

Women Who Mean Business

www.wwmb.org.au

...Selling Gippsland's Finest

Project Newsletter : Summer Edition : 2005



Message from Mary

Christmas Message from Mary Salce

WwMB project management committee co-ordinator

Thank you to the project officers and all the women who have worked to bring the projects to fruition across Gippsland throughout the past two years.

I thank all the people who have participated in the projects and encourage and invite you all to come together and celebrate these wonderful achievements at our end-of-year breakup at Sale on December 12 (see back page for details). This will be a great chance to relax and enjoy companionship.

Looking ahead to 2006, we are busily preparing for our Showcase, Marketing and Business Forum, to be held at Sale on February 17 and 18.

This will really be the climax of more than two years' of work by women throughout Gippsland.

Our project has been an amazing journey with more than 750 women participating in 45 skills training workshops. As well, more than 200 women, plus many volunteers, have taken part in the community projects.

Omeo-Swifts Creek, Yarram and Maffra-Stratford have completed their community projects while Latrobe Valley, Warragul, Orbost and Buchan are well on the way to fulfilling their dreams.

Our Forum at Sale in February will bring us into the final stage of this hugely fulfilling project. I look forward to seeing you there and, meanwhile...

Best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year!



Mary Salce has been travelling from one corner of Gippsland to another through the year to offer encourage and guidance to the project officers and their teams. She is an inspirational, resilient and resourceful leader.



Warragul women believe their town must be in the running to claim the title of Bollard Capital of Victoria. They have found out that it's best to whisper the word "BOLLARD" to others because when they advertised for the community to come paint them the phone ran hot. Some of the many helpers are pictured here. Everyone wants to make their mark on a bollard. This is wonderful. This is what community strengthening is all about. More inside...

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Yarram's festival a huge success

The Yarram project committee has been enjoying a well-earned rest after its very successful "Spring into Art" festival over the Melbourne Cup long weekend in November.

The festival followed hot on the heels of several other successful projects, the "Back to Back" international wool challenge and two art exhibitions organised by the Omeo-Swifts Creek project committee, and the launch of Maffra-Stratford's "Garden for Humanity".

The queen of Australian musical theatre, Marina Prior, was a major drawcard at Yarram, with 300 people filling the town's Regent Theatre on the Saturday night to hear her sing.

Marina not only sang on stage: she moved among the audience, much to everyone's delight.

All in all, the vibrant Marina set the pace for a weekend of memories to last a lifetime.

The five day festival was officially opened by Jill Gael in front of 80 people at the Courthouse Gallery on the Friday night.

Jill, from South Australia, has become well-

known throughout Gippsland as an events' workshop facilitator. She was the ideal person to open the festival as it was one of her workshops which inspired the Yarram women to take the plunge and organise the event.

It was 13 months of hard work but project co-ordinator Tina Hambleton said the weekend was one that the Yarram and district people would talk about for quite some time.

On the Sunday, more than 400 people headed to Port Albert for a Snapper Fest where their appetites were enticed by a range of seafoods. A community market and art displays throughout the district added to the variety of entertainment on the day.

Other activities organised for the festival included garden visits, "Art in the Park", barbecues, a scarecrow competition and book launch.

Tina extends her appreciation to other members on the festival committee, including Jan Jess, Lyn Willmott, Julie Brandsma-Mark, Fay Reeve, Lisa Grassby, Cheryl Kane and Helen Durkin.



Showcase Forum at Sale in February

Women who Mean Business will hold a showcase, marketing and business forum at Sale in February 2006.

The big event will take place on February 17 and 18 at the Wellington Entertainment Centre, 100 Foster Street, Sale. (See details and registration form in centre of this newsletter).

As part of this weekend of celebrations 'showcasing Gippsland women' and the outcomes of the WwMB project an art exhibition will be held in the foyer of the Wellington Entertainment Centre.

An invitation is extended to artists who have been involved with the WwMB projects,

held across Gippsland, to participate in this exhibition.

"This will be a wonderful opportunity for artists to present their work to a huge audience," said Eileen Thurgood, exhibition coordinator.

"Gippsland has a large resident arts community but until you bring together an exhibition like this that you don't truly appreciate the quality and diversity of their work."

