

EDRA Annual Report 2022



DAY ONE

Shop local

Mid-year promotion
May 16 - 22

Spend \$20 or more in-store at participating stores & fill out an entry form for your chance to win!

1st Prize \$500
2nd \$300 3rd \$200

In vouchers to spend within participating stores

Participating businesses

EMERALD - C-Me Uniforms, Your Local Pantry, Star of Emerald, Emerald Mill, Fox Cafe, Incy Wincy Cafe, Behind the Trees, Tinkars Corner, Emerald Village Pharmacy, Emerald Village Medical Centre, Kiki & Finch, Emerald Village Pharmacy, Emerald Village Medical Centre, The General Food Store.

AVONSLAUGH - Avonsleigh General Store, BAM BAM Italian, The General Food Store.

GEMBROOK - Hairy Dog Cafe, CK Elements

EMERALD - Pine Grove Hotel, Upper Beaconsfield, Over the Road Cafe



Chair Report

It's hard to believe it has been just over twelve months since I last reported on the activities of the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association. When we thought the workload couldn't be bigger than what we undertook in 2020-21 to support our members, this has proved wrong with the ongoing impacts the pandemic continues to place on our local businesses.

EDRA's membership with Mainstreet Australia, established in 2020 has been invaluable to us as an association and has enabled us to deliver a number of important projects for our members since then. Peter McNabb, President of Mainstreet Australia, was the guest speaker at our 2021 AGM and spoke about the benefits of our retail businesses (80% of our membership) to be more actively involved in their local business groups.

I'd like to remind local businesses about the importance of this again (see below) and as a testimony to this, you'll read in the following review what we have been able to achieve in the last twelve months to support local businesses.

Why Business Associations are important in our advocacy

1. A coordinated focus
2. A strong voice with about 250 Victorian business associations & chambers of commerce in Victoria
3. Recognition by the State Government, particularly the Minister for Small Business & her Department
 - New \$5 million grants program in 2020-21 to over 200 business groups across the State
 - Strong interest in another round of grants in 2021-22

Why advocate for our local shopping precincts and how we should work together on this

These are tough times

- Extended lockdowns with 5 km travel limit
- Ongoing uncertainty and anxiety
- Loss of business turnover – a few businesses closing permanently
- Emotional and psychological impact – high level of stress
- Your situation as being part of metropolitan Melbourne rather than a regional country area

Greater importance of supporting local businesses and your Association

- Helping businesses survive, recover and rebuild
- Sharing experiences and learning what works best
- Power in numbers

Tough times can bring out the best in us

- A caring approach
- Leadership
- Little things that will make a big difference
- Doing things differently – greater use of social media, competitions, gift cards
- Resilience



Our year in review

In August, some of our members provided insights into the impacts the pandemic was having on their businesses, along with other trader groups to Mainstreet Australia to use in advocating for more State funding to support business & trader groups. This was extremely beneficial to Mainstreet Australia and resulted in the Dept of Jobs, Precincts & Regions providing two rounds of Business Chambers and Trader Group's funding and a third round, currently open at the time of writing this report.

Being a small volunteer-run local business, and to remain sustainable in the long term, EDRA needs to rely on membership and support from grants and other funding available to operate.

Our local businesses need to recognise and value the role of the association & volunteer hours put in by the EDRA committee to support their business, and more importantly, provide input, and feedback and get involved where they can in projects and services they would like to see implemented.

As a previous employee working in the meat industry in retail, wholesale food service and supermarkets for 55 years and 37 of these as an owner operator, I certainly would have benefited from the resources & services EDRA provides its members and encourage anyone in business and not already a member of EDRA to join.

It has been an honour to be the Chair of EDRA for the last three years and to have worked alongside committee members Walter Berger, David Nickell, Jennifer Crossland, Louisa Lammers, John Wall, Mick Spruhan, Mark Protheroe, Michael Galea, Holly Cochrane, Emma Hutchinson, Glen Mepstead & Lynne Trensky over this time.

I have learned so much during my time as chair, and made many great connections and new friendships and look forward to continuing to support EDRA in the future.

Sincerely,



Garry McGough
EDRA Chair

Our year in review

Through Business Chambers and Trader Group's Round One funding EDRA received in the last financial reporting period, we started the rollout of our marketing campaign "Get your fill in the hills" under the banner of reconnecting to build local community prosperity in July 2021 with a screening at the Cameo Cinema in Belgrave for members to view the nine local videos produced and that 29 members took part in. The efforts and collaborative participation shown by our members resulted in EDRA being a Mainstreet Australia Awards finalist under the category 'Program Initiative, Activity or Event Program Initiative with a budget under \$50,000 (no special rate). Even though we didn't win, we were proud to demonstrate what we achieved for our members with a budget of less than \$5k we had to use.

