A photograph of a large blue sign and a rusted metal sculpture in a park-like setting. The blue sign is tilted and features the text 'Big Lizzie Town' and 'RED CLIFFS'. In the foreground, there is a large, rusted metal sculpture with a circular opening. The background shows trees and a grassy area.

Big Lizzie
Town

RED CLIFFS

RED CLIFFS COMMUNITY PLAN

2016 ~ 2021

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'It's a good community that responds to community issues. A town with it's own character that is independent of other nearby towns. Has most of the important services necessary for everyday life. People can access those services more readily than in a larger community.' Ian

RED CLIFFS – OUR STORY

Location

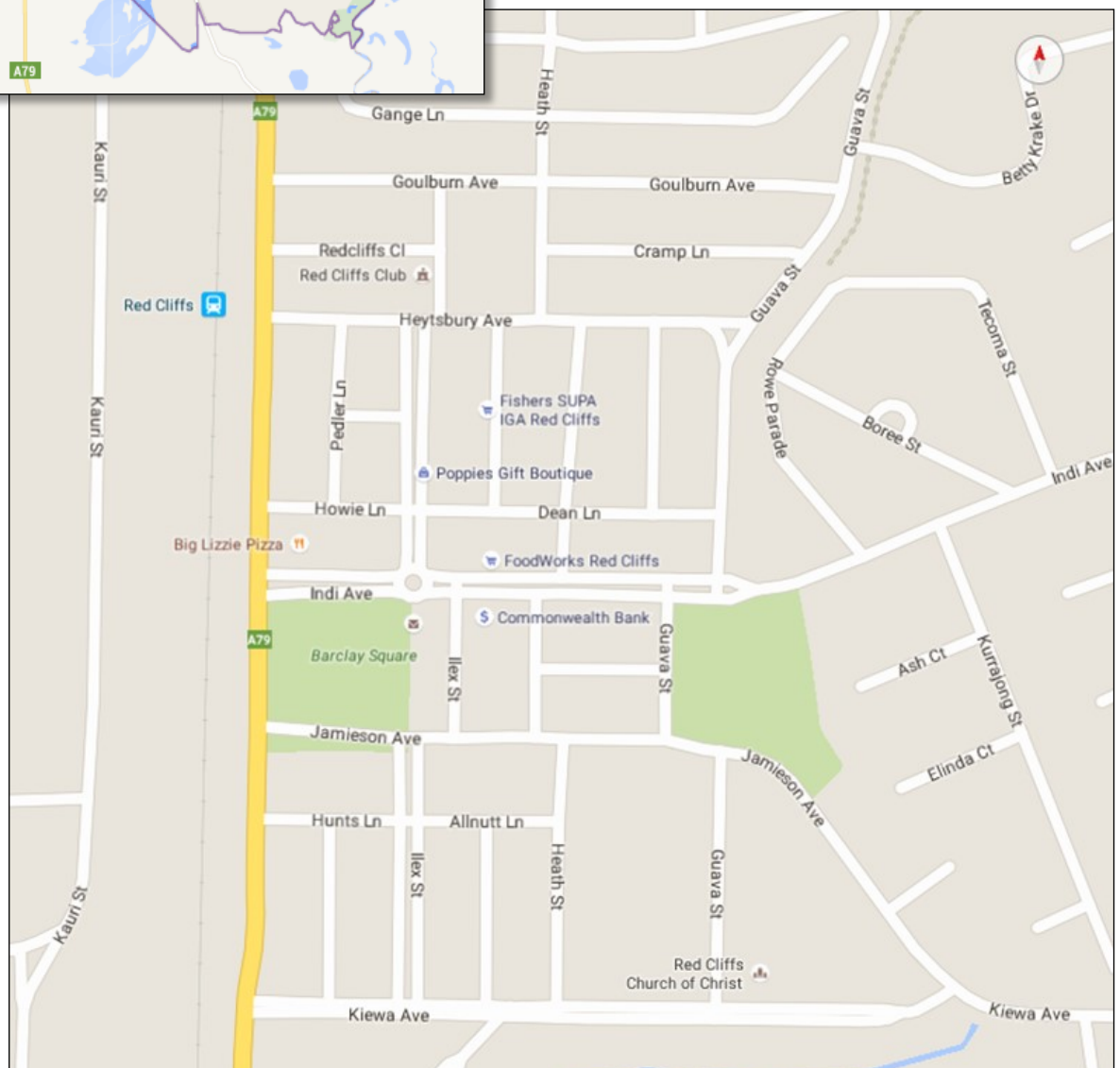
Red Cliffs is the southern gateway to Sunraysia on the Calder Highway.

