

# Tumut and Adelong Times

AND BATLOW DISTRICT NEWS

Friday, March 3, 2023

\$2.00

**SPORTS CENTRE  
CONCEPT  
REVEALED** PAGE 11



**SNOWY DETAILS  
TUNNELLING  
PROGRESS** PAGE 13



Election candidates Joe McGirr and Julia Ham take a break from campaigning to enjoy some serenity at the new wellness walk listening pod, located at Pilot Hill Aboretum. They're pictured with Yvette Myhill.

## \$100K win for lucky lady

A TUMUT woman is eager to be rid of her mortgage forever after scoring \$100,000 in the Lucky Lotteries Super Jackpot draw.

The Riverina region resident held the 1st Prize winning entry in Lucky Lotteries Super Jackpot draw 10757, drawn Tuesday 28 February 2023.

The winner was oblivious to her good fortune until an official from The Lott interrupted her day with the good news.

"My heart's pounding a bit faster now!" she laughed.

"Oh, wow! That's so wonderful. That means so much to me."

"You've disrupted my day but in a good way. You've made my year!"

The semi-regular player shared she already had one thing in mind for her prize.

"I'll pay off the mortgage. It will clear it and be really helpful," she declared.

"Thank you for that news. That's brilliant!"

The winning entry of 10 random numbers was purchased online at thelott.com – the official home of Australia's lotteries.

The Lucky Lotteries Mega Jackpot prize is now \$2.92 million for draw 1605.

## Bago Forest tourism plan unveiled 'A place of hope and healing'

FROM the ashes of the devastating Dunns Road fire that wiped out arguably the best-known drawcard in the region, a new plan has emerged to develop Bago State Forests as a tourism destination.

In the wake of the 2019-20 bushfires having destroyed the picture-perfect Sugar Pines, a tourism magnet, a new plan has been created with the help of \$2 million in government funding that will develop five areas of the Bago forest.

Visitor facilities at Paddy's River Dam, the Pilot

Hill Aboretum, Lochinvar Rest Area, Paling Yards and Sugarpines 2.0 will be upgraded under the plan.

Work has already started to develop designated trails to improve access for bushwalkers and recreational trail riders, improve dedicated signage, upgrade picnic and camping facilities and place sculptural elements.

Welcoming visitors and highlighting history in a forest that is a workplace for a large-scale industry

harvesting sustainable timber will be a balancing act.

Then there's the environmental focus. The Paling Yards and Paddy's River Dam areas support large areas of sensitive montane peatlands, which are the headwaters to the Murray River, and those peat bogs are subject to historical degradation, but are also popular with locals and visitors.

Continued page 4

A better banking experience.

Right on your doorstep

We deliver the products and technology you'd expect from a big bank, plus the personal service you wouldn't.

Feel good about who you bank with. Try Bendigo.

Find out more. Search Bendigo Bank near me.

Adelong & District 6946 2922 ·  
Tumut 6947 6777 · Gundagai 6944 1136

**BANK  
LOCAL**

**Bendigo Bank**

Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited ABN 11 068 049 178, AFSL/Australian Credit Licence 237879 A1455027 OUT\_19510953, 26/05/2022

Community Bank  
Adelong & District, Tumut and Gundagai

# Connecting with nature

A NEW wellness walk at the Pilot Hill Aboretum was unveiled on Wednesday.

The trail aims to unlock nature's health benefits, both mental and physical, by providing a short, self-guided walk.

There's six stations along the trail that give users a chance to enjoy rejuvenating moments in nature, including a 'sky seat', giving people a view of the tree canopy, and a listening pod.

The wellness walk was developed in the aftermath of the 2019-20 bushfires, in a partnership between Murrumbidgee Local Health, Forestry and Connective Co.

It's one of a series of walks throughout the Snowy Valleys which aim to transform areas of nature into wellness walks, showcasing what's special in the different towns and through that process, helping bring communities together.

Waminda Parker, from NatureFix, which designed the walks, said nature was "an insanely powerful way to improve our health and wellbeing".

"Designed to support individuals from all walks of life, NatureFix unlocks nature's health benefits by providing short, self-guided experiences in nature known to improve physical and mental health," Ms Parker said.

"A simple yet powerful app-based program provides individuals with an important tool for selfcare and healthcare, enabling them to thrive.

