



Andrew Hopper
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Do your homework when buying a block

CHOOSING the right block of land is vital to the buying and building process of any home.

To the inexperienced eye, it's often hard to differentiate one block from another.

Shape matters. Be sure to focus on the shape of the block in relation to the kind of home you're planning on building. **Consider slope and soil type.** Blocks with a steep gradient that have not been retained can incur high building costs. Sandy and light soils may need reinforcement even over light gradients, and thick clay or rocky soils may incur additional excavation and tipping costs.

Look for groundwater. Damp blocks may require additional drainage.

Orientation. Even the most poorly oriented block can look sunny and elevated when it is vacant. Be sure to get an expert opinion on how your block's exposure to sun, wind and rain will affect the home you plan to build.

Services. Blocks in new estates and in rural and remote areas will often incur additional costs for service connection.

Check out the neighbourhood. Consider things like shops, transport, entertainment and nearby schools when buying. **Uncover easements and impediments.** Check the Land Title Certificate, visit the council and approach the relevant bodies to discover whether there are encumbrances on your land.

For more information visit one of our many display homes, contact your local Hotondo Homes builder on 1800 677 156 or visit hotondo.com.

Pantomime in the Park — all the better for children to have fun



Families from the Geelong and surrounding regions have been enjoying Warralily's summer event's program. Picture: Reg Ryan

WHO'S afraid of the big, bad wolf? You will have to attend tomorrow's fun filled Pantomime in the Park event at Warralily to find out.

As part of the summer events program at Warralily, they are hosting another family friendly pantomime this weekend, putting a contemporary twist on the classic children's story, Little Red Riding Hood.

Pantomime in the Park will be held at the Warralily Parkland at 844 Barwon Heads Rd from 4pm - 7pm tomorrow and it promises to be even better than the last.

Head along to find out how Little Red Riding Hood outwits the Big Bad Wolf in a mesmerising

performance by Drysdale theatre group, Theatre 3222.

And the fun doesn't end there.

Children's entertainment act, The Kazoos, is guaranteed to put a smile on the faces of kids young and old with their combination of singing and dancing.

There will even be a chance to meet with the group and get a photo afterwards.

Kids will also get the chance to visit the Itty Bitty Book Van, a travelling children's bookshop with a focus on fostering a love of reading in youngsters.

They will then be transported by an enchanting

story read by the Itty Bitty Book Van's master storyteller.

Children's entertainer Sue Maree sing about her magical vegetable garden, in a performance guaranteed to get the kids excited about their greens.

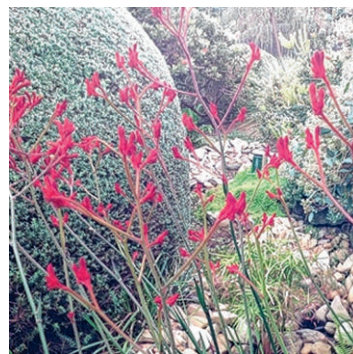
To top it off, there will be face painting, a jumping castle and a great selection of food and drinks.

Kids are encouraged to come dressed up as their favourite story book character just to add to the fun.

It will be an afternoon of entertainment for the entire family to enjoy.



Sunnymeade Garden's tranquillity proves an Australia Day favourite



Anglesea's Sunnymeade Garden was open to visitors on the Australia Day long weekend.

ALMOST 1000 people flocked to Anglesea's Sunnymeade Garden to check out the tranquil space when it opened to visitors on the Australia Day long weekend.

The garden won Ocean Road Landscaping a top honour at the esteemed Landscape Victoria Awards last year and was opened to the public for an \$8 fee at the weekend, which was donated to the CFA and Open Gardens Australia.

Visitors strolled leisurely among the various trees and grass mounds while the children took a keen liking to the tree house and flying fox.

Families, friends and strangers gathered on rocks around the water bowl to chat over a glass of wine provided by the Blakes Estate winery.

There were also three local artists, Sue Corbet and Cinnamon and Rowan Stephens, whose work was displayed in the garden.

Peter Shaw, director and owner of Ocean Road

Landscaping, says the successful event was the result of months of preparation.

"We had interest in people wanting to use the services of Ocean Road Landscaping after the opening, from garden design, landscape construction and garden maintenance," he says.

Peter says it's a unique experience to open to the public a setting that its creators are exposed to daily.

"It's a funny feeling sharing your creativity with people — it leaves you feeling a little exposed. You wonder if anyone will come and, if they do, will they like it?" he says.

"People's reactions to it are often charming and surprising. We find ourselves looking at our garden differently."

For Peter the project is both personal and professional.

"It's what we do and it's who we are. Our own creativity and personal preferences are expressed in (the garden)," he says.

-JEMMA RYAN