

2017 EDRA Annual Review



Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association

Working together to promote the services, attributes and tourism of our region

Chair Report



Another year has flown by and it only seems like yesterday we were reporting at the newly reopened Ranges Hotel in Gembrook. This year sees EDRA complete its first three years operating to deliver the Business & Strategic Plan developed for the period 2014-2017. The township tear-off maps being launched later this month, and completion of the multi-use trail connecting our townships between Emerald & Gembrook sets EDRA up to implement destination branding for our region.
(pictured: The Ranges Hotel, Gembrook)

Our small Committee works hard to support local business & community groups in our region and a lot has taken place during the last twelve months. I represented our members & region on the Cardinia Tourism Advisory Committee, now the Casey Cardinia Tourism Advisory Committee for 4 years. During this time, the Cardinia Tourism Strategy, developed in 2014, grew into the Casey Cardinia Visitation Strategy covering a much greater region. As a result, and inability to attract direct investment from Council to support necessary EDRA business & tourism initiatives I resigned in June this year. This has enabled me time to produce Maps for our region and for EDRA & its subcommittees to have more input into local projects & issues that directly affect our hills community as a whole.

This includes:

- Working with the Gembrook Community Group & Puffing Billy Working Group around Puffing Billy events in Gembrook.
- Liaising with Tourism Victoria, Economic Development
- Naming of the Emerald to Cockatoo Trail to the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail & now Rail Trail status.
- Quarterly meetings with Puffing Billy marketing to improve communications & collaborative opportunities between Puffing Billy Railway, our business community, townships & local community.
- Facilitating collaborative opportunities between our business members, township committees, community group members & visitor attraction operators that benefit our region as a whole.
- Identifying new visitor experiences & events for the region.

The following pages capture a snapshot of our projects for this reporting period. Thank you to the EDRA Committee & Subcommittee members for your support & efforts during 2016/17. I wish the new committee success in 2018 and encourage all existing members & new members that come on board to be more involved & take advantage of the opportunities as they unfold.



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Eastern Dandenong Ranges Rail Trail (Opening early 2018)
An exciting new walking and cycling route through the beautiful Dandenong Ranges National Park. The trail is suitable for walking and cycling. It is a 10km long trail with a total of 100km of trail. The trail is a mix of dirt and gravel.

Our recognition as a region is growing

As we close another year, the opening of the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Rail Trail early 2018 provides the opportunity to build stronger links between our townships and increase visitation and business opportunities in our region. Our Visitor Maps, was a key marketing initiative in our 2014-17 Business & Strategic Plan.

Dandenong Ranges Environmental & Bushfire Reduction Community Grant – Firewise Gardens

EDRA is a community based not for profit organisation. We initiate projects that support our community as a whole.

An \$11k grant received from Port Phillip & Westernport Catchment CMA in 2016 was used to implement Firewise Gardens and signage at the Gembrook Community Centre and Ash Wednesday Bushfire Education Centre. Developed, designed & produced by EDRA, we collaborated with local business, individuals & community organisations to provide a vital educational resource for our local community.

Thank you to:

Daniel De Graaf & Lynne Trensky, EDRA

CFA South East Region

Cardinia Hills Ragwort & Landcare Group

Yarra Ranges Landcare Network

Gembrook Emergency & Resilience Group

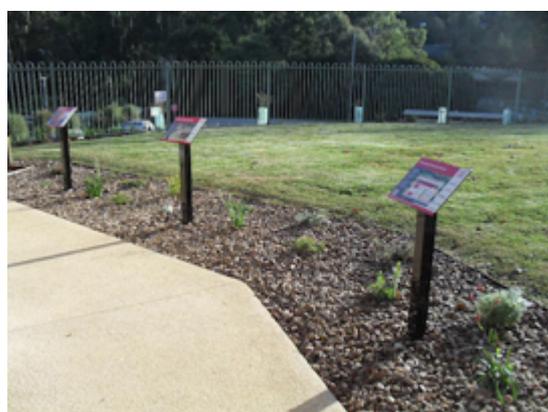
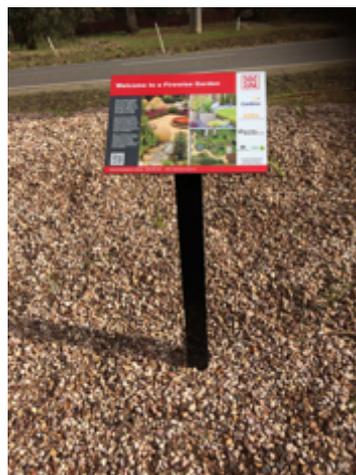
Cardinia Environment Coalition – Special thanks to Russell Hawsley

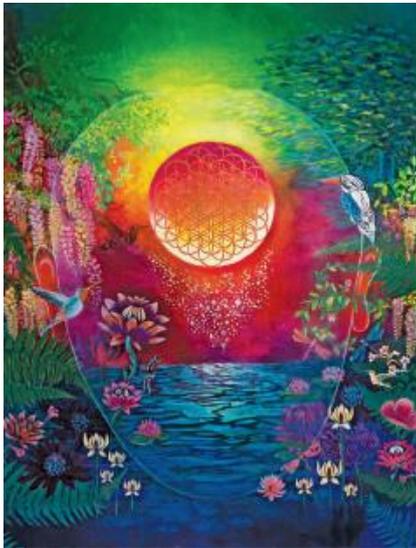
Ash Wednesday Bushfire Education Centre

Helmeted Honeyeaters Org, Macclesfield

HGS Garden Supplies, Gembrook

Gem Signs, Emerald





HILLS ART MARKET

Featuring Artists and Musicians
of the Dandenong Ranges
and Surrounding Region

APPLICATIONS OPEN

2nd Saturday of each month 9am–3pm
Beside Puffing Billy at Emerald Station
Opens 11 Feb 2017



hillsartmarket.com

Hills Art Market

Supporting small business local artists

EDRA assisted local resident Raquel Carter establish the Hills Art Market in Emerald.

