

# Your Foundation News

A quarterly newsletter from the Mirboo North & District Community Foundation



Mirboo North & District  
community foundation

Summer 2012

Welcome to Your Foundation news, keeping you informed and involved in our Community Foundation.

## Message from the newly elected Chairperson - Kate Buxton

After serving as Chairperson for the last 3 years, Norman Walker has decided it is time to hand over the reins to a new Chair.

Norman has always had a clear vision of what a community foundation should be. He has capably and effectively steered our Board ensuring that we never lose sight of that vision. It is in large part thanks to his dedication, wisdom and leadership that our organisation has had the very best start and can count three successful community grant rounds amongst our many achievements. Norman's commitment to our Foundation is certainly an inspiration and I am extremely pleased that he remains on our Board.

I thank the Board for their confidence and trust in electing me as Chair and I look forward to an exciting and challenging year ahead for the Mirboo North & District Community Foundation.

Some of the major plans and initiatives we will be focussing on in 2013 are:

- The formation and development of a Community Advisory Committee to act as community "eyes and ears" for the Foundation, provide information about the needs and aspirations of our community and tap into the tremendous knowledge and wisdom that exists in our district.
- Exploring ways in which our members can play a greater role in the Foundation and increasing and broadening our membership base.
- Raising awareness of the Foundation as a catalyst for effective charitable giving and how this benefits both the "giver" and the "receiver".
- Forming partnerships and developing joint programs aimed at supporting the more vulnerable members of our community.
- Continue to grow the financial capital of the Foundation for the long term benefit of the community.

On behalf of the Board I thank members, community and philanthropic organisations and all our stakeholders for their support over the past year and wish you all a merry Christmas and happy new year.

## Community Foundation News

Community Foundations are making a considerable contribution across the world and around Australia. As locally based organisations they are ideally placed to understand and respond to the needs of their communities, investing in projects and initiatives that make a significant difference at a local level.

The National Community Foundations conference held in August 2012 outlined some of the terrific initiatives that are being developed and delivered by community foundations around Australia and New Zealand including:

### Tomorrow Today Foundation - The Education Benalla program

This is a long term program to improve outcomes for all levels of students involving collaborative partnerships across community, government, schools, parents and students. This is a model which the Foundation will review as a potential initiative for Mirboo North and district in the education and youth sectors.

### Acorn Foundation- Bequest and Giving Program

The importance and value of bequests was highlighted in a presentation from this New Zealand based Foundation. Charitable bequests are gifts made through a will or living trust. Bequests made to a community foundation represent a wonderful opportunity for people to support the work of organisations dedicated to meeting local community needs in a meaningful and enduring way.

## Directors

Kate Buxton- Chairperson  
Paul Pratt - Vice Chairperson  
Rob Kiddell  
Norman Walker  
Ned Dennis  
Grant Irving  
Diana Mueller

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# Foundation Grants making a difference to the Mirboo North & District Community

The Foundation is delighted to have provided eight grants in 2012 which will help the recipient community organisations make a significant and meaningful difference to the lives of many people in our community.



The 2012 grants have increased by over 50% from 2011, to \$77,347, with a 100% increase in the maximum individual grant available to \$20,000, which has enabled grant seekers to initiate longer term more strategic projects.

Applications were received for over \$150,000, which indicates the continuing need of the community for funding and grants in these tough economic times.

Since our formation in January 2010, the Foundation has committed \$216,000 to community grants and bushfires appeal funds.

# Successful applicants

## **Mirboo North Primary School - \$13,600** **Healthy Kids, Healthy Community**



There is no doubt that the sedentary lifestyles we lead today are having a huge impact on our physical and mental health. In a recent study of 2,000 school aged children, the average time kids spent watching TV, playing video games or staring at a computer screen was a staggering seven hours a day! Small wonder then that chronic disease associated with lack of physical activity and obesity are on the rise.

The Healthy Kids Healthy Community Project, for the development of a raised herb & indigenous food section in the school's Kitchen Garden along with a running track, recognises that the best way to address these issues is to build children's knowledge and understanding of food and the central role it plays in our physical and social wellbeing. Getting children actively involved in planting, growing and cooking their own food plants the seeds for a lifetime of positive eating habits and, coupled with physical activity makes for healthy happy kids and adults. This project encourages connections between the school community and wider community and aims to encourage strong positive relationships.

