

# SEVILLE COMMUNITY GROUP INC



2023

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Seville Community Group Inc is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)



open hearts  
open minds  
open doors



Seville Community Group Inc  
8 Railway Road Seville VIC 3139  
[www.sevillecommhouse.org.au](http://www.sevillecommhouse.org.au)  
INC: A 0004911K  
ABN: 60641289309

Seville Community House  
programs are supported by the  
Victorian Government

Seville Community House  
acknowledge the generous  
support of Yarra Ranges Council

# Contents

About Us	.....	page 1
Vision, Mission and Purpose	.....	page 2
Our People	.....	page 3
President's report	.....	page 4
Manager's report	.....	page 5
Playgroup	.....	page 8
Treasurer's Report	.....	page 8
Acknowledgements	.....	page 9
Get involved!	.....	page 10
	.....	page 11

---

# ABOUT US

Seville Community House was officially opened in August 1985 after Seville Primary School offered the use of the old Principal's House as a permanent home for a small group of women meeting socially doing crafts and other activities – later the children's playgroup formed and it is still an important part of the SCH core function.

We have adapted and responded to the needs of our community and currently provide a raft of activities that include social, learning and inclusion opportunities.

Seville Community House is governed by a volunteer Committee of Governance.

# VISION

No one in our community will feel isolated, alienated or unable to seek assistance

# MISSION

Our mission is to provide to the whole community a place to come together to sustain and enrich their lives.

# PURPOSE

Advance social and public welfare by undertaking accessible and low-cost activities, events and classes to reduce social isolation, increase social connection and welfare support to those in need in our community.

Advance health by providing public health promotion and referral in areas of community needs such as, but not limited to, men's health, women's health and mental health.

Advance education by providing affordable, inclusive educational and vocational classes in areas such as arts, wellbeing and health matters.



---

# Our people



## COMMITTEE OF GOVERNANCE

Keira Cowell - Chair  
Anne Kean - Secretary  
Liz Mercuri - Treasurer  
Judith Lightfoot - General Member  
Ciska Van Spankeren - General Member  
Maria Boyd - General Member

## VOLUNTEERS

Karen Hanson	-Administration
Anne Kean	-Administration / Policy Development
Keira Cowell	-Administration
Carol Clarke	-Administration
Glenice Hopes	-Group Facilitation
Elizabeth Mercuri	-Chit Chat Cafe
Lynne Gwynne	-Community Lunch
Tamaryn Kimber	-Playgroup

---

## THANK YOU AND GOODBYE

Thank you and goodbye to Ciska who has now stepped down from our Committee. Your service to the Community House and your community has been exemplary.

## HEARTBEAT

Our volunteers are the heartbeat of our Community House. Thank you to each and everyone of you. You all bring different skills and qualities and contribute greatly to what we do

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I began to write this report the overwhelming sense of Déjà vu prompted me to reflect on how many years I have held the position of President and consequently how many such reports I have composed. Eight years is a long time and I have witnessed many changes at the house and changes of personnel and yet the essence of Seville Community House has stayed the same.

Staying abreast of changing demographics and social trends in the community, we continue to strive to provide programs that are relevant, appealing and accessible to all. Our endeavours in this area have been enhanced this year by a significantly increased and mutually beneficial partnership with the management committee of the Seville Public Hall.

Whilst the improvements to our physical environment are helpful, it is the people, both paid staff and volunteers, who work at and for the house that have achieved the very positive percept that Seville Community House enjoys in the neighbourhood and beyond.

Our house manager, Vicki, continues to ably steer the ship and, with the assistance of Liz and Merryn, keep the day to day operations and financial matters on an even keel. This year we have a new facilitator for our playgroup, Lynne K, and this program is now returning to pre COVID levels of engagement.

Thank you all for your work.

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of Nicole Shore who left us as a paid employee at the beginning of 2023 to pursue other opportunities but continues to support us by consultation and who has now re-joined our committee of management in a voluntary capacity. Many thanks Nic.

Our regular volunteers are a small band who bring a variety of skills and interests to enrich the performance and scope of our operations and we are very grateful to Anne, Liz, Jo, Lynne G, Tamaryn and Carol for all that you have done and continue to do. Thank you all so much.

Keira Cowell  
President.

## HIGHLIGHTS

A few highlights of the year have been:

- Increased opportunities to use the Seville Public Hall for our programs and community events.
- Continuing development of our Healing Garden
- Community Garage Sale
- Monthly free Community Lunch
- Involvement with the Community Market at the Hall

## THANK YOU

To the following entities that provide continuing support to our house are also very much appreciated:

- The Victorian Government through their ongoing funding
- The Yarra Ranges Council for its networking and financial support.
- Maureen McConnell from CHAOS
- Seville Primary School
- Seville local businesses and Wandin Seville Bendigo Bank
- CIRE Services
- Bunnings Lilydale
- Seville Public Hall Committee.

