



Castlemaine Community House
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Incorporated number: A0005623J



ANNUAL REPORT



CASTLEMAINE COMMUNITY HOUSE

2013/14

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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



FINANCIAL REPORTS

1:52 PM

29/10/14

Cash Basis

Castlemaine Community House Inc Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2014

	Jun 30, 14
Long Term Liabilities	
Provision Long Service Leave	6,486.28
Provision for Annual Leave	13,716.38
Total Long Term Liabilities	20,202.66
TOTAL LIABILITIES	45,149.36
NET ASSETS	189,906.84
EQUITY	
Retained Earnings	269,677.93
Net Income	-79,771.09
TOTAL EQUITY	189,906.84

HISTORY

Neighbourhood houses began in Victoria in the 1970s, and the Castlemaine community lobbied strongly for one here. Castlemaine Community House was established in 1985 with the help of a Family and Community Services community grant of \$3,255. The pilot centre was to “provide an easily accessible meeting point for all people in the local or broader Castlemaine area.”

The centre opened to the public on 4 July 1985 as the Castlemaine Community Drop In Centre. Early programs and courses included sewing, ceramics, hobbytex, microwave cooking and skincare! A version of community lunch operated even in the early days with community members invited to bring a plate to share once a week.

On 21 March 2014, we were delighted to move to new facilities, sharing with Bendigo TAFE at 65 Templeton Street. This fantastic venue provides spacious facilities for our extensive programs and services, and operates as a hub of activity that connects the community. Castlemaine Community House would like to thank the Mount Alexander Shire Council for their support in making this partnership and tenancy with Bendigo TAFE possible.



OF THE HOUSE



ORGANISATION

OUR VISION

Our vision is for a creative, dynamic and connected community.

OUR MISSION

Castlemaine Community House is a welcoming place, bringing people together to connect and strengthen our community.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Ilana Solo - Chair
 Robyn Till - Deputy Chair
 Tosh Szatow - Treasurer
 Bronwen Machin - Secretary
 Carol Foster - Ordinary Member
 Sandra Goode - Ordinary Member
 Helen Kelly - Ordinary Member

Management
 Martyn Shaddick - Manager

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY HOUSE?

The Castlemaine Community House is one of over 350 community houses in Victoria. Also called neighbourhood houses and learning centres, these local organisations provide social, educational and recreational activities for their communities in a welcoming, supportive environment. The Castlemaine Community House has been operating since 1985.

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE NETWORKS

The Castlemaine Community House continues to be involved in the development of Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria and the region through the Association of Neighbourhood House and Learning Centres (ANHLC) and the Loddon-Mallee based Regional Association of Neighbourhood & Community Houses (RANCH). Castlemaine Community House staff and committee volunteers attend RANCH meetings and the ANHLC conference.

PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS

Castlemaine Community House especially recognises the invaluable dedication and skills provided by the many staff and volunteers who ensure the organisation is able to deliver our many programs.

These programs and operations include:

- Community Development Programs
- Education programs
- Growing Abundance
- Social Enterprises (CAKE Catering and School Canteens)
- Centrelink and Medicare Agencies
- No Interest Loans Scheme
- Reception and Office Coordination
- Marketing and External Communications
- Bookkeeping and Financial Management

FINANCIAL REPORTS

1:52 PM
 29/10/14
 Cash Basis

Castlemaine Community House Inc Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2014

	Jun 30, 14
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
Cash at Bank	
Cash Management Account (1201)	87,375.86
Canteen Account (1203)	26,133.05
Term Deposit	92,899.39
Leave Account (1202)	12,303.27
Total Cash at Bank	218,711.57
Cash on Hand	
Petty Cash - CCH	54.65
Cash Float - Stronger Families	230.00
Cash Float - CSC Canteens	250.00
Cash Float - Community Lunch	100.00
Cash Clearing & Floats	57.00
Total Cash on Hand	691.65
Total Chequing/Savings	219,403.22
Other Current Assets	
Other Current Assets	
Bonds- Premises Rental	1,032.00
Total Other Current Assets	1,032.00
Total Other Current Assets	1,032.00
Total Current Assets	220,435.22
Fixed Assets	
Fixed Assets	
Office Furniture & Equip	
Office Furniture & Equip @ cost	29,918.32
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-25,654.00
Total Office Furniture & Equip	4,264.32
Plant & Equipment	
Plant & Equipment @ Cost	43,093.66
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-32,737.00
Total Plant & Equipment	10,356.66
Total Fixed Assets	14,620.98
Total Fixed Assets	14,620.98
TOTAL ASSETS	235,056.20
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	-1,402.90
Total Accounts Payable	-1,402.90
Other Current Liabilities	
Faulder Watson Hall	431.20
Payroll Liabilities	
PAYG	
PAYG Paid	-38,380.00
PAYG Tax	54,216.53
Total PAYG	15,836.53
Superannuation Liability	2,517.99
Total Payroll Liabilities	18,354.52
Tax Payable	7,563.88
Total Other Current Liabilities	26,349.60
Total Current Liabilities	24,946.70

