



**Warrnambool
Community
Garden**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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Images (in order)

Cover: Peek Whurrong Elder Robbie Lowe Sr with long-serving committee member and past convenor Julie Eagles at Live in the Quarry.

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Live in the quarry crowd

Sabine Schreiber showing Sprouts Club members pond life

Maida Gilbert at a communal Saturday working bee

Bees being checked by members

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Biochar being made on site

Keith Fisher and Dave Mitchell installing the new decking boards

New site map

Banksia Foundation certificate of recognition

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Heather Ryan and Kay Porter receiving Warrnambool Racing Club JUMP grant

Sprouts Club harvest basket

Rob Porter and Amanda Hennessy at Foodshare

Tour group hearing our story

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Team work at the pickles workshop

Rob Lowe Sr and Julie Eagles celebrate at Live in the Quarry

Almond blossoms signaling an early spring

Convenors report



As I finalise this report for 2023, I still have an emotional buzz going on from the amazing success of our quarry's first event in the amphitheatre – Live in the Quarry. What a wonderful picnic atmosphere with local music, food vendors, kids' activities, garden tours and fun. Our community came together in a wonderful spirit of festivity and sharing.

This fantastic afternoon was a fitting exclamation mark to an amazing year. This report can't cover all the highlights, but our monthly newsletters certainly have, look up wcg3280.org.au/resources

Garden committee

2023 started with the election of our committee: Courtney Mathew (deputy convenor), Sabine Schreiber (secretary), David Baker (treasurer), Christine Morriss, Geoff Rollinson, Sue McCallum, Heather Ryan, and Terry Lowen. They have done an amazing job in guiding policy, ensuring we met legal obligations, sharing the load with grant and other applications, and much more. I thank them sincerely for their energy, enthusiasm, wisdom, and knowledge, particularly Heather and Terry who aren't renominating. They brought many perspectives to the table, ensuring a diversity of views were presented to guide our community forward.



Special mention must be made of Courtney's involvement in 2023. As well as working full-time and completing the Leadership Great South Coast year-long leadership program, she has led several WCG projects with enthusiasm and skill. These included the completion of the wayfinding project which started before COVID (check out our beautiful new signs), and the accessibility grant project which involved updating and renewing our website and making it more functional; updating our logo to make it more accessible and functional, and running a series of free workshops.



Keeping "the basics" going

This past year has had many highlights, however these must be kept in the context that "business as usual" continued very strongly. Thanks mainly to our site manager Dave Mitchell and the core group of volunteers who wrap around his days each week (around 100 hours a week), the Herb Group on Tuesdays, and the wider group who come in for Saturday working bees twice a month, our whole site has continued to thrive. Significant maintenance has been done around plot edges, the native garden beds, fruit trees, communal vegetable areas, paths and much more.



Community is all

We are a large, complex organisation. Along the way there are always some frustrations. There are also times of sadness, especially when members are ill or supporting family members, or we lose a member to illness. There are also some disappointments, such as when our trailer was stolen. In times like that the "community" part of us comes to the fore. Often it's members supporting members, but sometimes it's support from the wider community such as when our trailer was recovered when we went to social media.

One thing that has emerged strongly after the depths of COVID is research on the psychological and emotional value of doing things with other people – community. If those activities are close to nature then there’s a multiplier effect. It’s nice to have what many of us just “know” verified by science.



New developments on site from our own resources

We’ve done a lot of work on site from our own resources, many areas now have automated watering including the hot house, automated chook feeders, biochar production, expansion of the sheoak forest, cardboard and mulch over some large areas not actively mown or gardened (more areas will be included if these prove successful), our first honey harvest in autumn, a new team coordinating the propagation programs building on Heather Ryan’s great work, solar power installed at the container using reclaimed panels, security cameras added, and the HUB garden bed has been rejuvenated as part of a student project.



New work and equipment from grants

Support from other organisations and government has been amazing.

- Quarry funding from previous years has seen the completion of the amphitheatre, including lighting.
- A Living Local State grant has allowed us to replace the deteriorating HUB deck.
- A federal volunteer support grant has purchased many items of equipment, including the new BBQ.
- A grant from WDEA (now Are-able) has seen our website updated to give it a more modern look and make it more readable, our logo reworked to better suit many applications and modernise its look, purchasing equipment to suit all abilities, as well as run a series of workshops and tours.
- Pre-COVID wayfinding funding from Warrnambool City Council has seen new signage finally go up including an updated site map, as well as new brochures for the garden and Sprouts Club program.
- Council’s events funding also supported our Live in the Quarry event.
- Wannan Water Ripple Effect funding is helping us to increase native plant biodiversity along our western boundary, including supporting us to propagate much of it ourselves.
- Support from the Good Things Foundation allowed us to run a photo scavenger hunt as part of online education, including purchasing an iPad and portable Wi-Fi.
- The A.L Lane Foundation contributed \$10,000 to help us rework the all-abilities gardening area which they helped establish back in 2009.
- A Warrnambool Racing Club JUMP grant will help us test blinds on west end of verandah to make this a useful area in all weather conditions.



