

# The BUSINESS

JOURNAL  
VOLUME 13



TOOWOOMBA  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE



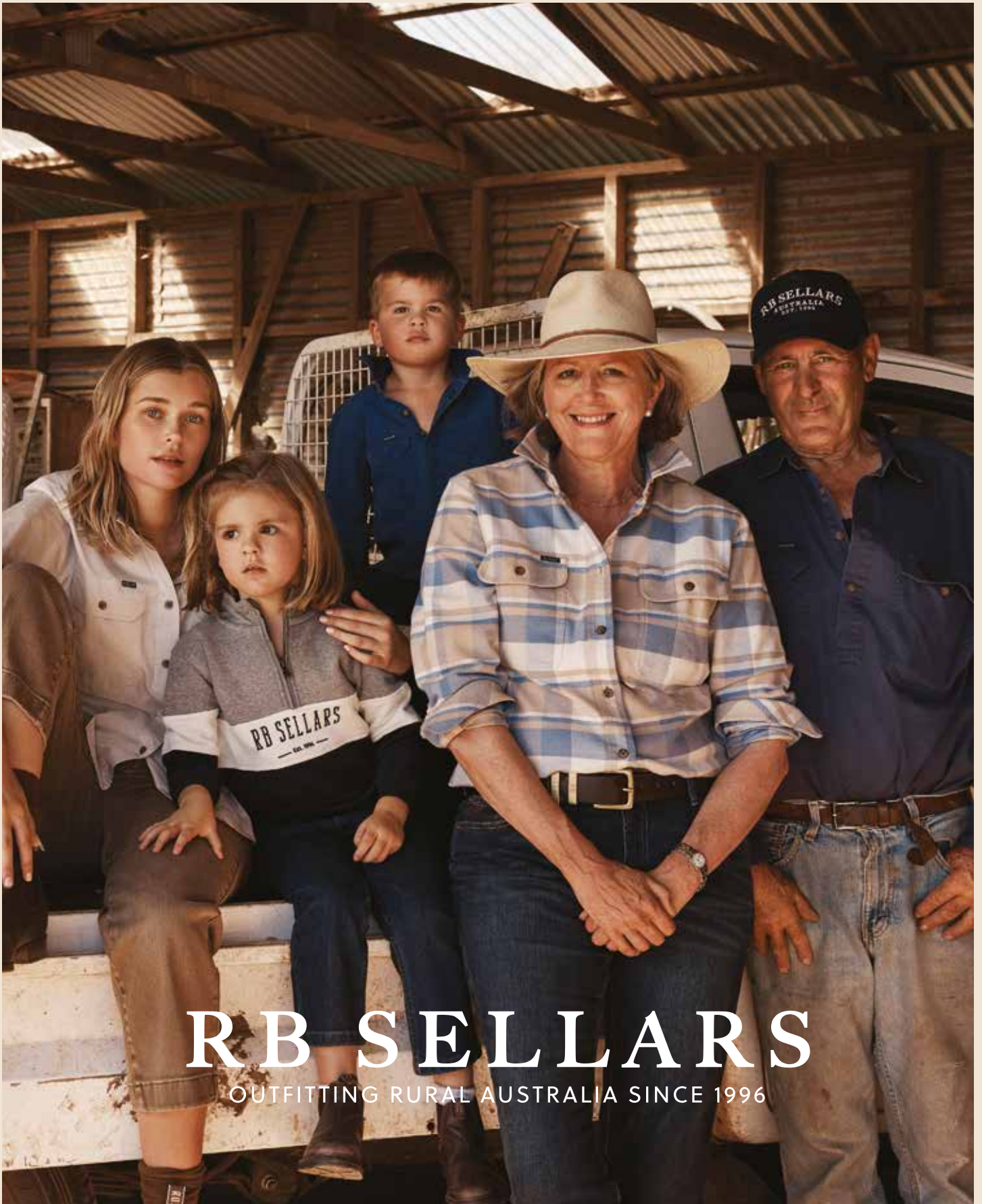
## Special Manufacturing Edition

**FIND OUT ABOUT**  
the Toowoomba  
Manufacturing Hub

**ARE YOU READY**  
for a 4DWW?

**GET TO KNOW**  
local manufacturers

*plus*  
people, projects,  
produce and  
lots more



# RB SELLARS

OUTFITTING RURAL AUSTRALIA SINCE 1996

Get the whole family looking great at RB Sellars.  
Come visit us in the heart of Toowoomba at 11 Annand Street.

[RBSSELLARS.COM.AU](http://RBSSELLARS.COM.AU)



## Table of CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE .....	4	HOMESTYLE BAKE - RISING TO THE VERY TOP .....	22
CHAMBER BOARD .....	5	VALKNUT MEADERY - SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS .....	24
MOVERS & SHAKERS - RECENT EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS .....	6	CROWS NEST TOURIST PARK - HELPING CREATE QLD'S VERY OWN BLUE MOUNTAINS .....	26
A MANUFACTURING HUB FOR TOOWOOMBA WITH ALI DAVENPORT .....	8	LEICHT'S - COUNTRY BUSINESS SETTING THE NATIONAL STANDARD .....	28
TAFE QLD AND JRS MANUFACTURING .....	10	4DWW - A NEW WAY OF WORKING .....	30
DARLING DOWNS TARPULINS - KEEPING THE CROCODILES HAPPY .....	13	WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS .....	33
MILTON & KING - MAKING SUCCESS STICK .....	16	GREENER FUTURE WITH CR NANCY SOMMERFIELD .....	38
TUFF AUSTRALIA - MAKING THINGS TUFF ENOUGH FOR AUSTRALIAN ROADS .....	19		



Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, the Jagera, Giabal and Jarowair people. We extend that respect to the elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and the hopes of Australia's First Peoples.

## The BUSINESS | JOURNAL VOLUME 13



TOOWOOMBA  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Send your story ideas and submissions to [communications@toowoombachamber.com.au](mailto:communications@toowoombachamber.com.au)

Editorial team: Todd Rohl, Ally Martell and Merryl Miller with Graphic Design by Danielle Chimes, printing by Greenridge Group

### ON THE COVER

JRS Manufacturing's Chief Operating Officer Jasmine Riddle and TAFE Qld Manufacturing Faculty Director Col Batzloff chat with Jesse O'Rourke. See story on page 10.

#### TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

353 Ruthven Street,  
(Access via Russell Street)  
Toowoomba Qld 4350

PO Box 3629,  
Toowoomba  
Queensland 4350

PH 07 4638 0400  
ABN 78 423 372 476

Office Hours:  
8:30am - 4:30pm  
Monday to Friday



The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is one of Queensland's largest regional Chambers. Together we represent a significant voice and as a group we can make a positive difference for our local business community. Contact our Chamber team today to learn more on how we can help you. We work for business. Email: [admin@toowoombachamber.com.au](mailto:admin@toowoombachamber.com.au)

# PRESIDENT'S *message*

We all know, thanks to COVID, that the manufacturing sector is a vital one nationally – and impacts on almost every supply chain we work with. But only recently did I become aware of just how significant it is in our region – not perhaps in size (only 3.88) but in the diversity of product, business and connectivity. Not many of us have in recent times been unaffected by supply chain issues connected with the manufacturing sector, from small issues that delay the arrival of furniture/white goods to massive delays in refurb, new builds and potential business development.

According to a TSBE report released last year, 'the Darling Downs manufacturing sector is worth around \$2.8b annually to the local economy with approximately 380 businesses focusing predominantly on food and metal related products'. What you may not know, because this light is sometimes hidden under a bushel, is that we create and

produce some truly fascinating things in our region, including fibre composite components for the nose cones for the Australian Collins class submarines, dam and tank liners, mudmasters, electric air curtains and gorgeous wallpaper, just to name a few.

In the coming year, the Chamber is looking to increase its

manufacturing membership and are keen to find ways that continue to shine the light on the work of this sector and amazing opportunities they will herald for the region.