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Cash Basis

Castlemaine Community House Inc Profit & Loss - July 2013 through June 2014

Stock Purchases	36,508.65		
Payroll Expenses	36,190.80		
Senior Campus			
Administrative Expenses	2,866.22		
Operational Expenses	467.06		
Stock Purchases	46,931.10		
Payroll Expenses	38,087.34	164,873.84	
CAKE			
CAKE CATERING EXPENSES			
Operational Expenses	12,562.43		
Payroll Expenses	26,106.11		
CAKE EDUCATION			
Operational Expenses	1,324.80		
FOOD JAM			
Operational Expenses	1,316.25	41,309.59	430,851.81
OTHER PROGRAM EXPENSES			
PEACE CHOIR			
Operational Expenses	4,690.00	4,690.00	
SOLVING THE JIGSAW			
Administrative Expenses	1,727.27		
Operational Expenses	8,272.73	10,000.00	
COMMUNITY LUNCH			
CASTLEMAINE COMMUNITY LUNCH			
Administrative Expenses	4,535.00		
Operational Expenses	8,511.09		
MALDON COMMUNITY LUNCH			
Administrative Expenses	2,672.75		
Operational Expenses	1,584.11	17,302.95	
CHAT WARBLERS			
Operational Expenses	2,121.82	2,121.82	
SPRING BALL EXPENSES			
Operational Expenses	8,643.04	8,643.04	
STRONGER FAMILIES			
Operational Expenses	538.29		
Payroll Expenses	1,528.16	2,066.45	
CHILDCARE			
Operational Expenses	141.71		
Payroll Expenses	4,860.09	5,001.80	49,826.06
Total Expense			808,585.78
Net Income			-79,771.09

REPORT.

Ilana Solo, CCH Committee of Management, Chair

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The Castlemaine Community House Committee of Management (CoM) plays a vital governance role for the organization, working tirelessly to insure financial sustainability, strategic leadership and direction across our community development aims. With limited recurrent funding, we rely on securing grants to deliver many of our programs, while other programs such as the iconic Castlemaine Community Lunch are completely supported by gold coin donations or subsidised by other funded programs.

We need to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of a number of committee members over the past year. Carol Foster has provided years of passionate leadership and steadfast commitment to good practice and good governance. Bronwen Machin, our Secretary has provided expertise and clear guidance around all matters related to governance and incorporation. Our Treasurer, Tosh Szatow, provided both sensible and balanced support to the organizations aims. And Sandra Goode, Robyn Till and Helen Kelly have brought expertise and wide ranging skills from saliently diverse backgrounds.

On behalf of the CoM, I also want to extend heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated and skilled team of staff and volunteers, who work tirelessly and diligently to provide high quality programs and community development across Castlemaine and beyond.

Some very special thanks this year must go to several people. Firstly, we thank **Norma Lynch**, who retired this year having been the first coordinator at the Community House and a long-standing volunteer operating our Music Playgroup. **Jacinta Walsh** had been with CCH for over 13 years, covering a range of community development roles including the inception of the Peace Choir. Special thanks also goes to **Lucy Young**, whose community development magic will always be remembered. And last but not least, we thank **David Perry** from the *Regional Association of Neighbourhood and Community Houses* for his dedication and support.

Our move to 65 Templeton St this year was a perfect demonstration of solid team work, with the office closed for only one day and all operations continuing without disruption through the move. We would like to thank the Shire of Mount Alexander for their fantastic support with our new accommodation in council owned facilities and we look forward to an ongoing and strong partnership over coming years. Also looking to the future, we aim for continuous improvement across all aspects of governance with a focus on our commitment to the community, our people, sound financial management and strong partnerships.

REPORT

Martyn Shaddick, Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

After a widespread search for new accommodation, Castlemaine Community House (CCH) is delighted to report our move to fantastic facilities with Bendigo TAFE in Castlemaine. The new venue at 65 Templeton Street provides spacious amenities for our extensive range of programs and services, while also providing the professional office space and meeting rooms we have been lacking for so long. The shared venue with Bendigo TAFE also provides a natural hub of activity that connects the community, and there is a constant flow of people visiting the Centrelink agency, asking for loan help from NILS, using the public internet access computers and enquiring about and booking for our programs and activities.

The sharing arrangement was made possible through a three-way partnership with Bendigo TAFE and Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC). CCH would like to thank Mount Alexander Shire Council for the financial and in-kind support that has made this community partnership possible. A service agreement with MASC was developed covering over twenty deliverables by CCH, meeting goals in the Mount Alexander Council Plan, including:

- A vibrant and healthy community;
- A thriving local economy; and
- Building sustainable communities.

In late 2013, we commenced a two-stage review of community needs in Castlemaine. This review was implemented to identify options for new programs at CCH in support of our strategic plan. The initial stage of the review was conducted by a La Trobe University Social Work student on field placement. The review will be finalised in late 2014 by a Master of Social Work student from La Trobe University.

