

Park Lane

Annual Report 2017-2018



Our Dream



We are part of a future where people of all abilities reach their potential and they feel respected, happy and confident.

Our Purpose



We provide an environment which encourages people to reach their potential while delivering quality products and services to our customers and clients.

Our Values



The Merriwa team has shared values which result in taking pride in our work and our role in supporting our community.

Prosperity

We are prosperous and successful in the provision of our products and services, and having a positive working environment

Responsibility

We treat the Merriwa business like it is our own business

Integrity

We are honest, ethical and work to high standards

Diversity

We acknowledge that every person has different abilities and we welcome, accept and celebrate our differences

Excellence

We are committed to being the best we can be, everyday, as we serve our clients and our customers



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Board of Directors



Danny O'Donoghue
Chair



Joe Caruso
Deputy Chair



Michael Carlile
Treasurer



John Joyce
Director



Libby Hosking
Director



Margaret Bennett
Director

Senior Management Team



Bart Crawley
Chief Executive Officer



Mark Currie
GM of Operations
Wangaratta



Scott Grant
Corporate Services
Manager



Joanne Ryan
Finance Manager



Jacquie Pavlik
Quality & Safety Manager

Divisional Managers



Paul Rundell
Contract Packaging Manager



Maria Wadley
Park Lane Nursery Manager



Mark Umanski
Timbers Manager
Greta Road



Mario Parisi
Timbers Manager
Gibson Street

Chairman's Report

On behalf of the Directors of the Board of Merriwa Industries Ltd, I welcome you to the 2017/18 Annual Report.

Readers of this report will be familiar with the term “going from strength to strength”; that term certainly characterised Merriwa Industries over the past year.

Merriwa's highly capable board of directors was strengthened by the appointment of Margaret Bennett, CEO of NorthEast Health, to the board early in the financial year. Margaret brings to Merriwa extensive experience and success at managing a large enterprise, a prominent community profile and strong networks across government, agencies, community and the health sector.

Merriwa's financial position was strengthened as a result of astute work by our CEO Bart Crawley, his team of senior managers and indeed all staff; their diligence has realised the sales growth, the efficiency and quality measures that have been the operational focus over the past few years.

A revision of Merriwa's strategic direction over the course of the year has resulted in the strengthening of our strategic and operational “footprint” by expanding Merriwa's business to Wodonga in order to capitalise on emerging business and employment opportunities in the Albury/Wodonga area.

History will be the ultimate judge of that move, however, early indications are very positive that the strategy will enable Merriwa to strengthen its core business of employing and supporting people of all abilities, in a large community where such options are limited.

Director, managers, employees and community/ business partners of Merriwa all possess an indomitable will to create employment and other

“Strength does not come from physical capacity; it comes from an indomitable will.”

- Mahatma Ghandi

opportunities for people of all abilities by being part of a highly successful and well regarded social enterprise.

Merriwa is strong and has an exciting future to look forward to.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank:

- Colleague Board members for your loyalty and professional contribution to the Governance of Merriwa
- CEO Bart Crawley and his dedicated management team and all staff for your hard work
- Customers, Contractors, Partners including all levels of Government – we appreciate your support
- Members of Merriwa past and present who have helped make Merriwa great



Danny O'Donoghue
Chair

Chief Executive Officer's Report



The year commenced with a feeling of anticipation having balanced the books in 2017, delivering a strong profit for 2018, and demand growing for our products and services in 2018/19.

At the beginning of 2017 our enthusiasm was tempered somewhat due to the NDIS rollout happening in October of the same year.

We began preparing our supported team members and their families for the pending rollout of the NDIS by running workshops for participants, families, carers and staff. Merriwa, still not having a suitable depth of understanding on the complexities of the new scheme, engaged an advisor to work closely with the key stakeholders to guide them through the maze of the NDIS.

An emerging decision for the directors and executive team was to clearly identify where Merriwa fitted within the new world of NDIS. It was generally understood, through experiences conveyed from NDIS trial sites, that the big end of town would eventually move to the region, bringing with them competition and financial sustainability challenges, so it was paramount Merriwa had a clear direction for the future. In early March 2018 at a strategic planning session, the direction was set by the Board of Directors and Senior Management Team – “to be the best supported employer, with wrap around services, in Australia”

The last 12 months have been extremely busy, witnessing numerous achievements across all Merriwa's business divisions, culminating in the new business opportunity in Wodonga which has now been operating since September 2018.

