



Bruthen's Bullant Brewery was filled to capacity with a degustation evening last Saturday night, many missing out due to the night's popularity. Bullant beers were matched with each of the six courses served across the night. Bullant Brewery's talented chef, Adrian Glover, was kept busy in the kitchen preparing dishes for the full house. See the *Bruthen View* pages in Monday's *Advertiser* for more on the successful event. K1229-536

Looking back

Reflecting back on the turbulent history behind East Gippsland's vegetable processing industry, and the current Vegco site prior to 1996, the East Gippsland Food Cluster is hosting a business breakfast on September 13.

Executive officer of the East Gippsland Food Cluster, Dr Nicola Watts, said that the forum coincided with work being undertaken by the cluster in relation to future investment opportunities for the region's vital food sector.

"Sometimes it's important to look back and reflect on the lessons of the past and how they might be applicable to the future," Dr Watts said.

"The Vegco site is an important part of East Gippsland's food processing sector, and the history of the site is a very interesting one, with stories that are not generally well known by the broader community."

The forum will feature guest speaker, Chris Egan, an East Gippslander who is part of the rich tapestry of the region's vegetable processing sector.

An electrician by trade, Chris was the founder of East Gippsland's largest electrical contracting business - Egan and Freshwater. His entrepreneurial spirit and business acumen came to the fore when Australian conglomerate, Pacific Dunlop, decided to close the vegetable processing plant known then as Gardenland, in 1991.

Recognising the opportunities associated with new consumer trends and demand for ready to eat salads, Chris led an ambitious capital raising that transformed the Gardenland site through a complex set of domestic and global alliances.

Chris is also a past chairman of Victorian Eastern Development Association (VEDA) and has extensive experience across a range of food businesses.

In more recent times he has been living in Melbourne where he now runs another successful food business, Cooe Cuisine.

Vegco was founded in 1994, merging with Harvest FreshCuts in 1997.

A highly successful and award-winning local business, Vegco is part of the One-Harvest Group, which has other food processing facilities in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney.

Vegco employs over 250 local people in the East Gippsland area - over 300 in peak season.

The Vegco site is the largest fresh cuts factory in Australia and also contains a beetroot processing factory, which has rejuvenated the Australian beetroot industry.

The site is considered an ideal location for a salad factory, being located on the doorstep of one of the premier salad leaf and vegetable growing regions in the country (the Lindenow Valley), and well positioned between major retail markets in Sydney and Melbourne.

The breakfast, which will feature East Gippsland produce prepared by Lindenow's The Long Paddock, will be held in Lindenow on Tuesday, September 13, from 7am to 9am, and is open to all interested participants. Registrations, however, must be made in advance.

More information, including details on how to register, is available from the East Gippsland Food Cluster.



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Housing blitz for the east

National not for profit housing provider, Community Housing Limited (CHL), will be providing 11 new head lease private rental properties in the East Gippsland region for women and their children escaping domestic violence.

The announcement is part of the State Government's \$50 million Rapid Housing Assistance Fund.

The 'housing blitz' was announced in response to priority recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The initiative includes purchase of 184 social housing properties and up to \$1.4 million for head leases for 124 social housing rental properties in priority areas across Victoria.

"Out of the 79 local government areas in Victoria, East Gippsland is one of the top five regions for police call outs for family violence," CHL's state manager, Shari McPhail, said.

"This much needed funding will provide additional safe, secure and affordable homes for women and their children who have experienced family violence or have become homeless as a result."

The properties will be located in close proximity to public transport and schools to ensure the tenants maintain their links to the local services and community.

With an office in Bairnsdale, CHL is a trusted provider of housing and homelessness service in East Gippsland, and has been for 20 years. It has partnered with Windermere Family Services to provide support and individualised assistance to the tenants.

"These homes will be available by the end of this year. Safe and affordable housing is the key to stabilising the lives of those most vulnerable, especially women and children, from which they can begin to rebuild their lives," Ms McPhail said.

"Overall CHL has been successful in receiving just under 10 per cent of the Rapid Housing Assistance funding, which includes 20 spot purchase properties - eight in the city of Casey, 12 in Latrobe and six head leasing arrangements in East Gippsland in addition to those mentioned above," Ms McPhail said.

CHL is a national and international provider of affordable housing. Its vision is 'a world without housing poverty'. CHL is a regis-

tered Housing organisation in Victoria and Queensland and a growth provider in NSW, Tasmania, WA and SA. In Victoria, CHL has seven offices with a portfolio of over 2000 properties under its management.

Its international operations are located in Timor Leste, Chile, PNG and India. Winner of various industry awards including HIA Special Purpose Housing and United Nations Association of Australia, CHL has over 6000 properties under its management across the country.

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

(GLaWAC) was established to further the aspirations of Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners and Native Title holders from the five clans.

GLaWAC functions are:

Whole of Country Operations

On Country Services

- Joint Management with Parks VIC (PV) and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- Natural Resource Management Enterprise

Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP)

- Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP)
- Cultural Monitoring Services

Cultural Hub

- Education Programs, including Welcome to Country ceremonies.
- Cultural Tourism Initiatives

For further information please contact Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) on 5152 5100
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