



Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

Press Kit

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Introducing Margaret Gill Sea Change Expert

"A Remarkable You, A Remarkable Life"

More than three years ago, **Margaret Gill** of Hepburn Springs bought a destination and ended up on a journey that has made her an *expert at sea change*. Having weathered the change herself and come through to success, she now helps others who are considering, or going through, a sea change.

What started out for Margaret as the adventure of a lifetime – a much-longed-for 'tree change' to the quiet town of Hepburn Springs – quickly deteriorated into a downward spiral of despair as she learned how little she had actually prepared herself for the realities of the move. Nevertheless, she persevered, and now is an expert at sea change, knowing what – and what not – to do.

Margaret's sea change began for her whilst she was travelling on the #6 tram from St Kilda, when a booming, but disembodied, voice said to her 'go and live in Daylesford'. Twice. At the time, Margaret didn't even know where Daylesford was. Margaret was not accustomed to hearing...let alone listening to...disembodied voices. Indeed, in her role as forensic business analyst, she was far more used to the hard-headed approach of determining exactly where reality begins to blur towards fantasy, albeit in a corporate setting.

But within months she found herself house-sitting for friends in Daylesford. Seeing it for the first time in its midwinter hush, she loved everything about the country. What was there not to love, with roaring fireplaces warming the traveller chilled by the morning mists rising from frosty fields?

Following her heart, as so many sea-changers, do, by the end of the next summer she had bought and moved into a 100-year-old Victorian 'cute house' (as a friend dubbed it) in Hepburn Springs, three minutes from Daylesford. The summertime cuteness of the house with its garden of roses and lavender bushes did not prepare Margaret for the bite of winter. She soon discovered that frost was not so lovely when it was inside a house, and that those roaring fires consumed a huge amount of very expensive wood.

Scarcity, frustration, and a whole lake of tears followed as Margaret struggled to make her sea change a success. Through strength and determination she gradually transformed her circumstances, learning how to start-up and run a small business and, just as importantly, how to accept kindness from strangers and friends.

Whilst Margaret would not trade her experience for anything, she cautions others who dream of a sea change. 'Unprepared as I was for my sea change, I ended up frozen, physically, emotionally and spiritually,' she says. 'I want others to learn from my mistakes.'

Contact: Margaret Gill
PO Box 574, Daylesford, Victoria 3460, Australia
Ph: +61 3 5348 2552, Mob: 0407 377 173
Email: info@margaretgill.com
Website: <http://www.seachangeexpert.com> & <http://www.margaretgill.com>





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Daylesford Victoria 3460 Australia
Email: info@margaretgill.com

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Margaret Gill ("Mz Margz") is a proven and effective Personal Mentor & Muse to the Creative and Wellness Sectors. After her own sea change experience, she now also works with other sea changers, sharing her story to ensure others don't have to suffer the loneliness and hardship she endured.

A deep-end specialist and master of change, Margz's background is both interesting and varied.

She was born and grew up in New Zealand's now-famous Marlborough winegrowing region. Her first career found her playing in a rock 'n' roll band at age 15. Her love of music, particularly the blues, is still an important aspect of her life.

After her stint in the 70's glitter band, Margz settled down to a successful business career for several years, working her way up to become a financial controller and forensic business analyst to major corporations across Australia. But even though she was outwardly successful, she found herself increasingly dissatisfied with life.

Recognising that outward success does not equate inward satisfaction, Margz travelled the world in search of her reason, and her place, to shine. Luckily for those who have felt her unique glow, she learned where she shone: through her gift and passion for communicating and working with people, helping them to find their own ways to be a star.

Margz's third career – that of Personal Mentor & Muse and Sea Change Expert – saw her shift from a corporate metropolitan lifestyle to a simple country life where, she says, she lives on less than she used to spend on hair care. She has discovered a compelling drive for working with people, helping them to bring out their greatness. Her road has been incredibly hard, but it has been worth it.

Becoming recognised more and more for her knowledge of sea changes and what can go wrong, Mz Margz has been featured on Channel 9's 'The Today Show' with Tracy Grimshaw, and was also featured in *The Age* 'Sunday Life Magazine' speaking on the dark side of the Australian dream.