Through networking & collaboration between EDRA, Puffing Billy, to use Puffing Billy land for the market, and Emerald RSL for parking, the Hills Art Market was born in February 2017. A small change Arts Grant through Cardinia Shire assisted Raquel to produce some printed material to promote the market.

Eleven months on, the marketing and promotion Raquel puts behind the market every month is paying off. The market has grown to over 60 stallholders and attracts new & repeat visitors to Emerald. The market supports many self-employed local artists and provides them the opportunity to showcase the diversity of their artistic talents.

The market & tranquil location provides a unique visitor experience offering hands-on workshops, a free children's art space, music & food.



Community Engagement

Art in the Garden/Heritage Festival/The Independent Longest Lunch/VASTROC/Xmas



EDRA assists to engage business & community members to collaborate on projects.

Art in the Garden – 23 October 2016

Sue Jarvis Gallery Garden – Gembrook

Emersleigh Estate Wines

Chisholm Tafe (Event Management students)

Little Gems Childcare (Children's activities)

Emerald Mitre 10 (Sponsorship)

Men's Shed (Cardinia wide) Garden Chair Competition

Australian Heritage Festival – Apr 2017

Puffing Billy

Emerald Museum

Emerald RSL

The Motorist Museum Gembrook

VASTROC – Mt Burnett Observatory – May 2017

Mt Burnett Observatory

Laughing Fox Café – Event catering at ESC.

Cardinia Beaconhills Golf Links – Convention Dinner

The Longest Lunch Gembrook

Puffing Billy

The Independent

Chisholm Tafe (Hospitality Students)

Emerald Christmas Decorations

Santa

Buskers

Business Breakfasts & Members Events

We held our business breakfasts at different members venues across the region this year.

This provided an opportunity for members to experience & learn about other operator's products and a forum to network, collaborate & discuss local issues.

As with all our business breakfasts, we offer 3 member presentation spots and include a training component and quick tips segment.

Training this year covered Business Goal Setting, HR for Small Business & Marketing & PR for business.

Member presentations included:

Fernlea House, Halls Outdoor, Gemco, KLR Legal, AAB Lawyers, Hills Physiotherapy, Lions Club, Emerald Pharmacy, The General Food Store, Incy Wincy/Behind the Trees, Bam Bam, Gembrook Co-Working Hub, Puffing Billy Events, Chieftains Smokehouse, All Star Defence & The Novel Nook Café & Bookclub.

Thank you to all our Venue hosts and the Emerald Subcommittee, Ian Ash, Louisa Lammers, John Wall & Lynne Trenskey for coordinating and running these events for members.

Our member events for the year included the Casey Cardinia Tourism Day held in August by Casey Cardinia Tourism and members Footgolf social evening at Cardinia Beaconhills Golf Links. It was disappointing neither events attracted good patronage given the quality of the events, speakers and cost to participate.





The Local Voice Newspaper

With 27 issues under our belt, the future of The Local Voice Newspaper in its current form will rely on a new volunteer subcommittee to administer and produce. The paper takes many voluntary hours to produce and the Local Voice subcommittee recognises the need to become financially and human resource sustainable to continue. With nominal funding each year from Cardinia, the paper relies on advertising to cover printing costs. It is a real shame, given the great comments we receive each issue and efforts put in by everyone who works on the paper. The Newspaper has been a great vehicle to promote a range of topics including Events & What's On, Local Business, Arts & Culture, Education, Town Talk, Heritage, Food & Gardening, Health & Wellbeing, Sport & Recreation & Sustainability.

The paper has been a great promotional resource to our Community Groups & local organisations. They provided editorial in return for free promotion of their services. The paper may exist as an online paper or Facebook page in 2018. This will be a decision made by the new EDRA committee.

Special thanks go to amazing group of dedicated people, Vivien Masala, Kirsty Hall, Gulsen Ozer, Lynne Trensky, Dave Key, Bill Pell & Phil Byers.

Finance Report

The Port Phillip & Westernport Grant of \$11k was completed and acquitted during this financial year.

EDRA was appointed the manager of financial accounts & promotion for the 2016 Casey Cardinia Tourism Day held at the Atura Hotel. Funding of \$3,500 from both Casey & Cardinia Shires and an additional \$1,500 from Casey Cardinia Tourism was managed by EDRA to cover the costs for the event. These costs included speakers & presenters, venue hire, refreshments & gifts.

The Local Voice Newspaper received its \$800 annual funding from Cardinia Shire. This year we had an increase in advertising from our business & community group members, which was great, however, we didn't secure enough advertising to cover rising printing costs and ended up showing a small loss for this financial period.

Existing business membership renewals for the whole region were held over for the financial period giving members the benefit of free membership for up to twelve months. All Membership renewals are now set for the period July 1 to June 30. Whilst we attracted an increase in our Community Group memberships, business membership uptake from July'17 to Jun'18 was lower than previous years. This was still the case even though we are running a promotion where 50% off the membership fees will go to a targeted Facebook campaign for the members business.

EDRA doesn't receive any funding from local council and relies on the membership fees as its main source of funding, and this is so EDRA can operate & remain viable.

Finding out what our members are looking from the association and focusing on increasing membership numbers to keep EDRA operating for the benefit of our region will be the top priority for the newly elected Committee for 2017-18.

Opening Balance	\$17808.83
Total income	\$22191.67
Total expenses	\$36312.14
Total profit/loss	\$ 3687.91

Joshua De Battista, Treasurer EDRA