In line with the business achievements Merriwa has been proud to continue its partnership with The Merriwa Maggies all abilities football team and the Wangaratta District Special School, through supporting their sporting teams or providing work experience to students in one of our factories.

During the year Merriwa sponsored a theatre production of “Listening to Voices” produced by Gateway Health. Open to Merriwa staff and members of the Wangaratta community the audience was witness to a professional, informative and often emotional challenging performance, exploring the many issues and challenges faced by people suffering from mental health.

This year's annual awards dinner continued to raise the bar and was a tremendous success. The keynote speaker for the night was Paralympian Kurt Fearnley AO, who delivered an inspirational speech followed by a standing ovation. There were over 20 awards presented on the night, all too well deserving recipients. The challenge is now set for next year, not only to better the night but finding a venue to fit us all in, with the new team in Wodonga expected to be more than 50 in number, by mid next year (2019).

Merriwa's strategic goal is to be the best supported employer in Australia.

Over the next 3 years we will be working on doubling our supported employee workforce to more than 160, continuing to build on our reputation and brand, and working tirelessly to ensure we remain a great place to work.

Procurement

Following the re-structure of the Maintenance Division in mid-2017, a Procurement module was established, which has a number of facets.

One area is the responsibility of organising the maintenance requirements for MCS houses. This involves investigating best possible solutions to the problems raised, and engaging relevant contractors specific to the tasks required. Tasks include plumbing, electrical (including Test & Tag), general repairs, preventative maintenance scheduling for some equipment, and raising purchase orders for service and repairs of asset vehicles.

A lockable procurement area was set up in the Hay Ave shed, and pallet racking was installed. This has allowed the purchasing of consumable items and spare parts to be consolidated and controlled. This has resulted in better price advantages being achieved, and freight costs reduced. Merriwa manufacturing divisions can now place requests for weekly deliveries, to ensure a constant level of necessary PPE and production items on hand. To enable a better delivery process, 2 older asset vehicles were traded in for a Mitsubishi Triton Ute, received in August 2018. This has reduced the insurance/registration costs by half.

A major achievement for Procurement was the commissioning of MCB Electrical from Melbourne to replace existing HiBay lighting with LED fittings, across the Merriwa manufacturing divisions. Due to government rebates, this was done at no cost to Merriwa, and this service had not been offered by local suppliers. Apart from better illumination, the added benefit is because the LED's use much less power, the overall power cost is significantly reduced. MCB also fitted the new Romet Rd Wodonga plant with LEDs, again at no cost to Merriwa.

Procurement has taken over the process of ordering and delivering First Aid supplies across all Merriwa divisions, and in future will be looking to expand this service to cover Stationery as well.

Merriwa's key objectives over the coming 12 months:

- Increase our supported employee numbers to 125
- Stabilise the new business in Wodonga
- Grow our co-packing division, with the introduction of at least one new key customer
- Continue to work on our timber division, turning it from being a significant drain on Merriwa's financial resources, to a solid contributor.
- Building the Merriwa brand in the region.
- Deliver more training, growing the capabilities of our management team.
- Increase the human resources in our quality and safety team.

In finishing, a huge thank you to all the team at Merriwa with a special mention:

- to our chair Mr Danny O'Donoghue, for his leadership and guidance;
- to the Board of Directors' for giving up their valuable time, providing Merriwa with clear direction and support;
- to my Senior Management Team for their support and dedication and passion for our organisation. Your support and contribution has been significant in driving the improvements over the past 12 months, creating opportunities now and into the future.



Bart Crawley
CEO

Operations



Packaging

We have seen substantial growth within our Packaging Division throughout 2017-18, where our relationship with our customers has continued to strengthen.

To cater for this growth and demand, our Plant 2 site in Wangaratta has been running at full capacity, operating 13 lines (work stations), working overtime shifts and utilising a casual pool of employees at stages to deal with the demand in addition to our supported and non-supported team of permanent employees.

The multiple product lines from our customers for co-packing have expanded from 60 to over 100 unique products, which has been based on consumer demand and catering for new markets contributing to our Packaging Division reaching capacity. Based on this, our key areas of focus have been on developing ways to efficiently manage production and timeframes in alignment with our labour force, and effectively managing work loads.