A large focus this year has been the continuing improvement of our systems and processes across CCH. Our accounts have been restructured into a new cost centre arrangement and the delivery of detailed budgets by program has been a pragmatic improvement. This approach has been particularly important in supporting the significant growth across CCH over the past years. Improved human resources systems and procedures were also established, with revised position descriptions, employment contracts and performance appraisal approaches introduced to meet contemporary HR frameworks.



Cash Basis

Castlemaine Community House Inc Profit & Loss - July 2013 through June 2014

Expense			
BUSINESS SERVICES EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses		21,264.11	
Occupancy Expenses			
Rent		17,166.50	
Utilities		9,557.07	
Relocation Expenses		2,638.85	
Administrative Expenses		10,967.64	
Equipment Purchase & Repair		2,192.92	
Payroll Expenses		125,327.23	189,114.32
EDUCATION EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses		7,094.35	
Administrative Expenses		8,848.80	
Payroll Expenses		51,498.69	67,441.84
CENTRELINK EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses		51.38	
Administrative Expenses		10,450.00	
Payroll Expenses		47,043.54	57,544.92
NILS EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses		429.77	
Administrative Expenses		939.20	
Payroll Expenses		12,437.86	13,806.83
GROWING ABUNDANCE EXPENSES			
COORDINATION EXPENSES			
Administration		20,752.74	
Operational		4,283.25	
Evaluation		6,550.41	
Payroll Expenses		147,871.74	179,458.14
HARVEST PROGRAM EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses		10,976.10	
Payroll Expenses		3,139.22	14,115.32
H.C.I. EXPENSES			
COOKING FOR NUMBERS			
Administrative Expenses		2,400.00	
Operational Expenses		501.43	
Payroll Expenses		11,298.57	
GARDEN COORDINATION			
Administrative Expenses		425.00	
Operational Expenses		91.96	
Payroll Expenses		7,302.11	
HOME GROWN & WELL PRESERVED			
Administrative Expenses		480.00	
Operational Expenses		1,138.33	
Payroll Expenses		4,822.52	28,459.92
FOOD FOR THOUGHT			
Operational Expenses		680.00	680.00
LOCAL PRODUCE GUIDE			
Operational Expenses		1,955.00	1,955.00
CSC CANTEEN EXPENSES			
Junior Campus			
Administrative Expenses		2,587.46	
Operational Expenses		1,235.21	

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Cash Basis

Castlemaine Community House Inc Profit & Loss - July 2013 through June 2014

Income

GRANTS & FUNDING			
Business Services	71,897.96		
Education	34,098.80		
Centrelink	56,971.20		
NILS	4,883.84		
Growing Abundance	228,442.91		
Other Programs	13,481.40		409,776.11
BUSINESS SERVICES INCOME			
Business Service Fee	45,431.27		
Operational Income	1,550.28		
Donations & Gifts	5,105.00		
Interest Received	5,580.78		
Membership	186.41		57,853.74
EDUCATION INCOME			
Course Fees	27,342.00		
Rebates	70.00		27,412.00
NILS INCOME			
Other Income	60.00		60.00
GROWING ABUNDANCE INCOME			
COORDINATION			
	995.38		
HARVEST PROGRAM INCOME			
	7,217.55		
FOOD FOR THOUGHT			
	537.70		
LOCAL PRODUCE GUIDE			
	2,850.00		
CSC CANTEEN INCOME			
	157,137.11		
CAKE			
FOOD JAM INCOME			
	29.80		
CAKE EDUCATION			
	3,680.81		
CAKE CATERING INCOME			
	36,889.45	40,600.06	209,337.80
OTHER PROGRAM INCOME			
PEACE CHOIR			
	100.00		
CASTLEMAINE COMMUNITY LUNCH			
	10,053.65		
MALDON COMMUNITY LUNCH			
	715.50		
SPRING BALL			
	11,789.89		
STRONGER FAMILIES			
	1,070.00		
CHILDCARE INCOME			
	646.00		24,375.04
Total Income			728,814.69

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Castlemaine Community House could not operate without our dedicated and skilled team of volunteers. Our volunteers cover tasks as diverse as front of house customer service, office coordination, food preparation at our community lunch, supporting our information technology, creating signage, leaflets and other publicity, and managing our website and Facebook pages. This year volunteers were invaluable in enabling us to move into our new location. We gratefully acknowledge and celebrate the wonderful and invaluable contribution of our staff and volunteers, without whom our operations could not function.



Kya, Karen & Martyn



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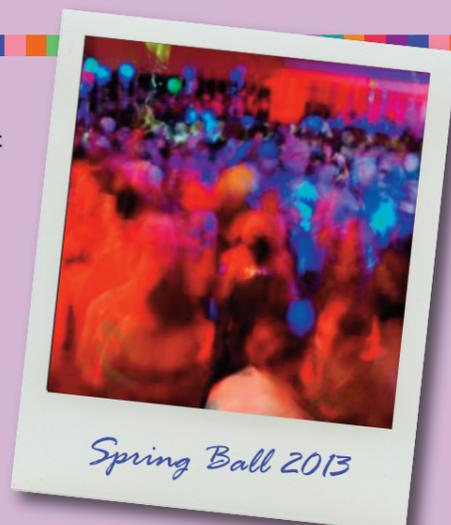


Norma Lynch

SPRINGBALL

The Castlemaine Community House Spring Ball, our major fundraising event of the year, is eagerly anticipated in the Mount Alexander Shire and beyond. This year once again we filled the Town Hall with revellers! The profits from the Spring Ball support a number of our services, particularly those such as the Community Lunch that are operate with no other funding.

