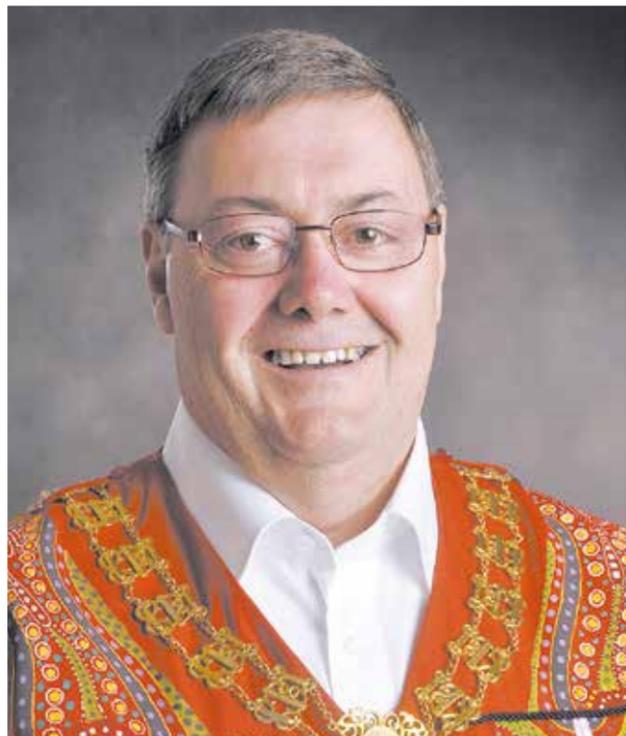




# From the mayor

Being the Mayor of an iconic town like Alice Springs is an honour and a privilege.



His Worship Mayor Damien Ryan

There is so much to be proud of in Central Australia.

Set against the magnificent MacDonnell Ranges, Alice Springs is home to a vibrant and ever-changing population with 20 per cent Indigenous, 30 per cent born overseas and a growing number of new citizens coming from all over the globe.

This month we welcome all those attending the 2013 National Local Roads and Transport Congress held at the Alice Springs Convention Centre.

The event is particularly timely, in light of the \$33 million Federal Coalition funding commitment for the "Longest Shortcut in the Country" – the Outback Way - linking Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. Central Australia will benefit enormously from such a commitment.

I am proud of the way people in this community actively take part in making Alice Springs an even better place to be.

I could wax lyrical about the beauty of the desert,

the big skies, the wildlife on our doorsteps, the ancient landscape – but it's the passionate, creative and bright people who really make this town the joy it is to live in.

Alice Springs is never short of perspective: a town filled with researchers, scientists and doctorates, is always open for debate and innovative ways to find solutions to the unique challenges of life in Australia's heart.

It is through public discussion and listening to each other that we can better understand what is important to our dynamic community.

It's those inquiring minds that have led to some exciting initiatives in the town, from the five-year-long Alice Solar City project, to our award-winning healthy communities initiative and the rejuvenation of the northern end of the Todd Mall.

The Alice Springs Town Council remains dedicated to thinking environmentally and socially, in order to pave a bright future for its residents.

# Revitalising the CBD

In July this year the Alice Springs Town Council celebrated the completion of the revitalisation of the northern section of the Todd Mall in the CBD, a key business and social site for the town which hosts fortnightly markets, night markets and many parades and presentations.

The project was a long-term vision for the Council and the upgrades have given the mall a unique Alice Springs identity by highlighting local cultural, historic and natural features.

The design provides greater space and safety for all users of the CBD, including seating, shade, free Wi-Fi, bins, lighting, water bubblers, bicycle racks, generous footpaths, space for al fresco dining, and access for people with disabilities.

