



Business of the Month
August 2016

The Blue Wren Clothing and Homewares



CBN's Trevor Clarke presents the BoM certificate to Steffi.

Business name: The Blue Wren Clothing and Homewares

Ownership: Steffi Morris

Management: Self-managed assisted by five casual or part-time staff (at Cobden)

Business: Coffee window, clothing/formal wear ordering service, gifts and homewares

Background: Steffi began The Blue Wren in early 2013. Just over 18 months ago, she opened another shopfront in Murray St, Colac. Steffi has always wanted to run her own business, especially in the fashion field where she can interact with people. Previously, she worked as a social worker, based in Timboon. Steffi has succeeded in providing an accessible and affordable environment, offering personalised service to people of all ages. She is also a Cobden Community bank director.

What you might not know about The Blue Wren and its manager . . .

1. Latest clothing styles and homewares are sourced both locally and on Steffi's fortnightly trips to Melbourne. Let her know if you want something particular or unique.
2. The business has a made-to-measure formal and bridal-ware service.
3. The coffee window and outdoor laneway was introduced to enrich the shopping experience.
4. The coffee beans are roasted by Piccolo Coffee Roasters owned by Jon Darcy, who grew up on a Cobden district farm, and his wife Olivia, formerly of the Terang area.
5. The business has more than 5000 'likes' on Facebook.
6. The Blue Wren is currently working on providing an online shop. Clothing and homewares have been sold all around Australia to people viewing posts on Facebook and Instagram.
7. Steffi grew up in Melbourne and was lured to the country after meeting local dairyfarmer Simon Morris who she married on 1st December 2012.
8. The Blue Wren is named after the Morris' family farm on Gribbles Rd, Jancourt.
9. The business proudly sponsors Cobden, Simpson and Colac netball clubs.
10. The Blue Wren hosts get-togethers for groups or work-staffs looking to hold end-of-year break-ups or social functions.

Business contact: Steffi Morris (0431 582 483)

Email: thebluwrenshop@hotmail.com

COBDEN CALENDAR

Sunday 25th September: Cobden FNC, Vote Count.

Monday 3rd October: 7.30pm, Progressing Cobden Action Group meetings.

Tuesday 4th October: Cobden Volleyball new season, phone 0429 921876 or 0419 043103.

Wednesday 5th October: 7.30pm, Cobden Golf Club AGM.

Friday 7th October: Cobden FNC, Presentation Night.

Monday 10th October: 7.30pm CopRice Festival meeting.

October 14th - 16th CopRice Cobden Spring Festival

~ Connecting Cobden ~ A Progressing Cobden Twenty20 Vision Project.

Websites: cobden.org.au, cobdenbusinessnetwork.org.au,

cobdenspringfestival.com.au. Facebook: Cobden Community.

Registered email: community@cobden.org.au.

CDHS BOARD NEEDS YOU . . . AND YOU . . . AND YOU!

Have you ever considered joining the board of Cobden District Health Services? Well, the time might be right!

Chairman Wayne Gibson believes a director's role is enormously satisfying.

"Currently, the board numbers five," he said. "It would be wonderful if we could return to the days when we had closer to twelve directors.

"Clearly, it is important we have a strong board because we have duties and obligations to carry out. We could share these more equitably if we had more members.

"If you have a passion for serving the community in a vital way, we would be very happy to talk with you. We will provide plenty

of support. You do not need to know all the 'ins and outs' of how health services operate," Mr Gibson said.

"The board's responsibilities include risk management, financial performance, ethics, succession planning and future planning. The CDHS CEO oversees the operations of the facility while we look after strategic directions.

"One of our biggest challenges is obtaining feedback from our community. New board members might have ideas about how we should go about this."

If you are interested in joining the board, please contact Mr Gibson (5595 1078), or one of the directors profiled on our Connecting Cobden page.

WAYNE GIBSON (Chair)



- Born in Ivanhoe, Melbourne, he attended Banyule Primary School and completed his HSC at Rosanna East High School.
- Wayne worked for two years at the Reserve Bank before completing a business degree at Swinburne Institute of Technology, followed by a graduate diploma in business administration.
- He worked for 12 years at CRA (now Rio Tinto) as an accountant. Moved into management which included installing accounting software in their Argentina, China and Philippines exploration offices.
- Further employment included a stint with BWK (a wool-brokering business) and Chiquita Brands, before moving to Cobden to take on a management role with Greencon Australia Pty Ltd, formerly L H & T O Green Pty Ltd.
- Wayne is a life member of both Banyule junior and senior football clubs (including one premiership and four years as Treasurer).
- Life Member of Banyule Cricket Club (including six A grade premierships and four years as secretary), also spent time playing with Carlton and Collingwood cricket clubs.
- He was a Cobden Football Netball Club committeeman for eight years including president for three years and on the Cobden Golf Club board for three years.
- An interest in understanding how boards operate in a business environment (rather than a sporting organisation) was the main reason Wayne applied for a board position.