We would like to thank the many volunteers that make this event possible. The planning, decorating, ticketing, and running the bar are all done by volunteers - not to mention the essential cleaning up after the event! We would also like to thank the Shire of Mount Alexander Council for their generous support.



Spring Ball 2013

REPORT.

Karen McMullan, Operations Manager

EDUCATION REPORT

Castlemaine Community House has a broad range of training and community development activities that operate throughout the year. These activities range from funded pre-accredited training to fee for service classes and community development programs.

The pre-accredited training is funded through Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) to conduct vocational and education courses which provide pathways to employment, further study and community connection. In 2014 we were successful in applying for extra funding from ACFE, and delivered a far greater number of student contact hours than the hours initially allocated. Initially we were allocated funding for just over 3000 student contact hours.

We were able to increase this to 4,248 student contact hours. The strongest course is still Permaculture Design, which ran twice in 2014. This year we have been able to offer Cert 111 in Permaculture through a partnership with VOTES in Bendigo, and this has created a pathway for many of our previous Permaculture Design students.

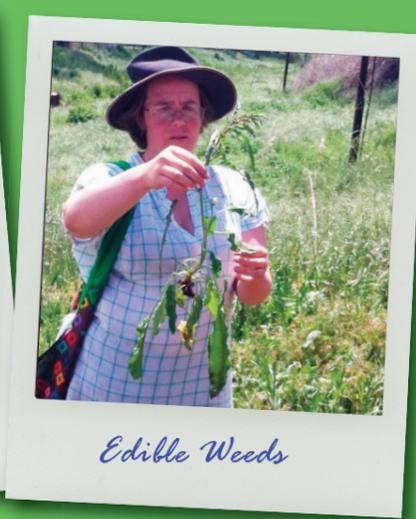
Our Cooking for Numbers courses have responded to the need to train professional caterers for the catering arm of Growing Abundance (CAKE Catering). CAKE has subsequently trained volunteers for our Community Lunch and the Castlemaine Secondary College canteen, creating more sustainable and healthy outcomes for students and the local community.

We also offered computer training for Apple Mac users, which is not available from any of the other local providers. Our education program has worked closely with the Growing Abundance Project to provide a large number of food-related workshops and short courses which we have included in the program we publish each term and on our website.

Our fee-for-service classes this year included Yoga, Nia Dance and Spanish, which has had a great uptake of over 40 new students across the year. Remaining a favourite is the Watercolour Class with legendary tutor Hilary Loftus. Hilary has been conducting classes for over 10 years for the community of Castlemaine.



Knitting & Craft



Edible Weeds

FINANCIAL REPORTS

person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Qualification

Receipts

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for the Castlemaine Community House to maintain an effective system of internal control over receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to receipts was limited to amounts recorded.

Qualified Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed, the financial report presents fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting, the receipts and payments of the Castlemaine Community House for the period ended 30 June 2014 and its balance sheet as at that date.

Yours faithfully

Warren Pollock
MGR ACCOUNTANTS
mgr@mgr.com.au

13 October 2014

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Our reference: JM/1095785_1

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT



To the Members,

Castlemaine Community House

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Castlemaine Community House which comprises of a Profit & Loss Statement and a Balance Sheet for the period ended 30 June 2014.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

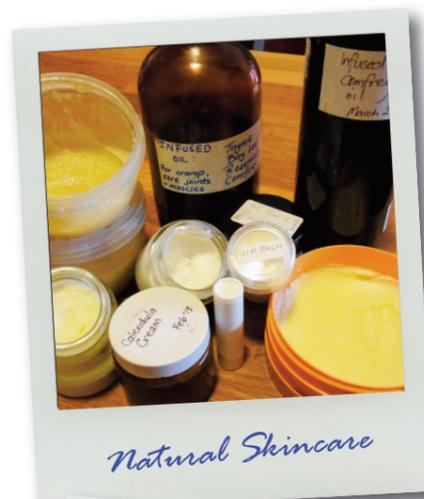
The Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report, and the information contained therein, and have determined that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members.