These factors have contributed to an exciting new development for Merriwa, which has seen us purchase a commercial site in Wodonga to cater for the growth of our Packaging Division. This has been an exciting time for Merriwa and we continue to work closely with our customers to continue to strengthen our relationship and meet their needs in this new development.

Throughout the year we have also seen the retirement of long-term employees and would like to thank them for their service and contribution to Merriwa's Packaging Team.

Paul Rundell
Packaging Manager

Contract Packaging and Processing

Throughout 2017-18 we have continued to build our relationships with our customers. We have strived to be embedded within their processes of developing, packing and distribution of the products we supply – this has seen several site visits to Wangaratta from our customers which has contributed to enhancing our relationship and communications with them.

Through these relationships, we have continued to expand the product ranges that we pack to include Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP), a soy based protein, as well as Bulgur Wheat, which is excellent for us to promote and be able to utilise our capabilities in packing allergen products.

We have been discussing opportunities to work with potential new clients who are based in retail sales and bulk product in nuts, which allows for and encourages growth within this division.

A key focus area has also been on our LEAN processes and training, building a culture of continual improvement, team input and a focusing on people, safety and quality which in turn improves our production efficiencies.

Our team at CPP has stayed consistent, with the occasional need for a casual workforce to manage supply and demand. Looking to the future, we continue to build on our capabilities and areas for growth through our strong relationships with customers, as well as providing increased opportunities for supported employment.

Mark Currie
General Manager Operations Wangaratta

Timbers

Our Timber Divisions have seen positive results over the past 12 months with the implementation of our revised business plan which identified areas for growth, industry trends and improvements.

Our production of Glue Laminated Beams has been a high growth area, where we continue to improve on sales and gain more market share across Victoria, working with key customers.

This has only been able to be achieved through our commitment to LEAN processes, where our focus has been on creating a quality product for our customers, meeting timeframe expectations and building a culture of continuing to improve efficiencies on the production floor with our team.

As part of this, we have been able to reduce labour costs and raw material costs, which sees us slowly closing the gap to become a more sustainable and profitable business. In addition to this, we have also diversified into producing stair treads, which is our own product and has already had interest from the marketplace.

Our production of hardwood flooring based at Gibson Street has seen it's challenges, which have been based around sourcing raw material locally, but we continue to explore sustainable options, particularly around the forestry industry in Tasmania. In addition to flooring, we have also been diversifying our capabilities and have introduced more furniture grade product, as well as focusing on our inventory systems to further refine our business model moving forward.

Our team culture continues to thrive with a focus on upskilling and providing training opportunities for our team, while focusing on our social enterprise model which sees us build our team of supported employees.

Mark Umanski
Timber Manager - Greta Road

Mario Parisi
Timber Manager - Gibson Street



Corporate Services



Over the last two years we have been implementing many systems and process improvements behind the scenes in preparation for the rollout of the NDIS in our regions. Systems such as Client Management (Supportability), clock cards (Bundy) and document control (Sharepoint) have continued to develop, albeit slowly in some circumstances, to modernise some of our corporate practices. These items are now part of our day to day operations and will continue to improve over time. Whilst these systems have been beneficial, nothing really prepared us for the disruption created by the NDIS.

Merriwa has always positively promoted the concepts of choice and control that underpin the NDIS, and understand that implementations of such projects are not always smooth. As a service provider we have been affected, but certainly not to the extent that many of our employees and clients have. Merriwa understands that planning and preparation is key in any major change or project, and undertook a range of pre-planning activities to assist participants and their families get an understanding of the NDIS concepts. Thankfully we did that. Many other service providers, and indeed the whole NDIS support landscape, were under-prepared for the change. Merriwa immediately launched into advocacy and assistance mode to ensure we provided the most support that we could to participants and carers. The 6 month period between October to April was, to say the least, hectic.

After nine months of involvement, we are now starting to see some settling and maturity in the NDIS process. More importantly, we are starting to see positive outcomes for participants as espoused by the scheme. It's far from perfect yet, but we are seeing less and less errors and some stability in plans. Evidence from other roll-out sites is that the NDIS service market takes 2-3 years before it starts to mature. We look forward to watching this market grow, and to watching our participants grow through the process.

