



W **THE YOUNG** WITNESS

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Cherry Capital*



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Incorporating the South West News and the Young Times

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COUNTRY & REGIONAL LIVING EXPO 2012



Farmers the theme

Young is on course for another outstanding National Cherry Festival in December this year, with a varied program of events and a dual celebration in the pipeline.

Mayor Stuart Freudenstein officially launched the 63rd National Cherry Festival before a keen crowd of Cherry Festival committee members, business sponsors and cherry queen candidates on Wednesday, July 11, at the Young Visitor's Centre.

Last year's theme was "150 Years Young", which acknowledged the anniversary of the town's name change from Lambing Flat to that of Young, a historical milestone that was highlighted during the three day event.

This year the committee have decided to help with the national celebrations of 'Australian Year of the Farmer' by making it the theme for 2012.

Young Shire Council's marketing officer Claire Myers said the theme allowed the community to recognise the contribution of the whole of Young Shire's farming community, but still keep cherries at the forefront of the celebrations.

"There is already keen interest in this year's festival from locals and visitors alike who have marked down the first weekend in December on their calendars," she said.

Mr Myers said festival enquiry is gaining pace at Young Visitor Information Centre, with tour operators and individuals confirming itineraries.

Also the Cherry Festival Treasurer and Sponsorship Coordinator Ms Myers expressed appreciation at the generosity and commitment of Young's business community.

"I am pleased to see the level of local business support for the National Cherry Festival year after year. They all do what they can to support Young's biggest event," she said.

"To have our platinum sponsors, Young Workwear, supporting the festival this year is fantastic and shows their vision for the town and its flagship event," she said.

"I am also thrilled that our gold sponsors Woolworths, South West Slopes Credit Union, Donges Supa IGA and The Young Witness, bronze sponsors Auto Pro, Verto and Big W have also elected to participate in the sponsorship program this year."

"We are in the very final stages on confirming some exciting elements for this year's festival," Ms Myers said.

The festival is known for its regular feature events which will continue in 2012 including the vibrant street parade, cherry based competitions like the pie eating and pip spitting, live music, market stalls, buskers, car show, bush poets, Celtic Tattoo and wine tasting.

Ms Myers said the National Cherry Festival committee was in the process of finalising the program of attractions and members were keen to deliver an outstanding spectacle to the attending crowds.

Young Shire on show

The captive audience attending the Country and Regional Living Expo has truly produced some great results for Young Shire Council



VIBRANT: Young's vibrant CBD - Boorowa Street, Young, NSW.

Young Shire Council's general manager, Peter Vlatko, said the Country and Regional Living Expo has a unique ability to interface between the city and country and in doing so has provided Young with affordable promotion into one of its largest target markets, Sydney.

"The Country and Regional Living Expo is the only event of its kind that we have found where you can engage directly with your audience to start a conversation and extend a personal invitation to come and experience for themselves what we at Young already know - that it is a great place to live," Mr Vlatko said.

"We pride ourselves on being a progressive town in the South West Slopes of NSW which actively promotes to increase population to grow critical mass, enhancing economic

activity and in doing so, achieve higher standards of living for our residents. "Outcomes from involvement in the Expo over the past two years have been very positive for the community.

"New residents mean an injection of funds for real estate or rental, more children to attend local schools, greater depth in the local skill base, increased spending and just greater prosperity generally.

"We're certainly looking forward to promoting Young at this year's Expo and seeing who else we can invite to call Young home.

"On behalf of the community of Young we would love to invite you all to visit and experience living in an affordable, exciting and progressive town that will welcome you with open arms and a friendly smile," Mr Vlatko concluded.

Connect with the country

And escape the routine of the hustle and bustle

The vibrant and progressive town of Young is located on the South West Slopes of NSW and has so much to offer visitors looking for a day trip idea or an extended break.

With something for everyone, Young will frame your stay within a setting of an authentic country experience featuring friendly locals, exciting festivals and events, thought provoking history, mouth watering local produce and a wide range of places to eat, drink, visit, shop, play, and stay.

Young has enjoyed steady growth for many years and is now a bustling regional centre with a strong retail experience at its heart.

From major national retailers to specialist stores, the shopping experience in the town is friendly and easy.