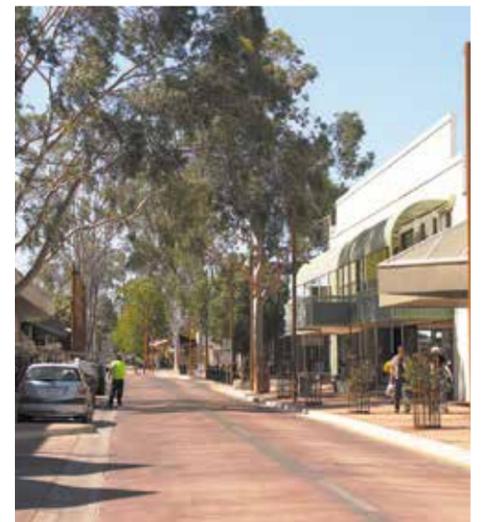
The re-opening of the road at the northern end of the mall allows locals and visitors to be delivered right into the heart of the town, contributing to the enlivening of the CBD.

Key features of the two projects include the biodiversity corridor linking the mall to the Todd River which also has highlights such as a riverbank garden, cascade feature and rainwater reflection pan.

The vision became a reality thanks to the hard work



Giant 'moth' shade structures now line the top end of the mall



The newly paved top end of the Todd Mall

of council, the Centre for Appropriate Technology's (CAT) Lyndon Frearson as project director and local architect and designer, Susan Dugdale and Associates, who drew up plans for features such as the "Moth" shade structures.

These massive structures are spread throughout the upgrade

as an indirect reference to the Yeperenye caterpillar.

These and the caterpillar seats have the dual purpose of general seating and serving as play spaces/objects for children and young people.

The \$5 million dollar project would not have been possible without funding from the

Northern Territory Government and was opened with a parade of vehicles from the classic era.

The celebration was jam-packed full of prizes and giveaways, family entertainment, live music and dance performances, balloon twisting, a jumping castle, face painting, roving performers and a fashion parade.

# Waste not, want not

In a town where goods arrive and rarely leave due to the tyranny of distance, Alice Springs plays host to a healthy sport known as 'lawn sailing'.

Lawn sales are like garage sales except, in a town with very few lawns, they tend to attract enthusiasts who make it their life's ambition to collect households full of second-hand goods.

Alice Springs's lawn sale culture is a testament to the importance of recycling goods in a town with few shopping options and the added cost of importing and exporting from capital cities.

A reflection of that culture is the current upgrade of the Alice Springs Town Council Waste Management Facility.

In the 1960s, Alice Springs was a small, dusty town of about 5,000 people, settled on the north side of the MacDonnell Ranges.

On the south side of these sleeping giants, through the gap in the ranges, in the Iparpa valley, lay a perfect spot, far from town, where the population at the time decided to create a landfill.

In 2011, the Alice Springs Town Council was successful in an application to Regional Development Australia for funding to undertake a major redevelopment of the landfill site.

The total project cost is estimated at just over \$5 million and with funding provided jointly by the Federal Government, a Special Purpose Grant from the NT Government and a contribution from Council.

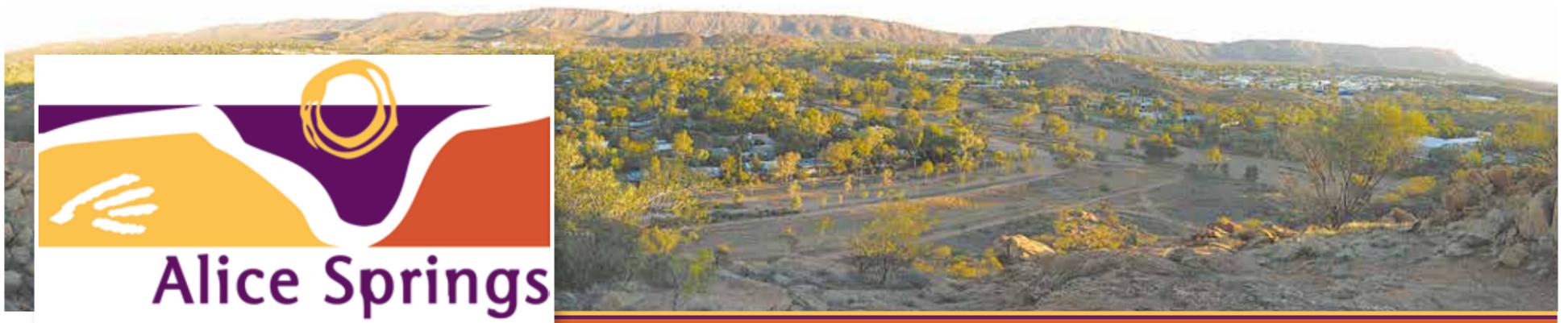
The redevelopment comprises the following major components:

