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Members' Newsletter

October 2020

TERANG & DISTRICT
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

Established on the 2nd day of July, 1908

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN UNIQUE IN MANY WAYS FOR YOUR CO-OP, BOTH WITH THE EXTRA PROTOCOLS THAT HAVE BEEN NEEDED TO BE IMPLEMENTED, JUST TO CONTINUE TO TRADE AS WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE, AND THE MANY CHANGES MADE TO OUR BUSINESS AS PART OF OUR STRATEGIC PLAN.

Though it has been very challenging, the co-operation of customers, staff and management to have a "business as usual" approach has been very gratifying. I would like to thank management and staff for the cohesive and positive way they have dealt with these challenges and the understanding of our customers.

With the rebranding of both our hardware stores and the continued upgrade of our offer, the increased patronage of these businesses tells us that our members and customers approve. The rebrand of our rural store is also underway and, with the much-improved layout and product range, is sure to appeal to our members and customers.

The most visible upgrade to all is happening in our supermarket. Under the direction of Paul Bailey, our project manager, it is progressing steadily. It has been our policy at the Co-op to employ as many local businesses as we can to achieve this. To coin a common phrase that is in use at the moment, "We are all in this together" and it is our ethos, as

a leading retailer, to support other businesses, community groups, schools, hospitals and sporting clubs as much as we can. Therefore, the continued support we get from the local region allows us to provide a much better shopping experience with modern facilities that we can all be proud of and allows us to support the many groups that make up the very fabric of our communities.

Your Co-op has withstood two world wars, a Spanish flu pandemic, the major depression of the 1930's and being burnt to the ground and has continued to trade through it all. Ask yourself how many businesses that we deal with today have been operating continuously for 113 years in their own right. It is a fact that we sometimes take for granted. Our Co-op has stood strong through it all and will continue to do so in the future.

On behalf of the Co-op Board I would like to thank our members and customers for their ongoing patronage and support of our Co-op and wish everyone a happy and safe festive season and a prosperous new year.

**Brendan Kenna
- Chairman**



FROM THE CEO

THE YEAR 2020 WILL BE REMEMBERED LIKE NO OTHER.

We started with devastating bushfires across south-eastern Australia and then found ourselves dealing with a, hopefully, once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. Thankfully, our region has been spared most of the devastating impacts of the virus, but we are well aware that the fight is far from over.

As Terang's biggest business, the Co-op will continue to maintain strict protocols to ensure all staff and customers stay safe during this difficult time. While we have implemented measures to protect everyone from the virus, in many respects it has been business as usual for our enterprises.

Even though the world is going through such a confused

and worrying time, the Co-op has continued to work along its strategic plan with a focus on business improvement. This year, the improvements are becoming more visible for our members and customers, including changing the hardware and timber stores to Mitre 10, an upgrade costing almost \$900,000 in the Supa IGA supermarket, and the rebranding of the Rural Store.

There have been a lot of good changes and we are starting to see the positive outcomes of these initiatives. At the same time, we are well aware that many in the community, particularly those in tourism and hospitality, have been devastated by this pandemic and the lockdown, and we are well aware that everyone, particularly



...continued

Giving back to the community since 1908

...CONTINUED **FROM THE CEO**

the elderly, are extremely worried about this virus.

Hopefully, Victoria's case numbers continue to improve and restrictions can be eased in the near future.

The Co-op continues to reinvest in the community, supporting local businesses where we can.

Recently, we have updated promotional signage at local sporting grounds and with the supermarket

redevelopment we are using as many local operators as we can. That is part of living and working in a local community and the Co-op will continue to play its role in helping the Terang and Camperdown districts to rebound from these setbacks.

Kevin Ford

- CEO

PLAYING A PART IN A STRONG FUTURE



ELIZABETH GREEN HAS FOND MEMORIES OF THE CO-OP AS A YOUNGSTER AND HAS RETURNED TO PLAY A PART IN ENSURING IT HAS A STRONG FUTURE.

Elizabeth joined the Co-op Board in March and is enjoying contributing to the community-based organisation. Born and bred in Garvoc, Elizabeth grew up on her parents' dairy farm and attended St Thomas' School in Terang and later Emmanuel College in Warrnambool.