The important areas of coffee and dining are also well attended to with a wide choice of outlets all convenient to the centre of the town.

For more information about some of the businesses in Young please go to www.getitalldoneinyoung.com.au.

Just some of the highlights of a visit to Young include the stunning Chinese Tribute Gardens, Poppa's Fudge & Jam Factory, BlueStill Distillery Cafe & Gallery, Heritage Town Walk, Burrangong Art Gallery and the artefacts of historical significance at the Lambing Flat Folk Museum.



THE PERFECT GETAWAY: Chinaman's Dam and Chinese Tribute Gardens make for the perfect backdrop for any day out.

Young, the retail base for Humus Compost Technology Experts

The Australian leaders of humus compost technology have relocated to a retail outlet at Cnr Chillingworks and Milvale Road Young. YLAD Living Soils produce humus compost as part of their humus based fertility approach to soil management. YLAD Living Soils distribute Aeromaster Compost Turners, Compost Tea Brewing Equipment, compost inoculants and associated biological soil fertility products throughout Australasia.

Started in 2002 the business has experienced astronomical growth as more and more people understand the importance of soil fertility and the opportunities that exist to create fertilisers from farm and municipal waste products. YLAD Living Soils have had interest from farmers, councils, waste management authorities, agronomists, processors and industry from all over the country.

Humus Based Soil Fertility is a program of building soil fertility through balancing the physical, chemical nutrients and biological facets of the soil aided by improved organic carbon content. YLAD Living Soils is able to help farmers achieve this fertility with the use of compost mineral blends, compost teas and other biological products as part of a prescription program. Educational field days and composting seminars are also run for those wanting to learn how to change from conventional to biological farming.

YLAD Living Soils are backed up by several testing laboratories both in Australia and overseas. They are able to do soil tests, compost and compost tea quality testing as well as leaf and compost feedstock analysis. The testing is backed by agronomists who will interpret the results and advise on applicable programs.

Tools to achieve the fertility goals include the composting equipment. The Aeromaster turners are a tractor pulled, PTO driven machine that turn compost rows whilst adding water and inoculants at critical stages of the ten week process. The Aeromaster turners are the only machines in the country that are successful at aerating the compost windrow and removing the majority of the carbon dioxide that has been built up in the windrow from microbial activity. The turners come in three sizes ranging from a 3m to 4.6m wide machines. The variable drum speed allows flexibility in blending new rows and building crumb structure.

An Aeromaster Compost Tea Extractor is

another machine that YLAD Living Soils use as part of the fertility program. The extraction system is a stand alone unit that can produce up to 6000 litres of tea per hour. Compost Tea is made by using water and air to extract the soluble minerals, humus, and microbiology from the compost. Compost Tea is another great tool used by progressive biological farmers to maintain plant health and ward off plant pathogens. Tea can also be purchased in 1000 litre shuttles and delivered to farm. Compost teas are a great method of foliar fertilising, adding beneficial

microbes and humic extracts to growing plants.

Through careful organic matter and humus management farmers can reap the benefits of higher yields, less dependence on artificial fertilisers and chemicals and overall healthier plants. This in turn will lead to minerally dense foods, higher protein levels, and greater tasting produce.

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EXPERT ADVICE: Rhonda Daly from YLAD Living Soils is able to help farmers achieve high soil fertility with the use of compost mineral blends, compost teas and other biological products



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What Young has to offer

Welcome message from Young's mayor, Stuart Freudenstein

We again welcome the opportunity to proudly promote what Young Shire can offer to our city cousins.

Our stand at the Country and Regional Living Expo will showcase the many advantages that Young has out there for all to see.

From our real estate and business potential to our lifestyle, sporting and cultural activities.

With our steady growth continuing - further emphasising our regional status - additional options are arising for our young.

For example the recent launch of the University Equity Pathways Program.

This partnership is between the Australian Catholic University and Hennessy Catholic College of Young.

Young Shire's agricultural production has an almost endless variety of ventures, from the traditional grazing properties and mixed cropping along with the mix of intensive agricultural industries such as poultry and pigs.

Young of course is renowned for its stone fruit production particularly cherries.

The annual Cherry Festival on the first weekend in December has something for everyone, with harvest activities combining with celebrations.

