

Business: T S McQuinn & Son

Owners/managers: Greg and Leanne McQuinn

Product/service: General plumbing including roofing and gas-fitting. The shop sells plumbing supplies, gas heaters, pumps and poly rainwater tanks.

Business background: In 1927, Stan (Thomas Stanley) McQuinn took over the existing tinsmith and plumbing business from his employer and it traded as 'T S McQuinn'. Son Bernie and daughter-in-law, Joan, took over the business in 1968 and it was registered as 'T S McQuinn & Son' – as it still is today.

Joan and Bernie's sons, Greg and Mike, took over in 1993, Mike left in 2003 and Greg and Leanne continued to run the business. Greg and Leanne's son, Stephen, started his apprenticeship in 2008 and is the fourth generation of the McQuinn family to be involved in the business.

Ten things you might not know about this business:

1. Stan, a returned soldier World War 1 soldier, served in France where his brother, Hec, was killed in action.



Leanne, Greg and Stephen McQuinn

2. Stan's wife, Bertha, boarded in the house where the extension of the T S McQuinn shop stands today.
3. T S McQuinn manufactured milk cans for the local farmers.

4. The business manufactured rainwater tanks for many years before the introduction of poly rainwater tanks.
5. The business has been a member of the Master Plumbers' Association for almost 50 years
6. Over the years, the business has employed 25 people.
7. The business supports local schools' work experience and VCAL programs. Five VCAL students have become plumbers . . . and one, an AFL footballer! His initials – GR.
8. Greg was involved with the Cobden Scout Group for 35 years, and he and Stephen are active members of the Cobden CFA. Both attended Cobden Technical School.
9. Greg's wife Leanne is the shop/office manager. She took over the position from Bernie's wife, Joan.
10. Stan, Bernie's dad, was a life member of the Cobden Football Club and he and his brothers all played for the club. Bernie continued the family tradition and played for Cobden for many years and Joan was his biggest fan!

Business contact: Greg McQuinn, 03 5595 1061, 0408 583 738



COBDEN U C OP SHOP

Manager Heather Matthews (left) with staff member Elizabeth Wilson

Business: Cobden Uniting Church Op Shop

Owner: Cobden Uniting Church

Managers: Heather Matthews and Dorothy Double

Selling: Pre-loved clothing, household items, bric-a-brac and books

Background: The first Cobden Uniting Church Op Shop was begun many years ago by the ladies of the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF), on Mrs Ada Bond's verandah in Parrott Street. It was relocated several times, in rented properties, before the current premises, 50 Curdie Street, was purchased from the Wilson family in 1990. Church members refurbished the house which opened as the Cobden Uniting Church Op Shop the following year.

Ten things you might not know about this business

1. The building was originally the first police station in Cobden.
2. The shop is staffed by volunteers from the church and the community. Some of them have been working in the shop, in its various locations, for more than 30 years. New volunteers are always welcome.
3. The shop was closed for several months while it was renovated and extended at the back of the building. It was re-opened in May 2014.
4. The improvements were made possible by the sale of the South Purrumbete Uniting Church.
5. Heather Matthews has 20 years of business experience and Dorothy Double has been involved in the Op Shop and the UCAF for over 30 years.
6. We have funded a welfare service through the Op Shop for many years. The service is now partly-funded by the government through the Food Bank, and is available for any in need. A free counselling service is also available.
7. Our children's wear is known for its variety and quality, the ladies' wear is well-stocked and there are plenty of men's clothes too. Readers are also well-catered for.
8. Recently, a shed was added at the back of the property to aid in the storage and sorting of donations. Excess clothing, linen and bric-a-brac is sent to Diabetes Victoria.
9. Rags are processed and sold to local tradies, businesses and farmers.
10. We have a community space available, and can offer a 'cuppa' to weary shoppers, or those needing to 'while-away' time for whatever reason!

Contact details: 0475 699 483

Business: BJ Savage Personal Trainer

Owner/manager: Belinda Savage (pictured below)

Service: Personal Training/Group Training/Fitness Instructor

Background: Belinda began her business in October 2008 after she identified a need in the Cobden area for health and fitness training to accommodate people of all ages.

