

Heyfield & District Community Bank® Branch

Newsletter—March 2009

A Message From the Bendigo Bank Limited

As we begin 2009, the global economic uncertainty we have experienced in the past 18 months shows little sign of easing. Around the world, many economies now face the prospect of a deep recession. So far, Australia has avoided the worst excesses of the global downturn, but some key indicators, such as retail sales and job advertisements are beginning to show a downward trend.

However, there are still sound fundamentals underpinning the Australian economy. Enhanced by the Government's guarantee on savings, our banks are among the most solid in the world and they continue to lend money. We still have low unemployment and the

agricultural sector is well overdue a good season after the diminishing returns of recent years.

As well as these factors, the Reserve Bank of Australia still has room to further lower interest rates to help stimulate the economy. It is only a matter of time before rates fall below the 2001 low of 4.25%, with many commentators predicting they may be as low as 3.5% before the first half of 2009 is over.

Notwithstanding some of the less than favourable economic indicators, with interest rates continuing to move south and house prices stabilising, it is still a very good time for buyers to

make a move into the market in a prudent manner.

Buyers, particularly those buying their first home, should ensure they do not get over excited by the current low rates and borrow beyond their means. With that in mind, it is wise to budget for loan repayments using a higher rate than present (at least 2 to 3% higher than current rates). Rates don't just go down, they go up too and whilst they may be lower in the foreseeable future, the cycle will eventually turn.

Source: Bendigo Public Relations
March 2009



Dear Shareholders

With the World Financial Markets in turmoil and the disastrous fires in Victoria and floods in Queensland, how do you stay positive?

It is the generosity of our fellow human beings that rush to the aid of these people. If you think you have a problem just think of the hardship these people are enduring.

Chairman's Report—Alan Broadbent OAM

Your Community Bank has contributed to the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund and your donation of \$5,000 to the Fire & Flood Appeal organised by Bendigo Bank which it doubled. We even had a cheque for \$50 American donated to us for the Appeal, thank you.

Your Bank is still growing and your Directors and Staff are monitoring the situation closely. Your Directors are working hard,

looking at how to grow your business, and we look for support from you our fellow shareholders, so if you have any ideas please contact me, I am eager to listen.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors in ways of monitoring costs and to our Staff for a job well done.

Keep Smiling

Your Chairman—Alan Broadbent OAM

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Heyfield & District Community Bank® Branch

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Operating Hours: Mon - Thurs 9:30am - 4:00pm

Fri 9:30am - 5:00pm

Sat 9:00am - 12 noon



Secretary's Message

In a year of global financial turmoil it is pleasing to note that the company's half year results have shown a continued steady growth in earnings.

The Board have finally reached agreement with Bendigo Stock Exchange for the company to be delisted as from 1st July 2009. Our Low Volume Market will commence from that date.

I also need to correct a statement made in our previous newsletter that the Australia Securities

and Investments Commission (ASIC) will administer the Low Volume Market. The company will administer the Low Volume Market but will be required to report its activities to ASIC.

Shareholders should not hesitate to contact the company if there are any queries in relation to the operation of the Low Volume Market.

Keith Borthwick—
Company Secretary



Treasurer's Report

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It is very pleasing to report, that in the present uncertain economic climate, our community bank branch is continuing to show continued growth with our total funds under management now above \$63 million.

Income from July to the end of February this year is in excess of the same period in the 2008 financial year, and we are constantly monitoring our expenses, as well as keeping ourselves up dated on the national and international situation.

At present we are anticipating that our full year financial result will once again be quite strong, allowing us to continue providing funding to community groups and organisations for their projects, and also to return a dividend payment to our shareholder base.

David Graham -
Treasurer

A Message from our Branch Manager— Clare Adams



Since my report in last year's Annual Report the economy has undergone significant change, such

as unprecedented decreases in interest rates and the Federal Government guaranteeing deposits under \$1million held in Australian Banks. I am proud to report that our branch is coping well with the impact with the current financial crisis, business continues to grow maybe not at the rate that we have seen in the last two years but we are still growing.

Total balance sheet position at the end of February was \$63.1 million which represents \$2.3 million growth from 1st July 2008. The branch now holds 3,345 accounts an increase of 118 this financial year, and we have approved 65 loans for the same period.

We have continued to support a diverse number of groups and organisations throughout the year in sponsorships and donations of \$30,000 including \$7,000 to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal.

I thank all our shareholders and supporters for continuing their support of our **Community Bank®** branch.

Clare Adams

Branch Manager

Our Branch Team



From left to right: Tamarah Smith, Jane McInnes, Clare Adams (Branch Manager), Tina McGill and Kerry Anderson



**If you wish to receive this
newsletter by email please let us
know. Email: hdfs@own.net.au**

A Scholarship is awarded

FIRST NURSING SCHOLARSHIP AT HEYFIELD

The first scholarship awarded by the Heyfield and District **Community Bank**® Branch for a nurse at the Heyfield Hospital has been presented to Ms Cassie Marshall.

Ms Marshall applied for and gained the \$10,000 scholarship, which will help her complete her Registered Nurse Division One studies, a task she is undertaking while raising two children and continuing to work at Heyfield Hospital in her capacity as a Division Two nurse.

"It is wonderful, it means a lot to me," she said. "Not only does it help me with the books and things that I need for my course but also helps with travel to Monash University at Churchill, where I study three days a week."

Alan Broadbent, Chair of the Board of Heyfield and District Community Financial Services, the entity which has the **Community Bank**® franchise in Heyfield, said the Bank was delighted to award the scholarship.

"We have wonderful facilities here and we want to continue the services we have, which requires well trained people. It is wonderful to be able to provide the first scholarship to Cassie," he said.

