

500km Walk for Autism reaches final destination

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who was involved in or donated to my 500km Walk for Autism.

We raised more than \$70,000 for Abacus Learning Centre and Amaze (Autism Victoria) to help them continue their good work.

I particularly want to thank the 56 schools we visited along the way for their warm welcome and their generous donations. Collectively, schools raised more than \$10,000 for autism.

Throughout the course of the walk, I was joined by more than 200 people, including school students, kindergarten children, grandparents, parents and members of the community.

Abacus will use the funds to fit out its new building in **Hastings** adjacent to Western Port Secondary College.

Your support throughout the walk was tremendous and your donations will make a real difference to the lives of children with autism.



▼ At the starting line of the walk at Arthurs Seat



▲ At Osborne Primary School in Mount Martha



▼ With Daryl Somers walking through Cape Schanck



▲ walking through Dromana



▲ Being welcomed by students at Cowes Primary School



▲ At the finish line on Cowes Jetty



▲ Exploring the Bass Hills



▲ Walking with children from Lyndel Childcare Centre in Tootgarook



▲ Hiking through The Gurdies

New Building for Abacus Learning Centre

It is fantastic that Abacus Learning Centre has been able to secure a building on the grounds of Western Port Secondary College in **Hastings**.

The College has kindly agreed to let Abacus occupy the building, which was a former trades centre and has been vacant for a decade.

This will provide an interim home for Abacus until a purpose-built centre can be constructed.

Having been vacant for so many years, the building is in great need of some attention but Abacus is confident it will be able to occupy the building from the start of next year.

I was delighted to be able to help out with the fit-out of the new building by contributing more than \$60,000 raised from my 500km Walk for Autism. This money will go towards the necessary repairs needed to get the building up to scratch.

It is fantastic to see this group achieving so much for children with autism and I look forward to seeing the building completed.

▼ With Westernport Secondary College Principal Michael Devine and Michael & Lauren Moore at the new building





▲ Inspecting the new shipping container with members of the Hastings Port Men's Shed

Hastings Men's shed all sorted with new shipping container

I was thrilled to visit the Western Port Men's Shed in **Hastings** recently to see the group's new shipping container.

When I went to the shed several months ago, I noticed the group was in need of additional storage space.

I approached transportation company Toll to see if it could assist in providing a disused shipping container.

Toll came to the party and the container was transported to Hastings where it now takes

pride of place next to the shed.

Western Port Men's Shed is a fantastic community resource and I am delighted to have been able to source this shipping container come storage facility for the group.

The shed is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am-3pm. There is also a ladies shed group on Wednesdays from 1-3pm. To get involved phone 5979 1969 during shed hours.

Green Army graduates succeed on the Mornington Peninsula

I was delighted to join participants, project sponsors and service provider Conservation Volunteers Australia recently at one of the many sites that has been revegetated through the Restoring Bushland on the Mornington Peninsula Green Army project.

The team completed activities to improve the natural environment at six locations:

- Redhill Community Park, **Red Hill** – several hundred plants planted and mulched
- Baynes Road Reserve, **Red Hill** – weed removal
- Balcombe Estuary, **Mount Martha** – weed work planting
- Redhill Rail Trail, **Red Hill** – weeding, small number plants planted
- Woods Reverse, **Tuerong** – weeding
- Briars Indigenous Plant Nursery, **Mount Martha** – plant propagation



▲ Observing the hard work of the Green Army team at Mount Martha

Stronger communities grants on offer for local organisations

I was pleased by the interest in the Stronger Communities Program.

This funding round is now closed and successful applicants will be notified shortly.

A new round is expected to open early next year. Each electorate has funding of \$150,000 to allocate for local projects.

The objective of the Stronger Communities Program is to fund small capital projects that will deliver social benefits. The program aims to improve local community participation and contribute to vibrant communities.

Local government and incorporated not-for-profit organisations are eligible to apply for grants of between \$5,000 and \$20,000 to cover up to 50 per cent of the project cost.

Applicants are required to confirm matched funding in cash or in-kind on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

For further information or to lodge your expression of interest in the grants please phone my office on 5979 3188.

▼ Commemorating police remembrance day at the **Rosebud RSL**



Paying tribute to our police officers in Rosebud

Each of us is incredibly privileged to have the protection of police men and women on the Mornington Peninsula and across the country.

Police officers are pillars of the community and help to make our towns safer for everyone

to enjoy. I was humbled to pay tribute to them on Police Remembrance Day in **Rosebud**.

We are incredibly thankful to the men and women who lost their lives in the line of duty and indeed to all police officers who go to work each day knowing dangers are ever present.