## KATE VENABLES

*President Toowoomba Chamber*

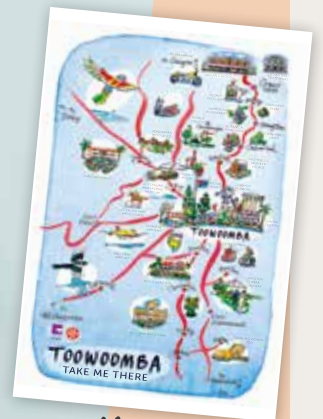


## Stunning Limited Edition Tea Towels

*Designed exclusively for  
Toowoomba Chamber by Anna Battle*

**\$29 each** OR get a group  
together and buy 10 and  
pay only \$19 each.

Wholesale enquiries welcome  
[admin@toowoombachamber.com.au](mailto:admin@toowoombachamber.com.au)



*Toowoomba take me there...*



# Toowoomba's Document Destruction Service

Want your documents securely disposed of?

As one of the largest document destruction and paper shredding services in Queensland, we offer confidential destruction of documents, archive boxes, and recycling solutions tailored to your specific business requirements right here in Toowoomba.

## What are the benefits?

- Active i-SIGMA Members with NAID AAA Accreditation available.
- 100% recycled into biodegradable and environmentally safe products.
- We provide 240lt bins to your business.
- We collect and exchange bins when it suits you.
- Provide employment opportunities for people with a disability.
- Certificate of Destruction available on request.
- There are no hidden fees.

## For more information

- ☎ 1800 112 112
- 🌐 [endeavour.com.au/document-destruction](https://endeavour.com.au/document-destruction)
- ✉ [business.solutions@endeavour.com.au](mailto:business.solutions@endeavour.com.au)



By choosing Endeavour Foundation for your business, you're supporting opportunities for people with disability in Toowoomba to work, develop skills, earn an income, explore their interests, and be involved in the community. These opportunities form a critical part of an inclusive and empowering community for people with disability.

# MOVERS & shakers

Join us in congratulating the following appointments:

## Bruce MCCONNEL

**Head of Animal Welfare - Minderoo Foundation**

After nearly five years with TSBE, as General Manager of Food Leaders Australia, Bruce is now moving across to the Minderoo Foundation as the new Head of Animal Welfare. The Foundation is Andrew and Nicola Forrest's philanthropic entity and takes on some of the biggest challenges on the planet, including removal of plastics, returning the oceans to a flourishing state, Cancer research and many other initiatives. Bruce will lead this new investment in animal welfare, where he'll work with industry to drive a true partnership model to accelerate welfare outcomes across the protein sectors. Bruce will remain based in Toowoomba where he is settled with his family.



## Tanaya TREADWELL

**General Manager - Southern Cross Austereo**

Tanaya Treadwell has been a General Manager with Southern Cross Austereo since 2019. Her first management position was in the Bendigo and Ballarat markets in Victoria before relocating to Toowoomba to join the Darling Downs community. She is excited to be working in this beautiful city, leading an incredible team and helping them to bring their best selves to work every day.

Prior to joining SCA, Tanaya worked for Fairfax Media in a variety of roles since 2011. Most recently she was Victorian Sales Director with commercial and leadership responsibility for all regional Victorian newspapers. She has also worked in sales and digital marketing roles in Melbourne, Ballarat and Warrnambool.



## Justin HEAVEN

**General Manager - TSBE  
Food Leaders Australia**

Justin Heaven is the General Manager, Food and Agribusiness with TSBE Food Leaders Australia, bringing to the role a wealth of experience from across agriculture, export market development and international trade. Justin holds a Diploma of Agricultural Science from the University of Queensland and has completed further studies in project management, business and export market development.

Having worked in the private sector for most of the past 30 years, Justin has extensive experience in a diverse

range of agribusinesses, project management, business management and export market development. Justin is passionate about working with local agribusinesses to identify opportunities, barriers, pathways to implement change, meet growth aspirations and achieve strategic business objectives.

Justin has most recently worked as Senior Industry Development Officer with the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries and previously with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, managing projects and assisting businesses adopt innovation and industry best practice.





# Deb ROBINSON

**Australian Major Events Manager - Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and the It's A Bloke Thing Foundation.**

With a background in community and stakeholder engagement, event management and marketing, Deb has been appointed Major Events Manager for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. (PCFA)

Her previous role with Toowoomba Chamber allowed her to develop community and business relationships as well as grow her experience in major events. The move to another not-for-profit organisation provided an exciting challenge.

Deb's role has been created to deepen the IABT's relationship with the PCFA, increase events around the country, raising awareness and much needed funds for prostate

cancer support. The funds raised enable the PCFA to provide the first specialist care nurses to Toowoomba, Darwin and the Gold Coast, run the IABT Education Roadshow in Queensland and the Northern Territory as well as support awareness and research for this insidious disease.

The Toowoomba-born It's A Bloke Thing Foundation (IABT) is the biggest fundraiser for the PCFA having raised more than \$12 million in the past ten years. Deb's immediate focus will be on events held in Toowoomba, Darwin and the Gold Coast including the IABT Luncheons which have become 'must-do' events surprising guests with world-class acts including Keith Urban and Ronan Keating.

The IABT's eleventh luncheon will be held in September along with Fathers' Day fun runs, called Run With Dad, in Toowoomba and Darwin.



If you'd like to share the news of your recent recruits, please send us a photo and a little information about them.

## BILLBOARD ADVERTISING IS IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN FOR TOOWOOMBA & THE DARLING DOWNS



No need to log-on, turn on or open up – billboard advertising is seen by over 90% of Australians on a daily basis.

Can you afford not to be noticed?

**BOOK BOOK WITH BISHOPP NOW!**



**Geoff Thompson**  
M 0438 420 251  
E [Geoff@bishopp.com.au](mailto:Geoff@bishopp.com.au)



## A MANUFACTURING HUB FOR *Toowoomba*

*Q&A with Ali Davenport,  
CEO TSBE*

**Manufacturing is a \$2.8 billion industry across the Darling Downs with \$1.352 million (20/21) of that generated in Toowoomba.**

We are proud of the success of our local manufacturers because they provide a whole-of-economy flow-on effect. But we also know that for many, their success has been hard won. We believe it's time to boost manufacturing to the next level and in order to do that, TSBE is proposing the development of a manufacturing hub. We caught up with CEO of TSBE, Ali Davenport, to find out more.

### **What is a manufacturing hub?**

It's a centre providing expert advice to local manufacturers to help support their transition to advanced manufacturing status. It's a community of advisors, researchers, members and partners that provides guidance, information and advocacy. More importantly, it means Toowoomba will have access to funding that is exclusively available to regions supported by a manufacturing hub.

One of the goals of the hub would be to partner with business to help manufacturers increase productivity, efficiency, supply chain capability, sustainability and increased access

to national and international markets. Manufacturing hubs provide a real sense that each manufacturer is not alone; they are supported by all levels of government and within the business community.

A hub in Toowoomba would likely offer training, business development programs, tailored advice, a regular program of workshops and events such as demonstration days – all designed to help businesses grow. That's a really key point: manufacturing hubs are intended for businesses that are ready to grow.

Have a look at the Queensland Department of Regional Development Manufacturing and Water website and you'll see that manufacturing hubs



are operating successfully in other regional centres including Gladstone, Cairns, Townsville, Gold Coast, Rockhampton and Mackay. Each hub focuses on industries specific for that region such as marine transport, aviation, mining technology, renewable energy and food production.

[www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/regional-development/manufacturing-hubs](http://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/regional-development/manufacturing-hubs)

### What are the key issues affecting the industry and how can a manufacturing hub help?

According to Deloitte's 2022 Manufacturing Industry Outlook, there are five key factors affecting manufacturing at the moment and these are: Workforce shortage, supply chain instability, smart factory initiatives, cyber security and environmental, social and governance factors (ESG).

These are huge issues which could be overwhelming for any business. But a manufacturing hub can provide expert advice and support as well as links to other businesses and government initiatives to help local manufacturers work their way through them while allowing them to do what they do best – which is manufacturing.