- a waste transfer station of more than 4,000 square metres where waste is sorted before entering the landfill
- an expanded retail recycling centre and salvage yard for second-hand or products
- a new weighbridge and security gates which will accommodate 17-metre articulated and B double trucks
- a chemical and hazardous waste facility
- allowance for the creation of a container deposit depot in line with the NT Government's CDL legislation.

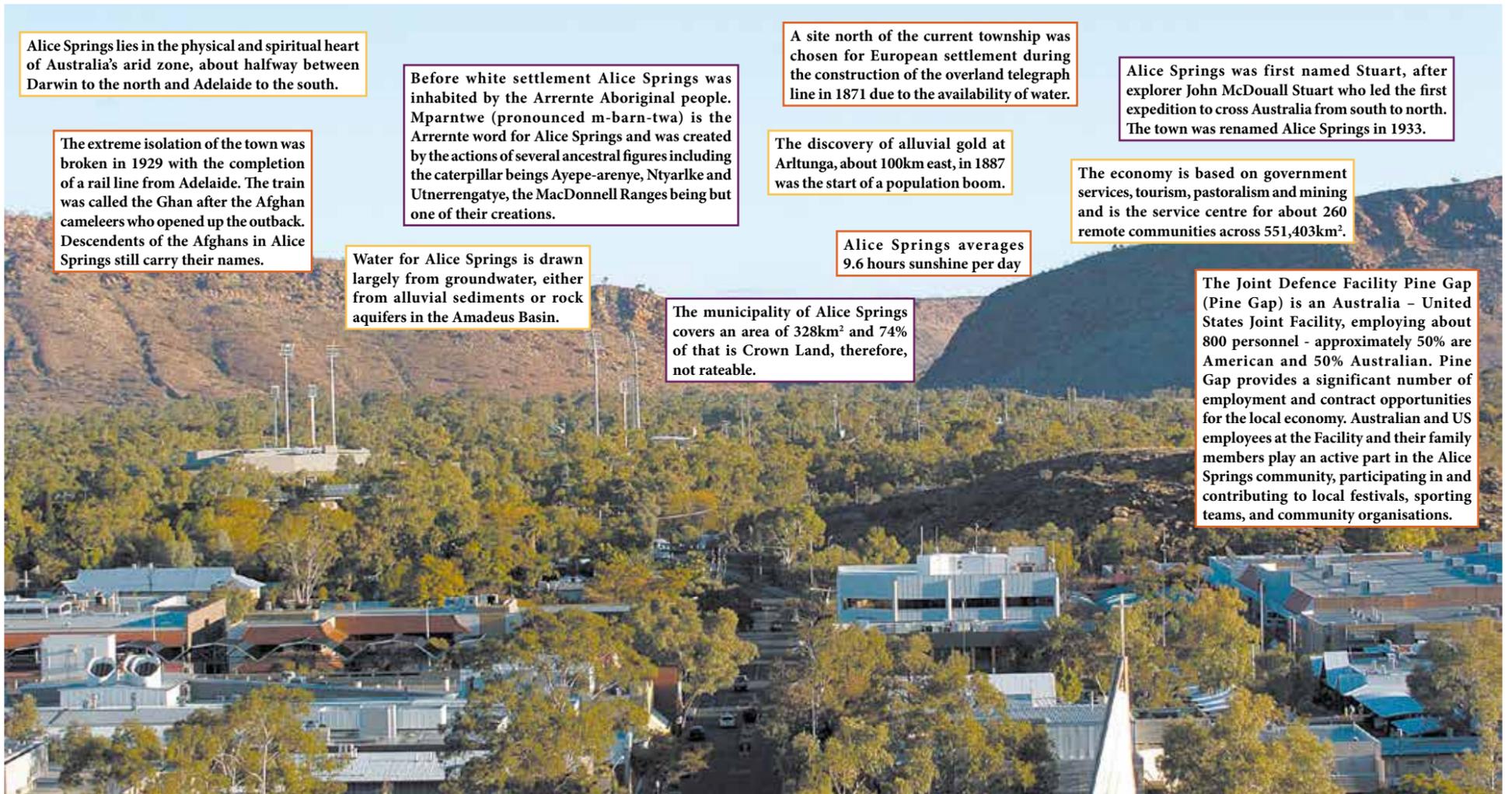
Construction began in late 2012 and is nearing completion.