Works do not have to be created specifically for this exhibition but it would add to the concept of the forum if the work related to women, local community or social comment, rural life or the Gippsland landscape.

Every endeavour will be made to show all works submitted for exhibition but in the event of more works being offered than can be accommodated an independent arts practitioner will be invited to select works for exhibition.

Artists associated with the WwMB projects and interested in showing their work should contact Eileen on 5153 1988 for exhibition details, guidelines and a registration to participate form (which must be completed and returned to EGAG, 2 Nicholson Street, Bairnsdale before January 2).

Late entries, or entries not registered, will not be considered for exhibition.

Report from our Project Evaluator

Hello Everyone,

I can't express how much of a privilege it has been to go around the projects and see what has been or is being done. The women have been so warm and generous in talking about their projects, which for some, were still in the process of the being finalised.

I've spoken with women from projects in Buchan, Omeo/Swifts Creek, Orbost, Morwell, Stratford/Maffra and Warragul and have spoken with four project workers.

Overall, people have found the projects and the networks and friends they've made, very worthwhile and valuable. The workshops were almost universally praised and women

have commented on the importance of consolidating as well as building their skills, their building of confidence and how wonderful it has been working together.

Generally what people have found difficult have been; the short-ish timeframes to undertake the workshops and complete the project: a lack of understanding of structure and roles of the WwMB project management committee and relationships to the projects; and the under-resourcing of time for the project worker.

Nearly all of the projects have plans for continuing past the finalisation date with WwMB and in fact, most relish the opportunity

to keep going, while some other members of the groups are pulling on the reins, saying, 'Woeee, there. Let's get this finished first!' But they too are looking to the future.

I also will interview members of the project management committee and have already spoken with one.

Thanks again everyone for your warmth, willingness and openness.

Cheers
Jenny O'Neill
Project Evaluator

Around the traps

Maffra/Stratford – Beth Ripper

A Healing Garden indeed! What a fabulous day we had on October 1 at the opening of the Garden for Humanity in Stratford.

Wonderful food stalls, craft, live music from the fiddle orchestra, sculpture making activity, wine, information stalls and Amnesty International banner, making stall and foot and hand massages. All this and more.

Many thanks to the school communities of Airly, Meerlieu, Bairnsdale Steiner school and St Patrick's, Stratford, for supporting the event as well as all the women who displayed their wares for sale.

The garden looked a treat as the sculptures are all in place – just a few casualties in the last clay story plaques that were fired but we managed to get a printed versions of the stories there in their place as a temporary measure.

The welcome to country by Sandra Neilson, on behalf of the traditional elders, was followed by an introduction to Joan Kirner by Cr Charles McCubbin – a self confessed environmental lobbyist of Joan Kirner.

Joan opened the garden and spoke passionately about the importance of strength in women and in community as well making reference to the value of community partnerships. Many Landcare members were present as were representatives from the Stratford Historical Society.

The day ended with some energised and able assistance in packing up then, with the assistance of an officer from Sale traffic police, a small group of riders were escorted over the bridge, under the railway viaduct and to the start of the Maffra Stratford Rail Trail.

Thanks to Roger Woolsten and Hilda Rhodes we made it to Maffra just after the Rail trail opening.

We were just in time to help the Greening Australia and community team to plant some trees on the site.

The fame of Garden for Humanity lives on the many references made to it by Joan Kirner in nationwide events since the opening!

Latrobe Valley - Michelle Tisdale

The Latrobe Valley and Mountain Rivers Project is near the final leg of its journey.

The book is in the editor's hands for its copy edit before proceeding to the graphic artists to be laid out before publishing. The cover design in currently in the hands of the Warragul girls.

We have had time up our sleeves as we waited for the legal agreements to arrive and so have

been having working bees among the group.

These have included clearing bush before the fire season begins, propagating plants for our local gardens, and networking with other groups, sharing our knowledge and encouraging their pursuits.

We have been attending the event of the other groups to pick up hints on how to design our launch which from our side have been very enjoyable. We have met several interesting people and filled in a mountain of paperwork. We have finally found an insurance that will cover our groups' needs in to the future.

The Women who Mean Business Latrobe Valley Inc have spread their wings into the creative endeavor of belly dancing, supplying local artists with much needed raw materials and generally having fun along the way. We look forward to putting together a book launch where we can all come together to celebrate. Maya has been working on our diary to present at the forum in February.