The remainder of our corporate services have all also revolved around NDIS. Our marketing presence through all forms of media has been constant, informing internal and external stakeholders on the roll-out of the NDIS. The important role Merriwa plays in supporting and facilitating goals for people has been widely publicised through our community marketing and engagement plans. Sponsorships, community events and functions have all helped to raise the awareness of how important Merriwa is to the North East Region.

The folio of work we have undertaken in the past 5 years has provided us with a significant foundation for future exciting opportunities. They are upon us now, and we look forward to providing people based outcomes through the wider North East region.

Scott Grant
Corporate Services Manager



Community Services

Merriwa Community Services experienced a busy and sometimes challenging 2017/18 year, with many changes, not the least being the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) into our region in October 2017. The impact of this was felt throughout Merriwa as new processes and systems were required to ensure ongoing delivery of services. With the change of funding it became evident that we needed to modify the Management structure and clearly separate Disability from Child Youth and Family to guarantee service quality. We welcomed the appointment of Annemarie Noonan in February and along with Ruth Belan and Jenelle Wind have managed the Merriwa Community Services team during these vast changes.

Disability Services now supports our Shared Supported Accommodation facility; Respite; Supported Residential Service and Day Services. These services have been directly impacted with the implementation of NDIS. We have continued to offer exceptional care, we are aligning our services with 'best practice' principles, whilst implementing systems that will allow us to work more efficiently.

Child Youth and Family have experienced ongoing demand for our services throughout the year, which has resulted in recruitment of staff and this is ongoing. Our homes continue to provide a safe haven for the young people in our community as well as being committed to ensuring they have the best possible outcomes.

During the year we have implemented a new induction process, have made a commitment to providing enhanced staff industry training, and have introduced the 'LEAN' philosophy. Community Services is also incorporating more visual aids throughout the division.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the MCS staff for their dedication and support throughout the year. The staff are enduring, flexible and committed to the often-complex environment in which they work, which is very much appreciated by the Board, Management and all of Merriwa.

Ruth Belan
Community Services Manager

Park Lane



2017/2018 has been an enjoyable and challenging period at Park Lane. We continue to focus on fostering a safe and enjoyable workplace, while producing quality product and providing great service to our valuable customers, through our retail outlet as well as our commercial and contract avenues.

We finally cracked \$1m in sales which was very exciting. Unfortunately that didn't equate to a profit this year, however it does illustrate that we have strong relationships with our customers across the board. A job well done by our Retail, Contract Gardening, and Production teams.

Our Production team was pleased to add two new supported employees to the crew this year, and has been involved in several important revegetation projects dealing with threatened species in our region. We have propagated *Banksia marginata*, *Acacia linearifolia*, and *Eucalyptus melliodora* for projects undertaken by Wooragee Landcare, the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning, Swamps Rivers and Ranges (SRR), and the King Basin Landcare Group. Some great environmental work happening here, we are proud to leave such a legacy.

We continue to foster good relationships with other regional councils such as Indigo Shire, Benalla Rural City, and the Rural City of Wodonga, supplying three substantial orders to Wodonga City who have been very impressed with the quality of our stock and service, as well as our social outcomes.

We have sought to diversify the production side of the nursery, including a large order from Bailey's vineyard at Glenrowan to grow on some of their heritage varieties – an interesting challenge for the team in this project, which will continue into the next few years.

Our Retail department has been kept busy with many loyal repeat customers, as well as new customers who have just discovered us. It's always challenging keeping our stock on the ground in top condition, as well as keeping up with the latest trends in gardening and landscaping, particularly in our local climate with its extremes in temperature from summer to winter.

The Contract Garden crew have welcomed two new supported employees to the team. They are kept on their toes with the Telstra, NEHW, Magistrates Court, and Merriwa maintenance contracts. They have also undertaken planting for North East Catchment Management Authority, as well as a number of private contract projects.

As part of our Continuous Improvement process, a hardworking core of three staff members have begun the very challenging task of overhauling the entire production and process "system" which has evolved at the nursery over the past 20 years – an unenviable task. They have sought input from all parts of the nursery to come up with a new system which will result in the development of a comprehensive database. This will allow much better tracking of information regarding sales, costs, and waste - which we believe will help us move towards becoming more profitable. It will also allow real time tracking of stock on the ground, which will help us to better serve our customers (and make stock take so much easier!).