The Committee's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

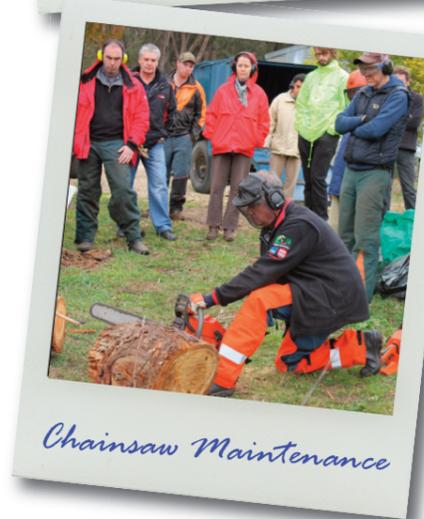
Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. The special purpose financial report has been prepared for distribution to the members of the association for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee's accountability requirements. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any



Natural Skincare



Chainsaw Maintenance

Community development plays a huge part of the program at Castlemaine Community House and this year the Music Playgroup has celebrated its 26th year with the retirement of Norma Lynch. Norma has facilitated this activity for so long that she has watched some of her charges grow up and then bring their little ones along. Community development such as this is priceless and we can proudly say the group is now managed by the mums and dads themselves. To Norma we owe our gratitude and heartfelt thanks for her dedication to the children and families of the Castlemaine community.

Another wonderful children's program is Bush Playgroup which is led by Rose. We look forward each week to her eloquent descriptions of nature and the children's activities in the bush around the Botanic Gardens.

Castlemaine Community House has formed a variety of relationships in the shire to provide appropriate sites for our wide range of courses and activities. In addition to premises controlled by Mount Alexander Shire, we have used TAFE, The Forge, Uniting Church, Anglican Church, South

School, Junior and Senior Campus of the Secondary College, Continuing Education and The Old Gaol complex. Coordinating venue access takes a large part of the time of the Operations Manager. Many activities and classes are free or have just a gold coin donation attached to them and this would not be possible without the immense help and contribution from our volunteers.

Castlemaine Community House, Castlemaine Continuing Education, the Bendigo TAFE and Maldon Neighbourhood Centre have collaborated to look to the future of adult and community to form MATCH - Mount Alexander Training Community Hub. This group has engaged the services of consultants to deliver a training needs analysis for the Mt Alexander Shire and surrounds in order to work collaboratively to deliver effective and appropriate training in the region. The executive summary is available on the CCH website.



Permaculture



Cooking for Numbers

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Partners
Peter J Mulqueen CPA
Stephen J Griffin CPA
Robert W Black CPA
Anthony J Cappy CPA
Warren G Pollock CA



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY LUNCH

Community Lunch provides a two-course cooked meal for around 100 people each Tuesday during school terms. The Town Hall, which has become our regular venue, has been undergoing renovations, so for several months our lunch was held at the Old Castlemaine Gaol, whose owners we thank. We also thank the Shire of Mount Alexander for providing the shuttle bus to assist those in need of support to attend the Community Lunch while it was at the Old Gaol. From the middle of 2014 we have been cooking and eating in the hall at the Anglican Church, which is a light, bright and more accessible venue. We are very grateful to the Anglican Church for providing this venue at an affordable rent.

This year we have had a number of new volunteers joining our cheerful kitchen team, including women from Tarrengower Prison. Some of the volunteers have planned menus, so our lunches have great variety - but always dependent on fresh vegetables and fruit donated by local suppliers. We have enabled some of the volunteers to go on to training in catering through our education program.

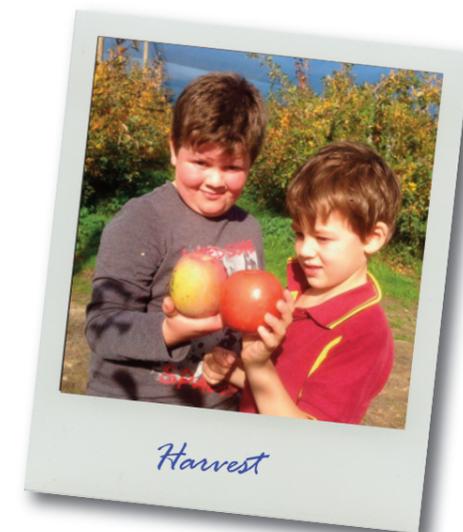
Community lunches at Maldon and Newstead, with the support of Mount Alexander Shire Council, have developed from our model.



SENIOR CAMPUS

The WOT's Up Wednesday project, funded by a grant from Mount Alexander Shire Council, provided healthy free lunches - and gave us the financial resources to experiment with 'sit down lunch' at the senior campus. This has meant the atmosphere surrounding the canteen has changed immensely. The diversity of the student population is now more evenly represented at the counter - whereas when we started we tended to only see part of the school population. The free lunches have sent a clear message: we are not only about healthy local food - we are about nurturing and treating everyone with equal respect and value, and most importantly the food is delicious and plentiful.

Students are now buying more food; when we started buying even a simple salad roll was a challenge for many.



JUNIOR CAMPUS

Students are becoming more adventurous and starting to try new dishes, and are not sticking to sausage rolls and sauce for lunch. Students look for the specials and the opportunity to try 'new' foods. Over all we have seen a swing to healthier eating, and we produce fewer toasted sandwiches and more fresh rolls and salad.

We have strengthened our relationship with the school management, through good communication and support of extra work for the canteen in the form of catering - which also provides us with an additional source of income. Staff have worked hard to build relationships with teachers and management by being excellent ambassadors of the values that underpin any community house project.