Users download the NatureFix from a welcome sign at the beginning of the walk.

The walk can be completed as audio using headphones where the



Ray Billing takes a break at one of the six stations on the Wellness Walk at the Pilot Hill Aboretum on Wednesday. Here, he's relaxing in the 'sky seat'.

activities automatically open on the phone screen as the user approaches each station. Alternatively, the user can hold their phone and read the instructions or through installed signage. The map feature allows the

walker to navigate from one station to the next.

Other wellness walks are located at the Adelong Gold Mill Ruins, in Pioneer Park at Tumut, Batlow, Tumbarumba the Southern Cloud Lookout and Khan-coban.



Jennifer Wines (Murrumbidgee LHD), Waminda Parker (NatureFix) and Jacinta Elphick (Murrumbidgee LHD) were instrumental in the development of the new wellness walk at Pilot Hill. They're pictured relaxing on the 'sky seat', their favourite stop on the six-station walk.

## BAGO FOREST TOURISM UPGRADE PROPOSALS

### SUGAR PINES WALK 2.0

- Re-establish the pine forest with a variety of species, including Sugar Pine
- New Sugar Pine Walk to be oriented in same direction as previous walk, with uphill grade
- Establish carpark for up to 20 cars and suitable for buses
- Grassed areas for picnics and family games.
- Sculptures to be provided in suitable locations.
- Consider bike storage racks
- New amenities block, covered picnic tables and signage
- Natural or built amphitheatre for performances in open grassed area, as well as timber seating.
- Nature-based playground under existing unburnt tall pine trees utilising timber logs
- Artificial lighting to be considered in future

### PILOT HILL ARBORETUM

Upgrade existing barbecues, new picnic shelters, new barbecues, new footbridge over creek, new gravel walkway connecting amenities to walking track, upgrade walking tracks, new timber signage and upgraded amenities

### PALING YARDS

Environmental remediation work includes earthworks for Montane Peatland restoration, filling and replanting visitor established 'salt licks'.

Horse rider access to include a crossing to access Paddy's River Dam, armoured access to horse drinking water points and installation of three timber horse yards for overnighting horses. Visitor facilities to include a new boardwalk above the Montane Peat Bog and native grasses and interpretative signage featuring restoration works, as well as upgraded amenities.

### PADDY'S RIVER DAM

New picnic shelters, an upgrade of existing shelters, replacement of fishing site picnic table with a covered shelter, a covered shelter at Paddy's River Dam entrance and upgraded toilets

Signage updated. Horse rider access to include a set of three horse yards, footbridge suitable for horse riders, horse tie up rails, horse drinking access

Future opportunities outlined include fishing pontoon, swimming pontoon, kayak ramp assist and walkway

### LOCHINVAR REST AREA

Upgrade amenities, picnic shelters, signage and develop caravan parking spots on loop road

## Bold plan to develop forest tourism facilities

### From front page

The project has the Forestry Corp partnering with a range of other organisations to develop the tourism infrastructure in a way that hopes for the co-existence of tourism and the peatlands, as well as restoring the degraded peatlands.

On Wednesday, political dignitaries, workers on the project and community members got a peak at what's been happening at the Pilot Hill Aboretum and an idea of what's still to come

In many ways the little-known cousin to the popular Sugarpines just up the road, the Aboretum now boasts a new wellness trail that aims to unlock nature's health benefits via a short, self-guided walk with six dedicated stations.

Kathy Lyons, senior manager of stewardship for Forestry Corp, said the area had a "magic of its own".

"That magic was there before, and even after the fires, it's still



The new wellness walk at Pilot Hill Aboretum.

have beautiful forests and history to share, and a huge opportunity moving forward to work with our partners and locals to better manage the land for the future."

Ms Lyons said the history of the region must be acknowledged in any future plans.

"It's important we understand what has gone before," she said.

"How do we get back to how land was traditionally managed for thousands of years by Aboriginal people?"

How do we stop those devastating wildfires from occurring again.

"How do we better manage our forests and beautiful peat bogs to restore them to the way they used to be?"

"A lot of it is about talking to people, who know the story of the past, who know the history."

there," Ms Lyons said.

"We know tourism is important to the Snowy Valleys, we know we

who know the story of the past, who know the history."