We held our inaugural Autumn Photography Competition, with some awesome photos from right across the region. The presentation evening was a great success with a pleasing crowd in attendance, many of whom we have begun to see regularly visiting the nursery.

Park Lane Nursery was once again nominated at the Wangaratta Business awards for Agriculture Business of the Year, which was something that the whole team is proud of. Unfortunately we didn't win this year, but we are pleased to be acknowledged as leaders in our field.

At the Merriwa awards night, Park Lane was proud to have four team members who made it through as finalists, one of whom took out the prize for their category. Congratulations to those four individuals who go above and beyond every day.

A big thank you to the whole team here at Park Lane for their enthusiasm and commitment throughout the year. Looking forward to the challenges of the coming year.

Maria Wadley
Park Lane Nursery Manager





Financial Report

2017-18 Financial year there has been a concerted effort by Board and Management to ensure Merriwa is positioned to maintain future sustainability.

We have continued the re-structure process and it has produced good results.

Our future is looking very exciting, with growth and efficiencies our focus going forward.

Our result for the Financial year 2017-18 was in excess of expectations

- Total Revenue increase 1.2% on budget
- Other Income increase 35% on budget
- Net Profit increase 62% on budget

Merriwa has turned around a loss of \$98,849 in 2016-17 to a profit of \$925,590 this year.

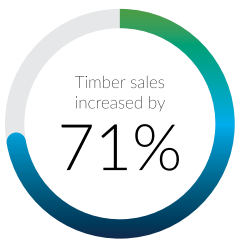
We have achieved this result by focusing on sales and margins, managing labour costs and stronger marketing.

Our balance sheet remains strong with Total equity of \$17,577,625.

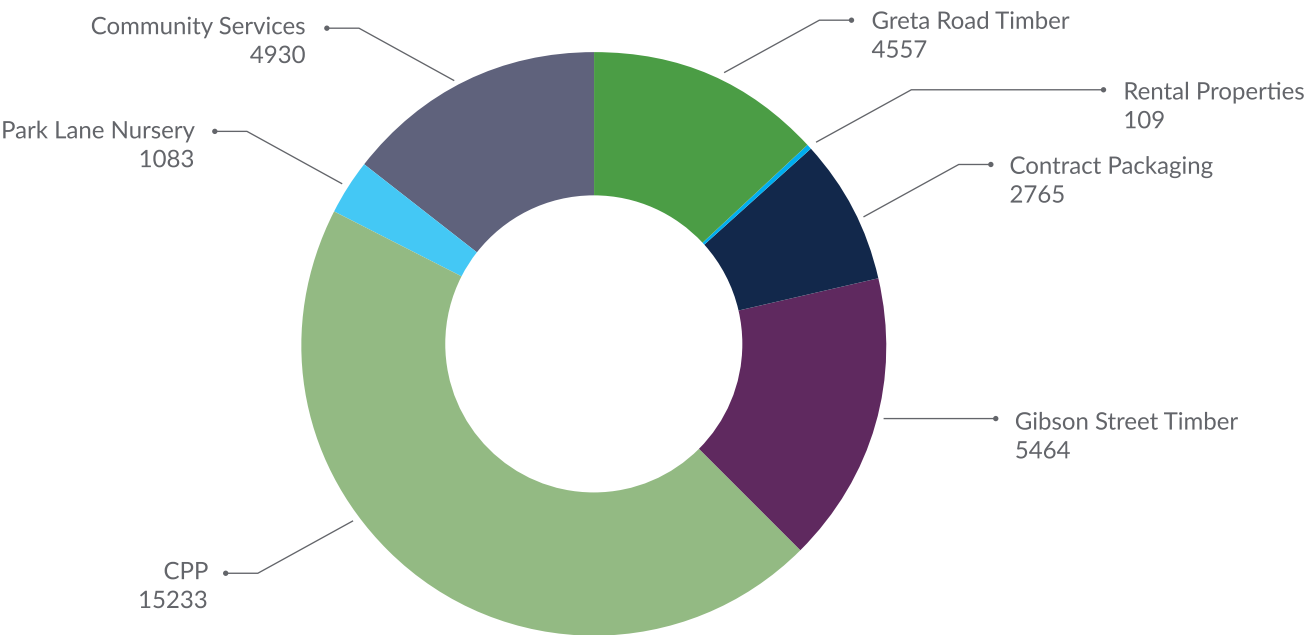
Merriwa is committed through strong fiscal management to remain focused on achieving the best outcome for our organisation.