Known as Big Lizzie Town, it is 16 kms from Mildura and 544 kms north west of Melbourne.

A thriving community, with a population of 4625 (2011), it borders the Murray River to the east and the vast Murray Sunset National Park to the west.

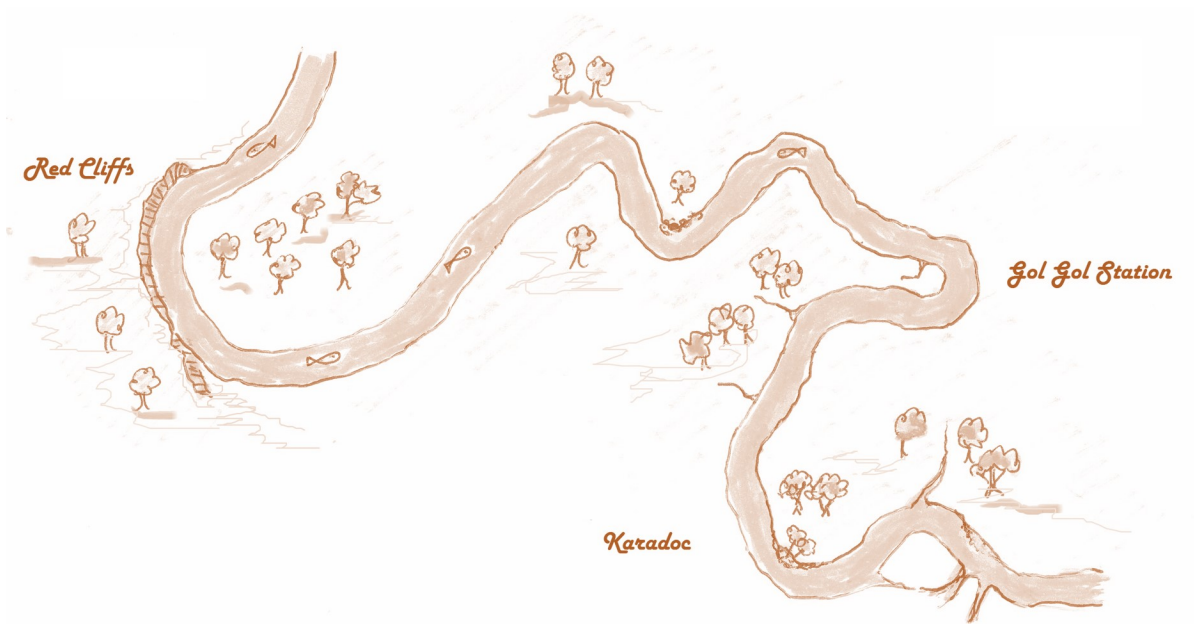


This plan covers the area from:
Boobook Ave/Thurla Ave to the Murray River,
Twenty Second St to Forbes Road,
including the areas known as Westside,
Sunnycliffs, Cliffside, Nursery Ridge, Stewart
and Karadoc.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the country on which Red Cliffs now stands, the Latje Latje people and their neighbours the Barkindji, and pay our respect to their elders past and present.



Settlement

We take our name from the magnificent cliffs towering over the Murray River to the east of the settlement. Middens along the base of these cliffs are evidence that this stretch of river was heavily populated before it was named Red Cliffs.

This land was part of the giant Yerre Yerre, later Mildura, Pastoral lease. The Karadoc Woolshed was located here atop the cliffs.

The area was part of the Chaffey Indenture of 1887. A site below the cliffs was considered as the location for the pumps for the Mildura Irrigation Colony. This did not eventuate as the cliffs proved too high for the engineering of the time to raise the water.