We undertook the painful process of choosing the recipes to be included in the book. We struggled over the wonderful recipes we needed to cut because of the space. We met and spoke with Meredith Fletcher from the department of Gippsland studies at Monash University, before picking up some great photos from Dan Clancy. Meredith has had a great deal of experience in biographies and auto biographies as well as local histories.

We also had fun with Jenny O'Neill at our project evaluation meeting. This turned out to be a great debriefing exercise and allowed all members to voice their concerns and frustrations to improve the group process for the future. We held our meeting at the Latrobe Regional Gallery so it was wonderful to catch up with their newest displays.

Two members of the working group learnt how to burn information on to CDs for the book as nothing else was large enough to contain the data. We wait eagerly for our launch date so that we can let you all in on the party.

Warragul - Patricia Clynes

There has been a great deal of progress in the past three months.

We received a \$4000 grant from the Baw Baw

Shire for Women's Compass Network, who will continue on when the WwMB Project draws to a close.

Our seats are likely to be completed with the help of a Warragul group called The Men's Shed, who work for the community in many ways.

We decided to bring forward our plan to decorate and install bollards along our local walking trail to replace the seats. The shire council gave us 14 small bollards which we decided to use at a later time when we will make families, adding two larger ones.

We have found out that it's best to whisper the word "BOLLARD" to others as once we advertised for the community to come paint them the phone ran hot. Our first 20 had people's names against the list almost immediately, and we were working flat out to prepare them for the painting.

Ingrid's phone kept ringing, the list of volunteers grew longer and she became quite concerned about the evergrowing excitement. We were running out of bollards, so it was decided to buy another 10 and once again we were busy preparing these.

The word kept travelling, though, so we decided to buy another 10 in order to involve as many women as possible, and call it quits for now at 40. It is now suggested that Warragul is the Bollard Capital.

We thank Janiene Ayre, Baw Baw Shire events and culture manager, and Kerry Irwin the new recreation officer.

The group had a meeting with them recently and at the end of our time we were asked to do a mud map of our planned installations for the next three years.

This involved some members once again getting together to add Tesserae and bollards and our compass to plans for the seats. We added some seats to go into Brooker Park in 2006, 2007. We thank all in the shire who will in some way help to put our works along the trail.

We look forward to our Tesserae being put along the trail, and know when we get back to doing the compass we have people eagerly waiting to help, not only those from our mosaic workshops but newcomers as well.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL.



Maya Fraser with Domenic Germano, who attends St Vincent's Primary School in Morwell. Domenic's art work has been selected for inclusion in the Latrobe Valley book.



Yvonne gets into the swing of things with her bollard preparation at Warragul.

Sowing the seeds for Maffra's "Garden of Humanity"



Jane



Mary



Michelle and Deb

Omeo -Deb Milligan

The Celebrating our Connections! exhibition at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre in Melbourne was a wonderful success with more than 80 people coming to help us celebrate the opening October 14, and many more viewing the works over the month that it was on show.

The artworks looked great and were a stunning example of the skills and talents that are found in such abundance among the women of Gippsland.

In the exhibition the artists explored their relationships with their land, their culture and their community through a range of materials including baling twine, felt, ceramics, photography and paint. They expressed their personal connection with great creativity and, as a result, the exhibition was a great way to show city people a sample of the diversity and beauty of the High Country.

Many thanks are due. Firstly to all the artists who shared their vision with us: thank you and congratulations. It was a privilege to gain an insight into the forces that move and inspire you.

Special thanks go to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Victorian Communities, John Thwaites for opening the exhibition. Mr Thwaites' ongoing commitment to the Women who Mean Business Project is greatly appreciated.

Special thanks also to two very talented women, Genevieve Fitzgerald for your wonderful singing and Louise Crisp for your insightful poetry: you both helped make the launch a special occasion.

I am also grateful to Deb Bye for being such a masterful Mistress of Ceremonies, Kate Earle for being a quiet, practical helper in the background, Anne and Deirdre Milligan for letting us borrow your furniture to use as plinths, Deirdre Jack and her wonderful husband Tom who helped install the exhibition (your patience was admirable, Tom!), Penny Carruthers for dismantling it, and Val Bythe for patiently helping with the 'fiddly bits'. Thanks also go to Phillipa and Beverley from the Queen Victoria Women's Centre for all your assistance: you have been very generous.