Like many in the community, the Co-op was the focal point for shopping in her early years. "I remember when I was at school, Mum and Dad taking us to netball or footy and they would stop at the Co-op for the essentials from the supermarket or parts from the hardware store downstairs."

The Co-op has stood the test of time in Terang, but that does not mean it should be taken for granted. "When organisations have always been there, you can take them for granted and forget all of the work that goes into running them," Elizabeth said.

After working for a big four bank, then studying overseas, Elizabeth worked in public practice as a chartered accountant. The mother-of-three now works for not-for-profit agency Mpower in Warrnambool as the Chief Financial Officer. "I have always been involved at some level in community-based organisations and it is where my passion lies," she said. "Just because an organisation is not-for-profit or member owned, does not mean it should not be a successful business in its own right. It has been a steep learning curve but I am enjoying my time thus far."

Elizabeth says the Board has a good cross section of expertise from the community, which is ideal for a well-governed organisation. "The skills I bring to the table are in governance and finance generally, which is where I will contribute most," she said. Having served on Boards of other community organisations, Elizabeth believes "It is a joint effort in identifying opportunities that will benefit both the organisation and the community."

Due to COVID-19, the Board meetings have been held with some directors remotely and some in the board room. In such challenging times, Elizabeth believes the way the staff have adapted is testament to their understanding of the business and the community's needs.

With her parents and siblings still farming in the region, Elizabeth maintains a close connection to Terang. "In regional areas, we all play a part in each other's futures," she said. "People have a wonderful understanding about what we need and go the extra mile in meeting those needs for each other."

Elizabeth filled the vacancy created by the departure of Matt Henderson in March this year and was re-elected unopposed as a director at the recent Co-op AGM in September.

MEMBERSHIPS **RECORD**

THE CO-OP'S MEMBERSHIP HAS HIT A NEW RECORD HIGH AND CONTINUES ON ITS UPWARD TRAJECTORY.

At the end of the 2019-20 financial year the number of fully paid up members had reached a record 2,844. In the six months since then, a further 124 members have fully paid their shares, bringing the total of fully paid members to 2,968.

Furthermore, many other partly paid memberships are in progress, with over 1,000 applicants sharing in some of the benefits of membership whilst their shares are gradually paid off via their shopping support of the Co-op.

The Co-op thanks all members for their support and encourages everyone in the community to consider joining. During the past financial year, the Co-op distributed \$200,558 in members' rewards as a thank you for their

patronage and loyalty.

If you know someone who could benefit from becoming a member, you can access a Membership Application Form at any Co-op store or go to the Co-op website at <https://terangcoop.com.au/for-members/>

You can either buy shares at \$50 outright or earn your shares over time by accruing 5,000 points from spending across the Co-op's businesses.

Members benefit by earning points with every purchase at any Co-op store. You earn 1 cent for every \$1 spent. Points are redeemable at any stores. At the end of each financial year, at the end of February, any points older than 12 months expire.

CAMPERDOWN SUCCESS

PURCHASING THE CLOSED CAMPERDOWN HARDWARE BUSINESS IN 2014 MARKED A SIGNIFICANT FIRST FOR THE TERANG CO-OP.

It was the first time the Co-op had expanded its operations beyond the boundaries of Terang since 1974 when the Noorat trading store was closed.

It was also a challenge to bring the business back to life and now the investment is paying off. Under the Co-op's management, the Camperdown store underwent a significant makeover in late 2018 and the success of that transformation is now showing.

Now with re-branding to Mitre 10, the store is experiencing its best trading period so far. Trade manager Michael Boote said the hardware and gardening trade were up in general both locally and across Australia during the pandemic.

But he added that there is more to the Camperdown story than COVID-19 encouraging people to do more at-home work. "That's part of the success but it's also due to the changes that have been made," he said. "A lot of effort was put into re-designing the store and that's really bearing fruit now. The presentation of stock, good category alignment, focussing on getting the product mix right and having shelves full of stock have all helped."