2022 Manufacturing Industry Outlook | Deloitte US

### How will Toowoomba businesses specifically benefit from a manufacturing hub?

It's about building on our strengths and expertise to ensure local businesses can compete globally. We have to be able to respond to future needs taking into account education and training, innovation, supply chain, sustainability, investment and funding.

Manufacturing is nothing without a skilled workforce and a hub would work closely with local educators, including the University of Southern Queensland and TAFE Queensland, to help build and maintain the skills needed in our region.

A key role of the hub would be to help fund advanced manufacturing through investment and grants. So it would help match investors with business and also assist in grant writing. For example, Made in Queensland is a \$61.5 million Queensland Government program helping small and medium sized manufacturers to increase international competitiveness, productivity and innovation through the adoption of new technologies and to generate high-skilled jobs for the future. Some grants are accessible only to regions with a hub and it would be fantastic if Toowoomba could tap into that.



## TAKE A LOOK AT TILLY'S EXTENSIVE RANGE OF QUALITY NEW ATTACHMENTS



- RIPPERS
- STICK RAKES
- CANOPIES
- SWEEPS
- SCREENS
- FRONT BLADES
- LONG REACH BOOMS
- THUMBS
- WHEEL LOADER FORKS

[www.tillys.com.au/attachments](http://www.tillys.com.au/attachments) RIGHT PART, RIGHT PRICE, RIGHT NOW



## JRS Manufacturing

*JRS manufacturing partners with TAFE Queensland to develop best-in-class skills academy*

JRS Manufacturing is excited to partner with TAFE Queensland to launch the JRS Skills Academy – an Australian-first hybrid learning framework, at their Wilsonton premises, in Toowoomba. The partnership will strengthen the Toowoomba and Surat Basin’s emerging advanced manufacturing ecosystem, through the implementation of a resilient supply chain model that combines

industry innovation, end-to-end product design and development, with formal skills recognition.

Chief Operating Officer (Strategy, Systems & Business), Jasmine Riddle, said “Through the JRS Skills Academy, we seek to redefine the manufacturing skills landscape by re-engaging young people to understand the value of trade apprenticeships and future employment security.”

“Ambitious individuals will develop best-in-class skills in steel fabrication and welding, CNC machining and have exposure to the latest technology through specialised industrial and aerospace coatings and electroplating,” she said.

Growing from a team of four to thirty over the last six years, the JRS team have diversified their product offerings from stand-alone manufacturing as boilermakers, to a multi-disciplinary end-to-end production pipeline, using the latest technology.

The traditional manufacturing model is based on multiple skillsets across boiler making, welding, sandblasting, powder coating and final machining, to enable the delivery of the final product to the customer. This requires various trades, across different industries and locations, to work cohesively to ensure customer timeframes and deliverables are met. Identifying the opportunity to pivot to a multi-disciplinary manufacturing supplier, JRS Manufacturing are pioneering the workforce of the future and are prepared to skill the workers to match.

“Throughout its 140 years, TAFE Queensland has demonstrated its agility to meet emerging industry needs. The future is now and our partnership with such an innovative company ensures the evolution of traditional trades to meet the needs of a new generation,” said Manufacturing Faculty Director, Col Batzloff.

*“This is an exciting opportunity for everyone involved that will have real world impact,” he said.*

“The extraordinary growth that Queensland has experienced, and the increased demand for advanced manufacturing, positions us well to expand our unique business model, whilst skilling Queenslanders in the process,” Jasmine Riddle said.

JRS Manufacturing's Chief  
Operating Officer, Jasmine Riddle  
with TAFE Qld Manufacturing  
Faculty Director, Col Batzloff



Nominations  
are now

*Open!*

**The Chronicle**



**GARDEN**

**COMPETITION 2022**

Applications are open for  
The Chronicle Garden Competition  
this year, as a feature event during the  
Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers.

Look for your entry in The Chronicle every  
Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Enter your business or School today for  
bragging rights, trophies and product prizes.

You can enter your Commercial Premises,  
Not for Profit Premises, School Premises  
(Staff/Gardener) or Student Garden (looked  
after by students only)

**Applications Close:** 2pm on 12 August 2022.

**The Chronicle**

 **TOOWOOMBA  
REGION**  
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

 **UNIVERSITY  
OF SOUTHERN  
QUEENSLAND**

**Heritage Bank**  
*People first.*



## DARLING DOWNS TARPAULINS: KEEPING THE CROCODILES

*Happy...*

*Words by Meryll Miller  
images supplied*

*NEXT time you cast an admiring glance at a Louis Vuitton handbag, spare a thought for Darling Downs Tarpaulins right here in Toowoomba.*

Sure, you might not see an immediate connection, but it is thanks to the ingenuity and problem-solving capacity of this home-grown business that those handbags look so damn gorgeous.

“Yes, we are in the business of protected species,” Darling

Downs Tarpaulins owner Michael Ryan says with a laugh.

“Louis Vuitton farms crocodiles up north to make their leather products, and they want the crocodiles to be calm and not fight, because that potentially bruises their skin.



“Apparently crocodiles are at their calmest when their environment stays steady at 31 degrees - so we have supplied the shading for the enclosures that keep them at that happy temperature.”

Not that Louis Vuitton is the only big-name client of Darling Downs Tarpaulins – they also supply products for Sanctuary Cove (covered marina berths), Kidmans cattle properties, the wheat bunkers for Graincorp – and the potential for demand in the lead-up to the Brisbane Olympic Games is already looking promising.

And in recent years, sales have been boosted by orders from the horticulture industry.

“Our orders tripled for things such as greenhouse and shade cloth covers during the Covid pandemic because so many people started gardening during the lock-down periods. The demand for indoor plants also increased significantly,” Michael says.

“In fact, the agricultural sector also got bigger for us during Covid, because it started to rain at the beginning of the pandemic, and there has now been three grain seasons in a row.”



Using Australian materials whenever possible (around 95%) certainly continues to work in favour of the Darling Downs Tarpaulins business model.

Supply was not affected too badly during the height of Covid for starters, and the organisation can specialise in custom-made products to meet unique needs – something that resonates with customers.

It has been a focus of the family owned business, which

produces quality canvas, poly, PVC and shade cloth products, since its inception in 1983.

“It started out as Warwick Tarpaulins, and I began working there for some pocket money when I was still at school,” Michael says.

“It became Darling Downs Tarpaulins when the company moved to its current spot near the Toowoomba Airport in 1984, and I ended up as the full owner in 2017.

## fun facts:

“We now have 20 staff, 1500 square metres of factory floor space, and a capacity of 20,000 square metres per day. The shed is now really too small.”

*“The industry has really evolved in terms of fabrics and equipment.”*

Michael can't imagine anywhere better than Toowoomba for the business to be based. For him, it is the perfect location geographically, and able to utilise a great transport network.

“There really is no disadvantage to being based in Toowoomba,” he says.

“Logistically, we are at the centre of the hub from where all our materials are sourced, and it's also cheaper in terms of real estate to run this sort of industry than it would be elsewhere – so that gives us a competitive edge.”

### Future of the industry?

*“It is all going to be about recycling, and coming up with ways to make that happen.”*

### Greatest challenge?

*“Finding staff – but every business seems to be in the same boat right now.”*

### How can you address that?

*“We work hard to raise our profile across schools. Because this is not a mainstream trade, it can be a bit unrecognisable to young people thinking of doing an apprenticeship.”*

### What local businesses do you work with?

*“We interact with accountants, electricians, transport companies and agencies, and car dealerships. I think we have a real footprint in this community.”*

## PROTECT THE FUTURE OF YOUR BUSINESS

**If you're a manufacturing business you know that the unique systems, processes, designs and branding you use every day are critical to the financial future of your business.**

Don't underestimate the impact on your business if these are not legally protected and end up in the hands of your competitors.