We are moving towards the five-year plan that Nikki Valentini and Deb Taylor have discussed over the course of our engagement at the school. The policy of slowly, slowly, bringing everyone with us, is working. We still have a long way to go - but we will be able to do away with take-away food containers at the senior campus by January 2015 and by the end of 2015 at the junior campus.



THE MUSIC PLAYGROUP continues to provide a social experience and a stepping-stone to kinder for little people in Castlemaine. Our numbers are growing, and we suspect one reason is the increase in the number of young families in the Shire. The other reason is the visibility of the group in the library foyer which means parents and carers see the group and want to join in. Two parents have taken responsibility for facilitating the group now Norma Lynch has retired. We also have two parent-run bush playgroups in the Botanic Gardens

PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS COMPUTERS were originally provided by the State Library of Victoria. We now have three computers in almost continuous use by members of the community.

ACTIVITIES The Castlemaine Chess Club, Hatha Yoga, Tai Chi and Theatre Games are all part of the weekly life of the Community House.



WHAT NEXT FOR GROWING ABUNDANCE?

With significant funding for the project ending in November 2014, Growing Abundance is now in a process of refocusing and development for future directions. An in-depth evaluation, re-visioning and reflection process carried out within the Program has helped us both celebrate our achievements and look forward to the next stage. The strengthening of existing, and development of new, social enterprises which can help make the project less dependent on grants is essential for our long term sustainability.

AND A SPECIAL THANKS AND BON VOYAGE TO LUCY We'd like to say thanks and bon voyage to Lucy Young, a fundamental player in establishing, shaping and coordinating Growing Abundance. Lucy was central to the vision of Growing Abundance and the delivery of *Transition Towns* values across the shire and beyond.

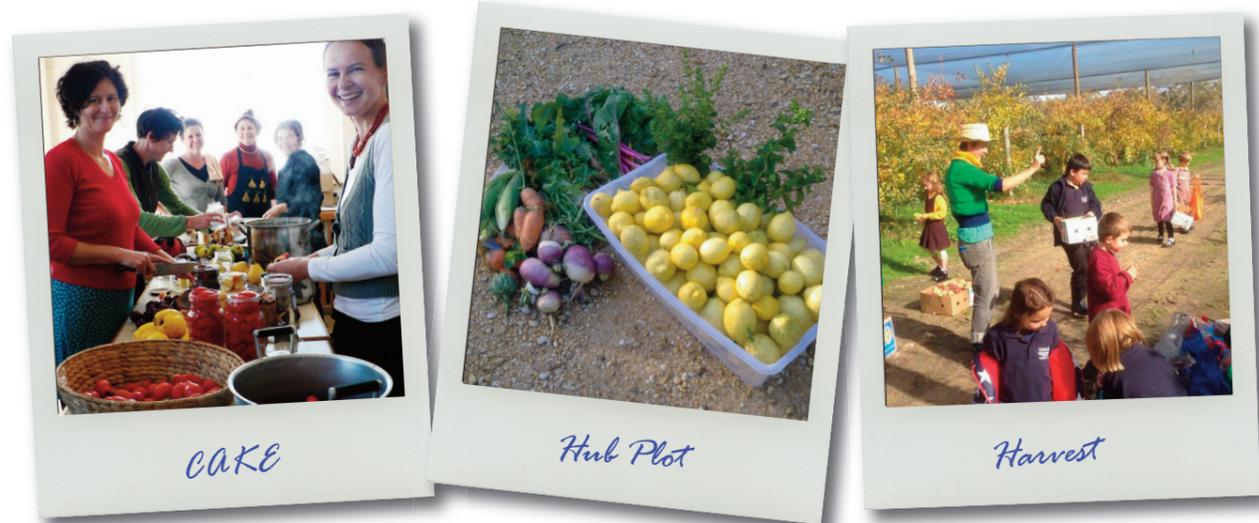
CAKECATERING

This year saw CAKE grow in strength in the community as we moved to the Old Gaol to base our operations for catering, workshops and community 'food jams' (shared preserving and cooking). This was a milestone, and offered the opportunity to strengthen the business model and grow the enterprise. CAKE Catering undertook 90 catering jobs, branching out into weddings and private functions. Our three main caterers went from strength to strength with creative ways to use local food.

Ten food jams were attended by 150+ people. Fruit was provided by the Harvest group, as well as third quality fruit donated from Mount Alexander Fruit Gardens. Food jams now have a dedicated coordinator who plans to take food jams into a new realm as part of the whole CAKE enterprise, supplying preserved food to the canteens and catering business.

Workshops this year included sourdough bread making, miso paste making, and the popular Viva La Ferment series of fermenting workshops. The CCH Cooking for Numbers course explored the way community groups can raise money while using as much locally sourced food as possible, using the theory and philosophy of Growing Abundance, and included farm tours and two practical sessions. This sparked the Maldon Community Lunch, which a student who attended the Cooking for Numbers course now coordinates with confidence. This year we noticed a change in the general skill level of attendees at our workshop, with much more expertise.