Employment opportunities will be further enhanced with the soon to be reopened Burrangong Abattoirs.



Young's diverse range of small employers contribute to the mix that serves the region of around 60,000 customers that surround us.

The vibrant CBD, with its stunning gardens and roundabouts, welcomes visitors.

I look forward to welcoming visitors to our stand over the three days.

All the best,
Stuart Freudenstein



AUSTRALIA DAY: Deputy Mayor John Drum, Mayor Stuart Freudenstein, Young Shire Council marketing officer Claire Myers and tourism officer Maree Lamb at this year's Australia Day breakfast.



NATIONAL CHERRY FESTIVAL (above): Young's mayor didn't miss out on all the action in the popular cherry pie eating competition during the National Cherry Festival in Young.

JUST BEAUTIFUL: Young's picturesque main street, Boorowa Street.





63rd NATIONAL CHERRY FESTIVAL

30th Nov - 2nd Dec 2012



The National Cherry Festival Committee would like to once again thank the following sponsors for supporting the 2011 National Cherry Festival.

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The National Cherry Festival Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the following sponsors for their support and commitment to the 2012 Cherry Festival

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research or relax.

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Fairfax sponsor jobs board at expo

Natasha Lloyd-Jones, Digital Sales Manager NSW, QLD, SA, NT of Fairfax Regional Media, has announced that they will sponsor the Country and Regional Living Expo Jobs Board at the upcoming event at Rosehill Gardens, James Ruse Drive this August 3, 4 and 5.

The Jobs Board showcases jobs on offer in Regional NSW and is an important method of showing that there are real jobs in regional NSW.

At least 1000 jobs were on display at the 2011 event.

CEO of Country and Regional Living Expo Peter Bailey said it was vital that we showcase jobs in Regional NSW, as people won't move without a job.

With jobs.com.au we see our new association as enhancing the previously static jobs board.

"We will have well over 65 communities from regional NSW at Rosehill showcasing to Sydneysiders what they have to offer people interested in moving to areas outside of Sydney," Mr Bailey said.

This sponsorship will enable jobs to be directly loaded onto the jobs.com.au for the expo, allowing potential job seekers to access a vast array of country and regional NSW jobs online.

Fairfax Regional Media clients already have their jobs displayed in the local paper and loaded on jobs.com.au, which will also receive the additional benefit of being promoted with

additional cover at the expo on the interactive jobs board.

This will encourage people to make the move out of Sydney to regional NSW.

With so many areas experiencing skill shortages, here is an opportunity to get your job advertised, marketed and promoted in Sydney.

With so many families and individuals being squeezed in Sydney, we are about to show them a real alternative.

Fairfax Regional Media will also offer visitors a chance to search for housing on domain.com.au at the Country and Regional Living Expo, showcasing prime real estate within regional NSW.

These are the two big draws to moving people to regional NSW jobs and our great value for money real estate and we are delighted that Fairfax Regional Media are coming on board to have an online presence at the expo.

A bank of computers will be at the expo to allow visitors to search for real estate and jobs in Regional NSW.

The Country and Regional Living Expo is organised by the not for profit organisation Foundation for Regional Development Limited based in Armidale.

They will host the expo this Friday to Sunday, at Rosehill Racecourse, Sydney.

People attending the expo will be able to walk NSW in a day, and see what regional NSW has to offer.

Find out more at crlxpo.com.au.

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COUNTRY WEEK SPONSORS: Fairfax Group Digital Sales Manager Natasha Lloyd Jones recently met with Peter Bailey - Chief Executive Officer - and Sam Nottle - Director, both of the Foundation for Regional Development Ltd, to discuss how to best show job and housing availability in Regional areas at the upcoming expo.

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Shire grows by 80

THE Young Shire has opened its doors to 80 new residents in 2011 according to recent regional population growth statistics.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has recorded a 0.6 per cent increase in the area, taking 2010's figure of 13,055 to 13,135 in 2011.

It's certainly a coup for the town considering they had the highest climb in numbers over the past 12 months compared to surrounding areas like Boorowa, Harden, Temora, Cootamundra and even

Cowra.

Boorowa welcomed eight new residents last year, bringing their total to 2482 from 2474 in 2010, (6218). Harden had 16 people area (3679) and Cootamundra increased by 66 residents (7782).