KEEPING A FAMILY FOCUS



WHEN DEBBIE LAIDLAW DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE WORKFORCE AFTER A NINE-YEAR BREAK, SHE WANTED TO FIND A FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE, AND THAT IS

EXACTLY WHAT SHE FOUND AT THE TERANG CO-OP.

The administration and human resources officer had taken time out from work to raise her children and was anxious about returning to the fold. "I had applied for a position at the Co-op and received a call a few weeks later to come in for a chat to discuss my resume. During this chat I discussed my family commitments and from there I was offered a casual position and after a few weeks, was

then offered permanent part time hours. "I'm a single parent and need to be there for my children and the Co-op has been able to work around my needs; they have been really good with that."

Debbie's youngest son is vision impaired to the level of being legally blind and it took a while to settle into school. "He was sick when he was young and has vision impairment so it took quite a bit of time to get him settled into school so that kept me at home," Debbie said. "I'm really happy that the Co-op has taken a chance on me to see what I can do and I think it has paid off for all of us."

Coming up to her first anniversary in the role, Debbie's work includes staff recruitment, conducting interviews and a little finance work. "Hopefully, I'm a very approachable person for staff to come to when needed, and I hope I am contributing to build a more

positive work environment across the Co-op," she said. "I'm absolutely loving the role that I've graduated into," she said. "It has been a great learning curve for me. Previously, I was more in finance and administration but there is a greater emphasis on HR at the Co-op, which I really enjoy."

Debbie usually works five days a week within school hours. "I drop the kids off at school and then come to work and then leave to meet them after school," she said. "It's busy but the flexibility has been a big bonus."

Debbie admitted that the COVID lockdown has been a trying time, as she has needed to help her sons at home in Warrnambool, restricting her presence at the Co-op office. "The Co-op has really worked well with me to cater to everybody's needs," she said. "I couldn't be more pleased with how it has worked out."

DRIVER MAN



SEVEN MONTHS INTO THE JOB, DAVID WHITEMAN HAS GOT TO SEE A LOT OF SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA.

Showing the reach of the Co-op's rural, timber and hardware operations, David is constantly on the road moving in all

directions, in his role as delivery driver. "I've been to Dunkeld which was a nice drive and I drive to Colac fairly regularly," he said. "We'll go anywhere that people want to pay for delivery."

Based in the Terang timber yard, David also helps with deliveries from Camperdown if larger deliveries are needed. Apart from timber, David regularly delivers steel sheds, plaster, cement board and other large items.

A welder by trade, David admits he misses flexing his hands-on trade skills but is enjoying his new full-time role. I like the free range of it. I'm out and about all the time and enjoy driving," he said.

David moved from Ballarat to Mortlake earlier this year to be with his pregnant partner. The career change to driving is somewhat ironic; David was previously welding truck trailers.

A MIGHTY HELPFUL CHANGE

THE TERANG AND CAMPERDOWN HARDWARE STORES HAVE BEEN REINVIGORATED AFTER MOVING UNDER THE MITRE 10 BANNER.

Joining Australia's largest independent home improvement and hardware wholesaler has strengthened the Co-op's capability to provide a wide range of products at competitive prices. CEO Kevin Ford said it was an exciting change which would build on significant improvements made in recent years. "To move to the Mitre 10 brand is a natural progression for us," Kevin said.

The stores were previously under the HOME Timber and Hardware banner, which has been purchased by and amalgamated with Mitre 10. "It was logical to move to Mitre 10 whose support, range of goods and promotional campaigns fit well with the Co-op," Kevin said. "Being part of the Mitre 10 brand lets our customers know we are competitive with stock and price compared to anyone in the market."

The range of products will mostly stay the same, with select additions. "Mitre 10 is a much stronger click and collect business, which is ideal at this time. It means our customers can order online and pick it up from the stores if they want," Kevin said.

Trade manager, Michael Boote, said the response from customers had been terrific and the more efficient marketing program was benefitting both stores. "Both stores are trading strongly," Michael said. "Generally, the hardware industry has been strong nationally and we are ahead of those numbers. We have been focused on getting our product mix right for the market and the businesses are showing the benefits of that. You have got to have what the customers want."

Michael said the stores now stock a "shopper-led" range. Being part of Mitre 10, we can access all the sales data and base our range around those results. It means shoppers tell us what they want and we provide it for them."