July, August & September were busy renewing members and setting up their listings on the new Eastern Dandenong Ranges website and promoting across our social platforms and in the Casey Cardinia Family Magazine.

CASEY CARDINIA
FAMILY magazine

EMERALD LAKE PARK
A PARK FOR ALL SEASONS

HOME | SHOPPING | FOOD & WINE | EDI

caseycardiniafamilymagazine.com.au



A TASTE OF THE EASTERN DANDENONG RANGES

Family friendly, walking and cycling trails, recreational activities, abundant natural beauty, world renowned Puffing Billy Railway, quaint villages and shops, restaurants, bars and cafes, wineries, and farm gates. Twenty village townships make up the Eastern Dandenong Ranges, a microcosm destination to escape the city and hustle and bustle of everyday life. Each of the townships embrace a country feel and charm, and don't take long to feel relaxed, refreshed, and appreciative of the spectacular forests, fern gullies and patchwork landscape that is the Eastern Dandenong Ranges.

Emerald Lake Park, a park for all seasons, is just one destination in the Eastern



EMERALD MODEL RAILWAY MUSEUM

The Emerald Lake Model Railway is located just above Puffing Billy Railway's Lakeside Station and is the largest model railway in the Southern Hemisphere and the size of a 17 square house.

This fascinating and interactive miniature world with trains, towns, cities, countryside, snow-capped mountains, and animated figures, including pop-up viewing points along the track, is fun for all ages. The model railway has been in operation since the early 1980s and includes an on-site store for the train enthusiast at heart.



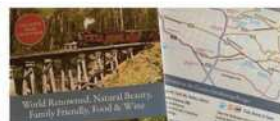
LAKESIDE PADDLEBOATS

Navigate your way around Lake Tregowan on the beautifully restored iconic vintage paddleboats. All paddleboats are 2-seaters, you can choose a 25, 20 or 10 minute pedal powered ride experiencing a true encounter amongst the resident wildlife whilst enjoying the myriad of seasonal colour changes the park offers.



LAKE TREGOWAN & LAKE NOBELIUS

Lake Tregowan is the larger lake, close to Puffing Billy Railway's Lakeside Station, and originally constructed to provide a water supply for the processing of flax, grown by Carl Aasi Nobelius. Lake Tregowan's home to the family-friendly Lakeside Paddleboats and is a very popular spot for a bit of fishing. A waterside walking path adorns the lake and opens in summer, with plenty of picnic shelters and surrounding playgrounds.



EXPLORE & FIND OUT MORE

The Eastern Dandenong Ranges is the perfect destination to spend time, play and explore each of the villages, their unique personalities, and range of experiences to enjoy.

Like to know more? Visit www.easterndandenongranges.com to download a Visitor & Touring Map or telephone 0491 475 970 for visitor information. You can also subscribe to their newsletter and take advantage of the special offers and events in the Eastern Dandenong Ranges.



EMERALD MUSEUM

The Emerald Museum is set in the beautiful and historic Nobelius Heritage Park and provides an opportunity to learn about the history of Emerald and the surrounding villages. There are displays of geological artifacts, gold discoveries, and history on the Nobelius nursery, timber industry, farming, and early settlement in the township.



WALKING TRACKS & TRAIL

From Lake Tregowan you can walk the all-accessible, 1.2km Nobelius Loop Track to Lake Nobelius, Nobelius Station, Puffing Billy Railway's Lakeside Station, Nobelius Heritage Park, and the Emerald Suburbs. The 2km Pine Tree Lakes in view of the Pine Plantation at Emerald Lake Park, where you will find a wishing well to make a wish on the short 700m long Whirling Well Track and immerse yourself in ferns along the 200m Fern Gully Track. The 20m long Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail starts at Clonetta and finishes at Gemfield. The Emerald Lake Park section of the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail takes you past the Emerald Museum, Nobelius Heritage Gardens, and provides spectacular fern gully and waterfall forest views, as well as the paddleboats on Lake Tregowan.

PICNIC SHELTERS

Five large picnic shelters, each accommodating a minimum of 40 people and 4 gas barbecues (2 are disabled) are located close by to Lake Tregowan and Puffing Billy Railway's Lakeside Station.



