

2022-23 Presidents Report

Together with your Executive members, the Myrtleford Chamber of Commerce & Industry continued to be active throughout the year having finalised many projects and looking forward to new opportunities for members in the future.

In 2022-23 the Executive concentrated on setting up financial software to streamline record keeping and follow up membership subscriptions. Endeavouring to bring membership levels back to pre – covid times we have looked at core activities to benefit the business community and have stepped back from some of our auspicing roles as groups mature in their own right. *(The With One Voice North East Victoria Community Choir, Crackpots Mosaic Projects and LaFiera’s Young Ambassador Program.)*

Our short meetings with Business Networking opportunities continued during the year for members and guests, with updates on some of the projects we are currently involved in, namely the Splash Park, Memorial Hall, Alpine Outreach Mobile Facility, La Fiera and more.

Splash Park



We have communicated with the Alpine Shire on a regular basis to ensure that the Myrtleford Splash Park comes to fruition with the tender for works recently given to Water Feature’s by Design due for completion in 2024.

Events:

Members were invited to events throughout the year on Men’s Mental Health, Digital Workshops and local Philanthropic activities, with guest speakers Ian Westmoreland founder of the not-for-profit organisations “Mentoring Men and Kintsugi Heroes”, Digital Workshops offered by Click Region and “Start-up Shake up” in March, and Fiona Nicholls on GROW Myrtleford+ and how the fund has been operating and benefits through community projects since launch in May 2022.

Myrtleford Community Hall Project



The year began with acquitting funds (\$55,000) to Bushfire Recovery Victoria for completion the Myrtleford Community Hall project which included repairs to floor and re-coating, installation of a grease trap, solar panels, cooking demonstration area with A/V equipment and storage cupboards as well as an external storage container. This was the final stage of what became a 4 year project which has returned a useful community space in St Pauls Anglican Church Hall. Paving between the Hall and the piazza was also undertaken completing a usable outdoor space and connection between public and community space.

Over \$150,000 has been invested by public and community funds since the Memorandum of Understanding between St Pauls Anglican Church and the Myrtleford Chamber of Commerce was signed in December 2018.

Where ever possible local businesses were engaged to provide equipment and works towards the project: Adam Cartwright Electrical, Dahlsens Mitre 10, Don Matheson, GP Electrics, Lukey Concreting, Mitch's Mobile Mechanics, Myrtleford Floors & Furnishings, Terry Cartwright Kitchens, J. Wojack, S. McLean Plumbing and RJ & JE Dean Builders.

Myrtleford Summer Series



The

Chamber continued to support local performers with three months of live performances by local musicians. Funding was provided by Bendigo Bank supporting 'Live at the Chapel' a series of live performances in St. Pauls Church on Thursday evenings throughout November, followed by outdoor live performances in the Town Piazza Friday evenings throughout December and Saturday evenings in January. The series continued when the Alpine Shire provided funds for additional performances over the long weekend in March and Easter.

The Summer Series encourages families to buy take out from local food vendors and picnic in the piazza whilst being entertained by local musicians. With plenty of chairs and umbrellas available. (We have been successful in attracting funding to run again December 2023 and January 2024)

La Fiera

Myrtleford's Italian Festival was well supported in 2023 proving popular with visitors to our region. LaFiera's Wine & Food Festa presold 2,300 tickets with over 600 purchasing tickets on the day – even with continuous rain. Of the tickets presold, 15% were from Myrtleford postcode and 85% all other areas proving that the festival is a definite Tourism event.

Statistics gathered showed a combined economic impact (sales) of Saturdays Food & Wine \$100,000+

Other events within the program included Il Mercato, Lunches at Gapsted & Micheleni Wines, Club Savoy dinners and Movie night generated another \$100,000+

An enormous amount of work is put in by a small steering group who work 12 months of the year for La Fiera from fundraising, planning, marketing, ticketing and more

- Kerry Murphy
- Louise Benini
- John Reynolds-Smith
- John Costenaro

Major sponsors Micheleni Wines, Bendigo Bank and the Alpine Shire combined providing around half the cost of running the festival.

Hundreds of people are involved in the actual festival with local Circoli catering authentic homestyle food from their regions and Myrtleford Lions Club members volunteering to assist with set up.

Myrtleford & District Land Care are to be congratulated for managing waste sustainability. Monitoring 4 bin stations during La Festa, assisting people to sort their waste, has reduced LaFiera's general waste by almost 90%. There were only 4.5 bins of general waste from Saturdays festival) with more than 3,000 people!

2024 will provide challenges and greater expenses as LaFiera continues to grow in popularity.



LOFIERA
ITALIAN FESTIVAL

Bush Market



Around 3,000 people attended the Bush Market held on Saturday 6th January 2023 held at the Myrtleford Recreation Reserve. Another Chamber initiative which has been running for over 30 years and is building up to pre-covid numbers.

Alpine Outreach

Last year the Chamber joined Bendigo Bank, Bright Rotary and Alpine Health in an initiative by TAFCO Rural Supplies in their vision to bring free skin cancer checks to farmers. The vision has grown to providing our community with a self-drive mobile GP consulting facility that can be used by the allied health professions to take services into communities and will include 15 days free skin cancer checks provided by Alpine Health trained staff at events throughout the region.

Australian Business Volunteers assisted the Chamber develop a 5 year business plan to ensure that the project was sustainable. As the project grew and financial pledges made, a new Incorporated Association was formed "Alpine Outreach Inc" to oversee the operation of the project and provide governance around delivering the business plan.

ACTUAL PLEDGES & SPONSORSHIPS AS AT 24.08.23								
Source		Pledged	Received	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
JACOBS GROUP		Crafter Van		\$ 100,000.00				
Alpine Health	inkind	Services		\$11,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Appin Park Rotary	12.07.23	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bendigo Bank - CEF	13.06.23	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bright Rotary Club	30.05.23	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Community Bank Bright		\$ 25,000.00		\$15,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
GROW Myrtleford		\$ 10,000.00		\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Myrtleford Op Shop	23.08.23	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Rotary Club of Albury	24.07.23	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$9,000.00				
Myrtleford Rotary Club	17.07.23	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Rotary Club Strathmore	21.06.23	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$1,000.00				
Rotary Club Yea	22.05.23	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$4,000.00				
Bright Rotary Club - Raffle	09.05.23		\$ 502.00	\$502.00				
Rotary District 9790	22.05.23	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FRRR	13.08.23	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Alpine Shire		\$ 20,000.00		\$20,000.00				
TAFCO/MCCI	inkind	Project establishment		\$15,000.00				
Total				\$202,002.00	\$23,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00
In kind values not calculated in totals								
		\$228,000.00	\$150,502.00					
			\$ 5,000.00	gst paid - owed to ATO				
			\$145,502.00	available funds				

Upon reflection of the year,

I must thank our Executive members for their commitment during the year to continuing to ensure we are an organisation that supports our community and brings value to our town and businesses.

I am very pleased to present this report to our members and wish all businesses prosperity in what may be challenging times ahead for many.

Jim van Geet
President