## **Dumbalk Hall Committee - \$5,000** **Update of Hall Kitchen**



The Dumbalk Hall is a tremendously important community asset and is used for a huge range of volunteer run functions and events including

festivals, markets, local meetings, weddings, even wakes. As someone aptly put it - *"The Dumbalk Hall is a bit like the glue that binds our community together; for celebration and reflection, for building skills, for learning and sharing."*

The local community have done a fantastic job raising a large proportion of the funds needed to bring the hall's kitchen up to the required legal standards. The Dumbalk Hall Ladies Auxiliary will undertake a major renovation and update to the kitchen so that it will meet the requirements of the Food Act to be registered to sell food. A grant of \$5,000 will be provided to update and improve the Hall's facilities, ensuring its ongoing sustainability.

This is a \$30,000 project with the committee providing \$13,340 of its own funds and \$1,660 of in-kind to the project.

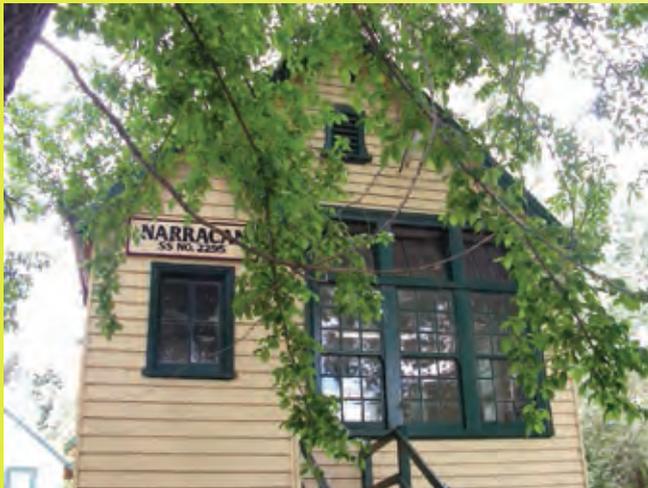
## **South Coast Primary Care Partnership (PCP) - \$18,214. Debunking Mental Health**



More than 20% of Australian adolescents experience a mental health issue and, despite the many advantages our regions have to offer, young people in rural areas have higher rates of suicide and are more likely to experience mental illness than their city or urban based counterparts.

One of the principle barriers preventing young people with mental health issues from seeking, sometimes life-saving, support, is a lack of information and understanding around mental health and mental health services. This project is the result of collaboration between South Gippsland Primary Care Partnership, the Mirboo North Primary School and Secondary College. During the project young people from both schools will participate in a program that will build a culture of awareness and understanding around mental health issues in the school community. This year the Foundation increased the size of individual grants in order to encourage innovative projects in our key priority areas of health and wellbeing. We are delighted to hold this project up as an example of this strategy.

**Narracan Primary School - \$8,688**  
**Community Pizza Oven and Kitchen Garden**



In 2011, a heritage listed poplar tree in the school grounds collapsed and devastated the surrounding area. On the 19 June 2012 an earthquake measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale damaged the heritage listed classroom chimney which was subsequently demolished.

The heritage listed poplar tree and the chimney were integral elements of the history of the school and both are remembered by the past students as iconic. This project will help rebuild that sense of history by transforming the area into a place where the community can come to share old memories and create new ones.

**Mirboo North Energy Hub - \$20,000**



The Mirboo North and District Community Foundation has always been keen to support innovation. This project has the potential to provide profound and long term outcomes for a community. Innovative projects often need seed funding to test their viability and we are pleased to be able to provide funds of \$20,000 to this project for this purpose.

The Mirboo North Community Shed is auspicing the development of a business case for an Energy Hub in Mirboo North. An energy hub is a community owned and operated energy service, which can provide savings in energy costs to the local community, significant environmental benefits and local employment opportunities.

**Community Music Victoria - \$5,060**  
**Fiddlehead Festival, Yinnar**



In 2012, a festival was born in Yinnar that brought community music lovers together from around the State and celebrated community resilience following the devastating bushfires. The Festival was such a success that the local community decided to take the festival on in partnership with Community Music Victoria and the 2013 Fiddlehead will be held on 16 February next year.