Clifford Gouldson's Intellectual Property team offers advice and services to secure, protect and commercialise intellectual property assets (including confidential information, trade secrets, business names, trade marks, designs, patents, plant breeders rights and associated assets), including front and back end contract and agreement work.

- WORKPLACE ■ LITIGATION + DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- COMMERCIAL + PROPERTY ■ CONSTRUCTION
- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
- WILLS, ESTATES, PLANNING + STRUCTURING

TOOWOOMBA (HEAD OFFICE) | BRISBANE | SUNSHINE COAST  
Ph: 07 4688 2188 | [www.cglaw.com.au](http://www.cglaw.com.au)



**BEN GOULDSON**  
Managing Director &  
Head of Intellectual Property

*“With Toowoomba's only dedicated intellectual property practice and Toowoomba's only local Trade Marks Attorney we are uniquely placed to assist businesses in our region protect their intellectual property assets.”*

BEN GOULDSON, Managing Director & Head of Intellectual Property

**CLIFFORD GOULDSON**  
LAWYERS

2206048



## MILTON & KING: *making success stick!*

*FLARED jeans. Skinny eyebrows. The hits of ABBA. They all hold true to the maxim “everything old is new again”.*

**Words by Merry Miller**  
*images supplied*

But wallpaper? Could something that so many people spent long weekends scraping off their walls in the 90s really ever have a revival?

Well, back in 2008, Bryce Capp and his brother Richard certainly thought so. And now, 14 years later, the worldwide success of their business Milton & King Wallpaper has proved them right.

The brothers have come a long way since they sat in their mum and dad’s garage in Mapleton and started to nut out their idea.

“I was a graphic designer, having worked overseas for a while, and

Richard had background in sales and accounting,” Bryce says.

“We had this idea which I had seen whilst overseas of creating canvas prints, with the aim of having a large range of images available to trade.

“We did that for a few years, but it wasn’t scalable and there was plenty of competition. At the time we had a brochure that mentioned we could do wallpaper. We couldn’t, but as we found more interest in wallpaper than the canvas prints, we needed to work out how to make it and quickly. Trust me though – we grew up in a farming family, so wallpaper

was not something that was ever really on our radar back then.”

Milton & King was born from these humble beginnings, and the brothers now have sites in Toowoomba, the United States, and the United Kingdom, with orders coming from clients across the world.

But Bryce is quick to point out that this has been no overnight success, with his parents only recently able to retire from a hands-on, full-time role in the company.

“We had to work really hard to get to this point – it has been a tough slog,” Bryce says.



“Our parents provided cheap labour for nearly all that time and have only recently moved on for a well-earned rest.

“We had no money for the first eight years, and there were no cash injections being put into the business. We are 100% customer funded. I was 28 when we started, and at that time the majority of our friends had already established their careers and had something to show for it. ‘You’re doing what?’ they would ask.

“But honestly, this has been very rewarding, and I’ve learned a heap along the way. I would do it all again in a heartbeat.”

Producing high quality and stylish wallpaper proved challenging when the brothers first entered the market, because the technology simply was not available to produce it digitally in quantities that made it cost-effective.

It wasn’t until 2012 when HP developed a printer using latex ink which produced a water-resistant and scratch proof product that finally Bryce and Richard could start to see their vision come to life.

“That machine was able to print one 10 metre roll per hour (the average wall in a home uses two to three rolls), it was very slow. But it worked,” Bryce says.

“Since then, technology has evolved to the point where a machine currently being developed will be able to produce 70 metres per minute – that has the potential to reduce our costs and speed to market, whilst still producing everything on demand and sustainably.”

Milton & King established its direct consumer on-line service in 2014, and in 2016 established a warehouse in Texas. “We’ve just installed our first US based printer and a showroom in the Dallas Design District” Bryce Says.

Toowoomba will always be the base of the company, but the ultimate goal is to produce in both the US and the UK. The paper that is used comes from Europe, and the ink from Singapore.

“Ninety percent of the stock we create goes to the US, as well as a bit to the UK,” Bryce says.

“The Wallcoverings industry in the US is expected to hit \$9 billion by 2026 up from 5.4 billion in 2020,

and we are keen to position Milton & King at the centre of that growth.

“While wallpaper is slowly coming back in vogue, the market in Australia is still pretty small. I don’t expect it will grow much in the next few years.”

That said, a number of the 1500 striking designs of Milton & King wallpaper can be seen around town, including on the walls of local coffee shop Milk and Honey in Ann Street.

One glance is enough to know that wallpaper had evolved a great deal since the 1990s. While it still maintains a traditional look, the colours are rich and vibrant in the modern designs.

“The fibrous backing on our wallpaper stops it expanding and contracting allowing for the paste to be applied directly to the wall, this backing also makes removal very easy too,” Bryce says.

“We have built a brand which is recognised globally as high end and high quality.”

## fun facts:

Artists are carefully chosen to have their work featured in Milton and King wallpaper collections. Many artists contact the organisation to have their work featured, but Bryce and Richard Capp select styles on the basis of current trends and customer preferences – which differ widely even from the west coast of the US to the east coast.

Social media is a key marketing tool for the business, especially Instagram. Milton and King have **130,000 followers** on their page, and work with influencers whose style matches their own. While making quality wallpaper was the biggest learning curve in the early days, now it is marketing.



# Collaborate and Communicate

with QUADTECH

## Communication Solutions for your Business



Business Phone Systems



SIP Trunk Phone Plans



Microsoft Teams Calling



Bulk SMS



Inbound 13/1800



Audio and Video Conferencing



Telstra Mobile Phone Solutions



NBN Business Internet



Business Satellite



IOT



Enterprise Ethernet



Failover 4G Internet



SD WAN



Dedicated Fibre



Managed Firewall

Quadtech are Managed Service Providers and IT support specialists who have been providing services to small to medium enterprises in Toowoomba and Southwestern Queensland for over 20 years.

**Quadtech also provide a complete communication service offering for your business. So why not let the people who manage your technology requirements support your telecommunication needs!**



- 30+ years telephony experience
- Local account management
- Save up to 80% on phone bills
- Vendor agnostic
- Work remotely
- Industry solutions
- Phone us now for a free communications audit

Allow us to demonstrate how Microsoft can transform your business

Phone the team at Quadtech today on 1300 722 879

or email [support@quadtech.com.au](mailto:support@quadtech.com.au) | [www.quadtech.com.au](http://www.quadtech.com.au)





*Mental health is front of mind for the TUFF team with both the factory and administration sections wearing conversation starting designs made by TradeMutt. The whole team at TUFF is bringing mental health to the forefront of their minds by wearing these shirts every Friday.*

## MAKING THINGS TUFF ENOUGH FOR *Aussie roads*

**Words by Merryl Miller**  
*images supplied*

*NOT too many organisations can honestly say they are in the business of keeping people alive. And yet that is exactly what the staff at Tuff Australia in Toowoomba can lay claim to every single day.*

As manufacturers of a wide range of bullbars, brushrails, trays, canopies and 4x4 accessories designed specifically to cater for the unique Australian environment, Tuff products literally keep people alive on our roads.

“We are incredibly proud that we are helping to keep people safe on our country roads,” Tuff Australia’s General Manager Mark Casey says.

“There are different conditions here than anywhere else in the world, and people need to feel confidence if they hit a ‘roo that they will be able to keep driving afterwards – or even be alive.

“One of our first customers credits us with saving the life of her and her family after she hit a black steer in the middle of the night. Not only were they not injured, they were able to get back home

after it happened. “We hear stories like that all the time.”

Tuff Australia is 100% Australian owned, and manufactures products in its 5000 square metre factory for individual, corporate and mining trade requirements, with clients including Santos, the Victorian government, the Federal police, and Toowoomba Regional Council.



A new blue Toyota 79 series has received the 'TUFF Treatment' with a TUFF 5 Post Bullbar, TUFF double brushrails and TUFF steel tray with toolboxes ready for its new owner.



Two cranes lift the new press brake into place in the TUFF factory.



A crane lifts the new Omada Laser into its spot on the factory floor.