And, of course, a special and heartfelt thank you to Margo Northey and all the people at the Rural Women's Network for your help and support. We couldn't have done it without you.

It is timely also to give credit to all the participants in the Omeo/Swifts Creek working group who have worked tirelessly throughout the entire project. Everyone involved has generously shared their skills, time and resources in order to benefit their communities and take care of each other - it is a wonderful thing. Particular mention must go to Deirdre Jack, Maureen Webb, Annie Richardson and Kate Leggett who held it together through thick and thin, from start to finish, and were a great support to me personally.

I would also like to recognise the amazing women on the project management committee who originally had the dream all those years ago and have worked tirelessly, supporting the project workers and participants to bring it all to fruition - Mary Salce, Eileen Thurgood, Di Deppeler and Jo McCubbin - all women of commitment and vision.

When I look at the depth and breadth of all the projects coming to fruition right now across Gippsland I celebrate my own connection to such a strong and vibrant community.

Orbost Project - Kate Earle

The Orbost Project got off to a slow start due to the number of government bodies, community groups and individuals we had to consult.

Everyone in the group was pleased with the way the mosaic tiles turned out. The 13 tiles depict the first settlers of the area. All the cutting and aching backs had paid off. The next stage was to get them in the path!

Much deliberation went on about what colour the cement should be, if indeed, it needed to be coloured! This was Jill Gael and Belinda Brennan's workshops in action! Compromise and consensus ensued and we all waited with baited breath to see how it would turn out. The results speak for themselves. We were all happy and so were the locals and visitors who commented on it.

Seeing our plan taking shape on the ground has given us added incentive and energy for our working bees to clear the area and plant our native plants and do our water feature. We are all looking forward to our sculpture workshop later this month where we will learn new skills and add to the attraction of our Magical Community Path.

We are also looking forward to including the local kinder and schools in completing the pathway with their interpretation of native fauna and flora on mosaic tiles.

We hope to launch in late December but this will depend on local elections. The East Gippsland Shire Council has been very supportive of the project and has contributed a great deal and we would like the council to be involved in the launch.

There is still plenty of work to do and if anyone in the community would like to join us they are more than welcome to do so.

We meet as a group every Tuesday 10am to noon at the site. Come for a short while or stay as long as you like. The more the merrier!

We are happy with what we have done so far. At the moment we are clearing the area for planting and putting in our water feature in the top corner.

We will finish the path with rock dust and have 21 mosaic circles that we will help the local schools and kinder to complete - three each - one of their school motto, one of their crest and one of local fauna and/or flora.

Omeo/Swifts Creek takes its art to the City



BACKGROUND

Over the past two years, the Women Who Mean Business project has presented an exciting opportunity for women of all ages, economic and cultural backgrounds to come together from all over Gippsland to develop talents in leadership, business and the arts.

It has helped them to participate in skills development training and to develop their own community project in each of eight areas. Over 800 participants have contributed to 50 skills training workshops and more than 200 have been directly involved in the community projects.

Throughout the program the women have engaged with State government, local governments, businesses and other community groups that have contributed to the development of their projects.

Progress on the projects has been shared with the community by the WwMB quarterly newsletter and the website. The media has also responded with over 170 articles and stories being told through print, radio & television.

All the projects have benefited from the interest and support of so many people and local businesses who have been generous with time and support in many ways.

The projects have provided networking opportunities for women in Gippsland as a means of information sharing, collaboration and friendship. This has provided an avenue for greater involvement of women in promoting the unique and important tourism potential of so much of Gippsland.

Now, in the last stages of the WwMB project, the eight working groups are gaining skills on how to market their products, their community and the Gippsland region.

Without the financial and strategic support of the Victorian Government, Community Support Fund the projects and the outcomes could not have been achieved.

An Art Exhibition with items for sale by artists involved with the WwMB Project will be held at the venue over the two days.

For further information contact:
Eileen Thurgood East Gippsland Art Gallery,
Bairnsdale Ph: 5153 1988 Email: ANEG@a1.com.au

An Art & Craft Market by participants involved with the WwMB project will be held from 5-7 pm on Friday, at the Wellington Entertainment Centre Expressions of interest close 28th January 06.

