

# New path leads to Lozzar's



Phil Slessar and Loretta Riordan have spent the past three years building their dream cafe at Lozzar's, which prides itself on great service and great food.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] A  
[/dropcap]t some point in our lives, most of us reflect on whether what we do for a living makes us happy or if we need to take a deep breath and make a change.

For **Loretta Riordan** and her partner **Phil Slessar**, that point arrived just over three years ago when Loretta, who had a long career in hospitality, decided she no longer wanted to work for other people, but for herself.

Phil, who came from a background in electric motor repairs, was also ready for a new challenge and doing "something completely different".

"I was moving from a job where you have very dirty hands, to one where they are very, very clean," he said with a laugh,

extending his fingers for effect.

Together, Loretta and Phil took the plunge and made an offer on a café in Kepler St, Warrnambool that they refurbished and reopened as **Lozzar's Lounge Cafe**.

"I had been working ridiculously hard for other people for many years, but I never had the confidence to think that I could open my own place," Loretta said.

"Finally, I reached the point where I realised that if I didn't make a move, I would never do it and in the end it all happened very quickly."



French toast anyone? Breakfast can be as healthy or as decadent as you like at Lozzar's.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] P  
[/dropcap]hil learned the art of being a barista and Loretta expanded her cooking skills to the point where she could make virtually all of the café's menu range herself, single-handedly, and only source a few items from other suppliers. Front-of-house was taken care of by the very capable **Bec Scholz**, who just moved on to a new venture last week after

three years at Lozzar's.

The café has established a loyal following for its breakfast and lunch menu which includes sit-down-and-take-your-time items like french toast, homemade muesli, fruit and oat crumble (breakfast), smoked salmon, feta and pea frittata, or a smoked chicken, leek and roast pumpkin risotto (lunch), plus the full range of 'grab-and-go' bagels, focaccias, salads and soups.

The sweeter side of things includes a range of plump muffins (raspberry and white chocolate is the house specialty) and delicious cakes (such as blueberry and lemon sour cream cake) paired with one of a large selection of T2 teas that are served in a pot, or a coffee from the ethically responsible Di Bella roasters.



Resistance is useless...raspberry and white choc muffins, made by

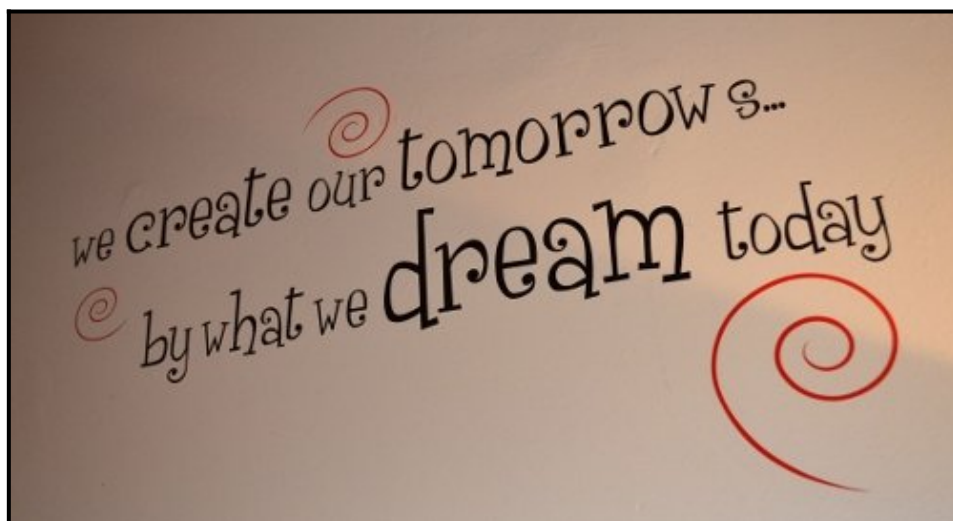
Loretta, are a house specialty.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] W  
[/dropcap]hen it comes to a successful café, however, great food and coffee are only one part of the equation. Great service is equally as important and this is where Lozzar's steps up.

"I want all of our customers to be noticed, and by that I mean, when they walk in, we say hello, we make sure they feel welcome and comfortable and really looked after," Loretta said.

The Lozzar's philosophy is reflected in the inspirational phrases added around the walls, which customers have been known to photograph.

"These sayings reflect my own thinking because I never thought I would ever have my own cafe. It has been hard work, but when the place is buzzing, when our customers are telling us that the food is great, well, it makes your day. It makes it all worthwhile," Loretta said.