Margz is an Energy Master trained traditionally in various techniques. Her clients benefit not only from her "been there-done that" mentoring, but also from the "secret ingredient", her own spiritual depth. She brings a unique blend of 15 years real-world corporate knowledge and ten years spent practicing her own spiritual mastery to every encounter.

She shines from her home base in Hepburn Springs near Daylesford, and spends two days each week as one of the stars at The Nature of Balance Wellness Centre in South Yarra, Melbourne.

~*~



Margaret Gill

Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

“A Remarkable You – A Remarkable Life”

Photographs



“The Cute House” that has featured so heavily in my tree change dream



Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

“A Remarkable You – A Remarkable Life.”

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the background to your move?

What is the difference between a sea change and a tree change?

How did you decide where to move?

What inspired the purchase of your property?

Describe the first year of your sea change.

Did you ever feel like giving up?

How has it worked out now?

What were your greatest sea change challenges?

How did you cope when everything started to go wrong?

How did you overcome the challenges?

How did the locals react to you?

How long did it take to adjust to life in a small town?

What do you miss about the city?

What do you most enjoy about where you live now?

Do you get lots of visitors?

What are the best and worst aspects of living in a small town?

What do you like most about your new life?

Did it take long to adjust?

What advice would you give others considering a sea change?

My full sea change story is also available on my website www.seachangeexpert.com

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Short Answers to FAQ's

What was the background to your move?

- I was a Corporate Forensic Business Analyst to corporations across Australia, an ace reconciler of accounting data, but always felt like the angel of death when walking into a business.
- I had a burning urge to work positively with people.
- I was on a spiritual journey to find my purpose and who I really was.
- I read an article on coaching, knew it was right for me, did my training and wanted to set up a practice.

What is the difference between a sea change and a tree change?

- A sea change is when people move to the coast to be near the sea.
- A tree change is when people move inland to a rural setting, buying acreage or, like me, living in a village.

Why the tree change?

- I heard "the voice" on the #6 tram in St Kilda (Melbourne).
- I wasn't 100% happy with city life and longed for a healthier, quieter existence.
- I had come to hate the corporate world and its values.
- Synchronicity found me house-sitting in Daylesford, where I loved sipping coffee by the open fires in the cafes and the misty romantic atmosphere of the town in the winter.
- I've never been a beach person and, being an air sign, I'm most comfortable when I'm well above sea level!

How did you decide where to move?

- Apart from the voice on the tram? I always wanted to grow lavender & roses in Tuscany. With the Swiss Italian heritage of the area, this was the next-best thing.
- It is a very beautiful area and has a lovely peaceful feel to it.
- There was a spiritual connection with the mineral water, lakes and forest.
- There were great cafes, and I knew I could get a great long black.
- It's a great melting pot with wonderful diversity in the community – artists, writers, holistic therapists abound, and there is a wonderful colour added by the gay community.
- It's a small town but still has a city feel on the weekends.

What inspired the purchase of your property?

- I realised that being on town water and with a regular power supply was probably a good thing, so I looked in the village rather than for acreage.
- I made the fatal error of going shopping for a house with a gay boy who got out of the car and exclaimed, "it's so pretty, you must buy this cute little house!"
- The garden was full of lavender and roses and rosemary and with gorgeous big trees at the back. Even though I saw it five times before I finally bought it, truth be known, the house chose me.
- Although it wasn't a factor at the time, it has a great commercial position. It was a bargain, and has increased greatly in value in the time I've been here.
- It was next to a restaurant that I figured would be great for Sunday breakfast and a long black – I didn't know they only did dinner!

Describe the first year of your sea change

- It was a total disaster.
- It was so cold, my hands kept going blue.
- I ended up on the dole.
- I've never felt such a failure in all my life.
- It was hideous.

Did you ever feel like giving up?

- Yes, every 2 minutes.
- If my money hadn't run out I would have packed up and gone back in a heartbeat, but I was stuck because I couldn't even afford a bus ticket back to the city.

How has it worked out now?

- Now it's great. Eventually I got acclimatised to the cold and after doing the NEIS course I could start to seriously work on my business.
- I've grown so much; the experience has strengthened my psychical & spiritual backbone.
- I've gotten to work with and meet some amazing people.
- I've found gifts and talents I never knew I had.
- My sea change has really become bigger than me. Things now exist that wouldn't have if I had stayed in the corporate world. I've encouraged clients to create six songs, two books, two ezines, a screenplay, two successful businesses. These things wouldn't have existed if I hadn't made the move.

