

Community Case Study

Date – 6 March 2018

Robyn and John Rumbelow

Robyn and John are aged in their early 70s and live 8 minutes drive south of Leongatha on a 1.5 acre property. They first moved to South Gippsland in 2009 to a get-away property they had owned there for a number of years in Trida after have living in a variety of places. After the Trida property became too hilly and difficult they moved to 1.5 acres out of Leongatha to allow freedom to travel. John's health requires they avoid South Gippsland winters for 4 months each year taking the caravan north. South Gippsland provides all they need and a feeling of safety in a quiet, friendly local area.



Robyn was born in Melbourne and spent her first five years living in North Melbourne after her Dad came back from the war. The family moved after Robyn's Dad bought a war service home in Highett and remained living there until she married John. John spent his first five years in Elsternwick before moving to Bentleigh where he spent the rest of his younger life.

Robyn (aged 21) married John (aged 22) and they moved to a new estate in Nunawading building in 1967 on land they purchased in 1965. After finishing work with the State Electricity Commission, John and Robyn owned and operated the Moorabbin newsagency living behind the shop for 4 years. Robyn and John went on to live in East Bentley for a further 17 years. Robyn worked while John cared for the children. In 1989 they moved to Mt Eliza where they lived for 13 years before moving to Phillip Island in 2002 to be near their daughter and grandchildren.

Living in South Gippsland

Robyn and John first discovered South Gippsland as a stopping point on the way home from caravan trips. Korumburra Caravan Park was a favourite place to stay every Christmas for 7 years. While living at Phillip Island they purchased land and built a get-away house at Trida. After 7 years Phillip Island became too busy so they moved permanently to Trida.

Trida was beautiful but it was steep and hilly. At 3 acres it was too small to put animals on and too big to let it go while they went away each winter. It was 25 minutes from town on a very windy road so eventually Robyn and John moved to a smaller property near Leongatha.

Robyn and John's Leongatha South property is a flat 1.5 acres with a single story house, eight kilometres out of town. The property provides good exercise and enough to do. For John's health Robyn and John go north every winter for 4 months when the mowing contractor can keep the grass down.

Employment

Robyn is a trained teacher of the deaf originally working at the School for the Deaf in StKilda and later leaving to work closer to home as a Primary School teacher. Robyn later returned to teaching deaf children as a visiting teacher on Mornington Peninsula for 12 years. Robyn loved this job and changed to part time in her later 50s allowing increased travel. When the job went to a contract position, Robyn had to apply for her position each year. Finally she didn't reapply for her position and retired. Robyn is still a registered teacher working with the deaf in Pearcedale.

Robyn works at Coal Creek with the school program when she can or if someone is sick getting out with her cane and long black skirt. She also volunteers at Coal Creek in the General Store or where ever she is needed. Robyn and Johns regular travel means Robyn is not at Coal Creek as often as she used to be.

Education

Robyn is a trained Primary Teacher and trained teacher of the deaf with a graduate diploma in educational administration.

John's training was as a mechanical engineer. Since leaving the SEC in 1970s John has run the newsagency, worked from home as a building designer and caring for the children while Robyn was at work. He completed a real estate course but has never used it.

Benefits and barriers to living in South Gippsland

South Gippsland is away from the madness and provides a laid back lifestyle. Robyn and John find everything they need in Leongatha, Wonthaggi, Warragul or Traralgon. There is no need to go to the big smoke at all. The air is clean and there is no smog which is essential for John's health. Robyn and John feel safe living in South Gippsland at home and in the community. The country smells are evident every so often as the neighbours are still fairly close. Robyn and John recognise that to live in the area you need to be retired or have a local job.

Disadvantages of living in South Gippsland

Distance, we are 1.5 hours from anywhere for visiting family. Got used to that living in Trida. Robyn and John miss the amateur theatre group we belonged to in Frankston and the life that went with that. Robyn still connects with the Frankston Theatre Group where she does costumes and front of house when she can. She does the same with Lyric Theatre in Leongatha and the Wonthaggi Theatre group but less so now they are away so often.