The facility will provide our region with an economically viable and environmentally sustainable waste management system with the capacity to service the region for at least 30 years.

As a way of inviting community input and pride in such an important, yet perhaps understated part of a town's life, suggestions were invited to name the new tip shop, with several schools and individuals taking part in a chance to win a cash prize and officially open the new centre.



# Fact file on Alice Springs



Alice Springs lies in the physical and spiritual heart of Australia's arid zone, about halfway between Darwin to the north and Adelaide to the south.

The extreme isolation of the town was broken in 1929 with the completion of a rail line from Adelaide. The train was called the Ghan after the Afghan cameleers who opened up the outback. Descendants of the Afghans in Alice Springs still carry their names.

Before white settlement Alice Springs was inhabited by the Arrernte Aboriginal people. Mparntwe (pronounced m-barn-twa) is the Arrernte word for Alice Springs and was created by the actions of several ancestral figures including the caterpillar beings Ayeye-arenye, Ntyarlke and Utnerregatye, the MacDonnell Ranges being but one of their creations.

Water for Alice Springs is drawn largely from groundwater, either from alluvial sediments or rock aquifers in the Amadeus Basin.

A site north of the current township was chosen for European settlement during the construction of the overland telegraph line in 1871 due to the availability of water.

The discovery of alluvial gold at Arltunga, about 100km east, in 1887 was the start of a population boom.

Alice Springs averages 9.6 hours sunshine per day

Alice Springs was first named Stuart, after explorer John McDouall Stuart who led the first expedition to cross Australia from south to north. The town was renamed Alice Springs in 1933.

The economy is based on government services, tourism, pastoralism and mining and is the service centre for about 260 remote communities across 551,403km<sup>2</sup>.

The municipality of Alice Springs covers an area of 328km<sup>2</sup> and 74% of that is Crown Land, therefore, not rateable.

The Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap (Pine Gap) is an Australia - United States Joint Facility, employing about 800 personnel - approximately 50% are American and 50% Australian. Pine Gap provides a significant number of employment and contract opportunities for the local economy. Australian and US employees at the Facility and their family members play an active part in the Alice Springs community, participating in and contributing to local festivals, sporting teams, and community organisations.

View from Anzac Hill

## An art collection for our future

While sport is a large part of Centralian culture, the Alice Springs Town Council supports the artistic and cultural heritage of the Red Centre, in part, with its art collection.

The collection is divided into three separate sections: The Alice Springs Art Foundation component (180 works), the Central Australian Art Society component (137 works) and the Alice Springs Town Council component (35 works).

An important part of that collection includes about 20 early boards from Papunya – the start of the Western Desert Art Movement famous for its dot paintings.

