

Valley, it's time to move on



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Preference will be given to shorter letters emailed to news@lveexpress.com.au. The editor reserves the right to edit all letters either for length or legal reasons, or omit letters.

The views of the letter writers don't necessarily reflect the views of the paper.

their religion.

A folder of these could then be available in each school, to benefit the understanding of the students. Funding should be slowly reduced from all non-state schools on an annual basis if the school is not educating the students in all religions, so they become knowledgeable with their teachings and their comparison with one-another.

If we have an understanding of each religion we will then be able to discredit the radicals who use religion to cause dissension and mistrust. Les Horsfield, Thorpdale.

Issues remain with MACP

I WOULD like to thank J Jackeaten (*The Express*, 16 November) for bringing up the MACP issue and reminding everyone that the old public library is still sitting in Moe empty because commercial interests thought they could take over public property and profit from it. Let us hope the library does not become an eyesore.

Moe and Newborough residents need to remember which current councillors revealed the dealings of this same group when it comes time to vote and that public libraries have no place in a commercial development.

The lack of parking in Moe will now become obvious as the project nears completion and this will affect the trade in Moe's central business district.

The opposite of what was planned. Moe has lost a proper crossing over the railway line, an upgraded public library and a transport interchange

that would have made it a stopping point for tourists heading to the snow. One would hope property developers have no say in public affairs, but in Moe it appears to be the "way things are done".

In closing it would be nice to argue about the issues rather than personal attacks on community representatives.

Cheryl Wragg's letter (*The Express*, 12 November) addressed issues about transparency and accountability and conflicts of interests.

It appears some could still learn this lesson when they make statements as community representatives, but fail to disclose a commercial interest in the issue at hand.

Such as lobbying the State Government on behalf of a relative or their football mates without letting the government know your relationships, or making quotes in *The Express* about them designed to steer public opinion in your favour. David Hollis, Morwell.

Will things change?

THANK you to the people who have recently contacted me wanting more information about why the existing Moe library wasn't renovated and the new Moe library/service centre built instead.

In 2006, Latrobe City Council released a five year municipal-wide library strategy plan showing the Moe library needed an upgrade.

Council's next step was to commission a confidential report showing some options.

The internal report considered a couple of onsite options and an offsite new build yet omitted the existing library's design anticipated a future upgrade.

It ignored the first floor slab waiting under the roof foundations built to carry a first floor extension, land reserved for a ground floor expansion and other features presenting a range of cheaper upgrade options, compared to a new build offsite.

During 2006, councillors did not vote to publicly release the report or adopt any of its options.

Despite this a local business owner became privy to council's internal discussions and, in February 2007 made a formal, written offer to purchase the library/service centre.

Soon after, in March 2007, senior council management directed external town planners, re-designing transport facilities around the railway station in a Moe Activity

Centre Plan, to include a library/service centre.

Council management, councillors and the business owner have never explained how in late 2006 - early 2007, council's internal, confidential speculations came to be treated as a firm council decision and communicated as such, both to the private business owner and the MACP designers.

In February 2008, the private business circulated a letter publicly stating they had offered to buy the library/service centre only after becoming aware of council's intention to redevelop the library elsewhere.

At a Freedom of Information Appeal in May 2008, in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, a senior council manager confirmed council management had told the MACP designers to include a relocated library, but didn't know who in council had made that decision.

We know from the public record that it wasn't by statutory public meeting of councillors.

Council's first formal, public decision in December 2007 wasn't to relocate the library but, rather, to endorse the MACP design which included a library/service centre.

In 2009, about 60 submissions about the MACP design were made by Moe community members to council.

People pleaded for four hours at a council meeting for changes but were ignored by most councillors.

In 2011, at a confidential meeting the then councillors signed off the current design.

As it nears completion more and more Moe people are asking how the \$15 million library/service centre happened.

Attacking me, my husband - Cr Peter Gibbons - and others who started asking back in 2007 is not an answer, but a distraction.

As their response to J Jackeaten's letter (*The Express*, 16 November) has confirmed, people are rejecting such distractions and want the truth.

I can't see that changing between now and next year's council election.

Cheryl Wragg, ex-MADRA Secretary, Moe.



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Religious education is the answer

THE mess that the world is in through politics and religion is primarily the fault of our education system.

How many people are familiar with the fact that there are six major religions, not counting the 260,000 variations of the Christian religion.

All of these practise (in theory) and convince adherency of their sole righteousness.

While in actual fact, nothing splits a nation as much as blind faith.

Society would benefit greatly, if each religious group produced an A4 sheet of the principles and ideals of

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