



Yarram Standard News

Wednesday 15/07/2015

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\$4M BOOST

Timber TOWN

YARRAM will be home to a world first, new radial timber sawmill that will see production tripled and more jobs created as part of the \$4 million expansion at the Radial Timber mill.

Originally set up by Andy Knorr the Yarram mill was the only commercial radial mill in the world.

He sold his Yarram mill to Chris McEvoy, who now heads Radial Timber and said the new mill would be located on a four hectare site next to the existing plant.

Radial Timber mill manager (above) Heath Pownall is excited to see the plans coming together for a new state of the art mill in Yarram. **See Page 3**



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Mill's \$4 million expansion

YARRAM'S Radial Timber \$4 million new mill will be constructed on the vacant land next to the existing mill, on the corner of Church and Livingston roads.

Radial Timber owner and managing director Chris McEvoy said the new mill is currently going through the planning process.

"We are working closely with Wellington Shire Council which has been supportive. We are hoping to get through the planning process and start construction late 2015 if everything goes to plan," he said.

"The existing mill was a pilot plant and will now be taken in 21st century."

Mr McEvoy said the new mill will be more efficient at material handling and will be more automated, allowing it to produce more timber in less time.

The mill recently secured timber resources from VicForests which will enable the mill to triple production.

"The licenses with VicForests will take us through the next 10 to 15 years and on top of that we have invested quite heavily in plantations in Woodside, Carrajung and Alberton," Mr McEvoy said.

"Our oldest plantation is around 12 years old. The earliest we can harvest them is between 22 and 25 years.

"Eventually our licence will swap over to just plantation timber. After that the mill will be self sufficient."

Mr McEvoy said the expansion will create more jobs for the area.

"We will need at least another three or four staff,

so we are definitely looking for people who would have the skills to suit a sawmill," he said.

"Employment in country towns is difficult; I would like to think if there was a career path available for young people they could stay in the area."

Mr McEvoy said there will be flow on benefits for other businesses in the district during construction

of the new mill, as well as when it is operational.

"Quite often it isn't just the employees who work in the place, there is a lot of work done by contractors and most of our contractors are local," he said.

The majority of Radial Timber's product goes to Melbourne, where demand is increasing.

"We have been buying from saw mills in New South Wales to keep up. We are confident if we triple our production we can sell it," Mr McEvoy said

"Demand in Melbourne is really strong and the guaranteed resource is going to give us consistency of supply.

"We only supply value added products including cladding, decking and screen board. Most goes into shiplap which is really growing in popularity."

The Yarram mill is unique as it uses a radial milling process on its timber, which essentially means the timber is cut into wedges before being cut into end product.

"We get more timber, less waste and we work with the natural grain of the timber, but where radial milling comes into its own is on the smaller logs," Mr McEvoy said.

"Because sawn logs are getting smaller, they are more unstable and harder for conventional mills to mill. We can get a lot more timber out of smaller logs."

Mr McEvoy said the mill development will include a bio-energy plant to process waste material.

"We are after potential partners who are after some cheap heat. I would love to think we could pump heat into local schools or the hospital, anything within a two-kilometre radius," he said.

"Because the mill is so close to town, we can actually do that. I would like to think eventually we can generate our own power and be self sufficient that way as well."

The existing site will stay and operate as the dry mill; the new site will be the green mill.

Mr McEvoy said he expects the new site to be up and running early next year.

"Noise is a delicate issue, but we won't do shift work, just a 7am to 4pm normal shift. I think that was the biggest concern for people," he said.

"We have also done a door knock with the residents on Church Road and most of them are supportive as long as there is no shift work."

"Open communication is definitely better."

Talking to *The Standard* last week in Yarram Wellington Shire Council mayor Cr Carolyn Crossley said, "The mill expansion will provide an economic boost to Yarram and its surrounding district and help ensure the future of Radial Timber Mill in

Yarram."

"Council has been advised a planning permit application for the proposed expansion of the existing Mill operation will be submitted in the coming weeks."

"Wellington Shire Council has negotiated a lease agreement on a section of the Yarram Council Depot, which will facilitate access for Radial Timber between the two parcels of industrial zoned land owned by Radial Timber."

"Our economic development team has worked closely with Radial Timber to reach this outcome of expansion and increased employment."

"From discussions with Radial Timber, the proposed expansion is state of the art, with the aim to create opportunities to use this renewable resource to its full potential."