# fun facts:

*What makes Toowoomba a good choice to base Tuff Australia?*

*Quite aside from the fact that it's a great place to live, it has such a strong manufacturing and agricultural base. Economic development is very strong in this region.*

*What is your greatest challenge at the moment?*

*It's hard to find good people at the moment, which is restrictive because it means it's challenging to keep up with the orders which flow off the back of our rapid growth. We have established a strong apprenticeship program for our welders though.*

*Which other local organisations do you do business with?*

*Support from TRC allows truck and transport expansion. We also prefer local suppliers, and buying Australian is very important. All our steel and aluminium is Australian.*



The company is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, after being founded by the Griffiths family from Zimbabwe.

"Phil Griffiths was a mining engineer, and he bought the company with his son Anton, who developed our systems and processes – together they created a great synergy," Mark says.

*"There were only five staff when they started, and now there are 100 more than that. Our success is a testament to our people, and the pride they take in their work to build a premium Australian brand."*

"I think what makes Tuff Australia special is that the focus always has been on looking after the people who work here."

Mark's words ring true just by looking around the Carrington Road site.

Staff are wearing brightly coloured TradeMutt shirts to help raise awareness of mental health – something they do every Friday – and the company is supportive of community initiatives such as the Hungerford Enduro event.

But happy staff need to be matched with a great product to achieve the success of Tuff Australia.

*"This is a competitive industry, but I think that what we produce is a bit unique," Mark says.*

"We started out with bullbars for country areas, but that expanded to products for trades, and people who like to tour.

"We will continue to grow – the factory size will increase, and we will use increasingly sophisticated equipment such as a new laser cutter and brake press that will help us to constantly improve our quality.

"Our products are also sold overseas including to the United States and the United Kingdom, and we will expand that arm of the business – but really, demand here in Australia is so strong anyway."

# Homestyle Bake

## RISES TO THE VERY TOP

Words by Meryll Miller  
images supplied

ASKING Lindsay Weber to name his favourite cake is as tricky as asking him to choose a favourite child.

When you are one of the owners of Homestyle Bake, you are surrounded by delicious treats all day long. And each and every one of them is worthy to be favourite.

But if pushed...

"I do like the donuts," Lindsay eventually concedes.

"But then there are the English muffins. They are even more delicious lately. We recently asked customers what they would like, and they asked for the muffins to be fully sliced – and the growth in sales has been staggering."

It is this attention to customer feedback that has kept Homestyle Bake – owned by born and bred (no pun intended) locals Brett Pascoe, David Nicoll and Lindsay Weber - at the top of the game since being established in 1989.



Anyone who grew up in Toowoomba would be familiar with their products, although these days 80% of all sales extend outside of Toowoomba.

Toowoomba will always be home however.

“Toowoomba is a tremendous place to base Homestyle Bake, because of its facilities such as education, health, sport and hospitality – and yet it’s still close enough to Brisbane and the beaches,” Lindsay says.

*“We have quality of life here at a reasonable cost of living, and I’ve always felt that local people have a strong work ethic and are more stable in their work patterns.”*

Coming from a family of farmers, Lindsay certainly knows a thing or two about work ethic.

He always knew he wanted to do something with grains, and eventually trained as a flour miller with Defiance Milling Company, before buying into Homestyle Bake in 1994.

Does he ever wish he had chosen a different path?

“Hell no!” Lindsay says emphatically.

“I have absolutely no regrets – this is a great and challenging industry. It is a pleasure to come to work each day.”

That said, the Covid pandemic certainly created a few new challenges for the industry – and not just because everyone decided to turn their hand to bread-baking during lock-downs.

“We source local ingredients wherever possible, but during Covid it was difficult to obtain

imported items such as sesame seeds and coconut,” Lindsay says.

“To compensate for this interruption to supply, we needed to increase our stock on site, which was an imposte to the business.

“And then when there were lockdowns, there were no school tuckshops, and elective surgeries were cancelled so we had very small hospital orders.”

With the situation now back to (almost) normal, Homestyle Bake is looking ahead to the future – which will inevitably involve increasingly sophisticated technology to improve business efficiencies.

“I believe we will see greater mechanisation in the industry to improve quality control, and more electronic controls around equipment and IT,” Lindsay says.

“There is still lots of room for development in that area.”

## fun facts:

*Toowoomba is a great area to base a business – but could anything be improved?*

*“It would be great to see a passenger rail connection to Brisbane. And an improved road to Brisbane would also be welcome – floods can too easily impact on businesses servicing markets in South-East Queensland.”*

*Are you experiencing staff shortages?*

*“Yes – and it has been a problem now for many years. We are just lucky to have so many long-term, dedicated staff, and we try to employ local people wherever possible.”*

*What local businesses do you work with?*

*“We use local services wherever possible, which includes tradespeople and suppliers. And ingredients are sourced locally where possible, including wheat from the Darling Downs, yeast brewed in Toowoomba, and cereal products.”*

*How can this staff shortage be addressed?*

*“It’s a national issue unfortunately, but we are as proactive as possible. In the baking industry, training has progressively reduced over many years. But we still train apprentices on a constant basis to develop a skilled work force for the future.”*

# Sweet Dreams

ARE MADE OF THIS...

Words by Ally Martell  
images supplied



*As an interstate truck driver Matt Anderson had time to dream about a different life away from Australia's endless highways. Perhaps it was his Scandinavian heritage but for some reason mead kept appearing in those dreams and one day he decided to find out why. He moved to Crows Nest and began his first brew of Valknut Mead and the rest, as they say, is history.*

Mead is a fermented, alcoholic beverage made from water, honey and various flavourings. It has been around for thousands of years in China, Northern Europe, Ancient Greece, Great Britain and Scandinavia. Wherever there were bees, there was mead – which was great for places that couldn't grow grapes.

Matt quickly discovered that Crows Nest has oodles of bees and the local honey is uniquely flavoured from native bush flowers.

#### **But how do you make it?**

"The recipes are all my own," said Matt. "When I hear of any kind of local fruit, I straight away wonder how that would go in a mead and then I make it, playing with ratios until I get the

perfect mix. The mead is flavoured with Twin Pine Limes, Hampton Blue berries, ginger is from Cabarlah and I also use organic herbs and spices grown in our own garden.

*"Our meads take between nine and twelve months from the start of fermentation to bottling. We do not pasteurise our honey or fruits, they go in raw so none of the goodness is lost."*

"Our ingredients are 99-100% organic, though we can't call it 'certified organic' because that's a whole other process.





*“Knowing that people are consuming something that hasn’t been infused with pesticides and herbicides makes me happy.”*

True to his heritage and fascination with all things Viking, Matt records his recipes in a type of ancient Scandinavian Runic language.

“Mead played a very important role in Viking culture, so understanding the sacredness of the drink from the Sagas and other ancient texts is paramount for me.”

The Norse Gods are obviously on his side because when Matt

started Valknut Mead his goal for one to two years away was to sell out each batch and then he could start upgrading production. He reached that goal in just 10 weeks!

“We have already bought a heap more tanks that are twice as big, tripling our production. Only problem is that we have no room, so building upgrades are on their way which will give us five times the floor space.”

***Has it really been a dream run? Surely there were some hurdles along the way?***

“The hardest thing so far has been all the red tape to get our food and liquor licence. Apart from that it’s been pretty cruisy,” said Matt. “Although we’ve been playing the long and safe game.

It took three years from the very start to our first sales. But it’s been worth it because the reviews we’ve been getting are great too.

“We are in the process of encouraging more businesses to sell Valknut Mead. Currently you can purchase online, at Rosalie House, Toowoomba Farmers Market and also at events such as Hampton Food & Arts Festival.”

For Matt the most rewarding part

of owning this business is introducing mead to first-timers.

“This drink is older than Stonehenge and the Pyramids, it was sacred to our ancestors, and it’s finally making a comeback. I feel bringing more mead into the world helps us get back to our traditional roots and I’m very happy about that.”