NOBELIUS HERITAGE PARK

The four-and-a-half-hectare heritage park preserved as a remnant of the historic Nobelius Heritage Nursery, started in 1846 by Swedish immigrant Carl Aasi Nobelius. The nursery exported fruit and ornamental trees to five continents, had influence on the nation's landscape and is the only nationally significant nursery collection in Australia that is housed in the same nursery grounds in which it was developed. The Heritage park trail includes displays of apple, pear, kiwi fruit, nightshade, lavender and rosemary, flax and a saline garden.

PLEASE CHECK OPENING TIMES WITH ALL BUSINESSES, AND WHEN GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE. EASTERN DANDENONG RANGES

Our year in review

In addition to supporting members with 3rd party promotion of their businesses, a lot of time has been spent by the Executive Committee meeting with the Hills Hub to discuss EDRA's interest and involvement to be a licensee of the Hub along with the Emerald Village Association & U3A. At this stage, EDRA won't be undertaking a licensee agreement at the Hills Hub until a business plan for the Hills Hub is made available through Council for our review and demonstrates benefits to our members.

We have and continue to advocate for improved Telecommunications and IT in the Hills, the development of a green wedge strategy for the Eastern Dandenong Ranges, signage improvements to the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail, support for a Mountain Bike Trail in Cockatoo and destination and pedestrian wayfinding signage in our townships.

EDRA also made a presentation to Cardinia Council for extra funding to support the annual expenses and additional administration required to manage the association. As a result, we can report Council funding has been extended for the next 3 years plus this year from \$10k to \$15k annually and we thank the Economic Development Team for their support and allocation of funds through their department.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts & Regions, Business & Chambers Group Grant Round Two funding offering 60 grants each of \$20k opened in November 2021 and we were quick to realise the benefits to members we could provide by adding new modules to our new easterndandenongranges website along with face-to-face skills workshops followed by one on one mentoring sessions. We put in a proposal with Collective Marketing (now known as the Diversity Group), our website developers in November.



Not long after Stronger Communities Programme Round 7 funding applications came out and EDRA was invited to submit them through Jason Wood MP. We applied for assistance to have a digital sign produced to promote members' events, products & services locally and were also fortunate to receive \$10k to facilitate and execute this by the end of October 2022.

Our year in review

We started preparing for Christmas in September 2021 to support members and in addition to the Christmas street decorations we erected in Emerald, Cockatoo & Gembrook, EDRA provided roving Christmas props & Santa visits across some of our retailers in Upper Beaconsfield, Emerald, Cockatoo & Gembrook, Gembrook Market, Cardinia Cultural Centre and the Emerald kindergarten. And find the Christmas baubles family activity was again successful amongst participating retailers and fun for local families.

We were also able to celebrate Christmas with our members and held a day event at the new Puffing Billy Visitor Centre and a night event at Elevations in Emerald to end another open again, closed again year.



Our year in review

We were advised on the 31st Dec 2021 we had been successful to receive \$20k from the Department of Jobs, Precincts & Regions, Business & Chambers Group Grant Round Two funding. Consequently, a lot of time was spent over the Christmas period and Jan/Feb to advise members and preparing for the face-to-face workshops that took place in March & April this year.

The easterndandenongranges website & HIVE online platform is our key promotional tool for members. Members have access to login and upload their events and specials and to update their listings at any time along with thirteen webinars to access and support them with SEO, their own website, Google Business, Google Ads, Digital Advertising, Email Marketing, Social Media, Messaging Platforms, Tracking & Analytics, Reviews & Social Sharing, Digital Safety and own Business Plan.



eastern dandenong ranges villages eat see & do shop stay functions offers what's on

adventure

experience both at the same time
eastern dandenong ranges

what's on?
events calendar

local businesses
professional & trades

offers & discounts
explore our special offers

meet the trader
our local business owners

Our year in review

To bounce back from COVID, we were confident enough to run our first face-to-face business breakfast in May this year and held it at the Puffing Billy Visitor Centre. It was also our first try at mixing up the format of the breakfasts we have been running for the last seven years and decided on a Q & A style with panel speakers. The breakfast session was a key opportunity for business members to gain insight into the new Puffing Billy Railway Act and what it means for local business, insights into planning, placemaking & activating our Mainstreet precincts as well insights into the Economy ID stats and profile for our region. The Q & A style was well attended and will be used again to suit the topics & presenters.

NEWS



People arriving at the business breakfast at the Puffing Billy Visitor Centre.



Gerard Breukers of Gembrook and Bret Butler of the Puffing Billy Railway networking.