Waste is down, healthier eating is up - we are progressing well eighteen months into business.



SCHOOLCANTEEN

The past twelve months have seen us consolidate the operations of the school canteen at Castlemaine Secondary College with the appointment of a paid coordinator, Kathryn Davies, who works in the canteen three days a week and has one day of administration.

We realised that total dependence on volunteers could not sustain the canteens, and so we employed three new staff willing and able to cook for large numbers, who are flexible and able to deal with shifting working conditions. We are more aware of the limitations of what we can produce and how to produce it, we know our clientele better we are more responsive to the changes in the weather and school numbers and are able to respond faster than we could a year ago.

THE STRONGER FAMILIES PROGRAM at Loddon Prison has had to expand as the prison extension has increased prisoner numbers. Thanks to this program, the fathers in prison are able to spend time with their children, playing, reading to them and building parenting skills. We offer an opportunity where relationships between dads and children can be maintained, even when the relationships with wives and partners have broken down.

CENTRELINK AND MEDICARE Castlemaine Community House has been running the Centrelink and Medicare Agency in Castlemaine since September 2012. In our new location in the TAFE building, we are able to offer greater privacy to clients of the Agency, and we have space for them to use the dedicated Centrelink phones and computers. There is a constant stream of clients, and they are also able to use our public internet access computers or find out about other services and programs of the Community House.

NO INTEREST LOAN SCHEME (NILS) The Mount Alexander NILS operates under the auspice of the Castlemaine Community House. The program provides no interest loans to people on low incomes. Castlemaine NILS operates with an average of 70 active loans to a total value exceeding \$45,000.



MUSIC+CHOIRS

The Peace Choir has been a Castlemaine Community House program since 2007. The choir offers a supportive environment for people who experience social isolation or intellectual disabilities. Partners of the Peace Choir are the Angel Fund (a local philanthropic fund), Maine Connection (local advocacy and support group for people with mental health issues), Making Music (choir leaders), St. Luke's (mental health service provider), Uniting Church Castlemaine, and Windarring (association for people with disabilities). The Peace Choir works with community development principles and was initiated to address issues of social isolation, provide support, and enable interaction and skill development.

Our other choirs, **Maine Song**, **The Blenders**, and the **Chat-Warblers**, meet weekly and sing at many events. In August 2014 a number of our singers took part in the Boite Millennium Chorus at Hamer Hall on Melbourne's Southbank. The **Corker Orchestra** brings people and instruments together for light-hearted music making each week.



"It involves and educates people in what was once common knowledge and has helped people join in a notion of community I have not seen since I was a child when the culture was more geared to sharing and being supportive."
2014 Growing Abundance Survey Respondent

HARVEST

After another year of low rainfall, hungry birds and unusual weather patterns, the 2014 harvest season (February-June) was slightly less fruitful than the previous year. Volunteer numbers were not down, however, and 419 people helped harvest this season at 40 harvest sessions held over 22 weeks. Over 5,219 kg of fruit grown in our community that would have otherwise gone to waste were harvested and distributed via weekly fruit boxes to 14 different local community groups and organisations. CAKE food jams, Community Lunch and the Castlemaine Secondary College canteens also received seconds quality fruit for preserving and cooking and local free range goat, chook and pig farmers also benefited from third quality fruit collected in backyards – a good way to prevent disease and infestation of the trees.

All harvested backyard trees were also pruned and all peach and nectarine trees sprayed with copper sulphate as an organic Curly Leaf Fungus preventative. Copper sulphate powder to make up hundreds of litres of spray was distributed in early spring to local community members to spray their own backyard trees. Eight new Harvest Team Leaders received training/induction in order to lead teams of volunteers at harvest and pruning events. This training included harvest induction, how to teach pruning basics and first aid level 2.

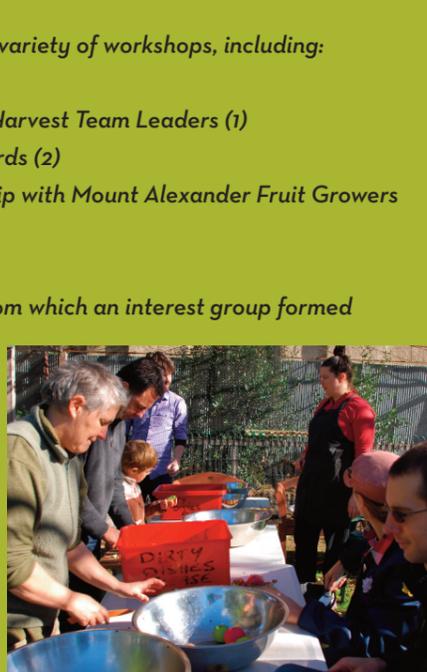
The number of backyards taking part in the harvest program expanded again and there are now over 2,150 fruit trees registered with the program. A strong connection continued to develop with schools and organisations which receive fruit. School students attended some harvests, and Sas Allardice, the harvest coordinator, delivered educational talks to three schools and cooked with students using harvested fruit.