Joanne Ryan
Finance Manager

Highlights



Segment Revenue by Division \$,000



2017/18 Awards Night

Merriwa's Annual Awards night celebrates and recognises those at Merriwa who have excelled in their work through recent achievements and have been nominated by their peers, and also recognising years of service and dedication to their jobs.

The Awards night had 260 guests attend including employees, families, carers and special guests. The guest speaker was Kurt Fearnery, Australian Paralympic Gold Medalist who captivated the audience, with his stories of success, triumph and tears. A truly inspirational guy.

The night was themed as 'Celebrities and Movie Stars' and was absolutely brilliant to see so many amazing costumes!

Jack Lyle Award for Achievement

Brad Howarth



This award is not just for achievements at work, although learning new work skills and mastering new processes are certainly good reasons for a nomination. People can achieve personal growth which in

turn benefits their work for example, overcoming obstacles, beating bad habits etc. This award is open to supported employees only.

38 employees were nominated for the Achievement Award, and were narrowed down to three finalists – Kath Kelly, Meron Melnyk and Brad Howarth.

The recipient was Brad Howarth, who was recognised for his transition from Plant 2 Packaging to the Timbers Division, learning new skills and pushing himself to learn in new areas. He aims for high standards in his work, is friendly to work with, is always respectful and loves his job.

Graham Gales Award for Endeavour

Anthony Hicks



This award is for an employee who has grown in their personal development. For example, they are self-motivated, have empathy for their fellow employees, demonstrate enjoyment of their role, has

grown as a person, is prepared to go the extra mile, is prepared to try new skills, demonstrates respect towards their supervisors/managers and takes instructions in a positive manner. This award is open to supported employees only.

41 employees were nominated for the Endeavour Award, and were narrowed down to three stand out finalists – Anthony Hicks, Clinton Lewis and Darren Metcraft.

The recipient for this award was Anthony Hicks, who was recognised as being a happy and productive member of the team at Park Lane Nursery and is always respectful and thoughtful of others. He is respectful of his workmates and supervisors, and he has genuine care for his fellow employees.

Mary Saunders Award for Enterprise

Chris Black



This award recognizes initiative and new growth. For example learning completely different work skills; taking on Work Health and Safety responsibilities; using the telephone to communicate.

The drive recognised in this award comes from the employee him/herself.

This employee is taking on extra duties without being asked, to challenge themselves and taking the lead in learning new skills. This award is open to supported employees only.

40 employees were nominated for the Enterprise Award, and were narrowed down to three finalists – Emma Arnol, Chris Black and David Sulman.

Chris Black was the recipient for this award, with his work colleagues nominating him for his adjustment to working at Greta Road and a new team environment. His willingness to learn new tasks, speaking up about concerns and being a member of the Supported Employee Advisory Committee.

Hugh Elford Award for Excellence

Kurtis Martin



This award recognises exceptional role-modelling and/or mentoring skills in the workplace. People nominated for this award will have strong interpersonal or "people" skills, and lead by example at work and

in life in general. Many excellence award nominees will have made a valuable contribution to the community. This award is open to all employees.

30 employees were nominated for the Excellence

Award, and were narrowed down to four finalists – Robyn Rowe, Naomi Leslie, Kurtis Martin and Belinda Clark.

Kurtis Martin was the recipient of this award for excellent interaction with the team at Timbers and working well in his role as supervisor, checking product, working through quality issues and ensuring the smooth running of Plant 1 Timbers.

Ray Byrne Award for Quality

Suzy Gehrig



This award is for outstanding professional workmanship or outstanding customer or client service. Nominees for this award will have met or exceeded quality-related targets, and will have added value over and

above what is reasonably required of them. Quality award nominees have made a valuable contribution to company objectives. This award is open to all employees.

30 employees were nominated for the Quality Award, and were narrowed down to three finalists – Suzy Gehrig, Erin Ross and Jason Hocking.

The recipient of this award was Suzy Gehrig for her quality customer service and relaying of information to the Timbers team. She goes above and beyond for customers, keeps everyone honest and happy.