Bouncing back from Covid

By Jamie Salter

The Covid-19 pandemic took its toll on all local businesses from retail, hospitality, tourism operators, and professionals but business owners are bouncing back and are planning for the future.

The Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association (EDRA) is a volunteer run local business and tourism group representing Cockatoo, Emerald, Gembrook, Menzies Creek and Upper Beaconsfield among others.

EDRA recently held a Q and A Business Breakfast at the Puffing Billy Lakeside Visitor Centre in Emerald to help business owners address the growing popularity of local spending and tourism.

Guest speakers included Puffing Billy chief executive officer Peter Abott, Mainstreet Australia urban planner Stephen Sully, Industry Capability Network's Andy Balmain and Cardinia Shire Council economy manager Andrew Pomeroy.

Attendees had the opportunity to network over a provided hot breakfast and put questions to the panellists.

With Casey and Cardinia shires about to see major growth over the next 20 years, residents will be looking to escape their homes and travel to popular destinations.

Mr Pomeroy said growth will occur around EDRA businesses, causing the popularity of retail and hospitality trade to boom.

"We're looking at the size of three Ballarat's joining us over the next 15 to 20 years living in homes with 420 square metre blocks and they'll want to get out of their houses and do things," Mr Pomeroy said.

"There's a large amount of people that will look for somewhere to go and EDRA is 20 minutes away."

Mr Balmain of Industry Capability Network explained how the agency works with the Victorian Government to engage local industry for construction and other projects and Mr Sully of Mainstreet Australia shared how the member based organisation advocates for the ongoing survival of main streets and town centres.

"Mainstreet works with state and local government to get those agencies to recognise the value of main streets and business associations as great partners to work with," Mr Sully said.

"We provide networking, professional development and advocacy and recently got the State Government to give money directly to business associations.

"There are 698 main streets across Victoria that employ upwards of 390,000 people so if they work collectively they're a major part of Victoria's economy."

Puffing Billy's Peter Abott discussed his plans to present new experiences to the public that will create a flow-on effect as rail passengers stop and spend at EDRA businesses.

"Our model is changing to encourage longer or overnight trips," Mr Abott said.

"Our focus is not just to grow passenger numbers but to have an economically sustainable railway for our workforce."



Puffing Billy chief executive officer Peter Abott, Cardinia Shire Council economy manager Andrew Pomeroy, Industry Capability Network's Andy Balmain and Mainstreet Australia urban planner Stephen Sully at the EDRA business breakfast.



Rosie Hopgood representing Cardinia Shire.



Gavin and Bec Millson of Emerald Ridge B&B with 3mdr broadcast journalist Judy Ann and producer Paul Dastey getting to know each other.

Our year in review

It was good to see twenty of our retail businesses collaborate in the 'Shop Local' May Madness Mid-year promotion that ran for a week from May 16 - May 22.

With more than 2 million small businesses in Australia, many of these are on our main streets and do an enormous amount for the community. Travel restrictions had been eased, and the promotion was to remind locals to keep supporting local business by shopping local.

1218 entries were tallied and the three prize winners each received vouchers to spend back at all participating stores.

DAY ONE

Shop Local

May Madness
Mid-year
promotion
May 16 - 22

Spend \$20 or more in-store at participating stores & fill out an entry form for your chance to win!

1st Prize \$500
2nd \$300 3rd \$200

In vouchers to spend within participating stores

Participating businesses

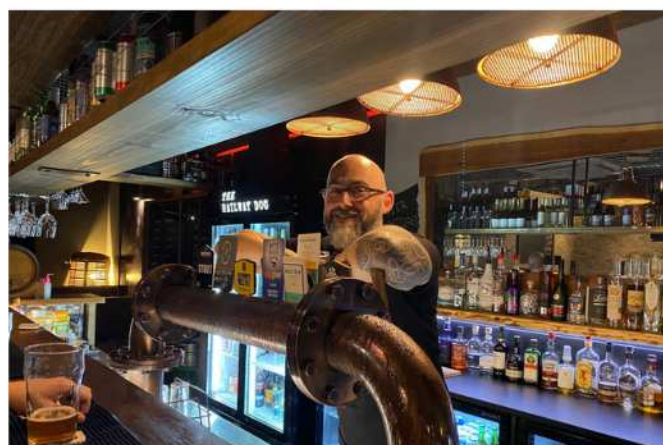
EMERALD - C-Me Uniforms, Your Local Pantry, Star of Emerald, Emerald Mitre 10, Laughing Fox Cafe, Incy Wincy Cafe, Behind the Trees, Tinkars Corner, Emerald Fruit Barn, Kiki & Finch, Emerald Village Pharmacy, Emerald Village Meats, The General Food Store.