Mitre 10, formed in 1959, is one of the largest players in Australia's home improvement and hardware industry with a retail network of more than 300 stores.

EXTENDED HOURS



SPRING IS HERE AND THAT MEANS THERE'S MORE TIME AND INCENTIVE TO GET OUT IN THE GARDEN AND TO DO THOSE HANDYMAN JOBS AROUND THE HOUSE.

To help the Co-op's customers, the Mitre 10 hardware stores in Camperdown and Terang have extended hours on weekends. The closing time has been extended from 2pm to 4pm on both Saturday and Sunday. This will be a trial over the daylight savings period and, if it is beneficial to customers, it might become permanent.

TURNING TIMBER AROUND

NATHAN MARTIN IS PLAYING A BIG PART IN THE REGENERATION OF THE CAMPERDOWN MITRE 10 TIMBER YARD.



As the timber yard supervisor, his job entails the day-to-day running of the yard, overseeing stock and dealing directly with customers.

There has been a significant overhaul of the yard this year and it's paying off. "We've turned the yard around quite a bit," Nathan said. "Sales have gone through the roof; we're up by more than 50 per cent. The whole yard has grown a lot bigger in the last six months and it's continuing to grow."

Nathan worked at Pontings Mitre 10 in Warrnambool for five years before making the move this year. Moving to Camperdown brought back a familiar face, reuniting with hardware supervisor, Mal McKay, who trained Nathan at Pontings when he started his career.

Nathan came into the hardware industry by chance. He completed an online retail course and was given a two-week trial at Pontings which turned into a full-time job in an industry he continues to enjoy.

Nathan drives from Dennington every day, a two-hour return trip, but says it is worth the effort.

"It's a lot of fun and I've learnt a lot over the years and I'm still learning as I go," Nathan said. "I really enjoy it here and the guys are good to work with."

COMING SOON: MIGHTY REWARDS CARDS

ALONG WITH ACCESSING THE STRENGTH OF THE MITRE 10 BRAND NAME, TERANG AND CAMPERDOWN CUSTOMERS WILL SOON GET THE BENEFITS OF THE MIGHTY REWARDS PROGRAM.

Mighty Rewards is free to join and gives shoppers the chance to earn and redeem points to use towards their next purchases. The card also entitles members to other discounts and special offers from time to time.

Next time you are in-store ask one of our team how to become a member and we will put you on the list for when we get the program established.

THE CO-OP'S RURAL STORE HAS A NEW SUPPLIER, A NEW-LOOK AND A NEW NAME.

Earlier this year, the Rural Store joined the National Rural Independent (NRI) group, ending a 30-year association with the CRT group. The new partnership is delivering benefits for customers and members. It also followed major improvements and the implementation of best business practices to optimise performance.

As part of the changes, the store has been given a new name, the Rural Store, which is a simple and straight-forward description of what is on offer. Acting manager Alison Lee said it helped to have specific branding that local people could easily identify. Store staff now have new uniforms and the new signage has been completed.

RURAL TO THE CORE



HAYLEY HART GREW UP ON THE LAND AND WAS DESTINED TO WORK IN AN AGRICULTURAL FIELD. NOW SHE IS THERE AND LOVING EVERY MINUTE OF IT. HAYLEY IS A SALES AND WAREHOUSE ASSISTANT IN THE RURAL STORE.

Formerly from Tasmania, Hayley's father was a farm manager which whet her appetite for a rural-based career. "It's always been in our family and my interest definitely lies in the livestock enterprise aspect of agriculture. But there is always something new and exciting to learn in all parts of the industry" she said.

Hayley moved to Victoria to complete her secondary schooling and after graduating in Ballarat she studied an Advanced Diploma in Agribusiness Management at Longerenong College. Before joining the Rural Store in late March, Hayley worked in animal husbandry for two years on a large sheep and cattle property in western Victoria.

She wanted to move to Terang to be with her partner. "I was looking for work that would allow me to move to the south-west and contacted the Rural Store. There wasn't a role advertised at the time but Alison and Chris thought I would fit in and be able to contribute to the store's development."