Continued recognition

After receiving the Premier’s Sustainability Award in 2022, recognition has continued in 2023. We were a finalist in the national Banksia Awards Future Places category in February. There was an article in Women’s Day Magazine in April. Heather Ryan was nominated for senior of the year, largely for the work she has done at our garden. We’re a finalist in the Volunteering Victoria awards for Volunteering Innovation. Our treasurer



David Baker received a Certificate of Appreciation in the 2023 Not-for-Profit Treasurers' Awards. We continue to be contacted by other community gardens, with some visiting to see what we do and how we do it. We don't do anything for the recognition, but it is always nice when someone else says "well done".

Support from our community

We are forever appreciative to our local community for their support. Some of the organisations who have helped us include All Seasons Nursery with several donations of money and goods and Wannan Water who provided merchandise for the Sprouts Club. Several organisations provided grants to enable us to further develop the site or run programs.



Sprouts Club

Our children's program has been rebranded the Sprouts Club. Under Heather Ryan's leadership it continues to engage children and families. While it started with the regular Wednesday timeslot of 4-4:45pm, it has run many other activities through the year. Apart from gardening, the children have built habitat, looked at pond life, cooked, been creative with solstice candle and hapazome (art with flower pigments) and nature stencilling, nature play, and much more.

The garden market

The market remains an important part of our financial self-sustainability. We have started a process of review and possibly renewal, beginning with a questionnaire and data gathering completed by Bruce Campbell. In 2023 any produce left after the market has gone to Foodshare.



Tours and activities

A quick scan of the calendar shows tours and activities with many groups. There are bound to have been more. Woodford Primary School; Lorne Garden Club; SWTAFE Intercultural Café participants; Council's Green Futures Now; St Pius Primary School; Warrnambool College - multiple groups over the year; Port Fairy Garden Club; Danawa Community Garden Torquay; SWLLEN Project Ready program - 4 days including completely remodelling the top garden in front of HUB; Stoked Surf Therapy activities; WAVE school - two visits; East Warrnambool Primary School – three groups; Warrnambool home schoolers group; Probus Twin Rivers Club; Warrnambool Seniors Festival Tour; Deakin University education students, planting in the quarry; Deakin University undergraduates and masters business students team doing some modelling on potential projects – an assessable activity for them.

Workshops and other HUB activities

A small sample includes weaving with ghost ropes (artist Kaz Clarke); pickling and preserves (Rob & Denise); propagation by seeds and cuttings (Rob & Heather); introduction to permaculture course (Kirsty Williams); National Reconciliation Week tours; Biggest Morning Tea; Volunteer Week morning tea; garden photography using your phone (Perry Cho); sustainable gardening (author Donna Ellis); garden design drawing (Kirsty Williams); producers panel (various expert growers).





Helping or working with other organisations

More and more we are working with other organisations. We helped with the establishment of Fruit Rescue, partnering with Leadership Great South Coast and Permaculture South West Victoria. We will host Foodshare's end of year function. We provided speakers to several organisations, many of them supporting older residents, including three Probus groups, Rotary East Warrnambool, and Warrnambool Independent Retirees. We have helped Lions Hopkins Kinder set up worm farms. We have been one of several organisations helping Warrnambool College students research for their bush food garden project.



Live in the Quarry

This was a wonderful celebration of community, but to really understand the emotional significance to the core group of our members driving the project, consider this brief historical snapshot. The quarry rehabilitation is the biggest project we have ever done, and probably will ever do. By the time stage two is finished we will have channelled close to \$450,000 of funding into it, the majority from state and local government. Huge trust has been placed in us as an organisation to manage a project of this size. The project started with a dream from the garden's beginnings in 2007, weed control research in 2014, concept plan consultation and development in 2016, major funding from Pick My Project in 2018 and WCC in 2022, actual development from 2019 to 2023 through COVID and multiple levels of government and bureaucracy but with amazing community support. Stage two work (the forest gully) should see earthworks start in early 2024.



Financials

The financial report is attached. In the changeover to Beyond Bank, a payment of \$2500 went through multiple times (a system error). This was outstanding on June 30 but has now been repaid. Plus, we installed CCTV which was not budgeted for. Without these, we have a very small deficit, well within our normal expectations.