The Fiddlehead Festival 2013 will be a family day of hands-on music-making, a staged concert and traditional country fair. It will feature special children's, youth and beginners music workshops and a schools program as well as workshops that will attract skilled musicians and people who love to jam in a group - both locals and people from wider Victoria. The keystone of the event is celebrating community resilience by recognising the amazing strength and creativity that prevails in our communities.

The Foundation's grant will support a series of free "Acoustic Youth" workshops and school music workshops in singing, percussion and acoustic instruments before, during and after the festival. A diversity of young people will come together for these workshops, providing an opportunity for them to meet people from other communities and have fun.

Local support agencies have welcomed the Acoustic Youth Workshops as one means of reducing social isolation for young people at risk.

### **Mirboo North Community Shed - \$1,785 Health and Wellbeing Program**



Statistics show that people in country areas have poorer health outcomes than our city counterparts. Access to health services and information is one of the factors that contribute to these outcomes.

The Mirboo North Community Shed works to address these issues by bringing programs and speakers to the town.

In 2013 the Mirboo North Community Shed will deliver a program of Health and Wellbeing events and seminars on some of the following topics- dementia, prostate health, skin cancer, bone health, diabetes and healthy eating. The program will be supported by the local medical clinic, Gippsland Southern Health Service and other health service providers.

### **Boolarra and District Youth Theatre Company - \$5,000. Trinominal Theatre**



The Boolarra Youth Theatre Company aims to provide a stimulating and creative environment for local young people, enabling them to develop a sense of pride and achievement in a fun and safe environment.

Last year the Foundation provided a grant enabling the group to deliver a program of skills based workshops, culminating in a live performance held in Boolarra. Feedback from the program has been very positive with participants gaining new friends, skills and confidence.

This year, the theatre company will hold weekly sessions where young people will learn many aspects of the creative arts and is planning the following live performances:

- puppetry to be performed at the Mirnoo North Arty Gras
- JUMP into Spring theatre, music and dance sessions
- Christmas celebration play/concert.

# Structure

The Mirboo North & District Community Foundation was established in 2010.

The Foundation is a membership based incorporated association governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with a wide range of skills and an extensive knowledge of the community.

## Board of Directors

### 9 Directors govern the Foundation:

- 6 are elected by members
- 3 are appointed by the Board

### There are currently four sub-committees:

- Community Connections, Compliance and Finance, Grants and allocations
- board nominations

Each sub-committee is convened by a Director and assisted by members of the Board.

## Membership

The Foundation is a membership based organisation. Monies raised through membership assists with increasing awareness and the operation of the organisation. This includes the development and distribution of brochures and newsletters, office costs such as stationery, and contributing to the cost of functions for members.

### Members receive:

- regular newsletters providing updates of the Foundation's activities and news
- invitations to networking functions and events
- voting rights on the election of Directors
- the opportunity to contribute to the direction and activities of the Foundation.

## Donations

Donations are made to the Community Fund and it is the income from these investments that is distributed through grants. At the Board's discretion, donations can be spent on a nominated project if desired by the donor.

### Types of donations:

- one-off donations
- regular donations
- bequests
- memorial donations
- named funds
- 'in-kind' donations/sponsorships.

## Partnerships / Projects

The Foundation has commenced informal partnerships with other community-minded organisations in the district, such as the Mirboo North & District Community Bank.

Part of the Foundation's strategy is to continue to foster and grow these partnerships.

The Board believes that by working together with other community-minded organisations, we can encourage networking and the sharing of resources, facilities, knowledge and infrastructure to achieve more for the community.

## Executive Officer

The Executive Officer provides the day-to-day management of the Foundation.  
Current Executive Officer – Derrick Ehmke

# News roundup

## Partnerships and Joint Programs

*'Together we can do so much'* - Helen Keller

The Mirboo North & District Community Foundation is committed to developing strong partnerships with key organisations enabling us to work together for the benefit of our community. A collaborative approach allows resources to be used more efficiently and combines the strength of different organisations to achieve better outcomes.