# Forest tourism plan years in the making

THE NEW tourism plan for Bago State Forest has been years in the making, interrupted by bushfire, floods and a global pandemic.

The 'Bago State Forest - Snowy Valleys Tourism Upgrade Program' Masterplan was shared at a ceremony at Pilot Hill Arboretum in Bago State Forest, hosted by Forestry Corporation of NSW.

Over 70 invited guests were on hand to show support for the Masterplan reveal, which details planned upgrade works at five visitor sites in Bago State Forest, located within the NSW Snowy Valleys, close to the townships of Tumbarumba and Tumut.

Developed under the NSW Government Regional Growth and Environment Tourism Fund, the Masterplan aims to deliver growth in the local and regional tourism economy through improved forest-based visitor experiences incorporating art, health and wellness, and environmental projects.

New visitor facilities, walking trails, signage and interpretation, timber sculptural elements and environmental restoration within Bago State Forest are key elements of the plan.

"Bago State Forest has an incredibly diverse landscape and is a fantastic part of the Snowy Valleys," said Brendan Grimson, Forestry Corporation Partnerships Leader - Southern NSW.

"We are incredibly excited to be launching this unique project, built on the principles of 'Caring for Community' and 'Caring for Country'. Traditional Owner culture and heritage, art and sculpture, visitor health and wellness, showcasing local hardwood and softwood timber, are all equally important elements of proposed works," said Mr. Grimson.

"Bago State Forest also supports large areas of sensitive Montane Peatlands. This project aims to enhance the visitor experience in those areas whilst also delivering restoration of degraded peatlands."

"A strong multi-disciplinary team brought together by design underpins the Bago State Forest Masterplan. Partners The Mulloon Institute, NSW Health, Sculpture by the Sea, The Connective Co., Planet Ark, and Tumut Brungle Local Aboriginal Land Council, all on board."

Jenni Wines, Bushfire/Disaster Recovery Clinician, said Murrumbidgee Local Health District was excited to be a partner in the Bago project.

"We are now starting to view nature as an important preventative healthcare and self-care model, with enormous community reach. We are bringing clients to Pilot Hill Arboretum, using the facilities and walking trail as a therapeutic session," said Ms. Wines.

David Handley, founding CEO and Artistic Director with Sculpture by the Sea, said the Bago State Forest project afforded the opportunity to extend their successful Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail.

"Bago State Forest is a fantastic part of the Snowy Valleys which offers a very different experience for visitors to the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail. Our three Bago project sites, our 'Sculpture Forest,' is perfectly positioned in the middle of the existing Sculpture trail, giving the visitor three unique experiences all within a very short drive," said Mr. Handley.

"Forestry Corporation of NSW has been fantastic to work with, they welcomed us with opened arms right from the start."

Bill McAllister, a Landscape Planner from The Mulloon Institute, agreed.

"We are incredibly excited to be given the opportunity to be working with Forestry Corporation of NSW on the restoration of Montane Peatlands. One really important element of Montane Peatlands is that they store tonnes and tonnes of Carbon dioxide. This makes their restoration a positive step to tackling climate change," said Mr. McAllister.

Dr Joe McGirr MP, Independent Member for Wagga Wagga, noted that the announcement was important for the Bago State Forest and for the local community as a whole. "The investment made here is going to greatly bolster tourism opportunities, leading to more jobs and economic benefits for the community."

"This is a particularly special project in the wake of the 2019/20 bushfires. I hope it will help in the ongoing recovery of community - not only financially through tourism, but also emotionally through a regenerated, accessible landscape," said Mr. McGirr.

"I am greatly pleased to see First Nations practices, culture and heritage being placed front and centre of the masterplan; an important consideration of respect, and leading to improved environmental, educational and cultural outcomes."

# Sugar pine walk 2.0 to rise from the ashes

IT WILL take decades to grow, but the Sugar Pines will return, with the promise of an enhanced range of tourism facilities.

A nature playground, large-scale sculptures, better parking and amenities, including toilets, are all planned alongside a new batch of sugar pine trees.