The enterprise arm of the Harvest project has extended. The Prune Enterprise employs up to six people on a casual basis to prune in pairs. They charge \$60 an hour, which means \$25 each and \$10 to Growing Abundance. Quality compost and 120 recycled wooden crates to turn into gardens and 'wicking beds' have been sold.

Over 709 (increased from 585 in 2013) people now receive the Growing Abundance email newsletter each week. It shares information about our events and partner organisations' events related to food growing and cooking, as well as seasonal food growing tips (in partnership with 'Grow Great Fruit') and links to other related initiatives globally.

In 2014, the Harvest project has run a variety of workshops, including:

- Come and Try Harvest (1)
- How to Teach Pruning Basics, for Harvest Team Leaders (1)
- Backyard Pruning, in local backyards (2)
- Natural Pest Control, in partnership with Mount Alexander Fruit Growers
- Grafting (1)
- Come and Try Pruning (1)
- Natural Beekeeping course (1) – from which an interest group formed



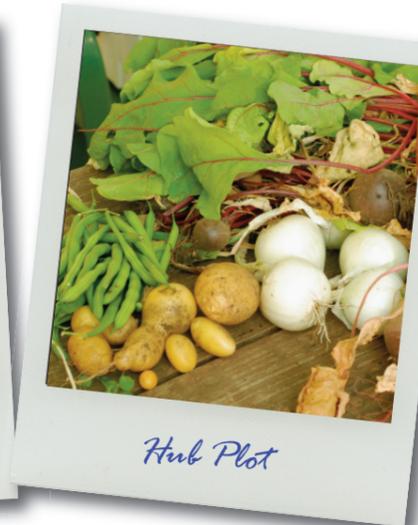
COMMUNITY KITCHEN GARDEN

The Community Kitchen Garden, which is a partnership between CCH, Continuing Education, The Hub Plot and Mount Alexander Shire Council, was constructed in late 2013 and has now been operating over three seasons. In this time learning opportunities have flourished, with workshops on worm farming, composting, espaliering and wicking beds run on site. Roughly 40 people have attended each workshop with participants reflecting the broad demographic of Castlemaine. Participants in a ten-week evening cooking class for young people harvested vegetables and herbs for the fun and nutrition of cooking simple but delicious food in a social environment.

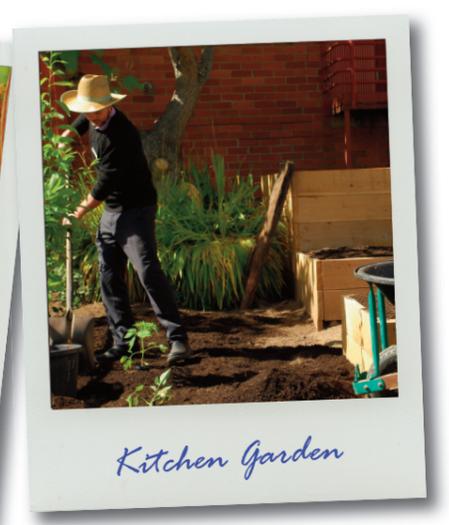
A coordinator was hired to work seven hours a week for nine months to manage garden activities and recruit volunteers. With 15 volunteers registered, more will follow. Some volunteers attend with their carers and others became ambassadors for healthy living, especially cooking with vegetables. Garden produce is used weekly for healthy sandwiches made by garden volunteers with bread donated after community lunch. As the term of the original MOU between involved community groups finishes in December 2014, the ongoing management of the garden is currently under negotiation.



Hub Plot



Hub Plot

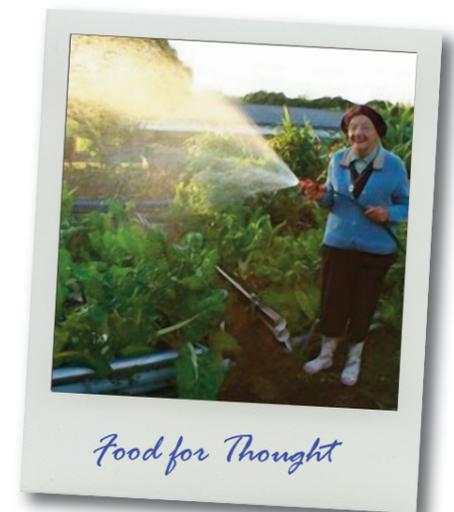


Kitchen Garden

SYSTEMS AND COMMUNICATIONS With the employment of a part-time administration and communications support worker for Growing Abundance the following systems and processes have been set up and documented to create greater integration between GA and CCH systems:

- Course and workshop booking system
- Forms for payment requests, leave, timesheets, etc.
- CAKE Catering enquiry forms
- Contact details for staff, tutors, volunteers, etc.
- Bookkeeping protocols

A more comprehensive plan to integrate media and marketing is being developed, to improve the use of the CCH website, Facebook, mailchimp and local radio, as well as the distribution of printed media including the term program and flyers.



Food for Thought