
MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 3 May 2021

The happy wombat

A temporary Portland visitor has taken up full time residence thanks to the generosity of Roger Haldane, himself a relatively recent newcomer to the town.

Roger, who is the proprietor of Shaw River Buffalo Cheese and also an accomplished artist, fell in love with the wonderful limestone wombat that has been visiting the town as part of the TRAILS Sculpture Exhibition.

The wombat, a creation of Lyons Sculpture Park artist Jon Dixon, has been lurking at the IGA end of the Julia Street Creative Space laneway.

Roger approached Jon to purchase the piece, but Jon offered to trade for one of Roger's paintings, and in response Roger created a wonderful wombat-themed piece.

But more than that, he also decided to leave the sculpture where it is, so the whole town can continue to enjoy it.

It's a perfect end to the inaugural Trails event, which has seen hundreds of locals and visitors enjoy walking through the commercial heart of the town to view 35 diverse competition entries as well as the work of five feature artists.

This story of artists, wombats and philanthropy will be highlighted in a new podcast, recorded by Story Towns.

Business owners, artists, Julia Street Creative Space volunteers, sponsors and other behind the scenes contributors gathered at the final TRAILS event on Sunday, where the AWA Alliance Bank People's Choice Award winner was announced as Jo Jo Spook for her entry 'Big Mouth' and the \$100 voucher to Clock by the Bay was won by Andrea Bolte.

BACKGROUND NOTE: The TRAILS Creative Arts Group is a collective of volunteers, auspiced by the Committee for Portland, who are passionate about promoting creative art to the broader community.

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