Following World War 1 there was a need for the Government to repatriate over 300,000 Diggers back into civilian life. The Red Cliffs bushland was put forward as a possibility for irrigated settlement blocks. On April 25th 1919, negotiations commenced with the liquidators of the Chaffey Bros. Ltd and by December that year a total area of 33,000 acres was purchased by the Government, of which half was to be for irrigation – consequently Red Cliffs became the largest Soldier Settlement in Australia.

The area was surveyed into blocks averaging 16 acres. By mid-1920 workers were arriving at the rate of about fifty a day. They were divided into 30 work gangs with the back-breaking task of clearing the land. The arrival of 'Big Lizzie' greatly assisted the work as she could pull up to eight Mallee stumps at a time. The State Rivers & Water Supply Commission under the direction of A.S. Kenyon were responsible for surveying and all construction works, including over 120 miles of concrete-lined channels. The first allocation of blocks was announced in December 1920. A further four allocations were made, making over 700 blocks in total. Three million vine cuttings were established in the nursery on the ridge. Water first pumped into the channel and onto the blocks in October 1921.

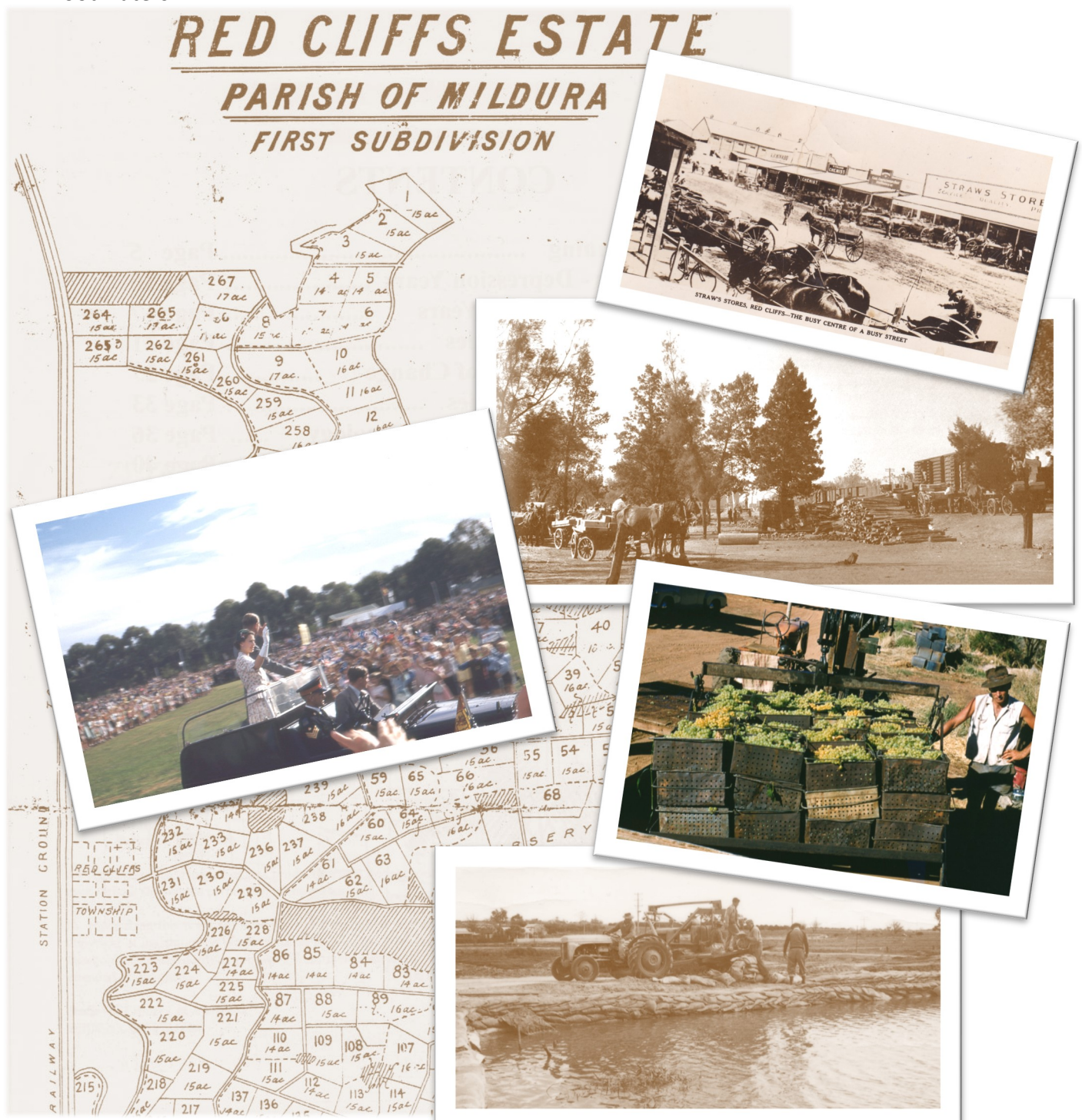
The Karadoc Woolshed was re-located west of the railway to accommodate the workers, and served a variety of purposes including social centre, church and the first temporary school. A tent town grew beside it with accommodation for families and commercial businesses to service the community. The shared past experience forged in battle and the Digger camaraderie and industry in establishing their settlement created a unique spirit of mateship, unity and purpose.



