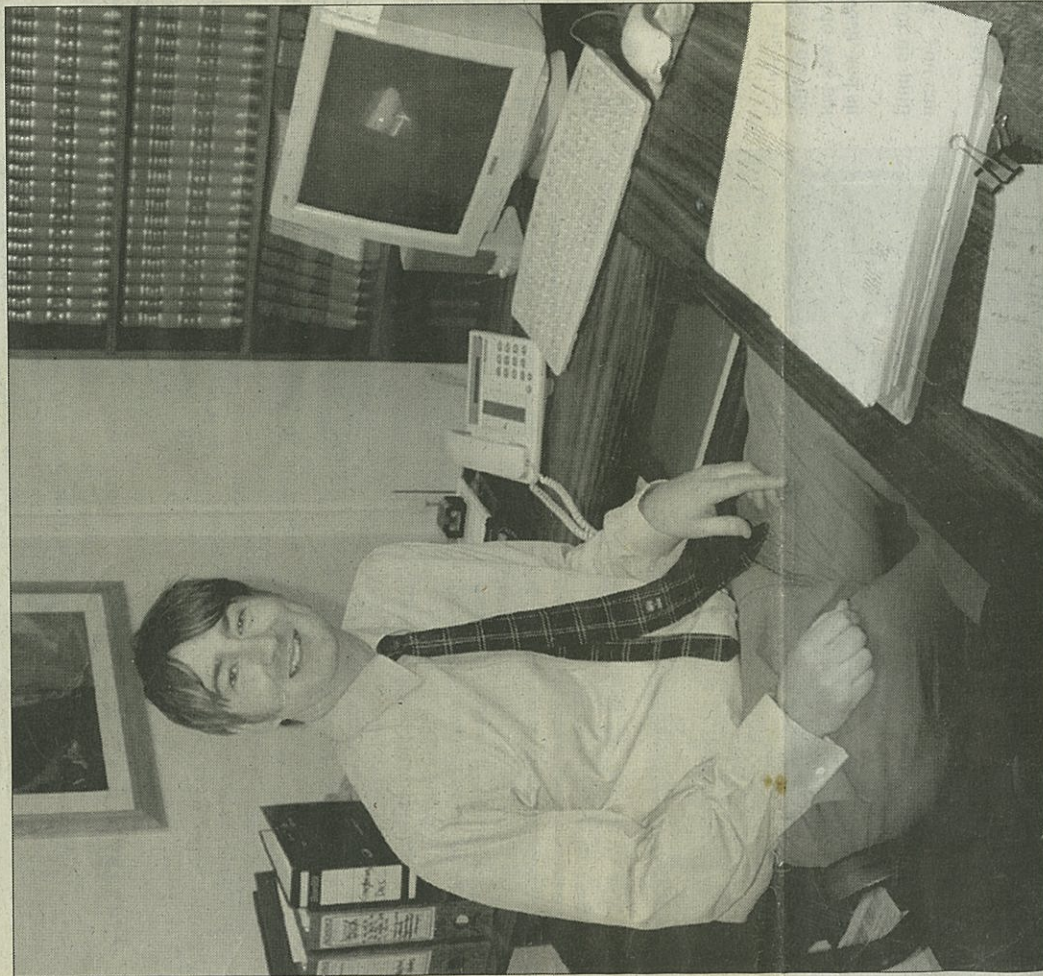


# 'Port Augusta has been good to us'

## FACES OF THE COMMUNITY



All over Australia, regional centres are facing the same problem.

The best and brightest to come from small towns all too often move away from their home with the belief that you can't succeed away from the bright lights and opportunities of the big cities.

Or, they might jet off to see the world, convinced that dreary-old Australia doesn't offer the same lifestyle as Europe or the United States.

Not so for local solicitor Greg Welden who couldn't be happier after moving to Port Augusta a few years ago.

Having now seen what the Gulf city has to offer, Greg and his family; wife Tanya, a teacher at Caritas College and daughter Ellen Mae, who's just about to turn one year old, now call Port Augusta home, and have become fierce advocates for the city.

"I feel sorry for those people who still think Port Augusta is a bad place to live, I really believe they don't know what they're missing out on," Greg said.

And he's speaking from a position of authority, having lived in the big smoke and experienced life in cosmopolitan Europe.

Growing up in the northern Adelaide suburb of Pooraka, Greg led a typical life, playing a range of sports while attending school at Nailsworth High, formerly Nailsworth Boys Tech.

Unlike many, Greg actually rose to the top of an unlikely sport - archery.

Unlikely for anyone but Greg that is...

"I was basically born into it; my father has been in archery since he was 18, I started when I was eight and was junior champion for South Australia and Australia," Greg said.

"I eventually found other interests because I got sick of giving up my Sundays ... I think if I went back to it today it would be fun but at that time I was enjoying sleeping in."

Unlike archery, another of Greg's childhood hobbies has carried through until today; music.

Picking up a guitar at the age of 14, Greg has taught himself to play and read music to the point where he's now teaching a new generation as a guitar teacher.

"It was great; I made a few runs and took a catch and from then on I was a regular in the team for about two years," Greg said.

Nicknamed "Skippy" for his obvious heritage and love of wearing an Australian cap on the field, Greg later learned he was playing under a local rule that only allowed one overseas player in any team - after all, this was the home of the gentleman's game.

"It was proper English cricket with the cut sandwiches tea breaks and polite clapping and everyone said 'jolly good' when some runs were scored - even I liked it," Tanya said.

But even though Greg was playing the game in its homeland, and being taken awfully seriously, there were a few aspects to the competition that reminded him of playing back home in the suburban leagues of Australia.

"Because we used the university grounds that were maintained by a proper greenkeeper the pitch was always magnificent," Greg said.

"So it didn't really matter if we lost every single game in a season - we still wouldn't get relegated to a lower competition because our facilities were too good - it was great.

"It actually happened while I was there; we only won three games and came bottom of the ladder, but because of our pitch we maintained our division three status," Greg said.

In October, 2000, offers for school teacher positions in Australia were being released, and Tanya, after 15 months living in England, was keen to return and put her years of hard study to good use educating the next generation of young Australians.

"Tanya had a look at Caritas, she said she loved the school and loved the people and took the job before I even got home," Greg said.

It was a convenient arrangement for Greg and Tanya - she got to work at a good school and through the parents and friends association Greg met future employer Tim Whitelum.

"We got together and the rest is recent history," Greg said.

For the last three years the pair have been working and living in Port Augusta, and Greg couldn't be happier with his job.

"Being a country lawyer you get to do