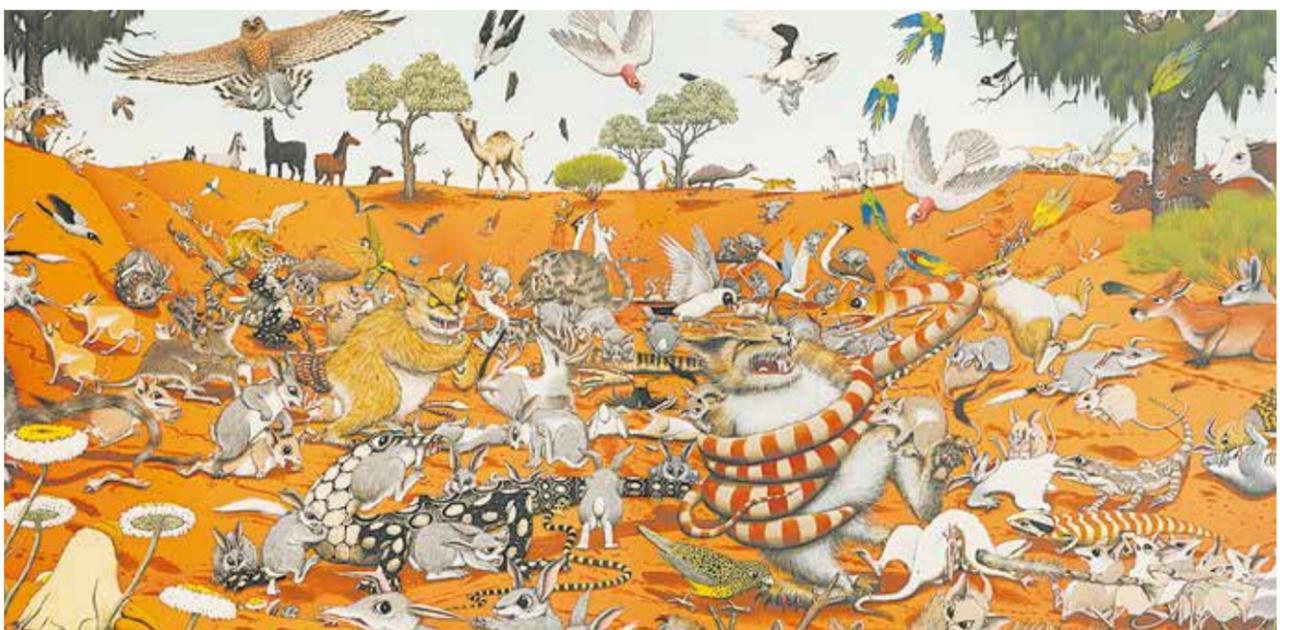
The Town Council is fortunate enough to own a small number of paintings by Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri

- one of those early Papunya Tula painters - whose works have been known to fetch over a million dollars per piece.

Other famous names such as Albert Namatjira, Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampatjinpa and Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri make up a small part of the collection.

In the Civic Centre Halls hangs the extraordinary Battle for the Spinifex series by local artist Kaye Kessing.

The 11 paintings deal with the feral animal problems of Central Australia and were used as a backdrop for an



"A Great Battle" from the series Battle for the Spinifex by Alice Springs artist Kaye Kessing. ©Kaye Kessing

education play which toured Australia in 1990.

All the paintings in the collection have some cultural

or historical relevance to the region or are significant to the

artists' career and hold artistic merit within a national context.



# Oasis in the desert

**One thing newcomers to Alice Springs often miss is the beach.**

We've got more sand than you can poke a stick at and since April 17, 2011 the beachcombers got their wish: The Aquatic and Leisure Centre.

More than just a pool, the \$19m redevelopment of the town pool now includes a heated indoor area including a lap pool, leisure pool, learn-to-swim pool and other aquatic features such as a spa, river section, water slides and fountains.

For a town of such climactic extremes - sweltering summers

and the freezing winters - now mean the townsfolk of Alice Springs as well as those from outlying communities - can use the facility all year round.