Recently, the Foundation has taken a lead role in a number of partnerships and local initiatives including

the development Mirboo North Community Plan, involving a number of local organisations and South Gippsland Shire, and the fostering of a youth mental health program between the Mirboo North Secondary College, Primary school and the South Coast Primary Care Partnership (PCP).

Late news is that Foundation director Diana Mueller has been elected Chairperson of the Mirboo North Sub-Committee for the development of a business case study for a Mirboo North Renewable Energy Hub for which the Foundation has made a grant of \$20,000.

## The Great Victorian Bike Ride



The 591km Great Victorian Bike Ride included a day/night stopover in Mirboo North on Friday 30 November.

The Mirboo North community once again showed its friendliness, hospitality and resourcefulness by providing what many riders expressed as the best town stopover on the ride from Lakes Entrance to Phillip Island.

An example of the hospitality was that of Margaret Yarnton, a member of the Foundation, who's motherly instincts took over when approached by a young rider desperate to have his clothes laundered. She took them home and delivered them back to him spick and span.

The Foundation took part in the event by acting as "ambassadors" to the riders, welcoming them and providing advice on events and locations of facilities.

Chairperson, Heather Butler of the Mirboo North organising committee, who along with the South Gippsland Shire Council did a fantastic job said *"everybody was just so happy to be in Mirboo North, even the weather was good with the swimming pool described as a sea of bodies"*.

The Riders camped on the Walter J Tuck Recreation Reserve and the excellent organisation of the logistics by the Victorian Bike Ride committee was amazing. Tents, marquees, toilets, showers, kitchens etc. all set up with no fuss. The tents covered two sporting ovals and part of the golf course.

The Great Victorian Bike Ride has been of great social and economic benefit to Mirboo North and we welcome other events of this nature.

# Directors Profile

## Kate Buxton



Born in the UK, Kate graduated from the London School of Economics in 1987. Before migrating to Australia she worked at a senior level in the British television and advertising industry.

Kate has a strong commitment to the not-for-profit sector, and as a former GM of Lifeline Gippsland she worked to improve mental health outcomes for Gippslanders. She is an active member of the Mirboo North community having been an organiser of the Mirboo North Art Show and is a former member of the Primary School Council and Secretary of the Junior Football Club. Kate is currently General Manager for design & communications agency tommy gun.

## Diana Mueller



Diana is Careers Development Officer with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and has lived and taught in the Mirboo North district for many years, currently living on a farm in Allambee South.

Diana has been teaching for more than 20 years and has wide ranging and in-depth training and qualifications in the Education sector. In 2010 she was awarded the David Osborne Regional Careers Award and is a participant in the 2011 Gippsland Community Leadership Program.

## Director Changes

### Jeanette White

After serving on the Foundation's Board since before its inception Jeanette White has decided it is time to focus on her many other commitments. Jeanette has served the Foundation with distinction and has been a driving force for the annual grants program. We wish her well and look forward to her continued involvement as an active member.

### Carol Elliot

We have also lost a valuable Board member with the departure of Carol Elliot from the Board due to her work commitments in GippsTAFE. We wish Carol well for the future and thank her for her contribution to the Foundation over the past 2 years.

## Board of Directors Vacancy

The Foundation has 2 vacancies for Board Directors. Board meetings are held monthly and Directors all serve on one or more sub-committees, which meet bi-monthly. The Board and Foundation are strongly pro-active in supporting the Community and working in partnership with other organisations. The voluntary Board of Directors are responsible for the formulation of strategic directions, governance and regulations, prudential financial management, implementation and monitoring of plans to achieve the foundations objectives for the benefit of the community.

If you would like to participate and contribute to the future development of Mirboo North and surrounding district we would be pleased to hear from you by contacting our Executive Officer, Derrick Ehmke, as per the contact details in this newsletter, or any of our Directors.

## In Closing...

We hope this newsletter has been useful to you and we welcome comments, questions and ideas. Change of contact details should be forwarded to **Derrick Ehmke, PO Box 327 Mirboo North, 3871 VIC.**

In the interest of cost minimisation and the environment, the Foundation would prefer to email publications to our stakeholders. If you have received this newsletter by normal mail and agree to receive by email, please advise us.

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