scope and vision.

"I've been impressed by what has been done with community resource centres in WA, and the Mount Barker Community Resource Centre is a superb facility that will provide an impressive array of services to the town.

"Often sheer persistence is needed to realise many projects, and I'm glad the years of dedicated work put in by a small volunteer group will result in an excellent tourist railway attraction for Kojonup.

"Similarly, after years of advocacy, Walpole is building seniors' accommodation, providing facilities that will help to maintain family ties to the area and strengthen the overall viability of the community, which is the intention of the Royalties for Regions programs," Mr Murray said.

Mr Murray took the opportunity to canvass opinions from community leaders, and heard a range of concerns about the provision of energy, water and other infrastructure in the region.

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888

Katanning teacher shows the way

National recognition for school engagement programs

Katanning teacher Andrea Rundle has been named one of Australia's top ten teachers in the National Excellence in Teaching Awards, presented in June.

Mrs Rundle, wife of GSDC Chair Peter Rundle, teaches at Katanning Senior High School (KSHS) and was honoured for her initiative in setting up the school's Access Program and a Senior School Enhancement Program.



Andrea Rundle

Both programs use practical activities to help re-engage students who find it difficult to fit into mainstream education settings.

The Senior School Engagement Program focuses on gaining employment and life skills and enables students to complete Certificates 1 and 2 in horticulture through the Great Southern Institute of Technology (GSIT).

Students involved in the program use the GSIT greenhouse and surrounding land to grow vegetables, and they built and operate their own pizza oven.

Mrs Rundle said it had been a privilege to be given the opportunity to make a

difference and she was thrilled to be recognised by the award.

"Our programs are practical and our students' life skills and employability skills are increased," Mrs Rundle said.

"Everything they learn is related to everyday life, so that maths, for example, is related to money, wages or cooking.

"Some of our students are achieving the same as students in mainstream classes and one has gone on to university," Mrs Rundle said.

KSHS has achieved a 100 per cent graduation rate for the past eight years, including students involved in Mrs Rundle's programs.

Great Southern producers tempt China

Wine and produce on show in world's biggest market

An excursion to the fastest-growing consumer market in the world was rated a success by participants in the GSDC-coordinated Two City Tour of China in late June.

Export development officer Liz Reed helped a group of Albany producers promote their goods in Shanghai and Beijing.

Wineries Alkoomi, Eastwell Estate, Forest Hill, West Cape Howe and Xabregas presented their wines to more than 300 delegates in tutored tastings of principal varieties followed by trade tastings of each winery's range.

The Great Southern Virtual Wine Tasting DVD was screened at the events and was enthusiastically received as a wine



Two City Tour participants took time out from their promotional work for a look at the Great Wall of China.

education tool that would help to expand the Chinese understanding of wine styles and conventions.

Promotion of the region's wines was complemented by information about

regional food including Albany Oysters, Eden Gate blueberries, Elixir Honey, and Frankland Estate and Genovese olive oils.

Ms Reed said the key was to engage with the market by having a presence and building prestige associated with a brand.

"The opportunities in China are unlimited," Ms Reed said.

"This program has positioned the Great Southern to continue developing strategic relationships and alliances. Several visits to the Great Southern from Chinese businesses are now scheduled for the end of the year."

Contact: Elizabeth Reed ph. 9842 4888

Top photos in demand

Photographers gain publication opportunities

Photographs entered in the GSDC Digital Photography Competition are helping to promote the Great Southern, providing publication opportunities for the competition entrants.

Since prizes were awarded for the 2011 winners in April, the GSDC has received requests from charities and commercial interests for photos to depict and promote the region, and various photo competition entrants have had the opportunity to offer their photos for publication.



Ricky and Bill Sand Jump Bremer, Ed Nelson's winning photograph in the 2011 GSDC digital photography competition.

Albany caravan park proprietor and keen photographer Ed Nelson won first prize in the 2011 photo competition, on the theme Great Southern Life.

Mr Nelson photographed his sons Ricky and Bill leaping from the top of a sand dune at Bremer Bay, resulting in a dynamic and striking photograph.

He won \$400 from the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) and a \$149 canvas print from Albany Camera House (ACH).

Jamie Kiddle won second prize, of \$200 and a framed ACH print, for his photo of a diver and a colourful cuttlefish. Third prize, \$100 and a \$100 ACH print voucher,

was won by Julie Holland, with a dramatic picture of a surfboat cutting through a wave, and Jaana Wilson won fourth prize, \$60 and a \$100 ACH print voucher, with a well-composed photo of a frog.

Albany Gateway hosted the competition and sponsored two \$50 popular vote prizes, won by Robert Davies' photo of a sunset at the wind farm, and Jolene Lawler with a photo of a blue wren.