That has proven to be true. Hayley has played a big role with the Rural Store team in introducing the Thomas Cook line of clothing and has instigated the introduction of new sheep product ranges for the store.

One goal is to eventually get on the road and visit farmers in relation to their agricultural livestock products. "To have like-minded conversations with farmers and to be able to provide a product that satisfies their needs is always a good feeling," she said. "I'm thoroughly enjoying being part of the evolution of the store and getting to know customers and farmers."

Now living in Terang, Hayley hopes post-COVID to join community activities such as netball.



CLOTHING RETURNS

IN DECADES GONE BY, CLOTHING WAS A MAINSTAY OF THE TERANG CO-OP WITH DEDICATED MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CLOTHING SECTIONS.

Now, the addition of Thomas Cook wear to the Rural Store has revived that tradition. The new clothing and accessories department at the Rural Store, featuring a great range of the latest Thomas Cook wear, has been well received by farmers and others living on and off the land.

Thomas Cook is Australia's largest family country clothing company, with a selection of trusted brands such as Thomas Cook, Wrangler Western, Pure Western and a range of shirts, vests, polo tops, jeans, jackets, and footwear.

Rural Store manager Alison Lee said the clothing and footwear fit a niche market and was needed in the community. "They're a really nice brand and a lot of local people wear that type of clothing," she said. "We identified a gap that we could fill for the community. It's not just the Thomas Cook range but everything that falls under its banner. Because it's such a large range, we can custom-order if people see something they would like."

Thomas Cook began making boots out of an inner suburb of Melbourne in 1924. Handed down through three generations of the Cook family, the brand has become an integral part of the country Australian lifestyle. A proud feature of the Thomas Cook logo is the silhouette of the legendary Man from Snowy River.

The Thomas Cook range expands and complements the many products and services already on offer at the Rural Store.

SUPER CHANGES



SHOPPING IS NOW EASIER TO NAVIGATE AND THERE IS AN EXPANDED FRESH AND FROZEN FOOD OFFERING THANKS TO A \$900,000 REVAMP OF THE SUPA IGA SUPERMARKET. THE REDEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN DONE IN FIVE STAGES TO MAKE SURE THE SUPERMARKET CONTINUED TO OPERATE DURING THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

The changes included the removal of three large grocery aisles from the entry of the store and opening up a fresh food zone in front of the deli area, using low-profile shelving.

The size of the meat chiller has doubled, new refrigeration has been installed and the liquor store has been extended to incorporate a larger walk-in cool room, allowing more chilled product to be displayed. New upright freezers have replaced the island chest freezers, allowing for the removal of aisles to make room for the expanded fresh food area.

The island freezers were without lids, making them very power hungry.

The changes have led to a significantly improved fresh food offer including fruit and vegetables, meat, bakery and deli.

There is a slight contraction in the grocery space but the product range will be retained thanks to improved layout and additions to the middle shelves. CEO Kevin Ford said the aim of the project was simple "It's going to be a better shop for shopping," he said.



Project supervisor Paul Bailey thanks customers for their patience during the major works. "The flow is so much better; it's so much easier to shop now. It has been a smooth process and everything has gone to plan. But there have been some disruptions and customers have been very understanding through the whole process," Paul said.

MELISSA LEADING THE FRESH TEAM



IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME COMING, BUT MELISSA HOEY HAS FINALLY JOINED THE CO-OP IN A PERMANENT FULL-TIME CAPACITY.

After moving from Western Australia, Melissa started with the Co-op in 2008 doing night fill and later moved to part-time work on the registers and in the dairy section. She gradually progressed into more senior roles, including doing the orders for the dairy section.

Until recently with her new position as fresh department manager, Melissa had chosen to work on a casual or permanent part-time basis. "I didn't want to take on anything because I have kids and I didn't want to miss out on important events in their lives," she said. "I wanted the flexibility to go and watch their sports days and so declined job offers in the past."

However, that has changed with her children Cassie, 18, Michael coming up 16 and Allivia, 11, now having a degree of independence that allows Melissa to commit to her work.