Big Lizzie moving through Red Cliffs. Wilf Henty Collection

Once clearing was completed the settlers moved onto their own blocks and a more permanent township was built on the eastern side of the railway. The roads were named in alphabetical order, the streets running north/south after trees and the avenues running east/west after rivers. A central square was laid out for public use. Red Cliffs quickly developed. By 1924 the blockies cheered as the first shipment of their dried fruit left by train from their Co-operative Packing shed.

The RSL became a strong support for this unique settlement of ex-Diggers. Red Cliffs was not unnoticed. In 1954 Red Cliffs RSL was asked to host part of the Australian Royal Tour. Over 30,000 people filled Quandong Park to see the Queen and Duke. The Diggers marched proudly making it the biggest event ever for Red Cliffs. The Diggers' spirit was again demonstrated in 1956 when all rallied day and night to defend the pumping and power stations from the devastating floodwaters.



Red Cliffs Today

The early settlers' hope for a prosperous, safe and vibrant community has carried through the years and is still evident in the culture and daily life of Red Cliffs. Today some of our original blocks are still in production but industry has diversified. Our community supports sporting, service, artistic, cultural and interest clubs. We value our kindergarten, schools, churches and Jacaranda Aged Care. The settlement provides a range of businesses, a Community Club, swimming pool, parks and playing fields. We take pleasure in our surrounding bush and river environment.

'Big Lizzie' stands in our square reminding us of the effort of our pioneers in the beginning years. We are approaching 100 years since that soldier settlement began. Together we developed this Community Plan to celebrate our centenary and ensure tomorrow's Red Cliffs remains a great place to visit, work and live.



The Red Cliffs Country Market began in November 2008 when a small group of locals decided to make a difference for the town of Red Cliffs. A committee was formed and the Market started with 70 sites. Local traders were encouraged to have their shops open and stallholders from across Sunraysia were invited to take part. The market quickly became very popular and has grown to 150 sites, some undercover in front of the shop verandas in Indi Ave & Ilex St and others in the Barclay Square Park. The market is held on the first Sunday of each month, and has a range of stallholders selling a great variety of items.



This event attracts up to 3000 visitors and locals and has helped revive our community spirit.



The Red Cliffs Historical Steam Railway operate each Market Day from the Karadoc Station, Millewa Road. The Skylark type coal train named Lukee, with historic links to our past, has been lovingly restored by Red Cliffs Steam Preservation Society.



The Red Cliffs Rotary Lunarfest is a festival featuring stalls and entertainment and a street parade. Lunarfest has, since 1983, provided opportunity for local artists to showcase their talents, sometimes sharing the stage with well-known professionals.

There are a variety of stalls which include food, various goods and exhibited items. The street parade, co-organised by the Nexus Club, provides Sunraysia with the only annual street parade. It features floats, local schools, clubs, businesses, classic & vintage vehicles, etc.

The Lunarfest is presently held in Barclay Square near the end of March.



VISION - *What do we wish to achieve?*

To develop a more prosperous, vibrant and inclusive community which enjoys improved facilities and services and demonstrates greater pride, involvement and connectedness.