For further information contact:
Beth Ripper
Ph. 5145 6094 Mob: 0427 456 094
director@stratfordshakespeare.com.au

WOMEN WHO MEAN BUSINESS Showcase, Marketing & Business Forum

For Bookings Phone (03) 5143 3200

For more information visit
www.wwmb.org.au



Arts Network East Gippsland Inc
Supported by Wellington Shire through the Venue Assistance Scheme

Women who Mean Business

... selling Gippsland's Finest

Invite you to a

SHOWCASE, MARKETING & BUSINESS FORUM

17 & 18 FEBRUARY 2006



At The Esso BHP Billiton Wellington
Entertainment Centre

100 Foster Street, Sale
Phone: (03) 5143 3200

Friday 17th Feb

8.30 am	Registration
9:30 am	Welcome & Introduction
10.00 am	Background to the WWMB project Presentation from 8 project groups <i>Buchan, Latrobe Valley, Leongatha, Maffra / Stratford, Orbest, Omeo/Swift Ck</i>
11:00 am	Break for Morning Tea
11:30 am	<i>Warragul, Yarram</i>
	Project Outcomes
12.00 pm	Keynote Speaker
12:30 pm	Break for Lunch
1:30 pm	Workshops
	Getting Started With Websites – <i>Owen Polanski</i>
	Demystifying Digital Cameras the Easy Way – <i>Daniel Jenkins</i>
	Tools for Business and Life – <i>Hilda Rhodes</i>
	Investing in the Share Market – <i>Helen Breier</i>
3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea

Friday Night

5:00 pm	Art & Craft Market
7.00 pm	Celebration and Entertainment with Food

Saturday 18th Feb

9.30am	Morning Session Forum – Marketing: Yourself – <i>Jill Gael</i> Your Products – <i>Sophie O’Neill</i> Your Business – <i>Linda Bertoli</i> – TBC Your Region – <i>Dr.Sharron Dickman</i>
11.00 am	Morning Tea
11.30 am	Marketing Session cont- Discussion
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30 pm	Afternoon Session Pathways to Financial Security – <i>Susan Jackson</i>
3.30pm	Close and Afternoon Tea

Jill Gael, motivating, funny, engrossing presenter who loves working with people. She uses her life stories to punctuate the input sessions, draws on the skills and knowledge of participants and empowers people to set their expectations high then to just "go for it". Jill Gael is co-founder of the Centre For People Development.

Sophie O'Neill, is a specialist in food marketing. She has looked after the marketing at GreenGrocer.com.au and started up and manages the farmers' market in Pakenham. Sophie is also working with Cardinia and Baw Baw Shire Council on the Gateway to Gippsland Food & Wine development.

Susan Jackson, founder and Executive Director of the Women's Financial Network. A Licensed Financial Planner, Susan has been helping women take control of their finances for over 16 years. She is the author of The Women's Guide To Property, The investment Club Start Up Guide and Why Saving Is Like Dieting and Budget's Don't Work.

Daniel Jenkins is well established as a photographer, filmmaker and teacher. Daniel is a fourth generation image maker. As a teacher for some 16 years at Melbourne University and the Victorian College of the Arts in design, media and imaging, he has an information delivery which sees no boundaries, that is, he gives it all away and holds nothing precious from his audience.

Hilda Rhodes, Shirlaws Business Coach. Following a successful but often frustrating corporate career in the UK, Hilda decided to look for a way of making a difference in the business world. In 2003, she met Australian, Darren Shirlaw whose ambition was to introduce a completely new approach to working with businesses to achieve their outcomes. Shirlaws tools and methods can also make a real difference when applied to your personal life

Dr Sharron Dickman, has extensive experience in arts marketing, public relations, market research and education. She is general manager of Pathfinder Marketing, a specialist consultancy company focusing on marketing, planning & analysis for the arts, cultural tourism and the hospitality industry. Sharron and her husband operate a Bed and Breakfast and Tearoom at Balliang, near Geelong.

Owen Polanski has lived and breathed the VICNET Roadshow over the past five years facilitating the development of diverse online communities across Victoria. As a former business manager he is able to deliver a broad spectrum of ideas, solutions and clear explanations to anyone embarking down the e-commerce path.