What were your greatest sea change challenges?

- I've lived in many different cities in the world, but nothing prepared me for this.
- The isolation and loneliness were the worst.
- I really missed catching up in person with my friends.
- I missed deep and meaningful conversations – there is a lot of small talk to get through before you forge deep friendships with new people.
- I didn't drink alcohol, so coming around for a few drinks, the traditional way people bond, isn't something I could do.
- For a long time the amount of space challenged me. Now I can't live without it, but it took ages to get used to having a big house and land. The first winter I lived in the back of the house with four of the five bedroom unused. Now, all the rooms have a purpose.
- The shops shut at 5.30, there's no all-night chemist, I can't buy Hagen Daas at midnight.
- Even though I'd worked in the business arena for twenty years, I didn't have the necessary skills to run a small business.
- I missed having work colleagues and the resources of a large organisation.
- I was trying to sell the hardest product in the world – myself – with no previous sales and marketing experience.
- Little unexpected things happened that completely threw me, like the day the fox dug under the Hen Hilton and ate all the chooks and left feathers and bits of chooks all over my garden – that devastated me more than dealing with the bank and creditors.
- And finally the cold – it snows; the money ran out to buy the warmth I needed; and I just froze, physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- Work was hard to get and was generally poorly paid.
- Having to sign up for the dole made me feel like a complete and utter failure.
- I had to put my pride aside and ask for help.
- I had to get used to being called a "blowie" or "blow in".

How did you cope when everything started to go wrong?

- Truth is, I didn't cope. It was truly a difficult time for me personally, but I had a driving ambition to make it work and somehow I just kept going. Eventually I got through it. Every time I took a knock I literally went down for the count and pulled myself up, dusted myself off and had a new scheme to run with a couple of days later. Looking back, my resilience astounds me.
- A few times I didn't get out of bed – it was the only place I could feel warm.
- I wouldn't have got through without the support of my friends and family.
- My ignorance helped. In the really dark times, when I contemplated ending it all and hanging myself from one of my tree limbs, I realised I had no idea how to tie the knot. Besides, I didn't have any rope, or any money to buy some!
- My confidence and self-esteem were shattered but I celebrated every win no matter how small, and that seemed to help.
- Occasionally my warped sense of humour could see the funny side of things, and that helped, too.

How did you overcome the challenges?

- Because I was so green, I had no idea of the things could go wrong and so, when they did, I just had to deal with them as best I could.
- Family, friends and neighbours feed and supported me once I finally asked for help. They would just arrive with food and wood. It was a very humbling experience.
- I used every tool in my spiritual and personal development toolbox. This was really the secret weapon, although at the time I was cursing the higher power that put me here.
- I believe others can see the passion and determination in someone like me who is going for their dream. By buying into my passion, they also get to live my dream, albeit vicariously. And that makes them all the more happy to help out when the chips are down.

How did the locals react to you?

- Over time, I have met some of the most genuine and beautiful people up here, but they certainly didn't initially appear with a cake and open arms.
- I found it quite difficult at first as I'm not very outgoing. I also found it hard to describe what my business was about, so I think I came over to people as a complete loony tune.
- I don't have children and, as I said before, I don't drink. I was also not part of a couple. Although the lines can often be very blurry in this area, most people here fit somewhere in those three categories. So I felt like even more of an outsider.
- I did volunteer work, which helped me become more accepted.
- The money ran out so I didn't have the means to mingle socially.
- Now I enjoy walking through town and having people say hello to me and be genuinely interested in what I'm doing.

How long did it take to adjust to life in a small town?

- It's been three years (April 2005), and I'm still adjusting.
- I'll never be considered a local because I can't produce grandparents either living here or in the local cemetery.
- I've accepted that I'll always be a "blowie".

What do you miss about the city?

- I'm a bit lucky because I still work in the city sometimes, so I feel I get the best of both worlds.

- I miss regularly being able to catch up with friends face to face.
- Being able to go to the movies without driving for ages would be nice.
- Blues music venues and local artists that I could just pop in and see whenever it took my fancy is something I took for granted.
- Practical shopping like 24 chemists and the big department stores
- I miss riding my bike along the Yarra.
- Believe it or not, television ads are different. Regional TV offers ads for bush shirts, sheep dip and water tanks.