MISSION STATEMENT – *How do we intend to achieve it?*

To develop and implement a clear, comprehensive and achievable five year Red Cliffs Community Plan, established through a process of community consultation, setting out a range of goals, targets and projects to achieve our vision, and reflecting community needs, values and priorities for the period leading up to our centenary celebrations.

CORE VALUES – *We say that as a community we are...*

R – **Respectful**

E – **Energetic**

D – **Diverse**

C – **Caring**

L – **Listening**

I – **Innovative**

F – **Friendly**

F – **Flexible**

S – **Safe**



COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Community Plan is necessary for Mildura Rural City Council as it assists them to gain understanding of the needs of the community to plan for services, facilities and activities within the municipality.

It is a consultation process which allows and encourages people to be active in defining issues that are important to the community they live in. It assists in identifying and documenting the future direction the community wants to take.

Community Planning aims to improve:

- Social Inclusion - this means that everyone is able to access services, connect with family and friends, work, develop personal interests and have a voice within their community.
- Engagement – to encourage involvement, open up communication channels and help connect people.
- Capacity building - to increase the skills and build confidence within the community.
- Participation – to connect community members and encourage them to work together.

Our Process

A group of interested Red Cliffs residents facilitated by the Mildura Rural City Council's Community Development Officer met in February 2015. A survey was conducted and over 250 were returned. Several public meetings were held using the surveyed information as a base. Further brainstorming sessions and interaction via social media has given us the foundation to create our own Community Plan and identify our key areas.

Key Areas

DEVELOPING PRIDE IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

INCREASING OUR HEALTH & WELLBEING

IMPROVING OUR FACILITIES & SERVICES

PROMOTING OUR DISTRICT TO OTHERS

GROWING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

CELEBRATING OUR CENTENARY

'The community plan was developed by the community, for the community.'

This diagram demonstrates how the key areas are all inter-connected with the major focus on the centenary celebrations in 2021.



DEVELOPING PRIDE IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

- Support for town beautification, roadside clean-up, weed eradication programs, nature-strip maintenance, streetscape improvement, shopfront decoration and riverfront preservation This includes Landcare, Keep Australia Beautiful and Tidy Towns Campaigns
- Continued maintenance and upgrade of Barclay Square, Civic Centre, Jacaranda Street, Railway reserve and other public facilities including town entrance signage
- Encouragement for schools, local organisations and the general public to continue to support the maintenance and improvement of our local environment and to increase their engagement in future community events and affairs

'The sense of community in the town is really strong.' Tracey
'I like the range of cultural diversity within a small town.'





'Because it's a smaller community people have greater opportunities to be leaders or excel in their field, and generally have the support & encouragement (are cheered on) to achieve their goals & dreams' Ian

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

- Planned Family Events - Movie Nights, Family Fun Days & Pool Events, barbecues etc.
- Support for Traditional Events - Lunarfest, Carols by Candlelight, Australia Day Breakfast, Red Cliffs Country Market, Country Music Festival, Sporting Events
- Promotion of Special History Events leading up to the Centenary Celebrations

INCREASING OUR HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Provision of gymnasium facilities (indoor and outdoor) to promote health & fitness
- Improvements at the local pool – water splash area, seating, shade, barbecue facilities
- Creation and maintenance of trails and tracks and shared walking/cycling corridors and maintenance and upgrade of the existing facilities
- Maintenance and extension of sporting and recreation facilities including the provision of additional seating, shelter and shade.
- The implementation of a Men's Shed and/or other community focused facilities.

"I like the swimming pool." Poppy age 6.

'I would like to see a good bike trail around the district and out to the cliffs.'

'Barclay Square is an asset in the town, it's nicely kept.' Helen





IMPROVING OUR FACILITIES & SERVICES

- Facilitation of improved water-pressure in the Red Cliffs township and provision of a regular local green-waste collection service within the district
- Continued negotiation of local services and facilities including an upgrade of public toilets, improvements to town footpath and seating facilities, provision of a clock in the town centre and drinking fountains and barbecue facilities in Barclay Square
- Provision of a pedestrian crossing across the highway to the town centre and improved traffic flow from and onto the highway at major intersections
- Upgrade and/or widening of streets around schools and Jacaranda Village which have an increased traffic flow due to new residential development.