AVONSLEIGH - Avonsleigh General Store, BAM BAM Italian

GEMBROOK - Hairy Dog Cafe, CK Elements

UPPER BEACONSFIELD - Pine Grove Hotel, Upper Beaconsfield General Store, Over the Road Cafe

We rolled out our Meet the Trader program at the end of June. The program is designed to help members leverage their business, products & services to attract new customers and network with other business members. The events, run monthly, are co-hosted and promoted by EDRA and the business member and are captured as a blog featured on the home page of easterndandenongranges.com.au.



Finance Report

It was certainly a busy year as Treasurer completing 347 transactions for the Association and including financial auspice for Ignite Youth Festival, Woorilla Poetry Prize, Hills Arts Alliance & PAVE/Funfest.

We commenced the year with \$12049.20 in surplus, \$8,000 of this was Ignite Youth Festival funding carried over from the last reporting period and was fully expended in the month of July.

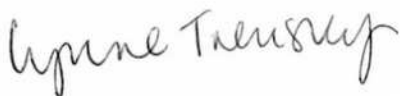
EDRA had a total income of \$85,708.79 for the year, comprising \$42,000 we received in grants and funding and \$16,000 in grant funding EDRA is auspicating for the Hills Arts Alliance, Funfest and Woorilla. Other income amounted to \$21,677.51 including \$5,724 in BAS refunds accumulated over the last 8 years, \$7,750.43 Woorilla entries and \$5,825.56 PAVE & Funfest tickets and stallholders.

Our total combined income for the year was \$97757.99.

EDRA had expenses of \$65,927.08 for the reporting period. \$30,451.65 in expenses were auspice payments. Contractor expenses of \$11,608 paid to the Diversity Group were made available through the DJPR grant & \$6,165.18 in Members Events expenses included both Christmas events for EDRA members, Shop Local promotion & Q & A business breakfast.

EDRA had a closing balance of \$31,830.91CR as of the 30th June 2022 and note \$6,883.21 is remaining funding being held for Woorilla, PAVE/Funfest & Hills Arts Alliance (\$2,047.85 Woorilla, \$1,835.36 PAVE/Funfest funding and \$3,000 Hills Arts Alliance).

This leaves an actual EDRA operating balance of \$24,947.70CR as of the 30th June 2022.



Lynne Trenskey
EDRA Treasurer

EDRA Financial Statement 1/7/21 – 30/6/22
 ABN 529 287 764 93

Opening Balance as at 1/7/2021	12,049.20 CR
INCOME	
Membership	4,808.63
May Business Breakfast	1,222.65
Stronger Communities Grant	11,000.00
Dept Jobs, Precincts & Regions Grant	20,000.00
Cardinia Council Support Funding	10,000.00
Cardinia Council Christmas Grant	1,000.00
Subtotal	48031.28
AUSPICE INCOME	
Cardinia Council Hills Arts Alliance Grant (Auspice)	5,000.00
Cardinia Shire Funfest (Auspice)	10,000.00
Cardinia Shire Woorilla Grant (Auspice)	1,000.00
Subtotal	16,000.00
OTHER INCOME	
Woorilla (Auspice)	7,750.43
Yarra Ranges Tourism Refund	145.68
Etsy Christmas Decorations Refund	271.81
Printflex Christmas Selfie Prop Refund	781.09
TryBooking Members Christmas Event	975.98
PAVE/Funfest	5825.56
Reimbursements	202.96
ATO Bas Refund	5724.00
Subtotal	21677.51
INCOME TOTAL	97757.99
EXPENSES	
Auspice Expenses	
- Ignite Festival	8000.00
- Worilla	6702.15
- PAVE/Funfest	13749.50
- Hills Arts Alliance	2000.00
Insurance	2131.37
Accounting Fees	800.00
Bank Fees/Consumer Affairs	96.10
Meeting Expenses	1415.34
Stationery	357.96
Printing	1180.23
Postage	144.00
Phone/Mobile	440.00
Contractors	
- Member M'ment	1528.37
- Diversity Group (web develop/training)	11608.00
Members Events	6165.18
Memberships	490.00
Website/IT	805.48
Subscriptions	1548.62
Training	27.00
Promotions/F'Book/Google	1979.24
- Xmas Decorations/Santa	2308.53
- Casey Cardinia Magazine article/ad	1210.00
- Star News Group	770.00
Other	470.01
EXPENSES TOTAL	65927.08
CLOSING BALANCE as at 30/6/22	31830.91 CR