



Business of the Month



Billy Roberts (left), managing director Mark Roberts, Chris Dendle, Steve McCallum, Trevor Roberts.

ROBERTS BUILDERS PTY LTD

Owners: Trevor and Glenice Roberts and Roberts Builders Family Trust on behalf of Mark and Andrea Roberts.

Management: Mark Roberts (managing director), Trevor and Glenice Roberts (partners), Andrea Roberts (partner and administration).

Business product/service: Building and construction including new homes, renovations, extensions, commercial carpentry, maintenance work, 24 hour emergency repairs, project management and shopfronts. No job too big or too small.

Business background: Formerly TW and GE Roberts Builders (est 1986), Roberts Builders (est 2008) includes company principal Trevor Roberts with over 55 years’ experience. Now, with Mark “growing up” in the industry after beginning his apprenticeship in November 1998, the tradition continues.

Roberts Builders has a long-standing reputation for building quality homes. The importance of taking great pride in their work and maintaining a reputation of excellence is instilled in all employees.

The firm employs local tradesmen of the highest standard, highly-skilled, motivated and keen to be taught the right way. They treat your home with respect . . . as if it were their own.

Ten things you may not know about Roberts Builders Pty Ltd and the people behind the business:

1. Roberts Builders currently employs four qualified carpenters and two apprentices.
2. In the past, the firm has employed six apprentices through to full qualification and assisted many others with parts of their apprenticeships.
3. Roberts Builders has been responsible for maintenance at Cobden Technical School since 1995.
4. The firm is willing to accept students for work experience – if the student makes first contact him/herself.
5. Roberts Builders has just completed a refurbishment of student accommodation at Deakin University, Geelong, including 84 ‘wet areas’ (bathrooms and toilets) 268 bedrooms and outdoor areas with decks and pergolas.
6. Mark worked as a builder in Ireland for twelve months in 2004.
7. The firm is willing to complete/use/research any type of building work to suit the client’s needs.
8. Roberts Builders pride themselves in maximising the use of local trades and services
9. They strive to use sustainable and the latest products, again, to best meet a client’s demands.
10. Client satisfaction, work pride and maintenance of the firm’s reputation are paramount!

South Western District Restoration Group Inc Annual Rally
10am - March 15th & 16th, Rally Park, Grayland Street.
Displays, grand parade 10am both days, vintage cars, food, Saturday auction, Saturday night meal.
Contacts: Brian 0448 711 476 or Helen 0408 104 912

An Australia Day Citizen of the Year nominee goes head-to-head with Connecting Cobden.
Only 25 years old, he already has a story to tell . . . we are sure you’ll be impressed!

A COMMUNITY ALL-ROUNDER – Matthew Coverdale –

Born: Camperdown Hospital, August 1988.
Family: Son of Maree and Donald Coverdale.
Schools: Cobden Primary School 1994-2000, Cobden Technical School 2001-2006.

Education: I didn’t enjoy primary school much. I found it boring and hard but it gave me a chance to build a friendship-base and I’m still friends with the same guys.
Secondary school gave me a chance to use my skills in the trades. I struggled at English but, other than that, school was pretty good. I enjoyed the later years when the teachers treated you as an adult and you treated them with more respect.

I did VCAL in year 11 which gave me the opportunity to join the CFA – we did all the minimal skills, first aid and low structure. I am still in the Bostocks Creek fire brigade, holding a fourth lieutenant position.

In year 12, I did VCE and did well in all my subjects except English . . . no surprise. A friend of the family said, “School is the best days of your life.” I said, “I don’t believe you, work must be better,” but once you leave school and hit the real world, you see she was right.

School story: I can remember cooking biscuits in year 7 when my mate and I made up the biscuit mixture, pre-heated the oven on the top temperature and put the biscuits in. Neither of us turned the oven back and our biscuits burnt black and hard as a rock. I could have used them as frisbees.

Growing up memories: I grew up on a dairy farm near Cobden where my parents still milk cows. The best thing about growing up on the land is all the things you can do. I had opportunity to build things, pull things apart, all things that come in handy now at work. You can hunt, drive tractors, trucks and cars well before you can in the town.

The disadvantage is the long hours and the lack of family holidays due to your parents’ work commitments. I decided cows were not for me and that I am better with my hands so I did a trade and the farm is there if I want it.