Wall art gives customers something to contemplate while enjoying their coffee...

[box type="bio"] Lozzar's Lounge Cafe, 52a Kepler St, Warrnambool. Open Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 9am-lunch. Ph:

55612823. Find them on Facebook [here](#). [/box]



*More stories about great cafes in South-West Victoria...*

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**Life is a real buzz as a  
beekeeper**





Brentan Doeven with the simple tools of the honey trade: a spinner and sieve.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A99E90;"] W  
[/dropcap]hen it comes to making a living, Brentan Doeven has chosen a path with a real sting in the tail.

Brentan, a tall, 25-year-old with a shaved head, Greg-Combet-style glasses and a heavy gold chain around his neck looks more like the sort of guy who would be serving short blacks in an inner-Melbourne café, but instead he makes his money from honey.

He finds it difficult to explain what drew him to beekeeping exactly, other than he simply likes bees.

“I found them fascinating. They are such simple yet complex creatures,” he said.

Brentan bought a single hive about four years ago and placed it on his parent’s farm at East Naringal, where he still lives, and taught himself the finer details of beekeeping by reading books about it.

“There is a lot more to it than meets the eye, actually,” he said.

“You have to learn how to check the boxes for diseases, how to keep the boxes in good condition and how bees operate.”



Checking the hives, with the rolling hills of Naringal in the background.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A99E90;"] B  
[ /dropcap]rentan has since expanded to 30 hives and pretty much knows all there is to know about bees, from how they don't like getting caught in the rain, to how they choose their queen and which flowers produce the best honey.

In this, he has a distinct advantage, as his parents grow and sell cut flowers, so the property is awash with a huge variety of native plants and trees, plus numerous fruit trees that have also proven irresistible to his charges.

“Come late spring and summer, when everything is in flower, it can get pretty crazy here,” he says.

Brentan has also taught himself how to extract and bottle honey, using techniques that involve as little human intervention as possible.

He bought a hand-cranked extraction machine – which looks like a metal garbage can – from an old farmer and uses this to spin the honey out of the honeycomb.

The honey is then filtered with a hand-sieve that is held together by four bits of cane.

And that's it.

The rich golden honey tastes superb – not too sweet, not too overpowering.



Unmasked: Brentan with some of his freshly harvested honey.

Of course there are drawbacks to working with bees, and we had to ask the obvious question, to which Brenton replied: “Yes!”

“Yes, I have been stung. Several times.

“Once I didn’t zip my suit up properly and a bee got in, then another and another, because once a bee stings, it lets off a



pheromone that sets all the other bees off. I had to jump in the dam to stop them.”

[box type="bio"] You can find Brentan (aka Brentan the Bee Man) at the Port Fairy Farmers’ Markets and Warrnambool Showground markets.[/box]

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## Beautiful craft of bookbinding

Flashback: Murray Simper and the gentle craft of bookbinding.

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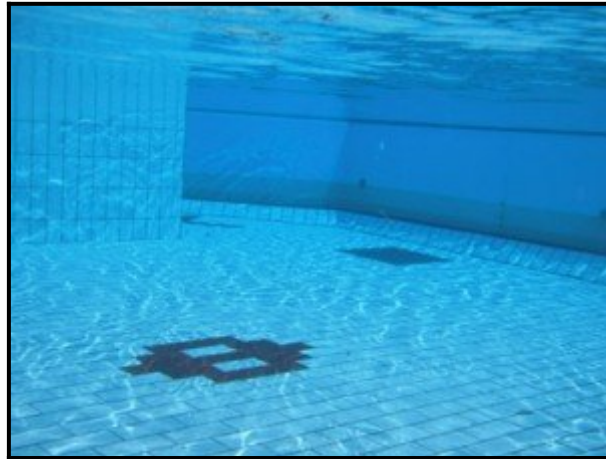
## A lot to like about these Celts

Take a generous serving of Scottish and Irish music, add a dash of jazz and a pinch of Reggae and you might have something close to the magical formula of Likely Celts...

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## What is going on at this

# pool?



Each week we post a Gumtree gem: an odd, funny or unusual item we have found on Gumtree, the online buy/sell/swap site. Most are from South-West Victoria or not far beyond.

This week, we uncovered a side line of skimpy wear available from an unexpected location....

[box] Black tutu skirt, brand new in packet. Multi sizes.  
☐☐ Local pickup from Geelong @Waterworld (Norlane pool) \$12.  
[/box]



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