Retirements

Julie Edmond – Julie started work at Merriwa in 2003 and worked afternoon and night shifts for several years. Julie has worked many different tasks over the years and enjoyed her work at Merriwa, describing her time as “It’s just like working with family. We are one big team and the biggest thing I’ll miss is working with such great people”.

Julie was always reliable, helpful, willing to learn new tasks and great to work with. Thank you Julie for your hard work and services over the years.

Janet Lawford – Janet started work at Merriwa in 2008 and has always loved learning new tasks. Janet is vivacious, caring and enjoyed a joke and having a laugh.

Janet decided to retire as she had worked her time at Merriwa, and now enjoys time at Park Lane Nursery in Day Programs participating in their activities. Thanks Janet for your services and we hope you are enjoying your retirement!

Ellen Lakeland - Retiring this month, Ellen started work at Merriwa in 1996 and has worked many tasks over the years. Her favourite was using the manual trolley jack to move pallet of product around the floor area.

Ellen always has a smile on her face and loves giving cuddles!

After 22 years, Ellen decided to retire and join activities that suit her lifestyle. Thanks Ellen for your services over the years!

Service Awards 2017/18

10 Year Service Awards

Brian Polkinghorne – Brian has worked between the two timber sites for 10 years. Brian is always willing to have a laugh! He works on the End Matcher at Gibson Street Timbers and gets along well with his team mates. Congratulations Brian!

Cain Van den Akker – Cain travels by bus from Benalla to work two days a week. Cain has a cheeky grin and chuckle and works many tasks, his housekeeping is excellent. Thanks Cain for entertainment and your services over the past 10 years!

David Sulman – David started in Timbers at Greta Road and has worked in all areas, he has progressed with his Machinist Apprenticeship with the company and has the ambition and determination to finish his training and become a fully qualified Machinist. He has the aptitude and knowledge to run the moulder at Gibson Street and does the setup every morning before the start of the working day. We cannot believe that it has been 10 years now - such a well-mannered young man, married with a lovely family and in his 2nd year apprenticeship - WELL DONE!!!

Ian Beattie – Ian has been a vital part of the team at Packaging in his 10 years of employment at Merriwa. Ian has a strong work ethic, passion and commitment to helping the CPP team succeed. Even after a life-threatening ailment in 2017, Ian returned back to work as strong as ever. He showed his commitment to Merriwa when we had to tell him he couldn't come back to work until the Dr's said it was OK. Thank you, Ian we really appreciate the hard work and effort that you bring to this team.

Patrick McDonald - Patrick has been volunteering his services at Park Lane Nursery since June 2008, and he is an intrinsic part of the Park Lane team.

Patrick has contributed to the nursery in many ways – from production duties, grounds and garden maintenance, joke telling, and generally keeping us in line. He is always willing to help out in any way possible, and he never grumbles – even when he gets the messy jobs. Patrick is the person who does all of those jobs that you don't realise need doing – until he misses a day and none of it gets done!

Patrick is generous, compassionate, witty and hardworking. He is “King of the Pun”, and passionate about politics (don't get him started unless you have the time to see the conversation through) and he has some awesome dance moves!

Patrick, thank you for ten years of wonderful service – we are very grateful, and look forward to many more.

15 Year Service Awards:

Lee-Anne Crocker – Leanne has worked in most areas of Merriwa, and is very versatile. She is intelligent and picks up new jobs very quickly. She is always willing and capable to learn. Lee-Anne is a valuable member of Timbers and make sure you keep your safety glasses on around her!

Darren Metcraft – Darren has become a key worker in the engineered timber products process. He has a keen eye for detail and works well with everyone. His love of playing country and classical music, has raised eyebrows in the past. If you are looking for a snack, find Darren at finishing. Thanks for the snakes! Well Done Darren!

Michael Kaup – Mick has done a variety of jobs over the last 15 years. He is a qualified wood machinist working between Timbers at Greta road and Gibson street. He is versatile and will take on last minute requests with minimal swearing....Good Work Mick!

Eril Edwards – 15 years ago Eril began her journey with Merriwa as a process line worker, working her way up to DSO. Words that describe Eril as a person are respectful, caring, reliable, dedicated & supportive. Eril goes over & above in her role as DSO helping people in her own time. The Merriwa family are fortunate to have Eril on the team.