Melissa has worked in supermarkets since before she left school. She started full-time in her uncle's grocery store when she was 16, quickly moving into roles of responsibility. "I did a bit of everything; you could say I was an all-rounder."

Melissa and her husband Jason were living in Kalgoorlie when they decided to make the big move east. "We came over for my sister's wedding in 2007 and moved here three months later," she said. "I wanted to be closer to my sister and Jason has a lot of family here. We didn't want to stay in Kalgoorlie and we didn't want to go back to Esperance where we had previously lived so we decided to give it a go here."

The move has been a success. "We loved moving here," Melissa said. "It was peaceful coming from Kalgoorlie where everything was so hectic. It's so beautiful and peaceful here in Terang."

Melissa has always enjoyed the supermarket work. "I love the job and what I'm doing now," she said. "I like to know everything so I can fill in wherever I'm needed. And having the trust and support of the supermarket management team really means a lot to me."

Now that COVID-19 restrictions are easing, Melissa hopes to return to practising karate. The second dan black belt also wants to get back into helping to instruct juniors in the martial arts. "I miss that a lot; we're like a karate family, but it's going to be hard to pick it up again after having so much time off because of COVID" she said.

FRESH OPPORTUNITY



STARTING A NEW JOB WITH A 10-MONTH OLD SON HAS BEEN CHALLENGING FOR COURTNEY, BUT SHE IS BEING WELL SUPPORTED TO MAKE HER BIG CAREER MOVE.

Courtney started in September as the new IGA supermarket deli supervisor and says the support has been terrific. Prior to having her son Noah, Courtney worked for 10 years at Swintons IGA in Warrnambool, mostly in the deli but also in fruit and veg and doing night filling.

The Terang position represented a chance to step up into a supervisor role. "A change is nice

and it was an incredible opportunity," she said.

Courtney, her partner, Grayden, and Noah live near Allansford. "It's a juggle but my partner and I are managing the family," she said "but I love the support at the Co-op. As a new staff member, I feel really supported in my role. I have great managers, there are a lot of growth opportunities and I feel that my voice is being heard."

For Courtney, the best part of the job is working with people and meeting new customers. "I'm really big on customer service; that's my biggest thing," she said.



TICK, TICK



WORKING AT THE CO-OP GETS A BIG TICK FROM AARON TEBBLE, WHO IS HAPPY TO BE BACK WORKING IN HIS HOME COMMUNITY.

A qualified baker and pastry chef, Aaron was previously second in charge of a bakery and produce department in a Warrnambool

Woolworths store. More recently, he worked on a dairy farm in Garvoc before becoming the dairy and fresh food assistant in the IGA supermarket.

Aaron says the opportunity to work in Terang and having room to grow in the Co-op structure attracted him to the role. "I'm originally from Terang," he said. "I live in Camperdown at the moment but getting a job in the local community was a big tick for me. I'm really enjoying being back in the local community catching up with people I haven't seen for years."

Aaron is also enjoying his new workmates, making new friends along the way. Aaron has more big changes on the way. He is engaged to Caitlin and they plan to marry next year.

A NEW STAGE

THE MOVE TO 360 DAIRY SOLUTIONS HAS BEEN EASY FOR KEN HEWITT.

A boiler maker and engineering fabricator by trade, Ken joined the team as a dairy technician in March. Ken has about 20 years of experience in the boiler making field, which followed a four-year stint in the navy. "I was building and servicing rotary dairies for a while, so it hasn't been a hard transition," he said. "I've gone from fixing them from underneath to being on the other side standing on top and making the dairies."

Ken's move to 360 came about quite by chance. He said "I worked for the company that built the platform for Wayne Johnstone's new dairy so I was there when the 360 Dairy Solutions team came in to install the machines. I got chatting to them and it went from there."

The move has been a great success, with Ken enjoying a variety of projects, both big and small. "I love it; it's one of the best jobs I've had for a long time, even though it's insanely busy," he said. "It has heaps of variety and good people and there's a good strong culture here."

Ken has lived in Terang with his partner Jacqui for the past four years.



DAIRY TRADIE

AFTER 20 YEARS IN MELBOURNE, CHRIS WARNECKE IS GLAD TO BE BACK IN SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA.