## HELPING TO CREATE QUEENSLAND'S VERY OWN *Blue Mountains*

Words by Meryll Miller  
images supplied

*Gerald Searle might not be a native of the Toowoomba region, but it's hard to imagine anyone having more passion and vision for this part of the world than him.*

Since becoming the owner of the Crows Nest Tourist Park with his business partner Phillip Curnuck in 2019, Gerald has been focused on taking every action to bring his piece of paradise to the attention of a broader market.

*“This area around Crows Nest really is like our own Blue Mountains – simply amazing vistas – and it is the gateway to the rest of Queensland,” he says.*

“We have so much to be proud of - people are starting to realise just how wonderful it is, and the enormous potential it has.”

Gerald has certainly been taking advantage of that potential – expanding the Crows Nest Tourist Park, buying the motel across the road 12 weeks ago and upgrading it to a more boutique offering, and ensuring diners have a first-class experience at the on-site restaurant The Curly Carrot.

“We want people who visit Crows Nest to have everything on offer to them that they would get anywhere else,” Gerald says.

*“It's not just about the accommodation, but about working with other local businesses to help visitors enjoy everything that is great about the region.”*

One would not normally associate a tourist park operator with manufacturing, but Gerald and Phillip have also embarked on that endeavour by building cabins in order to better service visitor needs.



While they initially purchased pre-made cabins from a Toowoomba manufacturer, they are now doing it themselves. Literally.

*“In order to control costs and delivery times, you really have to do things yourself if you want to succeed,” Gerald says.*

“Phillip is a builder, so he has the necessary skills – it would be silly not to just do it ourselves.

The pair now buy the frames (from a local manufacturer), move them to the Crows Nest site on their own tilt tray, and then do pretty much the rest (including assembly, footings, painting, cladding and insulation) themselves.

Local tradespeople (such as electricians, plumbers and cabinet-makers) finish off the work, and then the cabins either remain at the Crows Nest park, or are moved up to the pair’s other tourist park in Mission Beach.

“From whoa to go, we could finish a complete cabin in six weeks, but it’s more usual that we have

a number of cabins on the go in various stages,” Gerald says.

“We aren’t making them to order, because our purpose is to up-spec our facilities, and make sure we are offering the latest and greatest to our visitors.

“We aim to provide accommodation that best reflects the needs of a short-term holiday maker, with big balconies, and big televisions for instance. We are even looking t build off-the-grid cabins moving forward.”

Gerald first got into caravan parks after a career switch from being an electrician – “I didn’t want to spend my days crawling in ceilings; I wanted to talk to people,” he says.

In 1999, he bought his first caravan park in the Snowy Mountains and later moved on to the Ballina/Byron area.

But one suspects Crows Nest and the people of this region may have just stolen his heart.

“Since I arrived, Crows Nest has just exploded in terms of new businesses an amenities,” Gerald says.

“It is only going to get bigger and better from here on.”

## fun facts:

*Why is this region good as a manufacturing base?*

*“It is a well-resourced area, with fantastic transportation and supplier in situ. The costs of running a business here are comparatively good when you look at metropolitan sites, and its an up and coming area with a significant city at its centre.”*

*What are the challenges facing your business?*

*“Staffing. It is hard for everyone to find good staff at the moment. But in everything I do, I try to build and nurture respectful relationships. I do it with the visitors to our park, and I do it with staff. If you have great staff, you make sure you try to keep them.”*

*The greatest asset in the region?*

*“I think the organisations that work hard to support businesses and help them grow in this region are outstanding. The local Chamber of Commerce is incredibly progressive, and groups such as the Toowoomba Regional Council and the Crows Nest Progress Society are central to our ability to succeed.”*



## COUNTRY BUSINESS SETTING THE *National Standard*

Words by Merryl Miller  
images supplied

*AS A bloke who just “kind of fell” into his business, Mark Leicht is going great guns.*

Mark Leicht, the owner of Leichts Country Industries Australia (CIA) based in Goombungee – specialising in cattle handling equipment - started out as a boilermaker.

But when the chance came along in 1984 to marry his trade skills to business, he jumped at the chance.

“I guess I just wanted to do something for myself,” Mark says.

“I love the cattle industry, and I love that we do our own thing.

“It has taken a lot of years to get to where we are now, but now the others in the industry follow us. That’s a good way to be.”

Leichts Country Industries Australia predominantly builds cattle crushes, used to immobilise the animals for purposes including branding, pregnancy testing, needling, or other vet work.

Some of Leichts CIA bigger clients – such as AACO, Kidman Properties, or Stanbroke Industries – might have need for 30 or 40 of such pieces of equipment.

Customisation of the hydraulic range of equipment (for instance, remote control functions) is also a signature part of the Leichts CIA business success

“It’s a competitive industry, but our quality is outstanding, the equipment

functions well, and it is easier to use than others on the market,” Mark says.

“We find that they always come to us now.”

*Australian steel is used to build the cattle crushes, and all the work is completed on-site in the workshop at Goombungee.*

It is an approach which saw the business “sail through Covid”.

“We didn’t really have any major issues because of the pandemic,” Mark says.



“The major impact was really this year, and it was the same one everyone else had – staffing. We have 35 staff members, and if anyone was away because they were sick with Covid, it was hard to replace them.”

This situation of course exacerbates the problem every other business is currently facing: finding people to take on apprenticeships.

Mark works with local schools to attract young people to the trade, but says Goombungee’s distance from town creates an additional challenge.

“It probably might be easier to get staff if we were based in Toowoomba – it’s a bigger employment pool,” he says.

“But we based the business in Goombungee because it is my home town, and we have no trouble getting materials out here, especially now that the by-pass is so close.

“I think what I love most about Leichts CIA is that it’s a family business – my wife and three daughters have all been involved in it over the years.

*“Together we have travelled the country with the business, and we have all enjoyed getting around to the different properties and meeting people.”*








## Grow your business in a precinct like no other.

Spanning 760ha, AATLIS is a master-planned, purpose built industrial precinct with a range of land, pre-lease and turn-key options available for business.

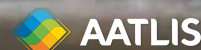
Strategically located on the western outskirts of Toowoomba, AATLIS offers cost-effective land solutions combined with access to key infrastructure, including road and rail networks, domestic and international air transport, on-site renewable energy generation, water and gas supply, fibre network access and data centre services. All within a 90-minute drive of Brisbane.

When compared to capital city alternatives, AATLIS is favourable for land costs, operating inputs and logistics, whilst also providing ample room for all sizes of business to grow.

-  **Cost Effective Land.**  
Lease or purchase affordable land parcels from 1-20 hectares with various zoning.
-  **On-site Renewable Energy Generation.**  
Access to large capacity, low cost green energy solutions via solar and gas.
-  **Custom Options.**  
Build purpose-built facilities delivered on turnkey arrangements.
-  **Key Location.**  
Minutes from Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport, bypass and the planned Inland Rail.
-  **Connectivity and Data Storage.**  
5G and NBN available and access to the Pulse Data Centre.

Join other industry leaders including Vinidex, Iplex, Barenbrug, Boral Resources, and Nuseed.

Contact Cameron Donaldson, Property Development Manager  
0457 555 422 or email [cameron.donaldson@aatlis.com.au](mailto:cameron.donaldson@aatlis.com.au)



# A New Way of Working



When Focus HR Director Alistair Green stood in front of a room of 500 people in December 2020 and issued a challenge to his fellow director and business founder Naomi Wilson, he figured it was a long shot. To implement a four-day work week, without additional resources while maintaining 100% productivity and servicing their large client base.

The 4 Day Week is an 100-80-100 model – 100% of the pay, 80% of the time, but critically in exchange for 100% of the productivity.

It's a strategy of working smarter rather than longer and investing in the wellbeing of our people.

Alistair was inspired by Andrew Barnes' 2019 book, *The Four Day Week*. In summary, the book was based on damning research showing workplace productivity in the UK was just 2.5 hours per day, and in Canadian was only 1.5 hours per day! The author concocted an idea... If this (or anything close) was true in his own NZ based business, he could give everyone a whole day off every week, in return for an effectively very small (1-3hour) productivity increase spread across the other four days.