Five entrants shared eight encouragement awards of \$30 each from the GSDC: Tanya Barber, Ricci Draper, Debbie Cristinelli, Mary Leonhardt and Jessica Vermeulen.

The winning photos are displayed on the Albany Gateway website in the Great Southern Life gallery.

Contact Steve Pontin ph. 9842 4888

Projects building the region

Royalties funding backs community initiatives

Royalties for Regions funding is at the core of a range of new facilities in the Great Southern.

Friendship House is an established venue providing respite holidays to disadvantaged people and people with disabilities, and is being extended with the help of \$85,000 of Regional Grants Scheme (RGS) funding through the GSDC.

The Emu Point property will soon include a purpose-built two-bedroom unit fully equipped for disability care and independent living.

The \$300,000 unit will be equipped with a self-operated hoist enabling wheelchair users to independently access the toilet



Community Services Minister Robyn McSweeney broke the ground to start the Friendship House extension project, watched by Albany East Rotarians John Dent (left) and Ian Howard.

and bathroom facilities, so they can enjoy a self-sufficient holiday.

South West MLC Robyn McSweeney launched the Friendship House extension project in May. It is a Rotary Club of Albany East initiative, supported by the RGS, Lotterywest and the Jack Family Charitable Trust.

King River Recreational Club recently celebrated the opening by South West MLC Colin Holt of a new sensory playground, a \$64,000 project aided by \$38,000 of RGS funding through the GSDC.

Children using the playground are encouraged to develop their senses of touch, smell, sight and hearing just by playing amongst features that include aromatic plants, musical installations and a variety of natural materials.

The sensory playground was established as a demonstration model that would help other play groups in the Great Southern to understand the advantages of stimulating play environments for children under four years old.

In Kojonup, community members and school students turned out recently to celebrate the opening of a \$100,000 refurbishment of the town's popular Apex Park, assisted by \$40,000 of RGS funding through the GSDC.



Premier Colin Barnett officially opened the Yougenup Centre in Gnowangerup in July.



South West MLC Colin Holt at the King River Sensory Playground, opened in May.

Apex Park is a well-used stopping point for motorists using Albany Highway, and the new play facilities and refurbished toilet block will be welcomed by many a traveller.

Wagin MLA Terry Waldron opened the project on Friday 24 June and recalled his own experiences using the park as a child and then as a parent with young children.

In Gnowangerup recently, Premier Colin Barnett opened the new Yougenup Centre, a Royalties for Regions-funded Community Resource Centre that houses the Gnowangerup Public Library, a toy library, art gallery and a range of office and technological resources including internet access.

Like other resource centres, the Yougenup Centre offers access to Centrelink and Medicare contact, and provides publications and information from many government agencies and community organisations.



Wagin MLA Terry Waldron reminisced about his family's visits to Kojonup's Apex Park when he opened the recent park improvements.

Wheels roll on cycle trail

Walkers and horses join Munda Biddi cyclists

Horses, walkers and cyclists will share the first Great Southern section of the Munda Biddi Trail.

The Torbay Rail Trail, opened by GSDC deputy chair Kim Barrow on 7 July, is a community trail that will form part of the eventual 1000km Munda Biddi Trail for off-road touring cyclists.

The rest of the Munda Biddi Trail is exclusively for cyclists but, because of its genesis as a community trail project, the eight-kilometre section from Torbay Hall to Elleker provides for horse-riders, walkers and cyclists.

Mr Barrow said opening the first section of the Munda Biddi Trail was a significant step towards extending the trail from Mundaring to Albany, and he congratulated the Department of Environment and Conservation staff, volunteers and Department of Corrective Services works crews.

"The alignment utilises the old rail formations and corridor, including rail bridge foundations," Mr Barrow said.



The Torbay Rail Trail includes sections of divided path to cater for horse-riders as well as walkers and cyclists.

"There has been plenty of work to strengthen existing rail bridges and build new ones, and build culverts to manage drainage.

"I know visitors to the trail will get a lot out of it, as it really is a remarkable stretch."

Extending the Munda Biddi Trail from Nannup to Albany is a \$6 million project that includes funding from the Department of Environment and Conservation, and \$3

million of Royalties for Regions funding shared through the Great Southern Development Commission and the South West Development Commission.

The Munda Biddi Trail is signposted by yellow trail markers with blue triangle direction indicators. It can be accessed from Elleker or from the Torbay Hall off South Hunwick Road.

Contact: Kerstin Stender ph. 9842 4550



Albany: Pymont House, 110 Serpentine Road, Albany WA 6330

Phone: (08) 9842 4888 Fax: (08) 9842 4828 Email: gfdc@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Katanning: 10 Dore Street, PO Box 729, Katanning WA 6317

Phone: (08) 9821 3211 Fax: (08) 9821 3334 Email: jessica.vanderwaag@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Web: www.gfdc.wa.gov.au

Postage Paid
Albany WA
6330