Chris, a plumber by trade, joined the 360 Dairy Solutions team in August. He is adapting his skills to his new role. "Having my plumbing background helps but, to develop as a dairy technician, you need to learn what's involved on the job from the other staff members. It's like its own little trade."

Chris is enjoying the new challenge and the variety it holds. "I had no real connection to the dairy industry but they found a role for me here as a trade technician and to learn about it. I do a little bit of everything as I train to become a dairy technician," he said. "I'm getting a good run down on how dairies work and I've also been doing a bit of metal fabrication. My job isn't in one particular area; it touches on everything a dairy technician needs to do."

The 360 team is busy with major new projects and has recruited people with trades backgrounds. "I absolutely love the job and the people are even better," Chris said.

Chris, 40, lives in Warrnambool with his wife and 12-year-old daughter. "I was born and raised in Warrnambool but moved away to Melbourne for 20 years. I came back 18 months ago for family reasons."

Living in the country also gives Chris more opportunity to follow his passion for getting out on the motorbike, hunting and four-wheel driving.



INVESTING IN DAIRY FUTURE

A NEW 60-UNIT ROTARY DAIRY BUILT BY 360 DAIRY SOLUTIONS HAS HELPED TERANG FARMER WAYNE JOHNSTONE TO EXPAND HIS HERD AND CUT PRODUCTION COSTS.

The dairy has been a great success since being commissioned in mid-2020, improving cow flow and reducing milking times and costs. The 60-unit rotary dairy was coordinated by 360 Dairy Solutions. The work was done by south-west Victorian contractors, with the exception of the Entegra Sheds from Swan Hill. 360 Dairy Solutions is a dealer for Entegra Sheds.

Costs were reduced by seamlessly integrating existing technology into the new set-up. "It's terrific; I couldn't be happier," Wayne said. "The cows are walking in easily and milking well. The old dairy was worn out," he said. "It was more than 20 years old and I was struggling with

it. I got quotes for repair but they were almost as much as building a new one so I'm very happy I've gone down this line. The big win was that I was able to keep milking," Wayne said.

Wayne added that "Ten extra machines might not sound like a lot, but it will allow you to milk 80 to 100 cows more per hour," he said. "The cow flow is much better. We should be able to do it in about two hours and 15 minutes. It will be a saving in time, energy and wages."

Wayne praised the team from Terang Co-op's 360 Dairy Solutions. "They managed it really well and have done a great job," he said. "It was a necessary investment because the other dairy was dying, but the industry is going well at the moment and we are confident it will be a good investment over time. It was great that 360 Dairy Solutions could do it and keep the work in our region."



SIMPLIFYING THE MILKING

A NEW 25-A-SIDE HERRINGBONE DAIRY BEING BUILT AT WANGOOM WILL MAKE CATTLE FLOW MUCH SIMPLER AND QUICKER.

The 360 Dairy Solutions project is nearing completion of the project. It replaces an existing herringbone dairy on the property but adds many new features to improve cow flow and to make milking easier for the farmers and their cows.

The new facility has been built alongside the existing dairy. It features a new round yard with an imported McConnell electric drive wheel controller for the backing gate. This allows easy segregation of the cows as they enter and exit the milking shed. The backing gate comes up to the pit and can easily contain new heifers in a confined space. The farmers can also set the backing gate increments so it can move on timed intervals. An electric drive has been used rather than water pressure to prevent any interruptions related to frost. At the exit, the 360 Dairy Solutions team has installed new Milfos pneumatic air-operated exit and entry gates.

There is also an undercover drafting and vet crush area and a Northern Feed System with stainless steel feed troughs. The bum rail is an anti-bruise rail, the type often used in saleyards and cattle pens and more comfortable for the



cows. The client also bought second-hand automated De Laval cup removers that are being installed by the team.

Other features of the dairy include: a GEA 10,000 litre milk vat imported from France; a push-start go and wash operated E-Therm system to control vacuum and wash; a Dairy Pumping Services yard blaster washdown system; two large Rhino tanks and a Safety Steel shed.

360 Dairy Solutions manager Chris Fitzgerald said this had been a big project but one which would lead to significant benefits and improvements for the customer farmers.

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