# MANAGER'S REPORT

Seville Community House

Real Impact. Real Value.

INCOME \$137,349 - VALUE \$295,107

Data provided to us through the **Neighbourhood House Survey 2022** reports that Seville Community House provided in excess of \$295,107 of value to the community during 2022. For a small organisation with a gross income of \$137,000 this information is gratifying to see and supports our view that we are doing most things right! While this information is important, continuous improvement and positive transformation must always be in the forefront of our thinking.

One way of improving for us has been the ability to add further activities to our program utilising the Public Hall. Our community lunches attract good numbers each month and we receive positive feedback from diners and volunteers about the program. We are in the planning stages of offering further social activities at the Hall in 2024.

It was pleasing to see the last of the COVID restrictions lifted that have shaped our last few years, however we have seen our volunteer numbers decline, in line with the overall decline of volunteering state-wide. It is well known that volunteers are the backbone of any small Community House, and we are no different. Our challenge now is to recruit the right volunteer for the right positions

Every so often organisations get rocked by unanticipated events – we had ours at the beginning of 2023 with the resignation of Nicole Shore, who has moved into full time work. Nic was such a huge part of the Community House in many ways, experience, local knowledge and the ability to adapt to whatever was placed in front of her. Her departure meant we had huge shoes to fill. We are very fortunate that Nic has stepped onto our committee as Treasurer and continues to offer advice to both me and Elizabeth who has taken on the financial aspect of Nic's role.

Merryn Auldish has taken on our program and comes to us with a wealth of experience in both community settings and social enterprise roles. And Lynne Kimber has taken on our Playgroup Facilitator role and has fitted in with ease.

With new people on deck, new ideas surface and we are witnessing further change as we move towards a main focus of providing no and low cost social activities for our community.

Thank you Keira and our fabulous committee, who never fail to roll up their sleeves to assist me whenever it is needed. Without them my role would be a very difficult one.

*Through COVID I isolated in the house and even after restrictions were lifted I still felt it hard to leave my home. On the chance meeting with Vicki from Seville Community House I was introduced to the community lunches. I came along and soon realised that I could put in and give back to the community by volunteering to take over the lunches. This gave me a purpose to leave the house and to get my mind active to look for recipes, go shopping, do the cooking, set up the hall and welcome all the locals in for lunch. It forces me to talk to people which I struggle with. I now look forward so much to the once a month luncheon. It has changed my life and without it I would still be locked into the home alone and isolated.*

*Thank you  
Lynne Gwynne*



# HIGHLIGHTS

- Installation of our Reflection Totems into our Healing Garden.
- Having our community to join us as we planted out our Healing Garden. We are excited to see what Spring looks like this year in the garden.
- Monthly Community Lunches - fabulous attendance and community feedback. Two new volunteers have joined us to assist with all aspects of this project.
- Social Solo Diners group - meet monthly at a local restaurant.
- Working with NHVic to assist people with concession cards access the \$250 Power Saving Bonus
- Retention of the minimum 25 hours Neighbourhood House co-ordination program.
- Launching our Community Markets - 3 have happened to date and we are so pleased with our community's support.

# GRANTS

We successfully applied for several grants during this reporting period.

Successful grants included:

- Upper Yarra Community Led Recovery Grants Program that funded kitchen equipment for the Seville Hall to enable easier catering for our Community Lunches and other community events.
- Living Local – Regional Community Grants that funded the purchase of new (OH & S compliant) tables and an efficient fridge for the Seville Hall
- We were the auspice organisation for the Wandin CWA to apply for funding through the Yarra Ranges Small Grants program.
- Federal Volunteer Grants 2022-23 that will fund defibrillators and First Aid kits for the Community House and the Public Hall.
- Sunday Sessions - a grant made available through Access Health and Community to run a month of free activities on Sunday mornings. These sessions are scheduled for February 2024.



# HEALING GARDEN

Our Healing garden was planted out over the 20th & 21st of October.

Community members brought their favourite plants along and Bunnings Lilydale supplied us with a beautiful box of natives to add to our Garden and Emily to assist with planting.

We've had a battle with rabbits and bugs, but our Garden continues to hold its own and we look forward to the warmer Spring weather when our wonderful deciduous plants once again burst back into life.

Our wonderful seat attracts parents and little ones as they wait for school children at pick up time.

We acknowledge the generous support and expertise from Betsy Sue Clarke (Dirtscape Dreaming)



# PLAY GROUP

I was delighted to take on the role of Playgroup facilitator at the beginning of 2023.

