

The votes are in for PEG Shire Council



People. Education. Government. Three simple words that create an acronym that has given rise to Councillor PEG and Victoria’s 80th local government area – PEG Shire Council! And here in Chewton!

Chewton’s relationship with local government is a long story. The diggers who rushed to Forest Creek in 1851 stood up to the Victorian government in the event now known as the Monster Meeting. Local government arrived shortly afterwards with the formation of the Borough of Chewton in 1858 after a fierce and vocal campaign to remain apart from Castlemaine.

A hall in Chewton was purchased by the Borough and became the Chewton Town Hall. As the Borough declined Chewton resisted joining Castlemaine and joined Metcalfe Shire instead. Metcalfe Shire ended with the Kennett government – compulsorily joining other shires in a newly created Mount Alexander local government area. And now we have PEG Shire Council!

Local government affects us all, but do we know its range of activities and limitations? Max Lesser pondered this question and decided to do something to redress the situation. And he visualised a way to make it interesting. Colourful mathematical and geometric designs became part of a grand plan and Max became a familiar figure in pre-schools, schools and on the streets as he began the promotion of “Councillor PEG”.



Max stood for council and was elected as a councillor in Mount Alexander Shire after a count back. His last year on council was as Deputy Mayor. These experiences reinforced his belief that education about



local government was critical, and they also helped him refine his ideas. Max is certainly inspired, as a visit to his studio shows. Card games, mazes, colourings and more are in Max’s rapidly expanding arsenal of educational materials, an arsenal that is continually added to as ideas from participants are taken on board and developed.

Developing the original councillor PEG concept and ideas was helped along with the support of the Municipal Association of Victoria (Victoria’s peak body for local government) together with the encouragement and endorsement of his fellow councillors. Max is now ready to expand the impact of his Cr. PEG Project. Interest in the project has widened since the launch in May 2019, which marked the beginning of an exciting ride!

In coming editions of the *Chat* we will be exploring some of the many lines and hoists that are attached to Cr. PEG.