

# 2023-24 Presidents Report

Together with your Executive members, the Myrtleford Chamber of Commerce & Industry have brought a range of business development and economic development projects and events to benefit the Myrtleford business community and town.



## ***Business Events:***

A number of free business workshops were delivered in Myrtleford throughout the year, free to members, starting with a Digital Marketing workshop for members presented by Propel Digital.

### *Social Media Supercharge: **Marketing Momentum of Start-ups and business***

- Understanding the role Social Media should play in your business.
- Components of a social media strategy & understanding your audience.
- How to define content pillars for your brand/business.
- How to generate content ideas.
- What types of content work best?
- Fostering community and User Generated Content.
- Platform optimisations.

A workbook and presentation notes were circulated to all members via our electronic newsletter.

Additional workshops were held in November - Canva for Micro & Small Business and Social Media for Small Business presented in partnership with Startup Shakeup's "Working Together" program delivering face-to-face workshops for our members.



**ClickRegion.**

'Working Together Program' presents

## Canva for Micro & Small Businesses

digital workshop delivered face-to-face

**Myrtleford**  
**Wednesday 15th November**  
**5.30pm - 7.30pm**

networking afterwards with tea, coffee and nibbles



A Small Business Strategy Workshop was offered in April aiming to realign small business owners with their business aspirations and develop practical business strategy to take them there.

## ***Digital Invoicing:***

Digital invoicing for Membership subscriptions was implemented during the year – this also streamlines our membership register for reporting requirements.

## Myrtleford Splash Park



We have liaised with the Alpine Shire on a regular basis about our Myrtleford Splash Park Project. There have been challenges and changes along the way since the concept plans shown to members a few years ago but soon you will see this project come to fruition before the end of 2024 which will have a positive impact on our town's amenity.



## Myrtleford Summer Series

We have continued to support local performers with 11 weeks of live performances by local musicians. Funding was provided by Alpine Shire through their Community Grants and Events. Outdoor live performances were held in the Town Piazza Friday evenings throughout December and Saturday evenings in January and into February.

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 2024 and January 2025)

## **La Fiera**

Myrtleford's Italian Festival was well supported in 2024 proving popular with visitors to our region. Magnificent weather after two preceding years of rainy festivals saw visitors and locals flocking to our annual Italian Festival Myrtleford.

La Fiera's Wine & Food Festa presold 2,000 tickets with all premium seating sold out prior to the festival. An estimated additional 1,000 people came on the day. Of the tickets presold, 13% were from Myrtleford postcode and 87% all other areas proving that the festival is a definite Tourism event.

2024 included more interactive street entertainment including Stilt Police and Bubble Tonic show at La Festa and an evening dinner with chef Patrizia Simone and food writer Richard Cornish and a Sausage Making demonstration.

Statistics gathered, showed a combined direct economic impact (sales) of events within the program including Saturdays Wine & Food Festa, Il Mercato, lunches at Gapsted & Michelini Wines, Club Savoy dinners and Movie night generated in excess of \$200,000.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the small steering group who work 12 months of the year for La Fiera from fundraising, planning, marketing, ticketing and more; Louise Benini, John Reynolds-Smith, John Costenaro and Kerry Murphy.



The Festival would not be possible without the support of many volunteers and community groups and financial sponsors. Michelini Wines, Bendigo Bank, McPhersons Earthmoving and the Alpine Shire combined provide around 30% of the cost of running the festival. Ticket sales, merchandise sales and stallholder fees make up the balance to conduct the festival.

Thank you to Myrtleford & District Land Care for doing a stellar job managing waste sustainability. Monitoring 4 bin stations during La Festa and assisting people to sort their waste, has reduced La Fiera's general waste by almost 90% in two years. To the Myrtleford Lions Club who assist in the set up and pack also we say a big thank you to the many volunteers who give up time on the Saturday to man the gate under Team Leaders Vanessa Leonard and former young ambassador Ashley Pasqualotto.

2025 will provide challenges as La Fiera continues to grow in popularity as do the challenges of red tape, risk management and the big one...expenses.



### ***Bush Market***

Around 3,000 people attended the Bush Market held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the Myrtleford Recreation Reserve. Another Chamber initiative which has been running for over 30 years and continues to be a popular event attracting thousands to our town. One Voice Choir members manned the carpark for us. Many thanks to Mel Dymond for her contribution as Bush Market Co-ordinator and Louise Benini for starting the Myrtleford Bush Market FaceBook page as well as starting social media marketing specific to the Bush Market.



### ***Community Support***

During the year the Chamber has supported initiatives by the Myrtleford Bowls Club, Lions Club, Mountain View Children's Centre and R.S.L. though letters of support for a range of community projects.

The Chamber is represented on GROW Myrtleford+ a locally-advised community fund which supports meaningful causes, working with existing projects and organisations to benefit the community.

Investing in the community through grant-giving, encourage growth to create a vibrant and exciting Myrtleford and its surrounding communities, now and into the future.

Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible. As a sub-fund of Into Our Hands Community Foundation, GROW Myrtleford+ can receive donations of cash, property and shares.



One of the projects funded through GROW Myrtleford funding is the Alpine Outreach van.

### ***Alpine Outreach***

The Chamber is represented on Alpine Outreach Inc. What previously was a plan is now a reality, with the van now fully operational and ready to be launched for use in the community for allied health purposes. This project has been 3 years in the making and will be a valuable community asset.

Alpine Outreach is a versatile mobile van available for hire by healthcare providers, local health professionals and organisations. Designed to deliver services to regional and remote areas, the van offers:

- Preventative health care consulting services
- Remote health servicing
- Disaster response capabilities



Finally, I 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. We have remained active even with reduced meetings due to the extended leave of our Secretary over the past 12 months.

Succession planning is important to all organisations so I encourage members to consider joining as an Executive member to bring fresh ideas and ensure we remain innovative and relevant to our business community.

I am very pleased to present this report to our members and wish all businesses prosperity in the year ahead.

Jim van Geet  
President