



**THE GIFT  
OF A  
JOB**  
PAGE 41

**A HALF-CENTURY  
OF DEVILEE'S**  
24 PAGES  
INSIDE



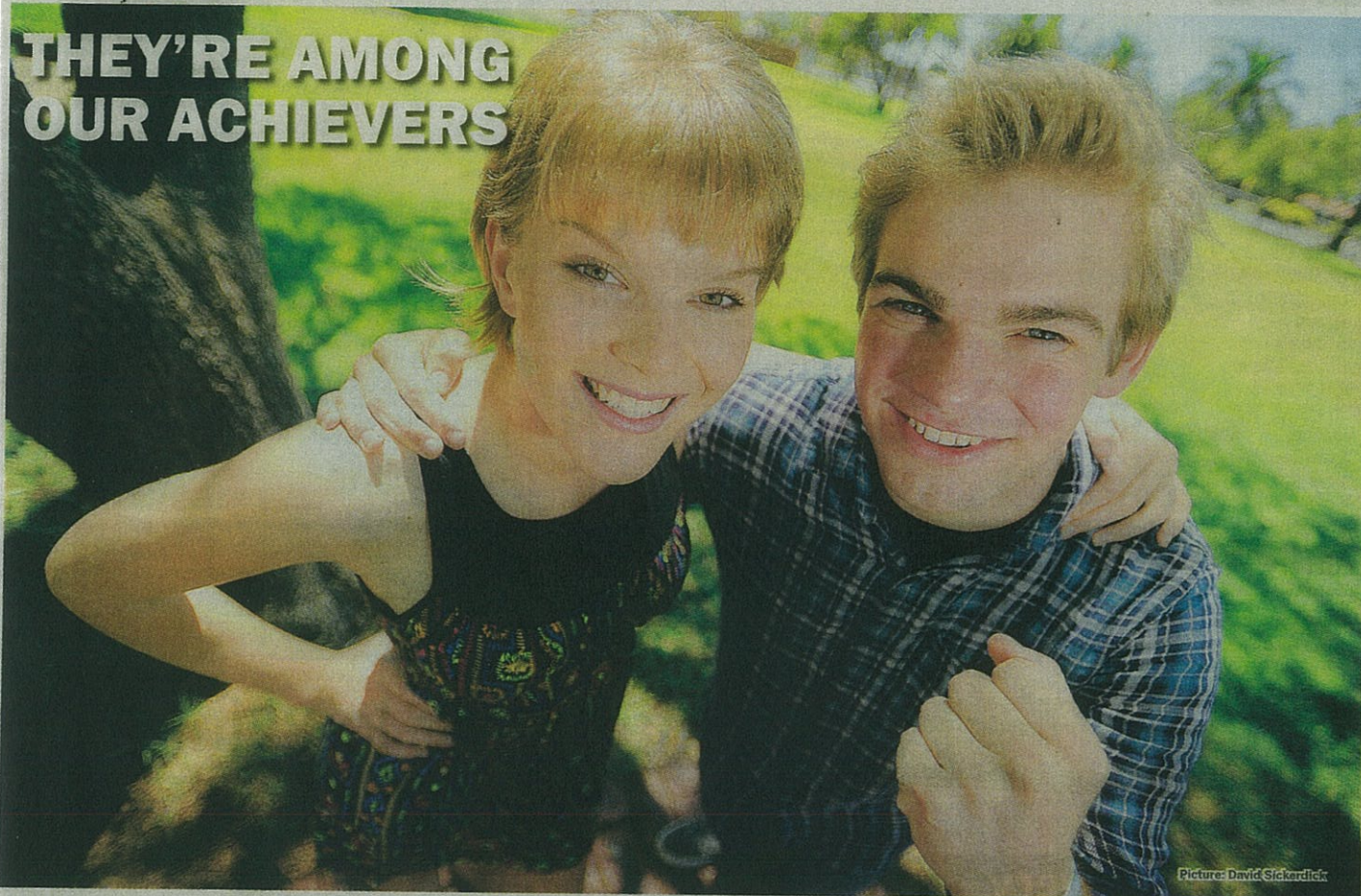
Serving Mildura and district since 1920

# Sunraysia Daily

Saturday, December 17, 2011

\$1.60

**THEY'RE AMONG  
OUR ACHIEVERS**



Picture: David Sicking

MILDURA Senior College students Grace Hornsby, 18, and Alister Sluiter, 18, are among Sunraysia's high achievers who were celebrating their ATAR scores yesterday. Alister who is the school's dux received a score of 99.1, which places him in the top 100 students in the state and Grace achieved a perfect study score in English and an ATAR of 93. St Joseph's College captain Emma Sanderson, 17, was the highest achiever in the region, obtaining a near-perfect score of 99.45.

FULL story and pictures, Pages 4, 5.

# FUNDS FLIGHT

## \$8 million Mildura Airport upgrade put on hold

By Allan Murphy

THE \$8 million upgrade of the Mildura Airport has been put on hold.

Airport chief executive officer Bill Burke yesterday confirmed only half the funds required for the project had been committed

and work would not proceed until the shortfall was guaranteed.

Mr Burke said in July this year that it was not a matter of if the works would proceed but when, however, yesterday he conceded that the project needed an additional \$4 million to get started.

The redevelopment work, which would have almost doubled the size of the existing building, was earmarked to begin before the end of this year and be completed within 12 months, however the Federal Government has yet to commit vital funding.

While the State Government has pledged \$3

million with a further \$850,000 from Mildura Rural City Council and Mildura Airport Pty Ltd cash reserves, the project was overlooked by the Federal Government in the last round of Regional Development Victoria funding.

Continued Page 10

weather

32°



Mildura  
Late rain

Mallee  
Showers

Partly cloudy with a little rain during the evening and the chance of a thunderstorm.

Sun  
28°



Mon  
28°



Tue  
29°



Full report P73



Picture: Stacey Merlin

LIFE CHANGED: Lauren Mercer at work at the Mildura Brewery Pub.

# Best Christmas present

## Lauren lands a job in Max Employment's national three-month campaign

By Liz O'Brien

LAUREN Mercer's life has been changed for the better.