What do you most enjoy about where you live now?

- First, the cute house when the lavender & roses are in bloom, and my trees and the backyard.
- Hanging out at the local cafes and finding all the local special meal deals at the restaurants and cafes.
- Finding all the farm gates where you can buy wonderful organic produce for next to nothing.
- I love the other “blowies” I’ve met that are just out there doing their thing, like me.
- The Palais for live music, and their penchant for providing excellent Australian & International blues acts a top venue to perform.
- Watching the sun set over Doctors Gully at the back of the house, either from the kitchen window or sitting on the back porch.
- In the middle of the week I love to sit at Lake Daylesford eating fish and chips, sitting in the scene the postcards and media show so frequently. Sometimes I’m the only one there, and I feel very blessed to have such serenity and beauty on my back door step.
- The views from the top of the Convent Gallery.
- The spring water that flows out of the ground that tastes like water – no additives!
- Walking out the front door and seeing the chooks happily pecking away in the Hen Hilton on my boundary.
- Driving around the corner and down the hill into Daylesford when coming home from the city and shouting out, “I LIVE HERE AND I LOVE IT!”

Do you get lots of visitors?

- Yes.
- My 80-year-old Mum visits from NZ each year, to sort out the cute house garden. I always cry when she has to go home.
- Usually we have a big anniversary party for the Swiss Italian Festa when friends come up. We had the Back Yard Olympics one year when I made them do chores and awarded prizes at the end, and they loved it.
- Friends mostly come in summer as the cute house has loads of gaps in the floors and walls and, although they like piling the wood on the fire, they don’t like waking up to the frosts and the cold. I’ll probably be more popular once I get pink batts and central heating!

What are the best and worst aspects of living in a small town?

- Best: Slower pace of life, finding what is important in life, the peace and tranquillity, the people I’ve met.
- Worst: The sense of isolation and loneliness, adjusting to a new environment, having to forge new friendships, and the harshness of the environment.

What do you like most about your new life?

- Funnily enough, the things that most challenged me at first are now the things I most love. The solitude is now a welcome space for quiet contemplation and relaxation.
- The sounds of nature – I just love the kookaburras, the rain on the roof, the rooster crowing every other time except sunset and the wind in the trees.
- Space – a separate office, library and workroom is luxury!
- Freedom to choose where I live and how I earn my living.

Did it take long to adjust

- Yes. I really made the move from the heart and not the head, so financially it was difficult trying to set up and run a small business when I'd only worked in large organisations with huge resources.
- The cold and the difficulty earning a living was a big factor to get over and the first few months were awful.
- I was told by a local that if I lasted three winters I'd stay, and it seems he was right.
- I've had other "blowies" tell me they are only feeling at home after seven years.

What advise would you give others considering a sea change?

- Know it does get better.
- Don't come in wearing rose coloured glasses.
- Sea change can be a huge emotional upheaval, don't expect it not to be.
- Visit in all the seasons before you buy and experience all the area's moods. I bought in summer, and winter was a harsh reality check. Furthermore, the town mid-week is nothing like it is on the weekends with all the tourists.
- Have a backup plan because you rarely get what you expect.
- Be prepared to give it a go for at least 2 years, as even with easy transitions it takes some time to adjust.
- Have at least six months buffer money in the bank before you move. Twelve months of cash reserve is even better because it allows you the flexibility to build your business or find a job without having to worry about how to pay the bills.
- Read the local papers and find the issues of the town before you buy there.
- Don't expect to get meaningful work immediately; ideally, have a job before you make the move.
- Ensure there are adequate services – identify the small things you will miss, such as a good hairdresser, good coffee and going to the movies.
- Start to scale down your lifestyle before you move – that way it's not such a shock to the system.
- Never start a sentence with "when I lived in the city" or "it wasn't like this in the city".
- Accept that sometimes you've got to get a little rain before you get a rainbow.
- Get someone like me to mentor you through the transition. Learn from my mistakes!