Ms Marshall has lived in Heyfield for several years and intends continuing her work as a nurse at the Hospital once her studies are completed.

She moved to the town about seven years ago after a ten year career in the hospitality industry, in food preparation and front of house.

Her first job at the Heyfield Hospital was also in the kitchen, but she decided on a career change to nursing.

"I wanted to undertake the Division Two qualifications first so I could see what the job was like. I loved it so I took up the Division One training. The scholarship will really help me complete it."

The Heyfield & District **Community Bank**® Branch has been a strong supporter of the Hospital for several years.

Manager Clare Adams said over the past three years, some \$250,000 had been donated to various organisations in the town, including approx \$138,000 to the Hospital.

With 51 aged care beds and nine sub-acute beds and emergency facilities, the Hospital is a large employer in Heyfield. The nursing staff alone includes 25 permanent positions as well as a number of casuals. There are also 17 personal carers and other administrative and catering staff.

Caption: Cassie Marshall, centre, is pictured in the Heyfield Hospital receiving the scholarship from Alan Broadbent and Clare Adams.



Following two very successful working bees held at the beginning of term, our kitchen garden is taking shape beautifully. We now have several garden boxes, paving between some of those boxes, and more to be done, a set of steps leading down from the sensory garden to the produce garden, shade cloth for wind protection, around the perimeter of the garden and the "Rolls Royce" of compost bins, with three bays, constructed by Kevin Barry. The design of the garden was influenced by the winning design of Adam Judd and Jack Northway who won the Garden design Competition of Heyfield Primary School in 2008.

Mrs Carol Barry, who is our gardener-come-instructor, funded by the Heyfield Bendigo **Community Bank**®, is doing some wonderful work with the children who have been busy

Heyfield Primary School—Our Kitchen Garden takes Shape

constructing "no dig" gardens, barrowing soil and planting out two existing garden boxes with zucchini and cucumber seedlings, generously donated by Errol and Jenny from E&J's Nursery in George Street. The Grades one and two children are excitedly watching their strawberry plants, donated by Carol Barry, grow, flower and start to produce berries and the Prep children have been busy planting seeds in Jiffy Pots and watching the seeds germinate and grow, ready to transplant into the garden.

In such a short time the children have been involved with measurement – for the perimeter fence shade cloth; hefting – understanding how much they can carry comfortably in a barrow; soil composition – constructing the no-dig gardens; seed raising and transplanting; and garden construction, where groups of children helped to construct the shade house where we will continue raising and growing seedlings for the garden. Team work

has been essential and the student groups have co-operated extremely well, understanding the need for everyone to work together in harmony to produce a positive and exciting outcome.

There are several people and organisations whom have contributed to the very successful start to this garden and to whom we extend our thanks. The Heyfield Bendigo **Community Bank**® for funding Carol Barry, who has brought her knowledge and expertise to the position, the parents and community helpers who participated in the working bees, the Junior School Council of 2008, E & J's Nursery, Vern Graham's Hardware which put together our new wheelbarrows and delivered them free of charge, Lynne, Ruby and Esther Richardson, and Emma Williamson and family who all generously contributed cash or materials. We now all look forward to continued planting and the excitement of reaping the produce in the coming months.

*Submitted by Russell Hodgson, Principal,
Heyfield Primary School*

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Our vision is to promote the importance of community banking to the highest degree for our customers and deliver benefits to the com-

Hello. My name is Christine Thomas and last September the Board appointed me as Company Personal Assistant. I have a background in working with community groups, government funding bodies and office administration.

I have found the position so far to be challenging, never boring and endeavouring to get everything done.

I admire the Bendigo model of Community banking and feel that to be able to put back into the community is important, both financially and for community satisfaction.

I can be contacted on 03 51482204 , mobile 0400679535 or email: hdfe@own.net.au

Learning to care for the Aged



Director Profiles

Last year, twelve students from the local area commenced studying a double qualification – the Certificate III in Aged Care & the Certificate III in Home & Community Care with the local Heyfield Outreach Centre of East Gippsland TAFE. Bendigo Bank was approached to financially assist students with their studies. This offered an opportunity for our Bank to offer scholarships, on the proviso that students successfully completed their course.

We are pleased to announce that six students graduated in March, and a further five students are continuing with their studies. Four students are already employed in their new career locally. We received very positive feedback about having local training & working in with Laurina Lodge.

David Wadey

Director
Real Estate Agent
Favourite Footy Team:
Mighty Demons



Favourite Sport to Watch: V8 Supercars "Go Holden"

Feel passionate about my job and love helping people & this job is a mechanism to help people realise their dreams.

Why Community Banking: The community of Heyfield & district have been very good to me, & it is a way of me giving back to the community. It keeps me in touch with the community and its on going needs.

Interests: My interests are: My Children (2 boys). C.F.A., Lions Club & The Community Bank. Also helping son Stephen work on his hill climb car, & offer support when needed.

David Graham

Director– Treasurer
Business Owner



Favourite Footy Team—Essendon

Favourite Sport– Motorcycle sport

Passionate about Family and Friends as they make the world a wonderful place

Why Community Banking: To ensure we had ongoing banking in our town and through this medium, enable our community to prosper for many years to come.

Interests: Motorcycling and Sports of all types



Michele Ripper -

Director
Principal & Proprietor of Body and Soul Dance Studio



Passionate about my family, friends, the community, being positive and living a fulfilling life. These are all the things that you keep you young, happy and engaged with life.

Why Community Banking: it seemed a great idea that would keep Heyfield and the district a viable place to live and work. The Bendigo bank has the kind of business ethic I admire that people come first. The profit share meant we could help ourselves, be proactive improving the amenities of the town and offer opportunities to local people

Interests: cooking, and sharing food with friends, horse riding and listening to music.