Jason Hocking – Jason commenced work at Park Lane Nursery in March 2003 – he has been an integral part of the team ever since.

Jason has worn many hats over the years – Nursery Hand, Day Program Co-ordinator, Support Worker, Retail Assistant, Health and Safety Rep, First Aider, Fire Warden, Friend, and Champion.

Jase embodies all that we as an organisation strive to be – fair minded, helpful, compassionate, hard-working, fun, and honest. He always strives for excellence, not only for himself, but also to improve products and processes for the nursery.

Jase is a great developer of people, he believes in people's abilities to learn new skills and achieve their goals given the right support. He consistently goes above and beyond, and can always be counted on to lend a hand – which is very generous given that he only has one!

Congratulations on 15 years of service Jase. From all who have been fortunate enough to work with you, we are grateful for the opportunity, and we look forward to many more years working along side you.

Glenn Moore – Glenn Moore more affectionately known as 'Chook', has worked in Timbers for 15 years and is a very likeable character! He is currently working at Gibson street timber on the docking line, grading timber, and is a valuable member of the team. Well done Chook!

Nadine Cain – Nadine commenced her work at Merriwa in the old Yakka building working on the floor. Nadine progressed and worked as a receptionist in the main office and then moved to Superior Joinery. Nadine now works in the office at Plant 2 Packaging. Nadine has always been a pleasure to work with and thank you for the very good service you have given Merriwa over the 15 years.

20 Year Service Award:

Sharon Petersen – Sharon worked on cake boards for many years, and has worked many tasks over her 20 years, now in the Packaging Division at Plant 2.

Sharon has always been willing to learn new tasks and help others. Thanks Sharon for 20 years of great service!

Vales

Mary Sanders – Merriwa mourned the passing of Mary Sanders in late 2017. Her family, husband Graeme, and friends are all in our thoughts. Mary was a life member of Merriwa Industries, recognising all her support and personal time she spent in helping to develop North East Handicapped Persons Association, now known as Merriwa Industries. Mary will always be remembered at Merriwa with a dedicated award in her honour 'Mary Sanders Award for Enterprise' which will be awarded tonight. We thank Mary for her contribution to Merriwa and she will always be remembered.

Brendan Evans – After a long battle with cancer, it was with great sadness that we said goodbye to an old friend to so many of us at Merriwa.

Brendan started at Merriwa back in 1976 when it first opened as Pelican Products and Packaging.

Brendan really enjoyed the social outings like the family Christmas Parties, Awards Nights and just being able to hang out with his friends/workmates.

Brendan was a quiet and loyal person and he will be sadly missed, however never forgotten as a wonderful person.

Nick Lindsay – Nick loved Park Lane; he contributed so much to Park Lane over the time that he was there and could propagate pretty much anything from a cutting! He was responsible for introducing many garden varieties of native plants to the nursery in the days when we were purely a revegetation nursery. The nursery was a big part of Nick's life, and he was a big part of the nursery – and he still is, we still have his name on the daily task plan, although we no longer put the prickly jobs on his job list.

Barb Schulz – After a long battle with illness, it was with great sadness that we said good bye to a much-loved lady and friend to so many of us at Merriwa.

Barb loved attending Merriwa functions and getting right into the spirit of the fun at the annual awards nights and the family Christmas party. Barb was never afraid to put herself out there, enjoying the smiles she put on everyone's faces. Known for her empathy and understanding, humour and compassion, Barb was always ready to offer a hand or support.

Nothing ever seemed to dampen her spirit!

Barbara will be missed, but will be remembered at Merriwa with heartfelt appreciation and deep affection.

Margaret Annesley – Margaret was heavily involved with Merriwa and was the president of the Ladies Auxiliary for many years helping to raise funds for Merriwa. Margaret joined the Auxiliary at the AGM in 1979 and continued her membership until 1993. She was President in 1982, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989. Her specialty was sauces, pickles and chutney made at home. At stalls across the district Margaret's cooking had a following; people asked for and bought her products. Mothers' Day flowers were her idea, and with the Garden Club assistance, thousands of dollars were raised. Margaret was known as a quiet worker, one who won respect for her work ethic and ability as an organiser and for her gentle nature.

Margaret will be missed, but will be remembered with deep affection and as a great contributor to Merriwa.



Bringing *quality* to life



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