The Cowra Shire only increased by six new residents in 2011 taking their population total to 12,940.

While Cowra's population has slightly increased over four years, they have actually lost numbers com-

pared to their 2007 total of 12,942 two more than what they have now.

They lost 71 residents over 2006.

Young's 2011 figure is a 1.1 per cent increase on 2006's population of 12,432 and shows that up to 12 people have moved to the shire over the last 10 years.

Young is ranked as the 87th fastest growing area and 94th largest growing area in the state out of estimated 152 areas.

The Young Witness, Friday, June 15, 2012.

Young's youth get proactive



Participants at this year's Youth Council Pool party.



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Party time at the pool

THE youth of Young are being invited to go along to a pool party to be held at the Aquatic Centre this Sunday. The party is being organised by the newly established Young Shire Youth Council who are acting as a voice for the young people. They work to consider and raise the issues and concerns of the youth of our community and develop strategies to tackle them before forwarding recommendations to council. The party will start at 12noon on Sunday and run through until 4pm where the council have organised a variety of different activities. The day will also be used to raise awareness of youth depression and some of the issues facing

BUSY: Youth Council secretary Erika Lindsay, Cr Maddison O'Hara, Cr Michel Cooke and mayor Amanda South among the rest of the council are busy organising the pool party to be held this Sunday.

Normal pool rules and fees apply but it is promising to be a great afternoon for all involved. So if making splash, listening to some tunes and soaking up some summer sunshine and a great Australian barbecue is your idea of fun then you are invited to the party.

Nearly time to get your skates on

YOUNG'S new skate park will be ready in just three weeks if the weather holds up, according to its builders. There's already been a big change at the site in the past week, with it now partly concreted and taking shape as a bowl. Concretor James Douglas, who works around Australia building skate parks, said it was always great seeing the finished job and watching the locals finally have their own skate park. Which they seem to be excited about locally. "Kids everyday come past the same sorts of ones hang out and have a look at what we're doing," James said. "They get pretty happy about it." James has been skating himself for 15 years and said most of the workers at the site were skaters too. "If I didn't have skating as a kid, I would have gotten up to a lot of mischief," he said. "It's good for the youth, gives them somewhere you can keep an eye on them," he said.



SKATERS: Builders (left to right) Fred Garland, James Douglas, Scott Walsh, Darren White and Andrew Leboyder are all skaters themselves.

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Young Shire leads the way in agricultural productivity

Pig poo powers technology

THE Young Shire Council has approved plans by Blanyre Farms Pty Ltd to finalise the establishment of a biogas plant to convert waste products from the farm's pigletty into an energy source.

The energy from the biogas plant will be used to drive the pigletty's pumps, lights, as well as provide heating for piglets.

The Blanyre pigletty is owned and operated by Edwin and Michael Beveridge and is located on their property which borders the Young/Murrumbidgee Road.

Edwin Beveridge's father, Digold Walker, who has played a major role in researching and helping to develop the biogas plant, said the use of biogas to generate energy was a common practice in many countries, especially in developing countries.

A biogas plant or biogas system is a waste-management solution that traps methane gas which is released when organic wastes are broken down.

Mr Walker said the biogas plant at the pigletty consisted of a large plastic-covered earth pond surrounded by a ring of pipes which capture the biogas created when the material in the pond broke down.

These captured gases were then blown into a motor to drive a generator that, in turn, produced electricity to meet the property's needs.

Mr Walker said tests on the soil used to build the pond had shown it would not leak into surrounding soils.

The electricity generated from the motor's radiator would be used to drive the pigletty's pumps and lights. Hot water from the radiator would be stored in a 4000 litre tank and then used to provide heating for the piglets.

He said his daughter and son-in-law had invested a substantial amount of money into the project.

The pigletty would only use about 30 per cent of the electricity generated by the biogas plant and that the surplus electricity would be sold into the NSW power grid.

Mr Walker said biogas plants had a number of environmental benefits. "Biogas plants, unlike wind farms or solar power, provide constant power," he said.

Also, by processing the pigletty's waste products, odours emanating from the pigletty would be dramatically reduced, if not eliminated.

He said one of the other main advantages of the biogas plant was that it created "nutrient rich fertiliser" from the organic wastes it processed.

