

## YOUR LETTERS

### Thank you to communities

What an amazing event, over two hundred people were gathered at Rollo's Airfield on Sunday to mark the "Road to Recovery" for many of the victims and to thank the emergency services involved in the Rockleigh Fires 2013, and the Rockleigh and Eden Valley fires in January 2014.

The day could not possibly have happened without the organisation of Barbara Pym, Lyn Gleghorn and Gwen Schubert on behalf of the Rockleigh Uniting Church, and the Rockleigh CFS.

Graham Boyd, Geosolutions Pty Ltd made his aircraft hangar available for the day, and Rollo Hein welcomed us to his property and organised and treated the large crowd to an aerial acrobatics display from the extraordinary Chris Sperou.

Dignitaries such as local member Adrian Pederick, Mayor Alan Arbon and Pam Arbon, Murray Bridge council CEO Peter Bond, elected members, and representatives of the Mid Murray Council were all there to help the recovery process.

This incredible day was fully sponsored by over 50 businesses in Murray Bridge (I suspect that every business that was approached gave in some way), Daish had been donating and assisting residents from the day the fires started, Max and Tim Noske (Hahndorf), the Meatbarn and TFI (Thomas Foods International) made sure that the event had a plentiful supply of sausages.

The assistance received from the band of helpers from the Murray Bridge Uniting Church congregation, and the Monarto Lutheran Church made sure people had seats to sit on, salads, and drinks and sweets to share.

IGA, Woolworths, Coles, McCues and Lobethal bakeries, Knights Party Hire and MKSL Enterprises made sure there was enough condiments, plates, knives, forks and anything else that could be added to make the day a success.

Ramsey Bros donated the major prizes for the raffle, funds will go to the Rockleigh CFS Support Group to help equip the badly needed new fire shed, the raffle will be drawn on Saturday, April 12, at the Murray Bridge Farmers Market, please come along and grab a ticket.

There are numerous other businesses and individuals that assisted with donations, possibly too many to name in this letter,

however, the generosity of the Murraylands communities and beyond was, and is, extremely humbling.

Funds raised from donations have assisted BlazeAid and their many volunteers in the valuable work of rebuilding fire damaged fences in the affected regions.

It was certainly a day of recovery, building and rekindling of friendships, and appreciation of the efforts of the CFS, farm fire units and all others that assisted during that horror month.

A heartfelt thanks must go to all that have opened their hearts over the last couple of months, and to all that continued to give for this event.

Penny Heighes,  
Rockleigh.

### 'Disgraceful' decision

I was extremely disappointed and angry to read your headline article in Tuesday's Standard that Murray Bridge council's Development Assessment Panel had approved in a meeting last year, the demolition of several "heritage" houses as "a compromise" along Swanport Road "to make way for a two storey car park".

My understanding was that the original shopping centre approval required the retention of these houses maintained in good condition so that the appearance and ambience of Swanport Road with buildings of this style be maintained.

It appeared by comments from the developer at this time that this was acceptable.

The DAP contains members of the community who are appointed to represent the interests of the community and we vote for our council representatives who we also believe will think of the community as its first priority.

It appears in this case that the best interests of the community are not as important of the best interests of a development company.

It has been obvious for some time that these houses since taken over by the developer have been neglected.

We have seen vandalism occurring and exposed as a fire hazard with high dry grass allowed to grow around the buildings.

No doubt the developer has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars by not having to update and refurbish these old homes.

Instead a bulldozer will knock them to the ground and be replaced by an ugly concrete two stor-y car park in full view of Swanport Road, a structure that originally would have been hidden behind the houses.

The only "compromise" the DAP gave was to allow the developer to save money.

Most developers will attempt to take the cheapest option when constructing a new or expanded project so they can maximize their profits.

What is best for the community is obviously secondary to their decisions.

Councils DAP has been hoodwinked and it is a disgraceful decision which ranks up

with this same committee's decision two years ago to allow a drag racing strip at Monarto right next to the Monarto Zoo which could have resulted in its closure.

Graham Hallandal,  
Murray Bridge.

## 100 days - no boats

Last Saturday marked 100 days since the last successful people smuggling venture to Australia.

The security of our nation is the most important responsibility of government and the Abbott Coalition Government takes its responsibilities in this regard seriously.

The Coalition went to the last election with clear policies to stop the boats.

We are keeping our promise to stop the boats by doing what we said we would do.

These strong policies are saving lives.

Under Labor, more than 800 boats arrived carrying over 50,000 people, including more than 8000 children.

This catastrophic policy failure resulted in over 1000 lives lost at sea and \$11 billion in Budget blowouts.

The Government has made the difficult but necessary decisions to stop the boats.

Operation Sovereign Borders is working as intended.

The people smugglers understand that the way to Australia is closed.

The progress we are making in strengthening our borders is restoring confidence in our migration program.

We are an immigrant country and a successful immigration programme requires that it operates with integrity.

While this milestone recognises the progress that we have made, the Government remains resolute in our determination to stop the boats.

Tony Pasin MP,  
Federal Member for Barker.