Linda Bertoli is Sage Technology's Managing Director and one of the founding partners of the company. Lynda combines considerable experience in the information technology sector with expertise in business and people management. Strongly client-focused, she has overseen the growth and development of the company from its origin as a small two-person business based in the Latrobe Valley to the largest computer consultancy in regional Victoria

Helen Breier has been active in the share broking industry for two decades including seven years as manager of education at the Australian Stock Exchange. She has been a senior advisor with major broking houses including Tolhurst Noall, Deutsche and is currently an adviser at FW Holst. She is an experienced and lively speaker who enjoys presenting to both experienced and novice investors.

Registrations close **10 February 2006** Cost includes catering

Name: _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____ P/C: _____

Fax: _____

Occupation/Project: _____

Email: _____

Special Dietary Requirements: _____

☐ Friday Afternoon Workshop **Select ONE workshop only**

☐ *Workshop 1 - Introduction to websites*

☐ *Workshop 2 - Demystifying Digital Cameras The Easy Way*

☐ *Workshop 3 -Tools for Business and Life*

☐ *Workshop 4 -Investing in the Share Market*

Select **one** of the attendance options and Amount to pay below:
(please use *one form per person*)

☐ Friday Only - **\$30** ☐ Saturday Only - **\$40** (includes workbook)

☐ Evening Celebration Dinner only - **\$25** (drinks extra)

Total Amount to Pay \$.....

☐ I have enclosed a cheque for the amount selected -
or -

☐ Please Charge my Credit Card the amount selected

☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex ☐ Visa ☐ Bankcard ☐ Diners

Name on Card: _____

Expiry Date: _____ / _____

Number: _____

CVV Number: _____ (last 3 numbers on printed on signature strip of your card)

Signature: _____

Cheques payable to:

Eso BHP Billiton Wellington Entertainment Centre

Mail with Registration form to:

100 Foster Street, Sale 3850 or call 5143 3200

Yarram hits high note with festival

Kate Earle describes her visit to Yarram for the "Spring into Art" festival organised over Melbourne Cup weekend by the Yarram WwMB project committee:

I had passed through Yarram once or twice before in the time since I arrived in this country and thought what a picturesque town it was. It also struck me as a very quiet town where on the surface it looked as though not much happened.

This thought sprung to mind as I arrived for the 'Spring into Art Festival' organised by the 'Women Who Mean Business' Project Worker, Tina and her hardworking group.

Colourful signs were placed all around the town informing locals and visitors alike of a myriad of activities for the weekend. There was craft in the park, a book launch, art galleries displaying paintings, flower displays,

jewellery, pottery, hand made handbags, soap, cards and numerous other items for sale at a number of delightful venues.

The highlight of the weekend, of course, was the evening with Marina Prior. The town was abuzz, the air was electric with anticipation. All turned out in their finery and you could be forgiven for thinking you were at the Arts Centre in Melbourne with the atmosphere and well dressed audience. She did not



The flower arrangements were outstanding and all added to the atmosphere. The food kept coming, each course tastier than the one before. A delight for one's taste buds. The desserts were exquisite and artwork in themselves. What a treasure Yarram has in this chef! These things do not just happen.

The attention to detail was excellent and it was obvious that Tina and her team had spent a great deal of time planning the 'Spring into Art Festival' and what a coup they pulled off!

The brochure advertising the weekend was eye-catching and informative and listed a weekend not to be missed.

Indeed this was the case and locals and visitors alike are looking forward to next year, however, how they can top this event will be interesting to see!



disappoint! What a fantastic evening – very intimate and entertaining. Marina moved around the audience seated at tables with comfort and ease, to the delight of all who attended. She also sang with her husband and he performed a tap dance.

The theatre was beautifully decorated and the table settings set off the décor beautifully.



Buchan Gallery Open for Business

Buchan Gallery opened its doors to the public at midday on Saturday, October 29.

This was not the official launch but an opportunity for the group to 'dip their toe in the water' and iron out any glitches before the official launch which will hopefully occur over the Christmas holidays.

They had 30 to 40 people through the door. At this stage no paintings are hung but there is a wide variety of goods for sale including jewellery, hand silk cards, jams, sauces, ceramics, soaps, woodwork and applique.

