

Despite spending cuts gloom and doom, Federal MPs still have time to suggest better times are ahead of us ...

Regional revival promised

THE Federal government is planning to have its \$1 billion National Stronger Regions Fund up and running next year, promising "more jobs, better infrastructure and a stronger economy" for regional Australians.

The commitment came as the government this week launched details of its regional plans in "Building Stronger Regional Communities," a publication outlining initiatives to benefit regional communities, promised in the recent Federal Budget.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development Warren Truss, released the document with Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs.

They said the Federal Budget detailed a massive works program that would invest in much-needed infrastructure across the nation.

No mention was made of Budget cuts to Federal Assistance Grants to local councils, totalling \$24 million and removal of Supplementary Local Roads Funding, an \$18 million equalisation fund that compensated South Australia which has 11 per cent of the nation's local road network, but just seven per cent of the population.

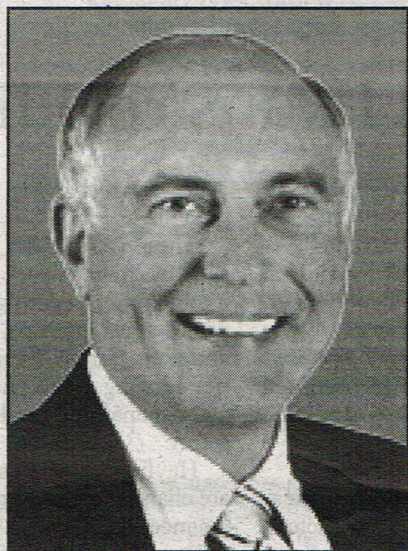
However, the program promises additional funding to the Roads to Recovery and the Black Spot Programs and will support maintenance of local road infrastructure and target funding to achieve better road safety outcomes and productivity uplifts for the regions.

Mr Truss said the Budget delivered initiatives that would boost local economies, improve connectivity across regions, increase productivity and create jobs.

"The \$1 billion National Stronger Regions Fund will be up and running next year and will target infrastructure projects that support local and regional development," Mr Truss said.

"Organisations, including councils and community groups, will be able to apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million for community infrastructure.

"The \$314 million Community Development Grants Program is another Coalition initiative that will support key



MR Truss has promised a massive works program.

economic community infrastructure by investing in almost 300 local projects.

"Our Budget includes \$2.5 billion for local roads under the Roads to Recovery Program - including an extra \$350 million to provide double funding in 2015-16.

This includes \$565 million for local road Black Spots plus \$248 million for Heavy Vehicle Safety projects.

"There is also \$100 million to fill in black spots in the mobile phone network, a new university scholarship program, green army, and an extra \$100 million for rural research - all of direct benefit to regional Australia," Mr Truss said.

Mr Truss claimed regional Australians would also benefit from the \$300 million Bridges Renewal Program, upgrading deteriorating bridges.

Mr Briggs said through the National Highway Upgrade Program the government was investing \$229 million to improve key highway networks, strengthening international gateways, freight hubs and trade corridors.

"The Budget also provides funding to ensure regional Australians have access to fast, affordable broadband Internet and improved mobile phone coverage," Mr Briggs said.

The Building Stronger Regional Communities publication is available online at: infrastructure.gov.au.



ENJOYING a chat were (from left) John Gillbert, John Griffiths, Gwen Smith and Ellen Gilbert.

Action on our 'home front'

AS part of SA's History Festival "About Time," Dublin History Group held its "Action on the Home Front" display on Sunday, May 25.

The display was held at the institute, with memorabilia to acknowledge the work of WWII "Fighting Forces Comfort Fund" (FFCF) branches in Dublin, Mallala, Avon, Wild Horse Plains and Lower Light on display.

Wild Horse Plains resident, Simon Baker, found some old FFCF minute books in an old shed on his property.

Thanks to a Community Partnerships grant from District Council of Mallala, the books have been cleaned up and were a wonderful addition to the display.

Much of the information used in the display was obtained from information from local residents, who searched through family members' old diaries and pictures.

Maureen Parker found her mother, Ivy Jenkin, a member of Long Plains Red Cross (prior to FFCF being formed there,) was "Miss Army Red Cross"

Balaklava's Kevin Bubner also found some photos, and researched information from his father's old diaries.

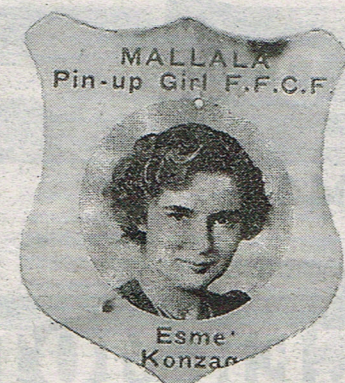
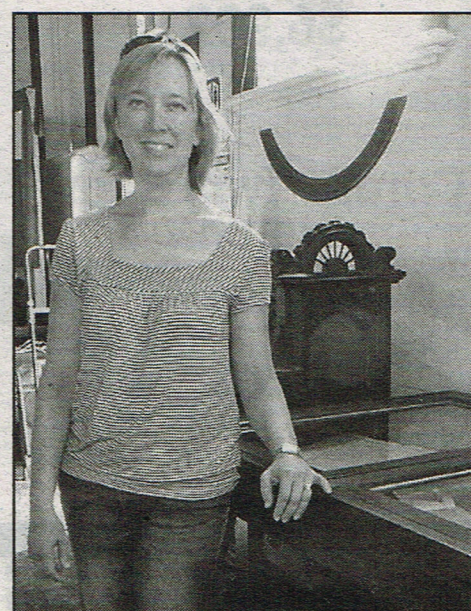
Pat Thompson, of Dublin History Group, was thrilled with the success of the day, with good numbers of people attending and enjoying the display.



IVY Jenkin poses as an Army nurse for the Long Plains Queen Competition in 1917.

RIGHT: ELIZABETH Mayfield, the paper conservator from Artlab in Adelaide, cleaned the various record books.

ESME KONZAG was a "pin up girl" for her Fighting Forces Comfort Fund.



Letter to the Editor

Wind power pride

THE second stage of Snowtown Wind Farm is nearing completion.

In a few days installed wind power per person in Mid North SA will be around 12,000 Watts and when it goes into full production, the Mid North's wind farms will be generating an average of around 4000 Watts per Mid North resident.

To put this in perspective, average home power consumption per person in the Mid North is around 260 Watts, and Germany, the nation with the high-

est solar power capacity per capita in the world, has 400 Watts per person of installed solar. It seems to me the people of the Mid North should be intensely proud of this. Geographically, the Mid North is leading Australia in the fight for climate change action, yet most of the locals seem to be unaware and uncaring - apathetic.

The tourist industry should be using this as a way of attracting visitors to the Mid North - "Sustainable energy capital of Australia" - but what are they doing? Apparently nothing.

Dave Clarke, Crystal Brook