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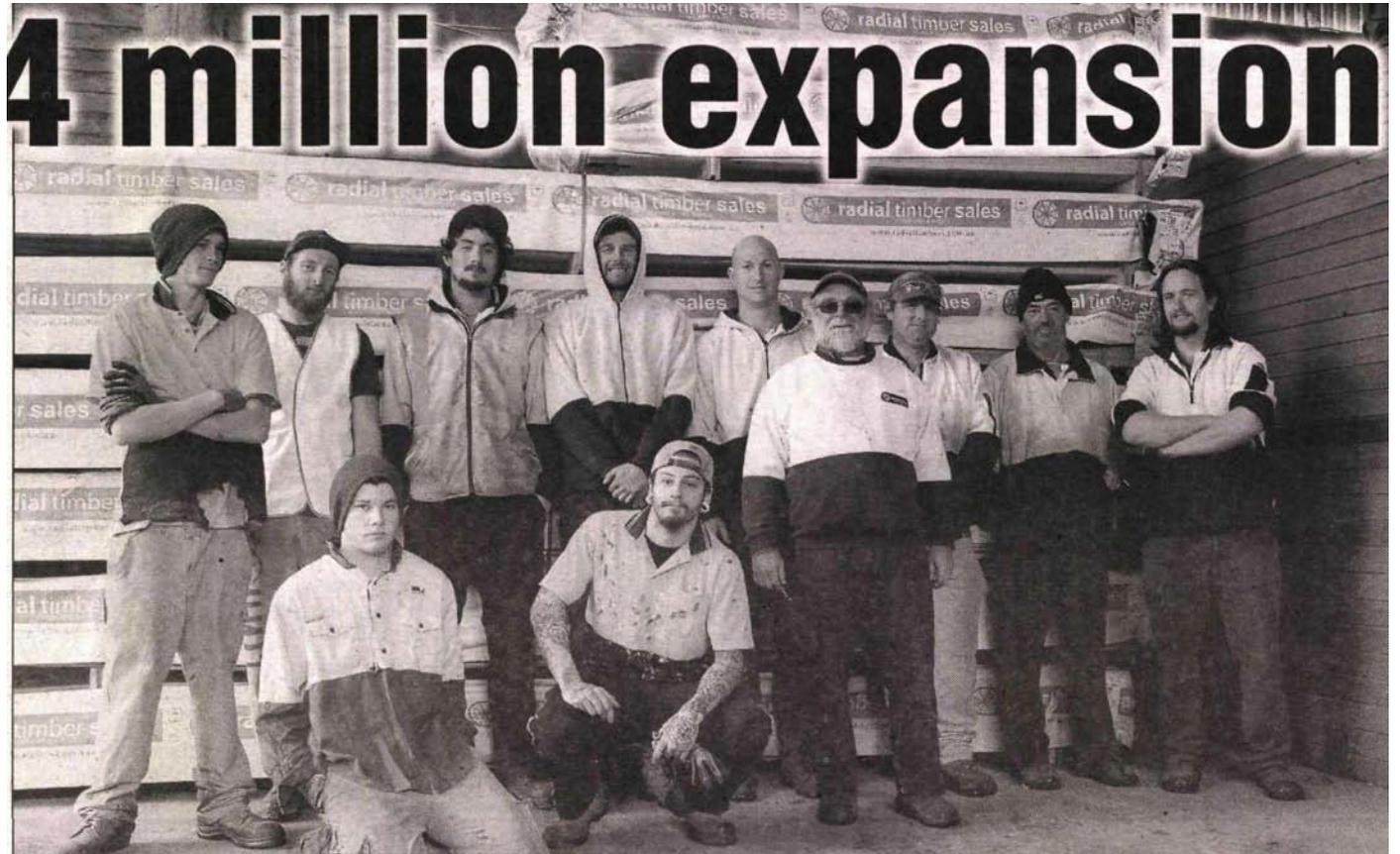
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Team shot: the Radial Timber team in Yarram is keen to see the new mill come to fruition over the coming years.



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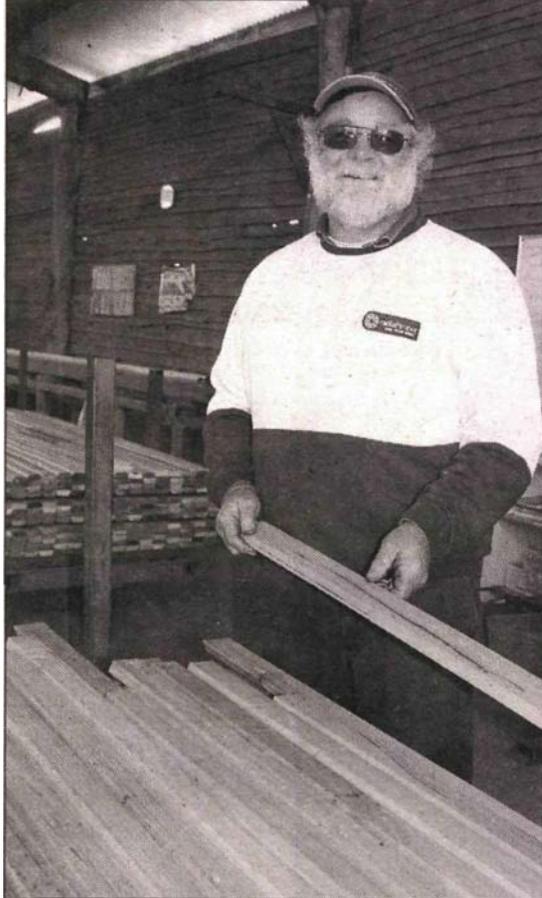
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New wood: Radial Timber employee James Leggett with some of the wood milled at the Yarram plant.