Classic Mz Margz quotes

- I spend less now than I used to spend on hair care in the corporate days.
- I froze, physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- I used to covet Chanel bags and Gucci sunglasses; now all I want are pink batts, power tools and a ride-on lawnmower!
- I was living in a postcard but the challenges were coming full throttle.
- I thought I was buying a destination but it turned into a journey.
- In the game of life you are dealing from two packs, the pack of love and the pack of fear. Choose love, and it will work out.

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Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

“A Remarkable You – A Remarkable Life.”

Client Testimonials

I used Margaret Gill to help me make a sea change to the Mid North Coast of NSW after living in Sydney for 35 years. During our time together I felt that Margaret was able to focus my energies on achieving my dream with real and useful everyday strategies. I felt challenged, not intimidated and supported, not smothered. My sea change occurred within 12 months. I have a job paying MORE than I was earning in Sydney, have just bought a lovely house, and acquired a dog and a cat and MY HEART IS SINGING!"

Carolyn Wilson, Business Manager, Mid North Coast of NSW

It's incredible how you have helped me change my life so dramatically in just one year. I'm now a director of a successful corporate company, have a wonderful partner, my own home and beautiful friendships. Most importantly, I have discovered the real me and what really makes me happy. *Elizabeth Egginton Director Expatriate Services International P/L, Sydney*

No matter where I am travelling in the world, I always keep in mind the wise words you gave to me during our sessions in Melbourne. No matter how my life and plans change, you have taught me to continue to think of the bigger picture - of how my actions today can grow, strengthen and support me in the future. Thank you so much for sharing a little of your wisdom with me, I will never forget it. *Polly MacKay, New York USA*

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Media Featuring Margaret Gill's Sea Change

- ☞ *The Age Domain Section*
“Heard on the #6 tram: Go to Daylesford”
- ☞ *The Today Show Channel 9*
Monday 28 March 2005 TIME: 8:10am
“Time for a sea change?”
Margaret was interviewed live by Tracy Grimshaw
- ☞ *Sunday Life, The Sunday Age magazine (27 February 2005)*
“Sea Change, The Dark Side of the Australian Dream”

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Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

Contact Details

Phone

+61 3 5348 2552

Mobile

0407 377 173 (Intl +61 407 377 173)

Postal Address

PO Box 574
Daylesford VIC 3460

Email

info@margaretgill.com

Website

<http://www.seachangeexpert.com>



Margaret Gill
Sea Change Expert

“A Remarkable You – A Remarkable Life”

Fact Sheet

(This page will only be available to people who actually have approached me for a story)

Margaret was born in May 1958

She heard "the voice" on the tram in early 2001

She house-sat for friends in Daylesford between August and October of 2001

She signed the contracts to buy 'The Cute House' on 11 February 2002

She settled on the property and moved in on Friday 12 April 2002

She signed for the dole on 19 July 2002

She commenced the NEIS program on 12 September 2002

She was accepted for the NEIS grant on 19 December 2002

Margaret is a life coach, mentor and muse to the holistic and creative sectors, and a sea change consultant to relocation companies and individual sea changers. She is an Energy Master and teaches personal development courses in the course of her business.

“The Cute House” is a double fronted Victorian, approx 100 years old. It was a guesthouse for many years and still has the little numbers on the bedroom doors. It is one of the few properties in the area boasting a non-functioning outside loo and urinal. It has two distinctive trees at the back, one used to hang a swing. The ‘Hen Hilton’ borders the property and houses four chooks and an effeminate rooster that looks like Tina Turner and crows at all the wrong times of the day. The garden has beautiful roses and many scented lavender bushes.

Daylesford is 90 minutes (110kms) from Melbourne and forty minutes from Ballarat, Castlemaine and Woodend.

Hepburn Springs has a strong Swiss Italian Heritage that is celebrated throughout both townships when The Swiss Italian Festa is held the first weekend of May every year. The parade commences outside The Cute House, much to the excitement of Mz Margz, who loves a parade and any excuse to decorate The Cute House.

Weather conditions: It snows two–three times per year in Daylesford with temperatures ranging January 10-27C and July -1-10C. (Source NRMA – The Open Road Website)

The full story of my sea change is available on my website www.seachangeexpert.com.

NB: Margaret was single when she made the move and still is. Due to several odd phone calls and texts after appearing in the media, she is happy to talk about making the move alone, but requests that the aspect of her still being single not be highlighted in a story.