

5-2
BUSINESS

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LAVENDER LACE

MARGARET GUNTON

GLAD McDONALD - MANAGER

NOW MANAGER 2017
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171 THOMAS ST ORIGINAL ADDRESS
VANITY COURT D'NONG

NEWS

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Sleepwear queen

By Casey Neill

Margaret Gunton removes a sheer, sky-blue night gown set from a change room that's packed with stock she can't fit on the shelves.

She explains that Lavender Lace Lingerie's previous owner, Glad McDonald, passed it on with the shop and told her never to sell it.

"It's over 80 years old," Margaret says.

The Berwick resident is the sleepwear's third custodian. Ms McNamara was the first.

She had a store in Lonsdale Street for about 20 years and sold to employee Glad.

Margaret bought the business from her in 1987.

She'd worked as a fitter years earlier and was unhappy with her job at an electrical store.

Glad offered her a job, but had put the business up for sale by the time Margaret made her mind up.

"She said 'why don't you buy it?'" Margaret said.

So she did. That was 30 years ago on Tuesday 17 October.

She leased a store at 171 Thomas Street, but that was acquired through the ongoing Revitalising Central Dandenong project.

"My daughter's got the shop Big In Black down the road," Margaret said.

"I needed to be near her because she'd give me the fuller figure girls."

So she snapped up a space for sale in the Vanity Court Arcade, also on Thomas Street.

"It's much, much smaller than I had before. I had a huge shop over there," she said.

"My line of business has changed because I don't have the walking past trade anymore."

But she's established Lavender Lace as a specialty fitter for "the fuller figure" and for women touched by breast cancer.

"Some people when they come in here, they're a little bit nervous," she said.



Margaret Gunton has run Lavender Lace Lingerie for 30 years. 174559

"I want them to be happy and feel completely normal again."

"It's as rewarding for me as it is for them."

It's a service she's offered since taking on the shop, but the demand has grown from two a month to five or six a week through hospital referrals.

Margaret also has reduced store hours so she can travel to nursing homes.

"Some of the dear old ladies can't get out anymore," she said.

"I do home visits for prosthesis, too."

She goes the extra mile to track down stock for customers and it keeps them coming back - all the way from China and Western Australia.

"When they've gone away they do without until they come back," she said.

Margaret will offer a 20 per cent discount to any customer who mentions this story.



Margaret Gunton is the third custodian of this nightgown. 174559