

MURGON BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT ASSN. INC.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023:

This year has been very different, with firstly the floods and now drought conditions once again. We extend a warm welcome to all our new Murgon citizens and Business Owners to become part of our family. We have an excellent number of financial members and Murgon's main concerns as always in the coming year will be to get our share of any new development and establishing further small industry and erecting more houses on our estates, and the finishing of part 2 renovations of QE11 park. It was sad to hear of some of our businesses closing, whilst we also attracted new businesses and extensions to others. We are going through very hard times, and we need each other's support by shopping locally. Our shop locally gift card has been a huge success. Our whole community should be proud of our town and its achievements and be a part of it, and with your help continue to improve the local economy and our quality of life.

Our popular breakfast and dinner meetings during the year have been well attended, and we look forward to further input from our members. Evening Board meetings and meet and greet will continue in 2024.

Bjelke-Petersen Dam, Boondooma Dam, Barambah Bush Caravan and Camping, the Murgon Dairy & Heritage Museum and our 48-hour free camp have been major attractions during this past year and Murgon has thrived on tourism and the fishing has been excellent which has also encouraged the return of fishing comps being held. Remember Murgon is on show to visitors 24 hours a day 365 days of the year and it is our job to make visitors welcome and rid them of any negativity about our town. We in Murgon have excelled in promoting these opportunities as well as the successful Wine and Olive industry and our courteous and friendly nature and then combine all this with our World class scenic views, 1st class sporting facilities, our highly competitive business community and our festivals and fun, - Murgon is definitely a great place.

I would like to especially thank our hard-working Secretary, Margaret Long, Treasurer Lorraine Goodchild, all office bearers, and promotional committees and those who presented reports to our meetings. Many thanks to Lorraine Goodchild for the updating of messages and news items on our web site murgon.net.au and our Facebook page.

Our Christmas celebrations will continue this year with Carols by candlelight and smaller entertainment organized in conjunction with combined organizations and the Murgon Show Society on the Murgon Show and Sporting Ground.

We are very appreciative of the support and patronage of The Cherbourg Community.

We also wish to thank the volunteers for their commitment to our town at the Visitor Information Centre and the Murgon Museum and those responsible for some of our major attractions that have included the return of the magnificent Murgon Rotary Music Muster injecting much needed revenue to our community, major Festivities at the Wineries, the Murgon High School Annual Speech Night and Senior Formal, The Murgon Men's Shed Railway Museum, the Murgon Rugby League sporting events, the Anzac Day celebrations, the ladies Pink Ladies Golf Day, the Bjelke-

Petersen Dam Fishing Carnival, the Easter Spiegtagular and many others including our annual local show.

We are appreciative of the local police department and Government agencies for their efforts in containing crime in our area and their involvement with the SB PCYC here in Murgon and we thank Sgt Renae Bond and her staff and volunteers of the SB PCYC who have instigated many programs, Sadly Murgon recently lost Sgt Renae to a higher position at Logan PCYC, many thanks for your commitment to the South Burnett Renae it was always a pleasure to work with you and we wish you great success in your new position.

Remember "Lock it or Lose it."

Whilst at times our town security cameras have created major headaches, moreover they have been very helpful in solving and reducing criminal activities.

We extend a very big thank you to all our members and businesses, especially Teys Murgon, one of our major employers, Service Clubs, Police, Ambulance, Doctors and Medical staff, Graham House, CTC, SES, Fire Services, Security officers, the Murgon Hospital Auxiliary and the Life Flight helicopter who saved many of our young and old, and to all concerned in promoting "Magnificent Murgon at the foothills of Boat Mountain, in the heart of the Burnett Valley, part of the Great South Burnett 2.1/2 hours from city or sea and look forward to a great 2024.

The South Burnett Rail Trail is another success story bringing many visitors to Murgon.

We also acknowledge the commitment shown by our area representative Councillor Kathy Duff, Federal member Mr. Llew O'Brien and State Opposition Leader Mrs. Deb Frecklington.

Congratulations to those recipients of local and Australia Day Awards and to sporting representatives who have achieved higher honours.

We are currently printing 5,000 copies, 48 pages of our local magazine The Murgon Moments and have now printed 205 monthly issues since enlarging our local newspaper some 16 years ago, (special thanks to our newspaper experts, script writers, the many story tellers, our advertisers and committee's for backing this local news production and to Darryl and Lyn Koy & Phenella Hiron, Jo Kemp and the Murgon Post Office in delivering to the Murgon town and outlying areas). I would also like to thank our print setter Linda Urch for her understanding and help.

Once again during this past twelve months we have sadly lost some of our great community workers, volunteers and family and we extend our sympathy to all these families. Murgon and our surrounding districts are synonymous with tough and changing times, and we look forward to better weather to set up our community for good summer crops. We thank the South Burnett Regional Council who have again worked closely with us and for the beautiful QE2 Park renovations,

During these past years many of our ambitions and dreams have become a reality, The \$3 million, 55 million years ago with our World renowned Murgon Fossil's and Art Gallery opened in

October 2023. This world class facility along with the Cherbourg Ration Shed, the Murgon Dairy and heritage museum, Wineries and Dams will attract visitors from all over the world. The upgrading of the old nurses' quarters at the Murgon Hospital to different health clinics (thankfully from a generous donation from the Pearen family), renovation of the SB PCYC toilets, and the erection of new homes on our estates will continue into next year.

But as always there are still some of our ambitions that have eluded us, small industries that employ people, the painting of the water towers, and we are still working on others and one day they too will become a reality.

It would be remiss of me if I didn't also congratulate the Murgon Men's Shed in bringing back a 1928 Railway steam engine which will form part of their Railway Museum.

Before I close, I would like to ask for your special assistance. A lot of us have held positions with this organisation for many years. Please be fair to my successor, you have all done a fantastic job over many years and thank you.

I have been led to believe we have more than sufficient numbers for positions on the board of this organisation going into 2024.

Please, if you feel you need a break, enjoy your rest, and please step back as my successor will need a lot of active assistance with new ideas that are being talked about.

We need new blood and new ideas to move this organisation forward and keep this well-respected organisation held in high regard by people of Murgon and the South Burnett.

Take a look at our town through the eyes of our visitors, it is a very vibrant country town, and you should be congratulated.

Remember STAY AWHILE – TRY LOCAL - &- BE SURPRISED

And have a safe and wonderful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year and welcome my successor to be elected here this evening.

Leo Geraghty OAM – President

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