He estimated the property could save between \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year in costs by using this fertiliser instead of having to buy-in fertiliser.

The Council approved the development application at their November meeting after Councilor John Drans expressed concerns that monitoring and reporting conditions had been removed from the EIA.

The deputy mayor was assured by council's Planning, Environment and Strategic Services director, Craig Filmer, that strict monitoring of the biogas plant had been imposed by both council and the Environmental Protection Authority.



EFFICIENCIES: The 115 metre long pond has a dual purpose in helping generate energy and in providing organic fertilisers for Blanyre Farms.



FAMILY BUSINESS: Michael Beveridge with his daughter at the biogas plant.

The Young Witness, Wednesday, November 30, 2011.

Duck industry forum ignites interest Market potential huge

OPPORTUNITY has waddled into the Young Shire leaving people now curious about the potential of duck meat production.

Insights into the duck meat industry were given at a recent forum that attracted some 23 people from throughout the South West Slopes including representatives from local government, banking institutions, agribusiness and rural property specialists.

The forum heard that the region had been identified as a locality with great potential to host an expanding duck meat industry.

Among the keynote speakers was John Houston, CEO of Pepe's Ducks, a Windsor-based business which produces 80,000 ducks a week.

Mr Houston said there was a real opportunity for the industry to develop away from the urban encroachment of the Sydney basin into the South West Slopes.

"Demand for production is increasing at significant rates," Mr Houston said, "historically Asian customers make up 90 per cent of the local market for duck meat, but now there are clear signs the demand is increasing across a much broader market."

Delegates at the session were provided with a snapshot of the modern farming techniques used by the duck industry and how it differed from the broiler chicken meat industry.

Greg Mills from the NSW Department of Primary Industries Intensive Livestock Industry Development Unit provided the forum with a background on the duck industry.

He also said the Department of Primary Industries were in the process of developing guidelines and standards which would provide more up-front certainty for applicants about the environmental requirements and need to be met in establishing duck sheds.

Peter Brown of Pepe's Ducks said the man had been very positive and he was jaded by the amount of interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by those who attended.

"I hope to hear from some of the people in Young who are interested in pursuing this," he said.

This is an area close to Sydney which is a perfect environment for growing duck meat," he said. "The climate is good, there are no roads to the processing plant, the water out here is diverse, there is existing enterprise in the area and there is water and land," Mr Brown said.



TOUR: Geoff Nuttall and mayor Stuart Freudenstein and general manager Peter Vlatko through the duck sheds at "Dutton Park" on Monday.

The Young Witness, Wednesday, July 27, 2011.



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Wine cellar a huge success

The Hilltop Regional Wine Cellar was first opened in September 2010.

The cellar door is an initiative of Young Shire Council and the Hilltops Association.

It is a retail wine outlet for the wineries located within the shires of Young, Boorowa and Harden that make up the Hilltops.

The cellar is located within the former Young Railway Station, now the Young Visitor Information Centre, and it has been hailed a huge success.

It has a variety of red and white wines, as well as Cherry Wine, Cherry Reserve, sugar plum reserve and more.

Since its opening, many visitors have been introduced to the Hilltops region and the brands of the 13 wineries that are involved in the cellar.

It is seen as an important project in the development of food and wine tourism to Young and the surrounding area.

Young Shire Council Marketing Officer Claire Myers has praised the Cellar Door saying the outlet has proved itself in solid sales and

raising the Hilltops profile since it opened.

"The promotion of wine tourism in the region took an important step forward with the opening of the Hilltops Regional Cellar Door," Ms Myers said.

"It is expected that this interest in the local wine region, and the cellar, will only continue to build on this sound foundation," she said.

"By making locally produced wines available to visitors who both may and may not know about the excellent wines coming from the district, we will be effectively spreading the word that The Hilltops is an exciting emerging wine region in Australia."

The Hilltops Wine Region Cellar is open seven days a week during the business operation hours of the Young Visitor Information Centre, and wine tastings are held on various weekends.

Tastings are advertised on the visitingyoung.com.au website and through the Talking Tourism column in the Friday edition of *The Young Witness*.

All wines featured are available for purchase.

Want to try some Hilltops wines?