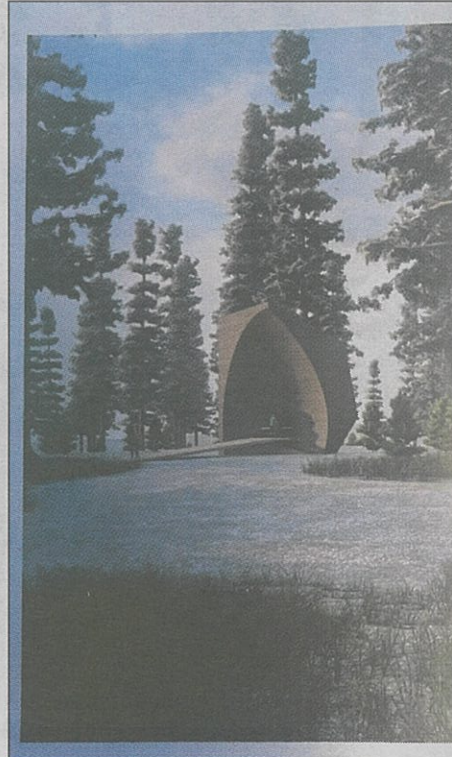
Over a thousand pine seedlings have started their decades-long journey to replace the iconic sugar pine walk, which was sadly lost in the 2020 Black Summer bushfires.

The former site was planted in 1928 as a range of different exotic species were being trialled for the forestry industry, later growing to become a majestic landmark for tourists and locals alike.

The new site will also incorporate a number of large towering Radiata Pine that survived the bushfire to form part of the new Bago State Forest tourism precinct.

Around 1,500 new seedlings were planted at the site last year - these initially self-seeded after the devastation of the bushfire, and later collected and propagated to form the 2021 Sugar Pine Walk planting cohort.

That means the new sugar pine walk will literally 'grow



The Snowy Valley Sculpture Forest & Trail

Sculpture by the Sea is partnering with Forestry Corporation of NSW to create the 'Sculpture Forest' at Pilot Hill Arboretum in Bago State Forest. The project will restore the iconic sugar pine walk, which was lost in the 2020 Black Summer bushfires.

The 'Sugar Pine Walk 2.0' will be a new batch of sugar pine trees, alongside a nature playground, large-scale sculptures, better parking and amenities, including toilets.

Over a thousand pine seedlings have started their decades-long journey to replace the iconic sugar pine walk, which was sadly lost in the 2020 Black Summer bushfires.

The former site was planted in 1928 as a range of different exotic species were being trialled for the forestry industry, later growing to become a majestic landmark for tourists and locals alike.

The new site will also incorporate a number of large towering Radiata Pine that survived the bushfire to form part of the new Bago State Forest tourism precinct.

Around 1,500 new seedlings were planted at the site last year - these initially self-seeded after the devastation of the bushfire, and later collected and propagated to form the 2021 Sugar Pine Walk planting cohort.

That means the new sugar pine walk will literally 'grow

from the ashes'. Alongside the trees will be sculptures, as Sculpture by the Sea partners with Forestry Corp to create the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Forest.

The sculptures will be at the new sugar pines site, as well as Pilot Hill.

It will connect the existing Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail, already located at Adelong, Batlow, Tumbarumba and Tooma.

The forest sculpture will comprise two parts:

• At Sugar Pines 2.0, about five large scale sculptures will be installed in the newly planted

pine trees.

• At Pilot Hill, 20-35 medium to large scale sculptures and environmental installations will be installed along the walking track within the eucalyptus forest.

The artworks will be by leading Australian and international artists.



Bill McAllister and Jack Smart from the Mulloon Institute, and Dylan Morrissey and Michael Anlezark from the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden, who are partnering with Forestry Corp to undertake environmental remediation work at Bago.

# Pilot Hill an important resting place

THE IMPORTANCE of the Bago State Forest area to Indigenous people was highlighted on Wednesday.

While the Pilot Hill Arboretum was established a century ago when plantings of more than 50

tree species from all over the world were established, it was a significant meeting place for thousands of years before that.

Uncle Craig Wilesmith explained that the Ngarigo people would stop and rest at Pilot Hill on

their journey from Tumbarumba to Yellowin Bay - now under the Blowering Dam - but then on the Tumut River.

"In early November about 600 people would gather and walk from Tumbarumba to Pilot Hill,

where they'd rest, before travelling on to Yellowin Bay for a week of corroboree to bring eligible boys into manhood," Uncle Craig said.

"From there, they would go on to the Snowy Mountains in search of Bogong Moths."