



Objection Number 9

Dennis Cartledge

4 pages

From: Dennis Cartledge [cartledge@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, 23 August 2010 9:40 AM
To: VIC Redistribution
Subject: McEwen Redistribution
Attachments: Submission on Division of McEwen Redistribution.doc

Please accept my Submission on Division of McEwen Redistribution. I have attached the submission as a M/S Word document. Please advise me if this format is not suitable.

Dennis Cartledge

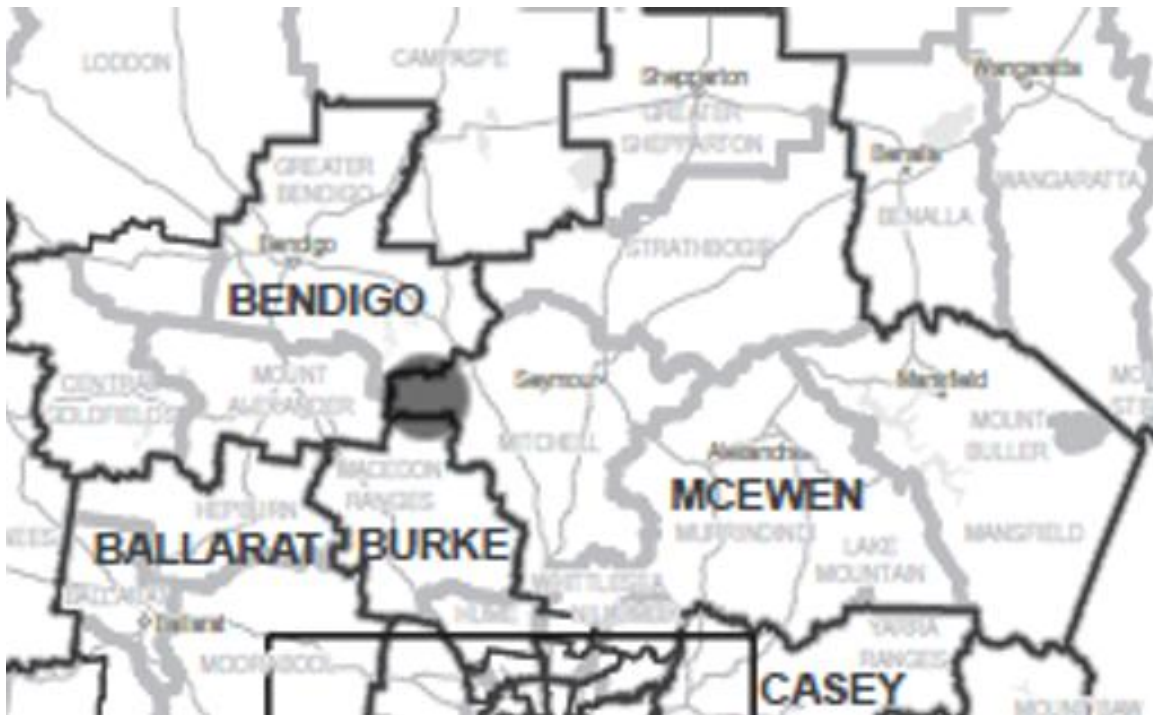
1925 Kyneton-Heathcote Road

Mia Mia Victoria 3444

0488 441 731

Submission on Division of McEwen Redistribution
Dennis Cartledge
1925 Kyneton-Heathcote Road
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This submission focuses on one small section of the Division of McEwen (see map) bounded by the Campaspe River, Kyneton-Heathcote Road and the proposed division of Burke, Mia Mia Victoria.



Mia Mia is a non-nucleated location which relies on the adjoining town of Redesdale for services such as shop, post office and tavern.

This submission argues that inclusion of this section of the local community represents an electoral aberration, and ignores the clear disconnect with the sprawling division to the east. This disconnect results from:

- A community of interest with the locally dominant Division of Bendigo as opposed to the more distant communities of McEwen.
- A simple vote Vs postal and absentee votes.
- A reliance on Bendigo regional or metropolitan media which does not adequately inform us on McEwen issues or candidates.

Thumbnail demographic

It is difficult to ascertain the actual resident/voter population in the area being discussed. It covers Mia Mia on the eastern side of the Kyneton-Heathcote road only, and census figures lump in the whole of Mia Mia and Redesdale collectively, citing their minimum reporting figure of 300.

The resident population is largely composed of older, longtime rural residents and increasing 'lifestyle' residents.

Community of Interest

In a democracy every willing voter has the right to feel engaged; and in good measure that feeling is derived from shared community of interest. The area under discussion contain a mere handful of voters, but voters who relate to the local region, not to communities far afield and beyond their knowledge or even understanding. Under the heading of media access I point out the lack of information about McEwen dynamics from Bendigo regional media. On the other hand we are exceptionally well informed about our own region.

Our local services are provided through the Redesdale shop and Post Office, and the Redesdale Tavern. These places are a community hub, places where we share community interest. They are a long way from Kinglake, Kilmore or even Romsey, Macedon, towns which do not feature on our local consciousness. The key centres of McEwen might just as well be on another planet for all we share with them. This area is firmly part of the Bendigo region which should also be the our voter focus.

A simple vote Vs postal and absentee votes

With such a small voter base it was not unreasonable to find that we were required to cast our vote within the Division of Bendigo. While I personally find a simple vote far more satisfying than the alternatives, I was more concerned at the polling place by the indignity some of the older and less sophisticated locals were subjected to. I intend to take up the issue of an officious returning officer with the AEC, but it was unedifying watching functionally illiterate older people being publicly humiliated by the process. The issue would not arise if this area was more sensibly in Bendigo electorate with access to a simple vote.

In fact all the posted information received from parties related to their postal vote campaign rather than anything which might actually inform a vote.

Media access

An informed vote obviously requires information. This area is dominated by Bendigo based media focusing on Bendigo regional interests. Voters in this area received little information on McEwen from media during the recent campaign. There were some efforts to cover voter information on the ABC, however it was limited and not especially informative.

The internet is rapidly becoming a major source of information for those of us able to access it. Even so, with limited and slow access, chasing down information can be an onerous task.

It can be argued that the candidates and parties bear some responsibility to inform voters. However even that is governed by their resources and perception of the importance of any part of an electorate. Having asked neighbours, none of us saw a candidate or even campaign representative and only received post out material on postal voting.

In summary the recent election was notable for a lack of substantial information for voters; our experience with McEwen underlines that trend. Yet throughout, we in this part of the electorate were well informed on issues, personalities and positions for the Division of Bendigo.

Despite suggestions to the contrary, during the recent election, we voters do not elect parties or Prime Ministers, we elect MPs to represent our local interests. I submit that the interests of this part of McEwen would be far better represented by the MP for Bendigo, as we are actually part of that community of interest.