The Hilltops Harvest Association are holding a 'Hungry for Hilltops' Regional NSW Showcase Dinner on Friday, August 31, in the historic Young Town Hall.

The night will feature local chefs and showcase many of the wines available at the Hilltops Regional Wine Cellar.

It is the perfect opportunity to meet some of the Vignerons in the one location that are represented in the Hilltops Regional Wine Cellar and to answer your questions about the wines from the region.

There is also the Hilltops Wine Tasting

at the annual National Cherry Festival on Saturday, December 1, 2012.

It's the perfect finish to a busy day at an action packed festival.

Watch the sun set out over the festival while tasting award winning wines from the region.



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Documentary tells some tales

Locals and visitors alike will have the unique opportunity to learn the history of Young told through the town's buildings in a documentary to be screened during this year's Lambing Flat Festival. Filmmakers Joe Kinckle and Brian Jones combined their knowledge with the talent of local filmmaker Larry Woodworth to create the 45 minute documentary called *Rising From the Flat: From Gold to Glory*.

The film has captured the history of the buildings located in Young's CBD, such as churches, the Millard Centre, the Old Young Public School and the town hall, even in detail regarding plans set up in 1890. And the town's fine brick, which was laid in those two years, has found its place in the documentary.

The film also incorporates material from the Lambing Flat Museum, the birth of 'White Australia' re-enactments filmed in 1925 and footage from a 1987 re-enactment of the Lambing Flat Riot.

Profits from *Golden Ridge* volunteered to help with the making process.

The documentary is set to premiere on Thursday, March 29 at 6:30pm at the Southern Cross Cinema, and will be the first in kick-start activities for the Lambing Flat Festival on Saturday, March 31.

"As members of the WYDAC Short Film Group and the Young Camera Club, we decided this would be a good film to make," Joe said.

"And we included the history of the 1927 and 1967 re-enactments to make the story," Larry said.

What makes the film all the more appealing is its focus on the town's history and the people who built it.

"It's a bit of a love letter to the town and its people," Joe said.

"It hasn't been easy pulling for these men who originally settled to have the Cherry Festival, but the film festival during the Cherry Festival, and the release of the film, is a great way to make and a bit of a love letter to the town and its people," he said.

The documentary will be screening during the Lambing Flat Festival at the Southern Cross Cinema between the hours of 6pm and 10pm on the eve of a golden jubilee.



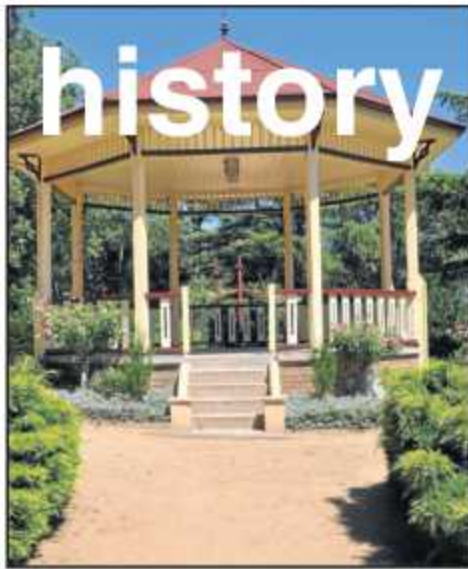
Young
The Cherry Capital
of Australia

The town's colourful history was recently documented by local historians in a short film called *Rising from the Flat: From Gold to Glory*.

Steeped in history



Welcome to Young



Carrington Park



The historic courthouse - now the Young High School



Young Town Hall



Lambing Flat Folk Museum



The former Young Railway Station is now Young's Visitor Information Centre

Murringo art exhibition

Annabel Wallace Gallery in Murringo will this month be showcasing the work of emerging Wagga Wagga artist Tony Curran in an exciting exhibition titled "Face Value".

Originally from Sydney, Tony produced the work as part of his PhD research exploring the notion of self and its role in contemporary visual art.

The work explores the value of the face in representing self and how the values of an individual and the customs of the community to which it belongs are expressed and performed via the face.

Gallery owner Annabel Wallace said she couldn't wait until the show opened this Saturday.

"It is a really challenging and thought provoking exhibition, not something that the Young audience would be accustomed to," she said.