JULIE FINNEY (Treasurer)



- Qualifications include a commerce degree and a financial planning diploma as well as being a registered tax (financial) advisor.
- Julie has been employed as an accountant at Duncan Morris & Associates for 23 years.
- Her interests include going to the theatre, scrapbooking, embroidery and quilting, watching her girls dancing and playing netball, cheering for the Geelong Cats in the AFL and the Melbourne Storm in the NRL.
- Julie joined the board because she was inspired by her late grandfather, Jim Mounsey, to do something for her community. Jim was a member of the original board responsible for bringing the bush nursing hospital to Cobden. When asked if she would be interested in joining the board, she was very honoured and felt it was a great opportunity to make a contribution.
- She hopes to continue playing a part in the ongoing success of CDHS so the community can keep benefiting from the facility and its services long into the future.

ALAN PORTER



- Resides in Sunbury just outside of Melbourne with his wife Kathy where they have lived for 45 years.
- They have four children and eleven grandchildren.
- Alan is a qualified pharmacist who has been self-employed for many years.
- Currently has interests in pharmacies in Cobden, Moonee Ponds, Sydenham and Casterton.
- He purchased the Cobden pharmacy from Neville Preston in March 1999 and has been on the CDHS board for most of the time since. Believes that being involved is just one small way of helping the local community.
- Alan considers it a privilege to have the opportunity to work in a rural community such as Cobden.
- For many years, he worked in Cobden every week but, more recently, the pharmacy has been managed by Peter Unger.

FRANK MARTIN (Vice-president)



- Grew up in Surrey Hills (Melbourne). Attended Surrey Hills primary and Box Hill high schools before completing an electrical engineering diploma at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and an engineering degree at Melbourne University.
- Frank worked for 30 years at the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) – at Thomastown terminal station (north of Melbourne), Rubicon hydro-power stations (near Eildon), Hazelwood power station, Yallourn W power station, Loy Yang A power station and in many Melbourne offices.
- In 1974 he was selected to work for 12 months overseas so, with Jocelyn and their small children, Heather and Richard, he travelled to Germany. While working in their power stations, he lived in small villages, and travelled throughout Europe on weekends and holidays.
- Frank's final SECV role was based in the Latrobe Valley as general manager of operations across all power-generating stations in the State. This ceased when the SECV was privatised.
- Since purchasing the Parlours' hardware business in Cobden in 1995, Frank and Jocelyn have operated Cobden Home Timber & Hardware, and Timboon Hardware since 1996. During the past 21 years, Frank has become involved extensively in the community through the technical school council, the chamber of commerce/Progressing Cobden, the rotary club, the community choir, Corangamite shire audit committee and the health services.
- He joined the board because of his high regard for the importance of a local community-based health facility. He had a desire to see the continued development of the existing facility and to ensure it serviced the broad health and well-being needs of the community. While having no background in health service delivery, Frank felt his business skills and customer focus could be useful in the work of the board.

SANDRA MASON



- Joined the board in 2008 after being encouraged by a long-serving director. Sandra didn't think she had anything to offer but was told she might be surprised by what she could bring to the position. She attended a couple of meetings to 'get a taste' before committing.
- Sandra has worked in various nursing roles, the most enjoyable being district nursing and aged care. Has developed a passion for ensuring patients' rights are respected, provision of quality care services, and she has a special interest in dementia care.
- Today, she works with Corangamite Shire community services as an assessment officer for the "My Aged Care – Regional Assessment Service" and also for the "Home and Community Care – Program for Younger People".
- Sandra has much contact with people seeking support to remain living at home and with those contemplating entering facility-based residential care – a very rewarding role with people letting you know where there are service gaps.
- Being a board member has allowed her to work with great people and have an active role in shaping service options for her community. She is proud of the high-quality care CDHS and its staff offer to residents through its residential care beds and home care support packages as well as the impressive range of health care services and community support services offered.
- Sandra says CDHS listens to and responds to the community's needs where it can – great examples being the pool, the men's shed, the GP clinic and the planned gymnasium. During her time on the board, she has learned much about small rural health services, governance, budgets, legislation, reforms, grants, processes, licences, the list just goes on and on.
- "It's surprising how satisfying it has been working with board members, staff and the community to assist CDHS to remain a vibrant and valued community service."