Local Sporting Champions grants available for young athletes



▲ With Bridget at Frankston Archery Club in **Baxter**

I would like to congratulate the young athletes who have received Local Sporting Champions grants and encourage others to apply.

I was lucky to meet 13-year-old **Dromana** girl Bridget Allan at Frankston Archery Club in **Baxter** recently, following her success at the Youth National Archery Championships where she received three bronze medals.

Bridget used the Local Sporting Champions grant to upgrade her archery equipment.

Local Sporting Champions grants are awarded three times a year to athletes in the Flinders electorate who are competing in events across the country and internationally.

The \$500 grants contribute to the cost of travel, accommodation, equipment and uniforms to enable athletes to participate in a particular championship or event. For more information visit www.ausport.gov.au

\$39 million for local councils in the electorate

Local governments in Flinders are set to benefit from \$39 million in funding under the Australian Government's Financial Assistance Grants Program in 2015-16.

Councils are free to spend this untied grant funding according to local priorities, including for infrastructure, health, recreation, environment, employment and roads projects.

Financial Assistance Grants funding to local councils will be distributed as follows:

- **Bass Coast Shire Council:** \$5.49M
- **Cardinia Shire Council:** \$9.89M
- **Casey City Council:** \$17.31M
- **Mornington Peninsula Shire Council:** \$6.43M

French Islanders to play major role in improving ferry service

Following letters I wrote to Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews regarding the **French Island** ferry, I have received a positive response indicating the French Island Community Association will be heavily involved in the future of the ferry.

The Victorian Government has committed to consulting closely with the French Island Community Association about future operating models for the service.

The French Island ferry provides a vital service, with residents depending on it to get to work or school and to access health services, education, training programs and social activities.

This is a positive step forward and I hope the French Island Community Association will play an active role in the future of ferry operations to and from the Island.



▼ Playing with children at Seawinds Hub in Rosebud West

Seawinds Community Hub in Rosebud West

I was delighted to meet some of the children attending Seawinds community Kindergarten in **Rosebud West** and see these bright youngsters in action.

The kindergarten is using the Abecedarian approach to learning, which is aimed at increasing literacy and language development through one-on-one interactions between teachers and children.

Seawinds is one of only three early learning centres in Victoria offering this approach and early results at the kindergarten are showing a marked improvement in children's developmental outcomes.

The Seawinds Community Hub and kindergarten is located in Rosebud West, next to Eastbourne Primary School. To enrol your child, please phone the hub on 5982 2204.

\$3.157 million for local road upgrades through Black Spot Program

The Australian Government is building safer roads and a stronger economy by providing \$3.157 million to fix nine dangerous black spots in the electorate:

- \$496,000: intersection of Heads Road and Caldermeade Road in **Catani**
- \$361,000: intersection of Manks Road and Dalmore Road in **Koo Wee Rup**
- \$269,000: intersection of Tooradin Station Road and Manks Road in **Tooradin**
- \$119,000: section of McDonalds Track from Range Road to Kettles Road in **Lang Lang**
- \$91,000: section of Gurdies-St Helier Road from Jade Road to 390m west of Nyora-St Helier Road in **Woodleigh**
- \$775,000: intersection of Jetty Road and Old Cape Schanck Road in **Rosebud**
- \$461,000: intersection of Bungower Road and Jones Road in **Somerville**
- \$300,000: section of Old Cape Schanck Road from Cleek Crescent to Jetty Road in **Rosebud**
- \$285,000: intersection of South Beach Road and Disney Street in **Bittern**.



▼ Officially opening the new roundabout in Somerville

Roads to Recovery funding for Somerville roundabout

It was a pleasure to officially open the fully refurbished intersection at Bungower and Tyabb-Tooradin Road in **Somerville**.

The Federal Government invested \$1.7 million in upgrading this intersection, making it safer for local road users.

Upgrades to the Bungower and Tyabb-Tooradin Road intersection will ensure motorists, pedestrians and cyclists enjoy safer trips on our roads.

It will have an enormous benefit for local residents travelling between work, school, home and leisure activities.

The Roads to Recovery Programme is helping local councils build the roads of tomorrow by injecting funds where they are most needed.

Focus on Phillip Island

▼ Admiring the work of the Green Army team on Phillip Island



Green Army a success on Phillip Island and the Bass Coast

I was delighted to join participants, project sponsors and service provider Conservation Volunteers Australia at the Koala Conservation Centre on **Phillip Island** to mark the team's graduation.

It was terrific to hear from the team about their experiences in the field and what they have achieved.