Alice Springs Town Council took over the management of the centre on 1 July this year.

Mayor Damien Ryan said: "Council wants to build on the potential of the facility and believes the Aquatic and Leisure Centre should be an integral part of Council operations.

"Anything you own and operate yourself you do with more pride and this facility is so important to the town.

"The Alice Springs Aquatic and Leisure Centre is a fantastic facility and Council will ensure that with the community's ongoing support it continues to be one of the best recreational facilities in the Territory."

The facility also includes a 2556 litre Helicol solar hot water heating system for indoor pool heating which meets, on average, 40 per

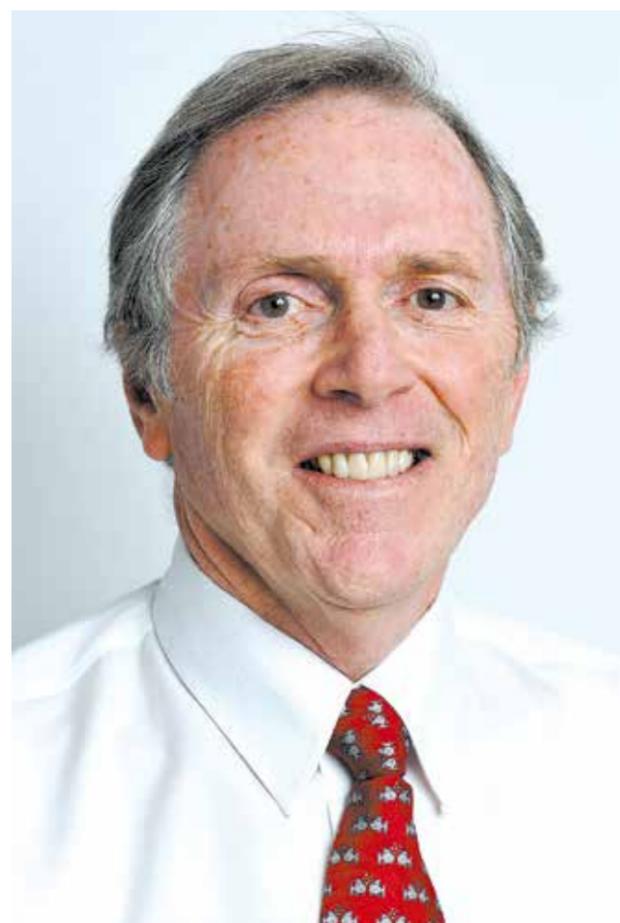
cent of the heating requirements for the indoor pools, increasing to nearly 100% of the heating requirement during summer.

With over 170km of vermin, cockatoo and UV resistant piping being used, the installation is one of the largest of its type in Australia.

The solar water heating system reduces the centre's gas usage by an estimated 30 per cent and saves over 3450 GJ natural gas per year (equivalent to 350 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>-e).

## From the CEO

**Alice Springs Town Council is one of the largest employers in Alice Springs, and we continue to provide some of the best employment conditions in the Territory.**



Alice Springs Town Council CEO Rex Mooney



## Library goes global

**Alice Springs might be remote, but there's nothing unsophisticated about this outback town - evident in the fact that the manager of the Alice Springs Nevil Shute Memorial Library, Georgina Davison, is one of only 27 librarians from around the world to be invited to participate in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's "Global Libraries" initiative.**

Georgina headed off to the Netherlands in September this year to join fellow leaders of library innovation who are all participating in a two-year training program.

She was invited to speak on ABC local radio about the event: "Basically it's 27 librarians from around the world and their sponsors have been selected to take part in this professional development activity and we are travelling for a week-long convention in Rotterdam and we are going to be checking out innovative libraries and doing professional development," Georgina said.



"It's great recognition of the innovative work that everybody at the library does."

"Being in Alice Springs is such a unique place and the library plays such a unique role in the community," she said.