"Tony takes his art practice very seriously and there is a lot of theory and intent behind his work."

She said the four installations that comprise of the exhibition were not meant to be decorative works to

match the curtains in your lounge room, but rather provoke discussion and analysis about human identities.

"He is a young and up and coming artist that has something worth listening to, it will be an exciting exhibition and I cannot encourage people enough to come and see it," she said.

"Face Value" will be showing from August 4

to 31 at Annabel Wallace Gallery at "Erinvale" Douglas Gap Road, Murringo.

The gallery will be open for public viewings on the weekends of August 4 to 5 and 11 to 12 from 11am to 4pm and by appointment at all other times by phoning 6384 6262 or 0429 993 004.

Visit annabelwallacegallery.com.au for more information.

annabel wallace gallery

Changing exhibitions by local and interstate artists. The gallery also conducts childrens art programs and artist workshops.

Gallery located at "Erinvale" Douglas Gap Road, MURRINGO

Phone: (02) 6384 6262, Fax: (02) 6384 6206, email: wallace@dragnet.com.au web: www.annabelwallacegallery.com.au



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COUNTRY WEEK 2012

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Festival triumph



Photo: Andrew Ross/ABC News

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Photo: The Young Witness

TWO CUTES: Photo: Andrew Ross/ABC News

CHRISTMAS GLE: A popular favorite

The Young Witness, Monday, December 5, 2011.

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▲ The Lambing Flat Festival March.



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From outstanding sporting achievements



Young Sports Advisory Committee secretary Steve Brill and Junior High Gun (clay shooting) World Champion Matt Schiller.



Australian cricketer Nathan Lyon.

To revolutionising higher education



Uni in Young

By EDWANA MASON

ONE of Young's secondary schools is creating a new precedent in education by offering rural students the opportunity to undertake university units at the college.

On Friday, Hennessy Catholic College principal Dr Peter Webster announced a partnership between the school and Australian Catholic University that he described as revolutionary.

"It's innovative because we are using the current system but for the benefit of the kids," Dr Webster said.

Tired of seeing many school leavers offered university placement, then turning them down because of financial and geographic constraints, Dr Webster said the school got lateral about how they would attack the race of ambition.

"Last year 86 per cent of Hennessy students were offered first round university placements, yet many of these students could not afford to relocate to university," he said. He says around 50 per cent of school leavers cannot afford to go on to tertiary education.

"Our here residents are not afforded the same opportunities their counterparts in the city are offered - city students get to stay at

home, catch public transport to uni - it is only a stone's throw away - whereas out in the country students have to leave home and set up in the city if they want to study," he said.

What the school came up with is called an Equity Pathways Partnership - a unique initiative which Dr Webster says has never previously been undertaken in this form.

"It's a saviour for those students who want to pursue university study while still living and working at home," he said.

"It means they can still complete their gap year, qualify for Youth Allowance and still get some units under their belts," he said.

"This initiative has the potential to provide equity for rural and regional students who are currently disadvantaged due to the cost of education," he said.

Units will be available in education, nursing, exercise science and business.

Students will undertake study through a series of two to three day intensive courses with the remainder of the unit completed online.

And there are other benefits.

"The program is open to all students from our region who have completed their preliminary HSC," Dr Webster said.

He also explained the Equity Partnership arrangement would allow students to undertake university units free of HECS, HELP (student loan scheme), accommodation, texts and other university charges and fees.

"It's an innovative local solution that caters for the needs of rural students," Dr Webster said.

"It will add to the college's current flexible pathways from the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and into university study," he said.

Australian Catholic University Equity Pathways officer Frances Moore said the university was excited by the possibilities of this initiative, not only for students but the university as well.

Dr Webster said that from an initial investment of 10 of the college's students, there are now 20 on the list.

"I have been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the students in their initial reaction to this proposal," he said, "this will make a difference to the lives of these kids."

One of last year's school leavers Madeleine Parkes said it was a fantastic opportunity - "I am definitely in - my parents agree that it is a great idea," she said.

The Young Witness, Monday, May 21, 2012.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY: Hennessy Catholic College principal Dr Peter Webster announced in May this year the new partnership between the school and Australian Catholic University which will give rural students the opportunity to undertake university units in town.