

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2019 BORDERWATCH.COM.AU

# Green

## Centenary Tower colour

MOUNT Gambier's iconic Centenary Tower will help shine a light on mental health over the coming days as it turns green in support of National Mental Health Week.

Illuminated by green lighting, the tower's change in colour is among a host of initiatives planned across the Limestone Coast in the coming weeks to address community mental health and wellbeing.

Residents are encouraged to speak up and treat mental health with the same importance placed on physical health, capitalising on the national week-long focus.

The South East Junction coordinator Nel Jans - a mental health wellbeing advocate - said small activities such as meditation could be crucial for those with mental health issues.

"Self care is very important for those with mental health issues as it allows them to cope better," Ms Jans said.

"We all have mental health, just like we have physical and spiritual health and this week is about the acceptance of people with those issues."

Ms Jans said the week also encouraged people to speak more openly about mental health with each other.

"This allows people to know what is going on and prevents people from acting surprised after someone comes out and says they are struggling," she said.

"It helps reduce the stigma and means people with mental health issues can lead a more meaningful life and not feel as if they need to hide because people may reject them."

"Their lives are just as valuable as others and to reduce the stigma means we can all live a more meaningful life together."

Ms Jans said The Junction volunteers had their own mental health challenges, with that experience helping them to support the community.

"There is no reason why people with mental health issues cannot live a fulfilling life and give back to the community and

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# glow for health

## changed to support community mental health and wellbeing



FULL SUPPORT The South East Junction coordinator Nel Jans (above) helped support the Mental Health Week events across the Limestone Coast this week.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

**LIFELINE**  
131 1114

**BEYONDBLUE**  
1300 224 636

**KIDS HELPLINE**  
1800 551 800

**MENSLINE AUS**  
1300 789 978

be a part of that community," Ms Jans said.

"That is what Mental Health Week is all about."

Ms Jans said she had seen a reduction in the stigma surrounding mental health in the region.

"I think the Limestone Coast community has done a wonderful job diminishing the negative sides of mental health," she said.

"Little things like choosing the right words to describe mental health is so important as it makes all the difference."

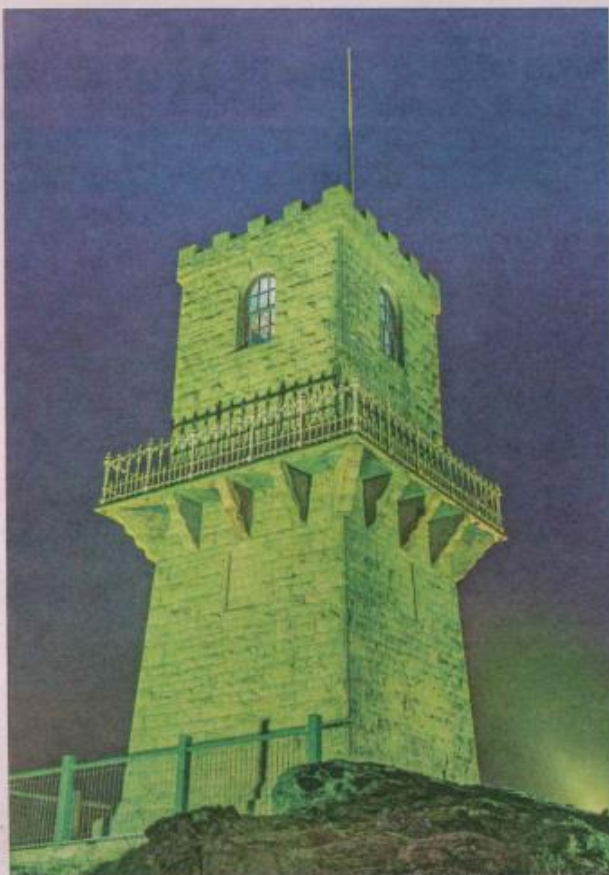
Crediting the multiple organisations and support services available to Limestone Coast residents in their mental health journey,

Ms Jans said the first step relied on the individual recognising they need support, encouraging residents to reach out.

"The first step will be a local general practitioner and getting a referral," Ms Jans said.

"As well as admitting to oneself there is an issue which takes a lot of courage."

Vasey Park will be transformed into a whirlwind of kites on October 19 for The Junction's annual Fly High and Teddy Bear Picnic event, which raises funds and awareness for the not-for-profit organisation.



**LIGHTING UP:** Mount Gambier's iconic Centenary Tower will light up green this week in support of Mental Health Week.