Looking forward

Our direction for the next few years will be guided by our new strategic plan for 2023-2028 (see appendix). The 2022 election promise for \$100,000 to support immediate needs (mainly a tractor and a shed) has been confirmed and paperwork has started. This opens up possibilities around increased garden areas, larger scale composting and more. We're working on a new tenancy agreement, changing from a licence to a lease, and hopefully working on longer-term agreements. We're changing membership renewal from November to July to match the financial year (and better fit the seasons), so a partial renewal from December to June 2024 then a full renewal from July 2024 to June 2025 will occur. Stage two of the quarry is scheduled and normal operations continue with ongoing work around the site, workshops, tours, links with schools and so on. We have started consultation about the market – it's due for some renewal.

Bottom line – Warrnambool Community Garden will continue to be a vibrant, supportive organisation where there will be many different ways for people to link into our community. Whether people join for one type of activity or many, from being a communal gardener to having a private plot to helping with Sprouts Club to grant writing or any of the myriad other things we do, or simply just companionship, we welcome all.

2023 has been amazing. I hope everyone is excited by what 2024 might bring.

Rob Porter, WCG Convenor 2023



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Agenda

Annual General Meeting

Warrnambool Community Garden

Tuesday 14th November 2023

7pm at the HUB Building

1. Welcome and acknowledgements
2. Present
3. Apologies
4. Business:
 - 4.1 Confirm the minutes of the previous annual general meeting and of any special general meeting held since then.
 - 4.2 Receive and consider:
 - (i) the annual report of the Convenor on the activities during the preceding year; and
 - (ii) the financial statements for the preceding financial year submitted by the committee in accordance with Part 7 of the Act.
 - 4.3 Election of committee members and office bearers
 - 4.4 Confirm or vary the amounts of the annual subscription:
 - (i) Membership renewal dates have been amended to align with the financial year and WCG Policies and Guidelines (October 2023) have been updated accordingly.
 - (ii) Membership fees for 2023-2024 will be pro rata from November 2023 to June 2024, with fees for 2024-2025 being invoiced in June 2024.
5. Close meeting
6. Next meeting

I respectfully acknowledge the Maar (Gunditjmarra) people as the original custodians of the land where I live and acknowledge the traditions and knowledge of their elders past and present.



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MINUTES
Annual General Meeting
Warrnambool Community Garden Inc.
Tuesday 8th November 2022
7 p.m. HUB Building

1. Welcome and acknowledgements.
2. Present: Rob Porter, Heather Ryan, Gilles Gundermann, Liz Norton, Sue McCallum, Courtney Mathew, Terry Lowen, David Mitchell, Jonathon Hogge, Denise Dalton, Dallas Smoother, Christine Morriss.
3. Apologies: Maggie Dwyer, Julie Eagles, Bruce Campbell, Geoff Rollinson, Sabine Schreiber, David Baker. Moved Heather, seconded Terry. Carried.
4. Business:
 - 4.1 Confirm the minutes of the previous annual general meeting and of any special general meeting held since then. Moved Terry, seconded Christine. Carried.
 - 4.2 Receive and consider:-
 - (i) the annual report of the Convenor on the activities of the Association during the preceding year; and Rob spoke about the annual report. Highlights kids program; Premiers Sustainability Award; quarry development. Looking forward, core communal gardening, place to be, **destination** - kids from Melbourne, cooking show. Ongoing evolution. Moved Courtney, seconded Sue. Carried
 - (ii) the financial statements of the Association for the preceding financial year submitted by the Committee in accordance with Part 7 of the Act. Moved Rob Porter, seconded Gilles. Carried.
 - 4.3 Election of Committee members and office bearers.
 - 4.4 Confirm or vary the amounts of the annual subscription. Subs increased last year. This year – edging of plots no longer responsibility of plot holders due to various reasons. As per last year's AGM plot fees will be discussed. \$88 currently, \$85 + 8.50 = \$93.50; \$90 + 9 = \$99. Moved Liz seconded Dave M. Carried.
- 5 Meeting closed 7.45 p.m. Next AGM 9th November 2023

I respectfully acknowledge the Maar (Gunditjmara) people as the original custodians of the land where I live and acknowledge the traditions and knowledge of their elders past and present.

Balance Sheet

Warrnambool Community Garden Inc

As at 30 June 2023

Cash Basis

	30 JUN 2023	30 JUN 2022	30 JUN 2021
Assets			
Bank			
Card Account	1,208.60	1,039.59	395.94
Community Working Account	3,422.72	22,718.80	48,776.50
Investment Account	235,927.17	98,715.55	128,530.06
Total Bank	240,558.49	122,473.94	177,702.50
Current Assets			
Market float	250.00	250.00	-
Total Current Assets	250.00	250.00	-
Total Assets	240,808.49	122,723.94	177,702.50
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Grant income c/forward	174,393.43	42,791.68	86,014.24
GST	(2,757.35)	(199.00)	6,292.38
Key Deposit	-	-	1,921.30
Market Music	-	-	257.83
PAYG Withholdings Payable	1,764.00	1,780.00	8,726.00
Rounding	(0.03)	-	-
SWCE Solar Loan	7,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
Total Current Liabilities	180,400.05	52,372.68	111,211.75
Total Liabilities	180,400.05	52,372.68	111,211.75
Net Assets	60,408.44	70,351.26	66,490.75
Equity			
Current Year Earnings	(9,942.82)	4,175.29	(134,035.25)
Retained Earnings	70,351.26	66,175.97	200,526.00
Total Equity	60,408.44	70,351.26	66,490.75