"I think it is very different here and we are very proud of the fact that it's one place in town that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people come together."

"I am extremely honoured to have been selected for this program. It's very exciting and I'm really enjoying the skills I'm gaining as well as the benefits for our fantastic library, Alice Springs Town Council and our town, Alice Springs," Georgina said.

Each year I am privy to influential and democratic debates within the Council chamber, and I always urge members of the community to take an active role in attending council meetings to see how local government works for their community.

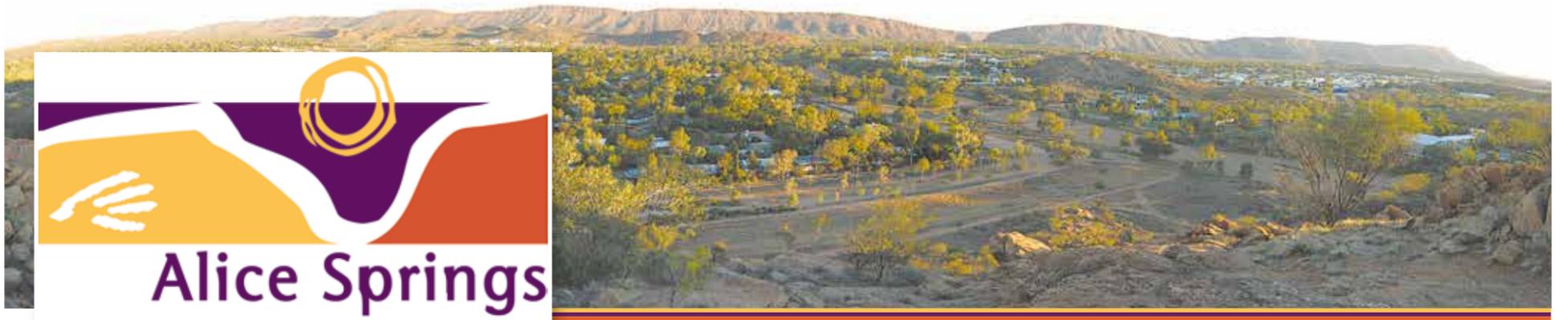
The achievements of our elected members and staff are a testament to their hard work and vision which has contributed so much to this community.

Some major recent achievements for Council include the completion and opening of the Alice Springs Aquatic & Leisure Centre and the writing of bylaws for the use of the facility; support and sponsorship of numerous events including the Council night markets and Christmas carnival; successful continuation of the town camp dog program; the newly developed Waste Management Facility and recycling centre and the revitalisation of the northern end of the Todd Mall, to name but a few.

Alice Springs continues to attract world class sporting events such as professional tennis, the Chairman's XI Ashes cricket match between Australia and England, WNBL, NRL, A-league soccer, AFL, The Masters Games and the Imparja Cup all proudly supported by Council.

We have a health program implemented by Council which was recognised this year with a Heart Foundation Healthy Community Award; an enthusiastic program for older members of our community in "Still Got Talent" and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation inviting our library manager to contribute to a world-wide network of innovative thinkers as part of the "Global Libraries" initiative.

Without our fantastic staff, His Worship Mayor Damien Ryan and all Councillors, none of these achievements would have been possible.



# Citizens from far and wide

The dynamic population of Alice Springs continues to evolve and that is clearly seen in the origins of those who now call the town home.

This year, Alice has welcomed 332 new Australian citizens to its ranks in four public citizenship ceremonies and several private events.

In September alone, 95 new citizens were welcomed at a citizenship ceremony held at the Civic Centre, in conjunction with Citizenship Day.

The ceremony saw a diverse range of people pledge the oath and affirmation - from a variety of countries such as Myanmar, Brazil, India, Philippines, Switzerland, Scotland, Pakistan, China, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Nepal, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sri Lanka, Canada, Bolivia, New Zealand, Mauritius, Czech Republic, Bangladesh, Sudan, Kenya and the United Kingdom.