The 22-year-old Mildura woman was one of about 60 locals to benefit from Max Employment's All I want for Christmas is a Job campaign.

The national three-month initiative will come to an end this month and already 9890 people across Australia have been employed.

The program's target is to create 10,000 jobs by Christmas.

Ms Mercer won herself a per-

manent part-time job at Mildura Brewery Pub after registering herself with the program.

It's her first job and it's done wonders for her confidence, she says.

"It's changed my life for the better, it's excellent, I'm always busy and I always have money," Ms Mercer said.

She would recommend the program to anyone and said it had also helped her prepare for interviews and life as an employee.

Her boss, Paul Neyland, jumped at the chance to be a part of the

jobs drive.

"I've been in the same position myself, looking for a job at Christmas time, so I figured, why not give someone else a chance?" he said.

Locally the program has created jobs for people aged between 18 and 60 in administration, retail, labouring and within the wine industry.

Anne Scott, Max Employment business manager, said employers could still register for the program.

"It is designed around trying to secure as many employment opportunities for people on income

support, those people who aren't working before Christmas," Ms Scott said.

"It's a three-month campaign that Max is running across Australia, so we have 73 locations, it's the biggest jobs service provider in Australia.

"We're also able to offer government incentives and without a doubt that takes the initial financial pressure off the business."

For many families, the jobs drive couldn't have come at a better time, according to Ms Scott.

"With some of our clients we've

had their family members ringing and thanking us, so that side of it's really beautiful and that's when you know you have done the right thing."

A barbecue celebratory breakfast was held at Max Employment's Lime Avenue office on Wednesday.

For every jobseeker placed into sustainable employment during the program, Max Employment will make a donation to The Smith Family's Christmas Appeal.

The business also has a Christmas wishing tree and all presents are being donated to MASP.

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