There has been an average of 6 - 8 families with 10 - 12 kids attending Playgroup. We have had consistent attendees, and some families have returned from previous years.

As an aside to the children's activities outlined below, this has been an excellent opportunity for mothers and fathers in the community to connect. It has been wonderful having Tamaryn volunteer with Playgroup, this has consolidated her desire to go on to further studies in child care.

It has been rewarding to see the development of the children this year. The younger ones have been learning to walk. The older ones have moved from independent to parallel, to interactive play. The theme from term 2 was vehicles and the theme for term 3 was Australian animals. We explored these themes in a variety of ways with songs and stories a key part of the learning experience. We have other hands-on activities, including, painting, playdough, pasting, colouring and jigsaw puzzles, chalk drawing, playing with cars and role playing activities. Outdoor play builds gross motor skills with activities in the sandpit and cubby house. It has been a fun year so far and we are all looking forward to term 4 and beyond.

Lynne Kimber  
Playgroup Facilitator



We love coming to Playgroup because it's a fun and safe place for the kids to play while having a social chat with other Mums at the same time.

*Miranda, Elizabeth and Olivia*



We love coming to Playgroup for the social interaction with other kids of similar ages, especially as the kids aren't in childcare. The kids love all the different activities that are set out to do on the day and get very excited for Playgroup day!

*Hailey, Lenny and Aubrey*

# TREASURER'S REPORT

We had some major change during this reporting period with our Financial Officer, Nicole Shore moving on to full time work. We are fortunate that Nic has joined our Committee as Treasurer and our Treasurer Elizabeth has taken on the role as our Financial Officer.

Liz has hit the ground running and has had amazing support from Nic during her whirlwind introduction to the financial world of Community Houses.

We are most thankful for the ongoing support from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Yarra Ranges Council. These funding bodies enable the Community House to continue its operations to support the local community.

Funding received from successful grant applications:

- Upper Yarra Community Led Recovery Grants Program
- Living Local – Regional Community Grants
- Federal Volunteer Grants 2022-23

Allowed us to purchase required equipment necessary to continue our no cost programs and support our volunteer team.

Our healthy surplus for the year was in part due to Nicole's unused personal leave entitlements coming back into our profit and loss.

Thank you to Catherine Aulich, Upper Yarra Valley Bookkeeping, for her ongoing financial guidance, especially important to us during our time of great change and to our auditor, Frederick Eksteen, Collins and Co. Audit Pty Ltd, for our Special Purpose Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Thanks to Vicki for preparing the annual budget for the coming year, as well as her careful financial management of the Community House.

Elizabeth Mercuri  
Treasurer 2022 - 2023

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We'd like to thank the following organisations and businesses for supporting us over the past 12 months.

## **FUNDING BODIES**

- Seville Community House acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government (DFFH)
- Seville Community House acknowledge the generous support of Yarra Ranges Council

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT / SPONSORSHIP / RESOURCES**

- Bunnings Lilydale
- Murphy's Outdoor & Camping - Monbulk
- Donna Grundy - Recycled Roots and Leaves
- Emily Hobley - Bunnings Lilydale
- Wandin Seville Bendigo Bank

## **OTHER SUPPORT**

- Maureen McLaughlin - CHAOS
- Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
- Michael Goodrich - Yarra Ranges Council
- CIRE Services
- Eastern Access Community Health
- Leading Senior Constable Linda Hancock
- Lachlan Mitchell - Max Brown Real Estate Seville

# HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

## **BECOME A FRIENDS OF SEVILLE COMMUNITY HOUSE MEMBER**

By becoming a FOSCH member you will be supporting Seville Community House in a way that says “this is my house”.

## **VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME**

By volunteering at your Community House you will make friends, gain skills and be involved and included in decision making and forward planning.

## **MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION**

You can help us keep our programs affordable for everyone by making a gift to us through our peak body Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association’s Public fund - ask us how

## **SUPPORT OUR EVENTS**

Supporting our events gives us the opportunity to ask you “what do you want from your Community House”?

## **ATTEND OUR PROGRAMS**

By attending classes and one off workshops of interest you are not only supporting your Community House but you have the chance to learn new skills and make new friendships.

## **PARTNER WITH US**

When we partner with other organisations it means we have twice the capacity to organise and promote our events.

## **GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK**

Our strategic planning is assisted greatly by receiving feedback on all the things we do.

## **RECEIVE OUR TERM PROGRAM AND SEASONAL NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

By registering your email address with us you will receive our seasonal newsletter quarterly, and program each term which will keep you up to date with the events and activities we are running.