PROMOTING OUR DISTRICT TO OTHERS

- Clear Signage inviting visitors to explore the district attractions and trails and the shopping precinct, restaurants, club, hotel, churches and other visitor services
- Support for websites, newsletters, face-book pages and general media coverage and advertising of local news, events, celebrations and attractions as they occur
- Promotion of local produce, industry and talent to the wider community

'I've never driven past Big Fizzie when there isn't someone stopped and looking at her. She is a true town icon' Bob

'We love to take our visitors to see Big Fizzie and down to the cliffs at the river.' Geoff





'The shop keepers are connected with the community and give good advice. The people are friendly and they smile and have a chat.' Chris

'I like to buy my gifts in Red Cliffs because they have things that are unique and they gift wrap them' Liz

"You can always get a shaded park and the shop staff are friendly" Lucy

GROWING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

- Support for existing local businesses and encouragement of new businesses, producers, enterprises and potential employers to locate in our district
- Continue existing promotion and the exploration of new initiatives to attract local consumers and visitors to 'Stop and Shop' in Red Cliffs
- Development of a business strategy investigating the positives and negatives for future growth and the potential for new directions in economic development.

CELEBRATING OUR CENTENARY

- Appointment of a planning committee to organise the various aspects of the celebrations
- To use the celebrations as a focus and incentive for completion of other projects of the plan
- To use the celebrations to build further community support and pride in our town and district

RED CLIFFS by a digger.

"And how do you like life at Red Cliffs?" I asked. The little 'Englishwoman (who had been in Red Cliffs just 2 weeks) smiled radiantly. "I like it real well," she answered. "The people up here are altogether different. They are working for a common cause, and for each other. I've met some real nice Australians in the settlement, and everyone works with enthusiasm. They are ready to put up with any hardships, and they keep ever so cheerful."

The Age (Melbourne, Vic.) Saturday 15 October 1921 p 24

"I love the painting on the water tower, and Big Fizzie" Matilda age 4.





IMPLEMENTING OUR COMMUNITY PLAN


The Plan gives the Red Cliffs community a focus over a five-year period.
We may not achieve everything in the Plan but it gives vision and direction.

The implementation of the Plan will be through Action Group/s (sub-committee/s) via the Red Cliffs Focus Group. The objectives of the Action Group/s will be to work through proposed projects set out under each key point in the Red Cliffs Community Plan. Mildura Rural City Council will offer ongoing support to these groups who will meet on an 'as required' basis.

The Action Group/s will determine which projects they would like to work on and can second help as required. This is an opportunity for everyone to be involved in shaping our community for the future. There is no age limit or prerequisites, just a love for our town.

PREVIOUS SUCCESSES

Projects like the Skate Park and CCTV were all made possible through the Red Cliffs Community Plan process. Other achievements include new signage to our town entrances; replanting and landscaping the roundabout and street garden beds; improving watering systems and adjusting the vine trellis; creating a walking trail from Jacaranda Village to the town; creating the alfresco dining areas and providing the umbrellas for shade comfort.



The Red Cliffs Chamber of Commerce (trading as Red Cliffs Focus Group) meet on the second Monday of every month, typically at 6.30pm at the Resource Centre. For details see the Red Cliffs Focus Group Facebook page. Everyone [not only business owners] is welcome to attend these meetings and participate in actioning what has been outlined in our plan.

RED CLIFFS FOCUS GROUP
P.O Box 1166, Red Cliffs 3496
Email: redcliffsfocusgroup@hotmail.com
Facebook: Red Cliffs Focus Group



On behalf of the Red Cliffs Community Plan working group, we would like to thank all community members who took the time to fill in surveys, attend meetings, voice opinions and that have otherwise contributed to the Red Cliffs Community Plan review process.

Thank You

"I like how beautiful it is, and because it's kind of fun. I like the shops, the market and all the pretty trees that are purple." Charlie age 6.

Thanks also for those who provided photographs: Ian & Chris Cook, Mary Chandler, Helen Petschel, Tracey Reid, Helen West, and the Red Cliffs & District Historical Society.