Alistair felt that what Barnes was suggesting was a brilliant, contrarian, out-side-of-the-box thinking approach to a pervasive problem. Our productivity and wellbeing epidemic.

*"We have more wealth than ever. We consume more than ever. We are living longer than ever before. But we are sicker, sadder, less connected, less satisfied with our work and less fulfilled in our lives than ever, all at the same time."*

"We are far too unproductive for the tools, the knowledge and the wealth we have at our disposal, and we should be working far less hours than we do."

"A hundred years ago, we moved from

working six-day weeks to five, and we're severely overdue for an update."

And so, after 12 months of research and consideration, Alistair chose Toowoomba's Business Excellence Awards to pitch the idea to Naomi. He figured with that many witnesses to the challenge, she couldn't say no.

Fast forward 18 months and the Focus HR team now each works four days per week. Each team member is paid 100% of their salary and works 80% of their hours. In return they are expected to maintain 100% productivity and the same level of excellent client service they are known for. For some of the team this means one full day off per week; for others it means leaving early for school pick up a few days per week. Without exception, the team states they would not go back – they love their fifth "gift" day.

The process has not been quick or necessarily easy and the team has learned so much along the way. The Focus HR team has a thirst for knowledge and a desire to share it generously. Their experience with the transition to a four-day week has resulted in a 'bank' of learnings and insights which they are keen to share. With a global trial of the four-day week beginning in August 2022, they are now presenting the same challenge which Alistair gave Naomi in 2020. Will you play your part in creating a new way of working?

While productivity and wellbeing are the major and most tangible improvements seen, other outcomes include: higher levels of engagement, attraction, innovation, continuous improvement, retention and equality.

"It's not just having a day off a week - it's about delivering productivity, meeting customer service standards, meeting personal and team business goals and objectives." Andrew Barnes

## fun facts:

The landmark four-day week trial at Perpetual Guardian in New Zealand in 2018, monitored by academics at The University of Auckland and Auckland University of Technology, found engagement levels rose between 30 and 40 percent, work-life balance metrics rose by 44 percent, empowerment by 26 percent, leadership by 28 percent, work stimulation by 27 percent, and organizational commitment by 29 percent.

Microsoft Japan's 2019 four-day week trial yielded a **39%** increase in productivity.

**78%** of employees with four-day work weeks are happier and less stressed.

A long-running landmark trial of a shorter work week in Iceland has been hailed an "overwhelming success". Analysis of the results found that a reduction of working hours maintained or increased productivity across all sectors in the economy. The findings also indicated improved wellbeing and work-life balance among workers.

**63%** of businesses found it easier to attract and retain talent with a four-day work week.

# Business@Dusk

Toowoomba's favourite  
monthly networking events

*B@D May hosted by Toowoomba Grammar School*



*B@D June Hosted by RB Finance*



# live, local &

# LOTS OF CASH

## with the Secret Sound!

river  
THE BEST MUSIC MIX



Taking the

# Next

step for the workshop

# starts

by supporting my cash flow.

# now

I'm ready for any opportunity.

## **A bank that knows your name by looking at your face, not your account details.**

A bank where conversations begin with 'How are the kids?', not 'How much do you earn?'

A bank where our people have made a point of knowing your people for nearly 150 years.

At Heritage Bank, it's always been about relationships. Isn't that what you want for your business banking too?

For equipment loans, fully drawn loans, working capital finance solutions, or just a cup of tea, come see us today. You know where we are.

Call **13 14 22** or visit [heritage.com.au](https://www.heritage.com.au)





## TO NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS



*At the time of printing, we have 497 members with 500 in our sites. Current Chamber staff believe this membership is a record (at least for the past 5 years).*

- ★ Mercy Services - CAMS
- ★ Busitel Networks
- ★ Synergy Accounts
- ★ Western Clydesdales
- ★ Hope Horizons
- ★ Progress Crows Nest
- ★ Prudential Asset Management
- ★ CCIQ
- ★ Barry Sheenan Psychology
- ★ Gip's Restaurant
- ★ Toowoomba Indoor Sport
- ★ Icon Adventures
- ★ Nicole Carlile – Future Leader
- ★ Protea Place
- ★ St. Patrick's Cathedral Centre
- ★ Claire Hamilton Makeup
- ★ BE Power
- ★ WorkCover
- ★ Toowoomba Business Networkers
- ★ Blackley Training and Technical
- ★ Toowoomba Christian Collage
- ★ Toowoomba-4350tv
- ★ Irene Henley - Essential Life Power
- ★ Highfields Chamber of Commerce
- ★ The Yarraman Business
- ★ Millmerran Commerce & Progress
- ★ Pittsworth District Alliance
- ★ Clifton Chamber of Commerce
- ★ Oakey Chamber of Commerce
- ★ Potters Boutique Hotel
- ★ Kiambram Country Cottages
- ★ Toowoomba Farmers Market
- ★ ALE Group
- ★ Top of the Range Mushrooms
- ★ Kajoku – Korean and Japanese Cuisine
- ★ Piccolo Papa
- ★ Café De Velo
- ★ The Curly Carrot
- ★ Irish Club Hotel
- ★ Café Valetta
- ★ Milk and Honey
- ★ Jilly's Café



CONNECT | ADVOCATE | EDUCATE

## YOUR MEMBERSHIP

AND HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF IT



ATTEND OUR EVENTS - IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY



ENGAGE WITH US



INTRODUCE A MEMBERS ONLY OFFER



INTERACT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



LET US KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO



CONNECT WITH OUR ADVISORY GROUPS



PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS ON OUR DIRECTORY

To get the most out of your Chamber membership, get in touch with our membership officer [memberships@toowoombachamber.com.au](mailto:memberships@toowoombachamber.com.au)

# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND A TRAILBLAZER IN *Space Research*

*The University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) has been named one of Australia's trailblazer universities to accelerate growth in space manufacturing and lead a new research hub of national priority.*

The 'Innovative Launch, Automation, Novel Materials, Communications and Hypersonics (iLAUNCH) Hub' led by UniSQ, was successful in securing \$50 million of the Australian Government's \$362 million Trailblazer Universities initiative.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Geraldine Mackenzie said UniSQ would be joined by its industry partners as well as Australian National University (ANU) and University of South Australia (UniSA), to lead Australian breakthroughs in an area of critical national manufacturing priority.

"The University of Southern Queensland is already a leader in space manufacturing with expertise in hypersonic propulsion systems, advanced materials, and astrophysics," she said.

"iLAUNCH Hub will improve Australia's skills in the space sector, providing new jobs and boosting the economy, and also help ensure our country's space expertise grows well into the future."

UniSQ's Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences Executive Director Professor Peter Schubel said the hub would support industry to address sovereign space manufacturing.

"iLaunch will operate as a national space commercialisation hub with three nodes – at UniSQ, ANU and UniSA.

"Our industry partners have identified \$3.65 billion in economic benefits associated with core iLaunch commercialisation projects, which will accelerate Australian IP

to market, and the development of a Space Engineering Degree that will create a pipeline of skilled, job ready engineers into this exciting high-value, high-growth sector.

"The program will provide critical research, equipment and infrastructure in support of rocket manufacturing, rocket launch and in-space hardware such as satellites, communications and sensors."

Director of the ANU Institute for Space Professor Anna Moore said Australia had breathtaking capability to offer the global space industry.

"Key to success is working with each other across states to offer our best efforts in a focused and purposeful way," she said.

"That's what it takes to create sovereign capability and to educate our next generation of Australians who will be excited and proud to grow our space industry."

UniSA Industry Associate Professor Colin Hall will lead the UniSA team, developing components, antennas and optics for small satellites and creating optical coatings for high-powered lasers.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for us, and our industry partners, to commercialise technology to grow Australia's space manufacturing capability. Together with the University of Southern Queensland and ANU we will cement Australia's reputation as a major player on the global space stage," he said.

