



FIFTH BIRTHDAY: Hamish and Jemima celebrated K-6's fifth birthday with a piece of chocolate cake. Photo: Madeline Crittenden.

Losing small town appeal

WHEN you think of Bowral, most people think of a charming rural town in the Southern Highlands that people visit to escape from the city.

It is the unique heritage of the town that Highlanders are proud of.

But is this in danger of being lost?

John Hewson's most recent article in the *Southern Highland News* on January 27 addressed the "decline" of Bowral.

His view that Bowral was slowly losing its appeal as more national corporations come to town struck a chord with the Southern Highlands community.

The article has already reached thousands of people and elicited more than 200 comments from the public.

Many agree with Mr Hewson that Bowral has lost its charm and there seems to be no clear plan for future development.

On the other hand, some people have argued that if people are willing to walk a short distance parking is not a problem.

Others have said they always have a pleasant retail experience in Bowral. But these people appear to be in the minority.

For a lot of people, the two main issues of shopping in Bowral is the lack of parking and poor customer service.

Others have raised the is-

sue that many shops are not pram or wheelchair accessible which makes it difficult to shop in the main street of Bowral.

There have been plenty of locals who said they rarely or never shop in Bowral due to these problems.

Others have said the locally-owned, unique businesses that are there struggle to survive due to high rents which has opened the door for larger companies such as Peter Alexander or Cotton On.

While it may appear to be all doom and gloom, many have also come forward with ideas to help reinvigorate the town.

Craig Golding suggested on Facebook monthly twilight markets could be held and live music played in Corbett Plaza on weekends.

He also suggested the introduction of Easter markets and the reintroduction of the Carpathon.

Others suggested blocking off the main street (Bong Bong Street) for pedestrian access only and bringing back events such as Day on the Green that will attract visitors.

But a compelling argument and one to consider was that if we don't shop locally and support Highlands businesses then there will no longer be any unique and individual businesses left to set Bowral apart from the rest of the country.

Five years of primary at Oxley College

EDUCATION Oxley College

FIVE years ago on Monday Oxley College opened a new chapter of education.

On January 30, 2012 the primary education classroom doors were opened at Oxley College.

On January 30, 2017, the

first day back at school, students and teachers celebrated five years of primary education at the school.

The school community celebrated by singing happy birthday to the school and enjoying a piece of cake.

When the primary section of the school opened in 2012,

135 students were enrolled.

This number has grown to 180 in 2017.

High school students who were part of the first primary cohort also attended the celebration and were in charge of the first cut of the cake.

The aim of the celebration was to recognise an impor-

tant part of Oxley College's history, as it was declared the college's expansion was second in significance only to the opening of Oxley in 1982.

The celebration also served as a welcome to new students and teachers starting at the school in 2017.

— MADELINE CRITTENDEN



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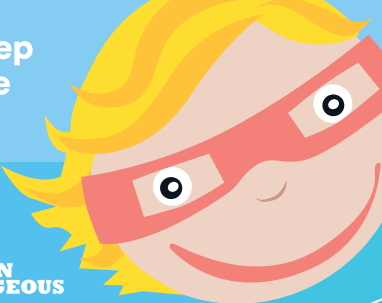
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