Profit and Loss

Warrnambool Community Garden Inc

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Cash Basis

	2023	2022	2021
Trading Income			
Contra	(2,424.40)	-	-
Gifts & Donations	2,083.80	2,288.09	6,170.70
Grants	177,303.82	8,991.18	56,818.18
Interest Income	3,949.91	185.49	479.69
Key issue	110.45	2,320.03	-
Membership Fee	4,115.67	4,660.92	2,635.35
Other Revenue	210.00	10,199.92	7,816.00
Rental - Hub	819.10	150.00	181.82
Rental - Plot	4,279.08	4,361.82	3,202.28
Sales	35,546.21	43,431.42	29,115.80
Solar Tariff	481.53	782.53	314.78
Total Trading Income	226,475.17	77,371.40	106,734.60
Cost of Sales			
Cost of Goods Sold	11,765.78	13,508.19	3,845.07
Total Cost of Sales	11,765.78	13,508.19	3,845.07
Gross Profit	214,709.39	63,863.21	102,889.53
Other Income			
Grant income brought forward	(131,601.75)	43,222.56	(11,358.87)
Music support	(66.36)	632.98	-
Total Other Income	(131,668.11)	43,855.54	(11,358.87)
Operating Expenses			
Advertising	-	-	146.10
Bank Fees	8.00	-	29.09
Cleaning	50.67	347.25	1,395.39
Consulting & Accounting	-	54.64	407.73
Freight & Courier	-	18.00	-
General Expenses	2,604.06	5,589.57	552.05
Grant Expenditure	46,529.98	52,213.74	67,868.96
Insurance	2,254.77	1,770.95	440.79
Light, Power, Heating	918.86	577.53	769.34
Office Expenses	1,788.05	2,026.48	1,538.97
Printing & Stationery	-	22.73	-
Rent	245.04	245.04	235.34
Repairs and Maintenance	8,027.84	8,358.15	4,673.38
Subscriptions	1,112.52	574.52	787.00
Superannuation	2,758.48	2,835.00	2,940.00
Telephone & Internet	163.68	163.68	94.62
Wages and Salaries	26,522.15	28,947.20	29,275.37
Write off/adjustments	-	(201.02)	114,411.78
Total Operating Expenses	92,984.10	103,543.46	225,565.91
Net Profit	(9,942.82)	4,175.29	(134,035.25)



Strategic Priorities 2023-2028

Our goal	How we will achieve it
<p>We will nurture a strong and inclusive community, creating opportunities for connection and learning between members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support new members to become involved and feel included in the community in whatever way suits them. • Help prospective and new members understand what our Garden offers and support them to increase involvement, build pride and strengthen the sense of community. • Match new members with an established member as a connection point for information, referral to our groups/people who can best support their interests.
<p>We will respect and nurture our members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a culture supporting members to choose the ways and extent they contribute. • Support those who take on leadership roles and critical responsibilities for income generation to ensure we remain sustainable.
<p>We will be clear about the opportunities and benefits of membership, and work with members to meet their expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review membership types, incentives, benefits and prices. • Promote membership to maximise the number of people making a direct financial contribution. • Clearly communicate the range of membership options to address the perception that you need a private plot to be a member. • Publish information about membership and supporting the garden.
<p>We will foster the next generation of leaders and support new members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk openly about what it takes to keep us sustainable and the importance of growing new leaders. • Commit to succession planning and invest in building the capacity and knowledge of emerging leaders.
<p>We will strengthen relationships with our partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture strategic partnerships that provide the resources, skills and capacity to ensure we can continue to grow our impact. • Ensure we have strong, healthy relationships with partner agencies and organisations to add value to what we achieve.
<p>We will seek growth and improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an ongoing site manager role. • Assess decisions to increase activities or implement initiatives on their cost of delivery and the human resources required to sustain them.
<p>We will prioritise site improvements that contribute to our sustainability, increase member and visitor satisfaction and improve the Garden experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Garden Masterplan, prioritising key projects based on the extent they contribute to our vision, mission and goals. • Undertake a basic feasibility assessment of proposed projects to fully understand the initial and ongoing costs (financial and human) required to deliver and maintain them.
<p>We will prioritise financial sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our financial sustainability plan. • Focus on consolidating the role of the market as the major generator of income, visitors and new members. • Create a business plan for the market for the next 3-5 years.