MtKent: UniSQ's Mt Kent Observatory, Queensland's only professional astronomical research facility.



FutMat: UniSQ operates a dedicated industry testing service specialising in materials characterisation, polymer analysis, mechanical testing and large-scale structural testing.



HypersonicLab: UniSQ's hypersonic wind tunnel facility investigates aerodynamics and heat transfer on aerospace vehicles.



Schubel: UniSQ Executive Director of the Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences and Project Lead Professor Peter Schubel.



# A place to excel, think big, and put your ambition into action

**At UniSQ, you'll find quality learning experiences, matched with resources and research that will inspire.**

From leading breakthrough space and defence research of national significance, to revolutionising the way a university degree can be attained online, the University of Southern Queensland has proved to be an innovative leader in tertiary education since it first opened its doors 55 years ago.

**Learn more at**  
**[unisq.edu.au](https://unisq.edu.au)**



University of  
**Southern**  
**Queensland**

# TOOWOOMBA *take me there!*

*Our region fast becoming a popular culinary destination*

There is no doubt about it, food tourism is a huge growth area for our region with local restaurants, cafes and developments, like Nolan's Block in Crows Nest, firmly putting Toowoomba and surrounding townships on the map as a must-visit destination.

Tourists, and locals too, have a healthy obsession with food right now and also "provenance" as more and more food lovers look for a deeper connection with what they are eating and drinking. Where is it grown, what is the story? The desire to know more about the chefs, the farmers, the butchers, the makers and producers is very apparent.

Dine Darling Downs, in partnership with the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, provides the platform for visitors and locals to explore options like never before. The popular digital food platform delivers mouth-watering inspiration and a quick scroll through Facebook and Instagram feeds will show how many dining options there are.

Dine Darling Downs founder Kristen O'Brien said "From cosy cafés and restaurants, great pubs, boutique breweries and inner-city wine bars we have so many possibilities to explore right here. Our website and directory [www.dinedarlingdowns.com.au](http://www.dinedarlingdowns.com.au) simply makes it easier for you to find them. We also love to feature local farmers and producers. We have the best produce in the world on our doorstep and our goal is to advocate for local farmers and growers as much as possible."

Meringandan Beef Producers Kieran and Andrea Luck of Bannockbrae Meats have seen a sharp increase in farm gate sales over the past twelve months.

"The demand is stronger than ever, with more and more people realising that world class produce



Andrea and Kieren Luck Bannockbrae | Credit Studio Jullene



## *Dining Guide*

Check out our easy to use Directory for the best places to eat & drink in Toowoomba!



[dinedarlingdowns.com.au](http://dinedarlingdowns.com.au)



is available right here. Our local customer base continues to grow as does our distribution into the Brisbane market," Kieran said.

Kristen believes this is all just the beginning.

"We are adding new venues and producers to our directory every month," she said. "For visitors there are also accommodation choices on

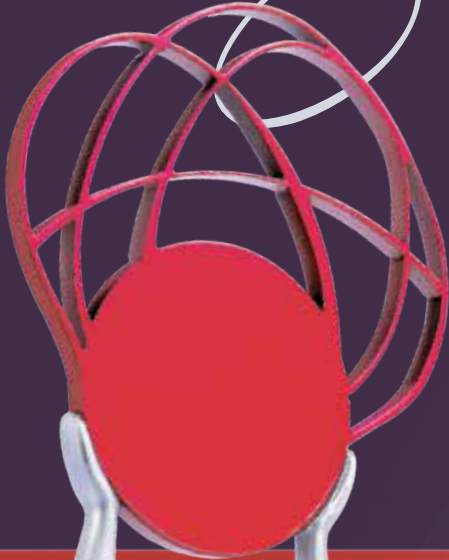
the website so you can plan where to dine and where to stay too!"

Local food and hospitality businesses and accommodation providers

Your Chamber membership includes a free listing on the Dine Darling Downs website and directory. Please contact Lucas Wegner at Chamber on 46 380 400 or Kristen O'Brien at Dine Darling Downs to find out more.

*Save the date*

*for Toowoomba Businesses' Night of Nights....*



focus  HR

**BUSINESS  
EXCELLENCE  
AWARDS**



**TOOWOOMBA  
CHAMBER**

*Saturday* 5 November 2022

*at Rumours International,  
323 Ruthven Street*



# A Greener future

with Cr Nancy Sommerfield

**GREAT NEWS!**

## NEW Materials Recovery Facility for Toowoomba

Cr Nancy Sommerfield is rather excited about Toowoomba Regional Council's \$2.5 million budget commitment to design and build a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) on the southern edge of the Greater Toowoomba Waste Management Facility (WMF) at O'Mara Road. It means that by late 2024, we will be able to sort and use by-products locally for reuse, reprocessing or remanufacturing.

"A MRF sorts co-mingled material from the yellow recycling bin, such as cardboard, paper, steel, aluminium, glass and plastic, into clean product streams that can be repurposed or reused, for instance the use of glass in road construction," she said.

"This will mean Council will be able to create a circular economy that enables re-use of these products locally. Emerging private operators will potentially reuse waste collected by Council.

"Apart from greater convenience and increasing our own recycling capacity, the new facility will enable Council to stop sending recyclables to Brisbane for sorting and reprocessing. An added advantage is that by staying local, we'll be taking around 400 B-double trips off the road per annum.

"Council is working to transition in line with the State Government targets for 90% of our waste being reused and diverted from landfill by 2050."

"The new facility will include the construction of a suitable shed, hardstand and other ancillary infrastructure," Cr Sommerfield said.

"Council will then seek a contract with a MRF provider to install and operate the facility's equipment, which consists of conveyors, sorters and compactors.

"The new MRF will be built to a scale that serves Council's current recyclable volume, while also catering for future growth. This will also include opportunities to collect and sort recyclables from neighbouring local authorities across the Darling Downs.

"The project will have a significant economic impact, firstly in the construction stage, then with ongoing operations."

"Our Region's population is expected to grow to around 205,000 by 2036. A growing population produces greater volumes of waste and its associated challenges.

"We continue to plan for cost effective and user-friendly waste management and resource recovery opportunities across our Region."



Share your Business Greening tips with Toowoomba Chamber.

## CHAMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

**BOOK YOUR TICKETS ONLINE**  
[www.toowoombachamber.com.au](http://www.toowoombachamber.com.au)

### JULY

- 20 B@D E&E Waste in Torrington
- 28 Toowoomba Business Sentiment Index Luncheon – with Mark McCrindle at The Atrium Clifford Park
- 29 An Evening at Myrtille – three course dinner with bus transport at Myrtille Bistro, Crows Nest

### AUGUST

- 17 B@D Ryley Jewellers
- 25 Migrant Networking
- 31 Leading Women Luncheon



# ONBOARDING AND INDUCTION WORKSHOP.



**The cost of recruitment can be upwards of \$10,000 per new hire.**

Studies show that investing in effective onboarding can improve your business' new hire retention by 82% and productivity by over 70%.

Seamlessly transition your new hires into valuable team members. Our workshops provide the tools, tips and guidance you need to develop an onboarding program for your business.

**Book for our upcoming Onboarding and Induction Workshop and receive one free Leading Teams Workshop (valued at \$175).**



Your people and culture consultants.

[www.focushr.com.au/events](http://www.focushr.com.au/events)



# WHY HIRE AN APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE?

HIRING AN APPRENTICE IS THE SINGLE BEST WAY TO GET YOUR WORKFORCE SKILLED AND QUALIFIED.

Apprenticeships are a smart way to recruit and train employees to meet the current and future needs of your business. You can customise the training, increase efficiency, boost your business financially, and contribute to lifelong learning in your workplace.

// FIND OUT MORE



1300 308 233 | [tafeqld.edu.au](http://tafeqld.edu.au)

 Skills Assure  
Proud to be a Queensland Government subsidised training provider

MAKE GREAT HAPPEN