Nearly nine years later, she works with people from 16 to 90 who are all intent on improving their fitness and achieving a healthy lifestyle. Well-qualified, Belinda conducts sessions at the cobdenhealth gymnasium and at many other venues in Cobden eg the lake, the Circuite de Savage, the swimming pool hill and the recreation reserve.

Initially, she ran two bootcamp classes a week. Now, there are 15 classes weekly, plus personal training sessions. Available are boxing for fitness, gentle exercise for older adults, mums and bubs and small group sessions.

Belinda organises trips to events like the Mothers' Day Classic, the Melbourne Marathon, the Stadium Stomp at the MCG, the Serra Terra at Halls Gap and various trekking day trips.



BJ SAVAGE PERSONAL TRAINER

Ten things you might not know about this business:

1. Belinda is at the cobdenhealth gymnasium from 6am three mornings weekly ready to begin 6.20am classes.
2. She believes her clients are more concerned about health and fitness than weight loss.
3. She gets great satisfaction from seeing her clients improve their fitness levels and achieving their goals. One recently ran a marathon.
4. Some clients have been with Belinda since 2008. Some attend sessions three times a week.
5. Ranging from 30 to 60 minutes, her evening classes are spread from 5.30pm to 8.30pm four nights a week.
6. Belinda continually updates her qualifications – recently, she attended MetaPWR and Metafit training.
7. The daughter of Colin and Del Taylor, Belinda attended Timboon Consolidated School. She was the third of five children so she had to stay fit to keep up with her older two siblings and to stay ahead of her younger two.
8. Belinda's husband, Evan is a plumber and bus-driver. She has lived in Cobden for 33 years. Her first employment was with a local law firm but now she combines her fitness work with her sports coordination role at Cobden Technical School.
9. Always active (and successful) in tennis, netball and basketball, she is proud that she ran her first half-marathon at age 50.
10. Belinda laughs when she recalls excuses used by her clients as to why "I can't exercise today" including the time-honoured, "I forgot my gear."

Business contact: Belinda Savage, 0419 587 036



COBDEN SEWING MACHINES

Business: Cobden Sewing Machines

Owner/Manager: Helen Smith (pictured above)

Product/service: Sales and service of Pfaff and Singer sewing machines and overlockers; Handquilter Sweet Sixteen and Simply 16 machines for the home quilter; accessories for these brands are also in store, along with many interesting tools to assist with your sewing. Sweet delights to enjoy.

Background: Cobden Sewing Machines has grown into a strong and thriving business since July 2010 when owner Helen started up in the Curdie Street shop co-occupied by Stitch-It Quilts 'n' Craft which sold patchwork fabric.

The businesses complemented each other and became well-known across the south west for their high level of service in a warm and inviting environment.

This month, Helen has taken on a new challenge by moving her business to 31 Curdie Street in bigger premises that is allowing her to extend her stock and enjoy more working space.

Ten things you might not know about this business:

1. All purchasers receive free lessons for the machine bought from the store.
2. Cobden Sewing Machines sells Horn sewing tables, chairs and cabinets.
3. Helen repairs and services all brands of machines after undertaking the latest training.
4. The business stocks Pfaff and Singer machines for both beginner and experienced machinists.
5. A machine embroidery club runs monthly, along with Hoop Sisters BOM embroidery clubs.
6. Helen offers classes for those needing help to begin a new project or requires assistance with a problem. More clubs and classes are coming soon.
7. Handquilter Sweet 16 is a Sit-Down free motion quilting machine, and the Simply 16 is on a small frame for those who have limited space but wish to make their own quilts.
8. Helen is always on the lookout for new gadgets to assist with sewing and patchwork. If you are after something particular, she can hopefully source it for you.
9. Cobden Sewing Machines stocks a range of gift and collectable machines which include musical, clock and ornamental varieties. Also a number of different gift ideas for the craft-minded friend. We also cater for those not into craft with a vast selection of sweets.
10. Pfaff (pronounced 'faff') is a sewing machine produced in Germany for over 150 years, featuring the original IDT system.

Business contact: Helen Smith, 0408 104 912

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