

THE SEEDS

ARE SOWN

The new owners of Valley Road Nursery in Highton share

their plans for growth. Photography by Jeff Reynolds





In October 2021 an optimistic couple took a leap of faith to take over the reins of one of Geelong's oldest – if not the oldest – retail nurseries, Valley Road Nursery in Highton. After 16 years the previous owners were looking to retire and Brad Wilson and Jeff Reynolds were up for the challenge.

Brad and Jeff had relocated to Geelong in mid-2021 to pursue a career and lifestyle change – and certainly found it. When the opportunity presented itself, the pair jumped at the chance to keep the small independent retail nursery operating.

Over the next few months the boys, their team, family and friends spent countless hours demolishing, repairing, painting, weeding, cleaning, creating, rearranging and merchandising the much-loved nursery.

With Brad having worked in both the retail and wholesale sides of the

gardening industry for decades and Jeff a background in retail, customer service and visual arts, the couple were itching to open something they could call their own. The garden industry is something that runs through the couples' veins as Brad's parents both worked at a seed company and Jeff's grandmother ran a fuchsia greenhouse on his parents' family farm.

Valley Road Nursery's team of enthusiastic horticulturalists and plant lovers are on hand to offer garden advice and consultations to their valued customers. The team works tirelessly to fill the nursery week after week with a wide range of new varieties and much loved classic plants. The new owners have also enjoyed filling the site with a wide-ranging array of outdoor pots and planter styles all of which are available for home delivery.



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Jan – who has been with Valley Road Nursery for more than 16 years – continues to be a vital and integral part of the team with her wealth of local and customer knowledge. Shortly after the change of hands, a happy chance of fate saw Jaclyn join the team. She had previously held a head greenlife-buyer role for one of Melbourne's largest nurseries. Lizzie, currently studying Certificate 4 in horticulture and Jane, who runs her family wholesale nursery, also add their expertise to the team.

People often ask if the beloved nursery cat Coco is still around. The answer is 'yes'. In fact she was written into the contract of sale.



The interior revamp was a labour of love for Brad and Jeff and they have created space for a range of lush indoor plants, a curated-range of pots and an assortment of giftware including jewellery, candles, fine art prints and Belgian chocolates. Despite this, there is still room for traditional garden products and hardware.

The last couple of years have highlighted the importance of buying locally and as such the team values working closely with local growers and suppliers, artists and artisans, supporting Australian-owned businesses as much as possible.

The team at Valley Road Nursery look forward to continuing to bring their community's gardens to life.



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