While many come here for work, a lot of people come



The newest permanent additions to the face of Alice Springs

here on holiday and love the climate and lifestyle so much they never leave.

That population diversity is evident in all aspects of the

town, from its restaurants and supermarkets to its art, music and culture.

Alice Springs has a high US population due to the presence

of the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap which means we celebrate Halloween, have a popular baseball league and all manner of delicacies in the

supermarkets you'll be hard-pressed to find anywhere else in the country.

Alice Springs Town Council is case in point

with staff from as far afield as South Africa, the Netherlands, Germany, India, Philippines, Britain and North America.

## Educate Encourage Enforce: The Town Camp Dog Control Initiative

Alice Springs likes to think of itself as unique among outback towns due to the 19 established Aboriginal town camps and two informal town camps around the fringes of the town.

Town camps are settlements originally set up by the various Aboriginal language groups of Central Australia when visiting from remote communities.

They were formalised as 'town camps' in the 1970s and 80s and the majority of the 2000-3000 town camp residents are permanent with many now third, fourth or fifth generation residents.

Dogs are also an important part of social and cultural life in town camps and the health of dogs can play an important part in the health of the community as a whole.

Late in December 2008 the Alice Springs Town Council (ASTC) received funding from the Federal Government to standardise dog ownership in town camps by enforcing compliance with ASTC bylaws.

This meant reducing the number of dogs in each town camp to no more than two healthy and registered dogs per house.

There was also a high education component with residents receiving information

about the health, safety and environmental risks of too many dogs.

The "Team Town Camp" initiative followed three deaths in Alice Springs town camps attributed to dog attacks.



Town Council Ranger Chris Gosling with a sleepy puppy during information sessions at Alice Springs town camps.

A subsequent report released by the Coroner in 2010 stated that Team Town Camp was an "important program for the benefit and improvement in the quality of life of the residents of the town camps and should continue into the future".

In practice, the project involved a team of two rangers, one of whom was a qualified veterinarian.

Initially the ranger team attended meetings at each of the 19 town camps, accompanied

by Aboriginal health workers and teachers.

This was an opportunity to distribute information and explain the program to residents, and was followed by further community meetings and events - barbeques proved to be very popular.

Over time, residents came to enthusiastically support the initiative and identified the dogs they wished to keep.

Team Town Camp de-sexed, registered and micro-chipped each dog, and the owners were given collars and leads.

In the absence of many of the diseases carried by so many unhealthy dogs (In the first 12 months over 1200 dogs were removed) the health and safety of town camp residents, particularly children, improved immediately.

Similarly there was a dramatic decrease in the number of dog bites and attacks reported throughout the broader community.

The manager of the ranger unit, Kevin Everett, believes that Team Town Camp has been a successful program, which is now in maintenance mode.

He cautions however that it requires ongoing vigilance. Council employs a full-time vet ranger and a regular visit to each town camp is part of the working week.

## Still got talent

"Talent doesn't have a use-by date," says Alice Springs Town Council Community and Cultural Development Coordinator, Leon Tripp.



"I'm a performer myself and I just thought; it's a good opportunity to showcase the talents of our seniors, especially during seniors' week"

The idea for "Still Got Talent" - a talent quest for the old timers of the town - came from a play on words and a fun adaptation of television talent quests.

For the past two years, Leon's enthusiasm has given a platform to 20 separate acts, performing in front of an audience of about 80 people each, in the Town Council's civic function room.

"The talent that came out was amazing. The women singing in harmony - it was beautiful," said Leon.

Echoes of "The Everlastings" - six Alice Springs matriarchs singing "You are my sunshine" in six-part harmony bounced around the Council corridors and brought a smile to everyone who heard them.

Three judges and an appreciative audience contributed to the event, which was sponsored in part by the Northern Territory Government which contributed through a Seniors' Month grant.

We look forward to next year's event and to see who will win the crown for those who've Still Got Talent!