

BUSINESS BEAT

Bad headlines won't stop Geelong's undeniable march to prosperity A city that won't be cowed

THE past week has seen Geelong come under intense media scrutiny, with headlines and stories that could lead one to think that Geelong is a hot spot for crime and destruction.

On top of that, the Greater Geelong council was sacked, and on the same day news broke that Target would relocate its head office to Melbourne's west, affecting 900 employees and their families.

Many people external to Geelong reading the news might wonder if Geelong is a troubled city.

The reality is that, despite the recent reporting of negative happenings in Geelong, the city is not broken and is far from being so.

Geelong, like many large cities, is affected by crime, but it is no more prone to crime than any other similar-sized city.

While it may not be pleasant to read negative stories about Geelong, we need to rise above it and take stock of all the positives this great city offers.

Take, for example, the good

CHAMBER UPDATE

with Bernadette Uzelac



work being undertaken by GROW (G21 Region Opportunities for Work) and Northern Futures.

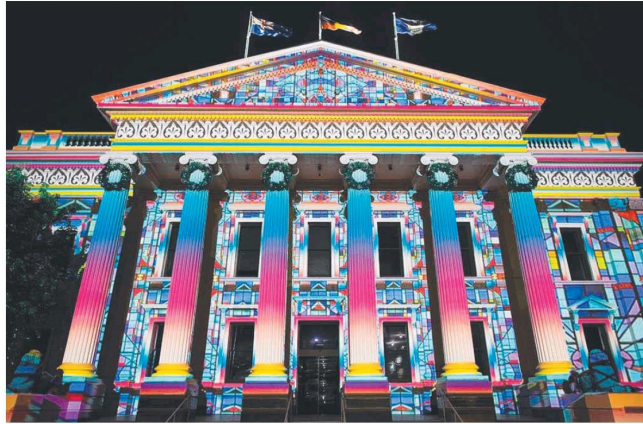
Both of these groups are doing amazing work enriching the lives of those who are most vulnerable in our community, empowering them through programs to help them gain meaningful work.

Consider also the good work being undertaken by The Gordon, Deakin, Diversitat, Karingal and St Laurence.

We have natural assets in abundance, a talented, skilled workforce and a livability factor that's hard to beat.

There is so much to rejoice about in Geelong and so many people driving those positive success stories.

Geelong's economy and its future are bright. The Geelong Business Trends Survey, un-



BRIGHT OUTLOOK. Despite last week's sacking of the Geelong council and Target announcing plans to relocate its headquarters to Melbourne, Geelong is poised for greatness and substantial growth.

dertaken late last year by the Geelong Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Deakin Business School, found business confidence has increased.

Most businesses are opti-

mistic about the future and expect to do better this year.

Business confidence is evident in the growth now occurring in Geelong. Both private and public investment and investor intention is on the rise

and there are many new major developments that will impact positively on the economic and social landscape of Geelong.

Commercial and residential construction is buoyant, driving growth of jobs in those sec-

tors. Our wonderful cultural facilities, such as the Library and Heritage Centre, GPAC and The Geelong Gallery are driving excellence in the arts.

Geelong is experiencing a renaissance akin to the heady days when the big manufacturing companies first arrived, or to even earlier times when Geelong was once the epicentre for the wool and agricultural trades.

It's an evolution that draws upon Geelong's past, present and future. We are fortunate that in Geelong we have so many good and smart people who genuinely care and who make a difference to this city on a daily basis.

Geelong people are resilient and have demonstrated that resilience many times over the decades. Right now, Geelong is poised for greatness and substantial growth, so we need to embrace the positive stories and successes, address the negatives, but not let those be the defining story for Geelong.

For information about the chamber, visit www.geelongchamber.com.au