I remember joining the swimming club in Cobden at age 11 and competing in the carnivals and school sports. I still swim and am now the president of the club. I also played badminton and learnt to play the guitar which I still do today.



Chief Simon thanks Matthew for his project work with other Rotary International volunteers in Sariri, Papua New Guinea.

Career so far: After completing year 12 in 2006, I successfully applied to do a pre-apprenticeship at South West TAFE in Warnambool. The course aimed to teach you about electro-technology to make you more employable. The course consisted of four days a week at TAFE and a day with an electrician.

Chris Walsh had begun his own business a year before and a lady in the supermarket put me on to him - so I gave him a call and the rest is history. After the six months of pre-app, I was still working one day a week with Chris. I had done well in the course and I’d won the electro technology pre-apprentice of the year. When I asked Chris for an apprenticeship, he said, “I will see how work goes.” After a lot of persistence from me, Chris made me an apprentice in September 2007.

His first apprentice and I will always be thankful for that opportunity. In the next few years Chris put on another apprentice, Tom Leishman. The four years went quickly and I managed to pick up the Rotary apprentice of the year in 2009. I completed my apprenticeship in September 2011 and, after three years of trade school and lots of tests and exams, I qualified in December. I have been working with CW Electrical ever since.

In 2013 I was awarded the Rotary trade service award. I have had the opportunity to see a business grow from buying power-points one box at a time, buying cable one drum at a time and owning just one ute to ordering in bulk, owning three utes and now having a business shopfront. I have also seen my boss’s family grow and I must say it is the best place to work. I have had many work experience kids and I have tried to pass on my skills to these future electricians.



Swimming club president, international volunteer and an award-winning electrician . . .

Sparky stories: I was testing a septic pump and put it in a bucket of water; I plugged it in and water went everywhere, all over me. Also, pulling the boss out of a fertiliser effluent pit has to be mentioned.

One day, the boss packed dog poo in a box – quite a surprise for a co-worker who opened it. And the mayhem when an apprentice blew up six smoke alarms!

Experiences and achievements: I had the opportunity to be part of a terrific Rotary International team building a school in a remote New Guinea village. A most humbling experience to see a third world country first-hand, the good bits and the bad. While I was there to do electrical work, growing up on the farm enabled me to do general plumbing jobs to give this village access to running water. We also gave the school power through solar panels. Many of these things we take for granted.

Achievements to date include pre-apprentice of year, a trade service award and an Australia day community award. All bonuses to doing your job.

Ambitions: Like my friends, buying or building a house is in the picture. Long-term, having a family, wife, kids, maybe owning my own business . . . hard to say, you never know what the future holds.

Favourite food: Roast of the day.

Favourite footy teams: Essendon and Cobden.

Worst habit: I am a sore loser.

Favourite music: Country music.

Favourite TV program: Mrs Brown’s Boys.

Favourite movie: The Shawshank Redemption.

Mentors: My parents.

How do you relax? I have many hobbies that keep me occupied but, to relax, I like watching movies, playing guitar and hunting with my mates.

Significant other in your life: I have been in a relationship for twelve months with my special girl Amberley.

Advice to young people as they prepare for a career: Do work experience to find a career you like. I wanted to be a furniture-maker when I was a kid so I did work experience in electrical and cabinet-making and found that I liked the electrical life better. The second thing is you will only get out of a job what you put into it. Give 100% and rewards will follow.

COBDEN CALENDAR	
Friday 14 th March:	7pm Cobden Cricket Club Celebrations, Sports Club.
Saturday 15 th March:	7.30pm Gracie's Flutterby's Relay for Life Bingo Night, Cobden Bowling Club. Phone: Vanessa 0434 344 187.
Saturday 15 th March:	10am SWDRG Annual Rally weekend.
Sunday 16 th March:	10am Rally continues. Rally Park.
Monday 17 th March:	7.30pm CopRice Spring Festival meeting, Heytesbury Room.
Saturday 22 nd March:	7pm Cobden & District Tennis Presentations, Sports Club.
Senior Citizens' Hall:	Bowls 1pm Mondays. Cards 1pm Mondays, Thursdays, Saturdays. Hoy 1.30pm first Saturday of the month.