The team worked with a number of local groups to improve the

natural environment at **Ventnor, Rhyll** and the **Summerlands Peninsula** as well as at the Koala Conservation Centre and the Penguin Parade.

These graduates have delivered real environmental benefits for the community and have also gained valuable practical training and experience to enhance their career opportunities.

New facilities for Phillip Island students

I was honoured to officially open the Centre of Excellence: Newhaven College Trades Skills Centre and the new library and administration building at Newhaven College on **Phillip Island**.

The library and administration building was partly funded by an Australian Government Capital Grant of \$500,000.

The Centre of Excellence: Newhaven College Trades Skills Centre was built with a \$1.5 million contribution from the Australian Government.

The Trades Skills Centre is a state-of-the-art building where students can gain practical construction and trades qualifications.

It is brilliant to see young people thriving in a hands-on environment and learning trades that may become their future careers.



▲ At the official opening of the Trades Skills Centre On Phillip Island

Community Health and Medical Hub at Cowes

I am delighted the Community Health and Medical Hub at **Cowes** is now underway. Tenders have been called for a design team, with preliminary designs for the hub due to be completed by April next year.

I recently met with community members at the site to discuss the project, along with Human Services Minister Stuart Robert.

The hub will incorporate a range of community health facilities plus treatment rooms, specialist medical consulting suites and an ambulance bay and will form part of the Wonthaggi Hospital network.

The Federal Government has committed \$2.5 million to the project.

I will continue to explore opportunities associated with the hub, including the option of co-locating Medicare, Centrelink and Veterans Affairs at the new hub.

▼ With Human Services Minister Stuart Robert and community members at the site of the new Community Health and Medical Hub at Cowes.

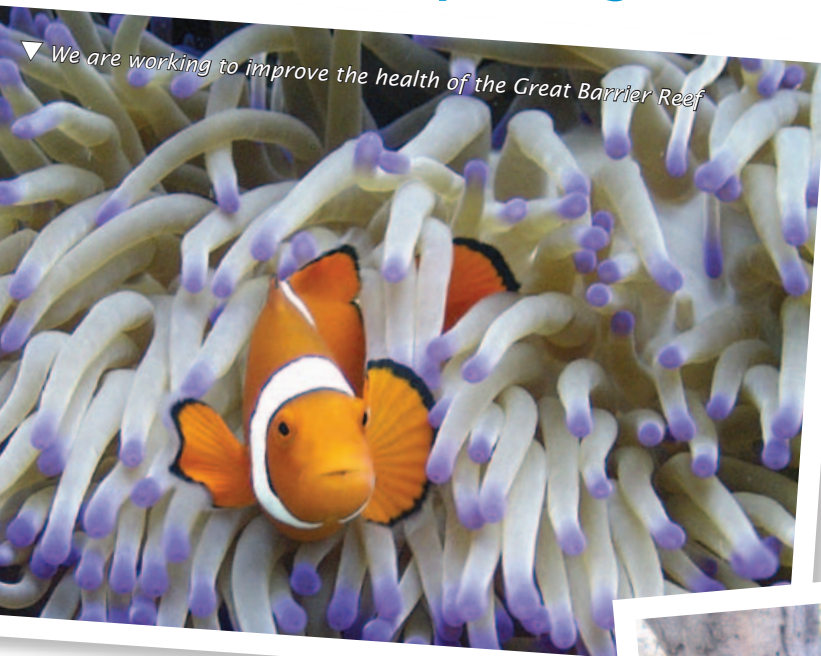


Focus On The Environment



▲ Inspecting erosion in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment

Improving the health of our Great Barrier Reef



▼ We are working to improve the health of the Great Barrier Reef

We are improving the health of the Great Barrier Reef by enhancing water quality to preserve this World Heritage icon.

I was in Cairns recently to launch the Government's Tropical Water Quality Hub, which is part of the \$142 million National Environmental Science Programme.

Hub scientists will conduct 25 innovative research projects with \$32 million in

funding from the Australian Government.

We are also making water quality improvements through the \$140 million Reef Trust.

It takes time for improvements in land management to translate into measurable outcomes in marine condition. We know the positive changes we are seeing on land will continue to translate into real, long-term benefits for the reef.

Reducing Australia's Emissions

Australia will be playing its part in addressing climate change as we join the major international talks in Paris at the end of the year.

We have set a strong and credible target which will see emissions per person reduce by 50 per cent by 2030, which is one of the highest commitments of developed countries.

I have established a new Office of Climate Change and Renewables Innovation to invest in new technologies that will assist us to make the transition to a cleaner and healthier environment.



▲ Planting a tree at Somers on National Tree Day with the Somers Residents Group