

Sculptor soaks up inspiration at artistic Hive



Creativity: Ocean Grove bronze sculptor Will Wilson's new gallery, The Hive, opens this weekend. Picture: PETER RISTEVSKI

BODEY DITTLIFF

A BRONZE sculptor is realising his creative dream by expanding from the garage to the gallery in a collaborative venture launching in Ocean Grove this month.

The Hive gallery is the artistic brainchild of Will Wilson, who hopes to

expand his own business — Willie Wildlife Sculptures — while also providing valuable space for several other local artists to showcase their wares.

Wilson, who has lived locally and worked from home for the past 15 years, said his business had outgrown its humble beginnings and that the two-storey building in

Smithton Grove provided an ideal opportunity to promote the region's "top-quality artwork".

"So many small businesses start from the kitchen table — we've done everything from home until now," he said.

"The designs are getting bigger but also we really wanted to make a real experience for people —

not have just our work, but have a mixture of work."

A self-taught sculptor, learning through various foundries, Wilson's specialty lies in tailored bronze birdbaths said to "last forever".

Alongside Wilson's wildlife-inspired sculptures downstairs, the upstairs section features work from furniture maker Jack Auld,

paintings from Bill Linford and Georgie Gall and sculptures from Lucy Meachern and Pam Wilson.

Will Wilson said the Bellarine was taking off as a tourism destination, adding that it was "catching up" in mirroring what the nearby Mornington Peninsula has to offer.

"The Bellarine is just getting better and better —

more wineries, more things to see and do and more attractions, so we're hopefully going to add to that," he said.

The Hive has its official opening on Saturday, July 9, and Sunday, July 10, 10am-5pm, at its new base in 41 Smithton Grove, Ocean Grove. Visit thehiveoceangrove.com.au, williewildlifesculptures.com.au or follow 'The Hive Ocean Grove' on Facebook.