

100 years ago
6 December 1917

Glorious Australian soldiers

Describing the Australian soldier with the one word "magnificent", Mr J Henry Lang, national general secretary of the YMCA for Australia, who has just returned from a visit to the western front, says: It is difficult to conceive a more soul-stirring experience for an Australian than a visit to the Somme Battle area where our men fought long in the freezing cold, and finally beat and drove back the Germans.

No description could adequately convey to the mind the actual conditions, or do justice to the heroism, resourcefulness, patience and courage of our men who faced this herculean task amid the frosts, biting cold, rain and mud of the worst winters of France, there is much to make one sad for everywhere there

are lonely little wooden crosses, and at less but all too frequently intervals, smaller and larger cemeteries that mark the last resting place of our heroes.

The longer one is in this region, however, the more one becomes conscious of its triumphs rather than its tragedies.

50 years ago
5 December 1967

And so we say ...

The city's town hall was a hive of activity over the past few days as the various council departments organised their transfers to the spacious municipal office site in Clow Street.

The move began in earnest on Thursday when building sections under the city engineer's jurisdiction were transferred to the new site.

The ground floor section at the new centre houses all the municipal offices.

The first floor incorporates the mayoral chambers, mayor's and councillors' rooms, and an outdoor terrace.

New office hours are between 9.30am and 4pm. Previously they were from 10am to 4pm.

20 years ago
1 December 1997

Road to milestone

Five years ago, one of Dandenong's biggest and oldest manufacturing companies, International Trucks, was rescued from near death by Iveco, the commercial arm of Fiat.

Last Tuesday it celebrated survival and a new lease of life at the official handover of its 200,000th truck. Speaking at the ceremony, the Premier, Mr Kennett, congratulated International for producing "world-class trucks".

"The key to prospering in this industry is to think local and act global," he said.

5 years ago
3 December 2012

Win for people power

A people-power campaign against three-storey apartments in a predominantly one-storey residential street of Dandenong has won support from Greater Dandenong Council.

Neighbours to the proposed 12-apartment building at 30 Macpherson Street have claimed it is incompatible to the precinct's character, a number of historic homes are nearby.

Council officers and councillors agreed, rejecting the proposed planning application on Monday last week.

The site is a residential two zone, and if the council had approved the proposal neighbours would have had no right of appeal.

However the developer may yet appeal against the council's decision to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Finding a difficult path

COMMUNITY VOICE
THAY HORN YIM
IMMIGRATION SERVICE DIRECTOR



Immigration matters are very complex, even for a partner visa application.

I have never seen anything like this in my experience working in public and private sectors in the migration field for more than 25 years.

I've volunteered for the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC) for more than 10 years.

The City of Greater Dandenong is among the very few council areas that have the highest NESBs (Non-English Speaking Background) in

Australia and speak 120 languages other than English.

Most residents are settled and become Australian citizens.

Many have become involved in loving relationships from their similar ethnic backgrounds.

The Australian Government has made regulations and policies administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) harder and harder for sponsors to get their loved ones a visa to live in Australia.

The partner application fee is exorbitant, in excess of \$7000 (paying to DIBP alone).

The processing time is much longer: for on-shore (first-stage) up to 21 months and for its second stage, up to 35 months.

That is an awful long time for love!
Many may know there is a dramatic in-

crease of refusals for its second stage due to the accessibility available through social media where the department can easily check.

Earlier this month at the Migration Institute of Australia (MIA) National Conference, Assistant Minister for DIBP Alex Hawke, and his senior department assistant secretary Damien Kilner from Canberra announced that from 18 November 2017 there is a mandatory e-lodgement for partner applications.

Secondly, all partner applications must be lodged with full supporting documents, or be subject to refusal without further request.

Thirdly, fraudulent documents/identities, and faulty statements of claims including family composition and life story events have an extended backdate from one year to 10 years.

These fraudulent documents are assessed regardless of who submitted it, either by individuals or friends.

The applicants for visa or citizenship will be responsible for any mistake and attract a heavy penalty.

For example, their first stage partner visa could be refused and barred from being lodged again for a certain period of time.

While the government's intention is to make it easy and user-friendly, it is a minefield for those partner applications to be able to lodge them online successfully without getting immigration assistance from a registered migration agent (RMA).

People who are thinking about lodging partner applications are wise to seek immigration advice from an RMA before lodging.

My clients come from various backgrounds and countries, ranging from a peasant who could not write a word to a church minister with a PhD who used to help his own church followers.



IT'S A BRIGHT & COLOURFUL

Christmas

AT ENDEAVOUR HILLS SHOPPING CENTRE

Meet Santa & his friends, Poppy & Branch from the DreamWorks Trolls movie, as they kick off our Endeavour Hills Christmas festivities.

+ Free Trolls activity books for the kids*

SAT 9 DEC • 11AM - 2PM

Plus follow our facebook page or visit our website for more info on our other Christmas activities: Santa Photo times, Breakfast with Santa and Trolls Colouring Competition.

*Conditions apply. While stocks last. Limit one per child. Parental supervision required.



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