The Gallery is open on Tuesdays, Thursday, Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 4pm except Christmas Day. Other times will be by arrangement.

The group is delighted with the number of volunteers they have and the local interest in the Gallery.

The group will circulate information to tourist operators to let them know of the facility.



Sue, Ev and Liam

Omeo Gems

Quotes from Omeo participants explaining their involvement in their Celebrating our Connections! exhibition at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre in Melbourne:

It is about connecting us to each other, connecting us to our land and opening out to other people. It is about sharing our riches.

Deirdre Jack

The ever-changing colours and shapes of the high country and the natural events such as fire, snow and sunsets / rises are a constant source of inspiration to me - painting onto silk is like the environment I live in: vibrant, fluid with unexpected events and results.

Ann Bingham

My children live in a beautiful part of the world and their play reflects why we choose to live here. The connection with the land is strong and gives us as a family much joy. I feel a desire to record some of the special times so I will never forget them.

Anne Richardson

Profiles...

Ruth carves a meaningful life in the bush

Ruth Hanson shares her journey, and love of timber:

I have lived in East Gippsland for the past 20 years with my husband Morgan and young family who are now grown up: Sarah who lives in South Australia and is an Amnesty International campaign co-ordinator; my son Owen who works with Morgan in the wood business and Zoe who is still in primary school.

We moved to the area full of hope and determination. We moved to a remote farm in a forested area that was an hour's drive north of Orbost and about 20 minutes from the smaller community of Goongerah. Our closest neighbours were 10 kms away.

We were very naive about the workload we had undertaken, but we were sure that we could cope with any challenges that lay ahead. The property was 40 hectares, half was cleared, the rest was bush. We had no house, no electricity and no workable fences. We arrived with our tents, chainsaw, our old Land Rover and \$700 cash, with which we bought a water tank and a pump.

We decided to go into the woodwork business. Our environment had quickly educated us about the beauty and usefulness of East Gippsland timbers. We had to learn about the trees surrounding us in order to use them to their full potential. We were amazed by their versatility.

In 1985 I enrolled in a part time TAFE course one weekend a month in Orbost. This course turned into an associate diploma in wood design. I think I worked at it for six years



Ruth Hanson has shown amazing resourcefulness living in far East Gippsland.

but did not complete it. The course was moved to Bairnsdale, which proved to be an unworkable situation for me, and shortly afterwards the course stopped. However, the stimulation gained from the TAFE College had been invaluable, and enabled me to connect with other "woodies" once a month.

I am very interested in community development with true sustainable outcomes. As a result of this I have been actively involved in numerous community projects including the mosaic path for Uniting Our Rural Communities.

I was a founding member of the Women of

the Snowy River as a result of this project and myself and other members of the group also produced the Ceremonial Handover Bowl for the Agricultural Rural Women's International Conference. We then produced the Snowy River Floodmarker which depicts the six highest floods since the first recording.

I was also a founding member of Wood Inc. and initiated the Australian Wood Design Exhibition 14 years ago. This exhibition is now housed in our purpose built Orbost Exhibition Centre which we campaigned for and fund raised to come to fruition after seven long years.

I have been a teacher for many years of wood carving and I am interested in and continue sharing my knowledge with other community members in all facets of community capacity building.

I recently completed a graduate certificate in regional community development at Monash University. I work with 'at risk' youth, building their self esteem and skill base through creative projects such as furniture and mosaic tables working mainly through their personal interests and building on their skills.

I am also passionate about making the most of our precious natural resources of timber and water while empowering our grassroots communities through creative problem solving so that our community can flourish in a more harmonious setting.

I love my life and work, particularly the creative bits, and I really love creating with others.

Details: info@orbostexhibitioncentre.org



Out and About...



Profiles...

Hilda brings skills from corporate life in England

Hilda Rhodes shares her journey:

Getting away from the south east of England with all the millions of people living there, had become a priority for my husband Ray and myself.

Ray had wanted to immigrate to Australia in the mid-eighties but with my parents still alive at that time and living in Scotland and having just embarked on a promising career with Barclays Bank, I wasn't ready to make the move.

My career with Barclays was successful and I ended up as head of IT and programme management for a division of Barclays.

However I discovered that life at the top of the corporate management world was not really where I wanted to be, so I decided to look for an alternative career doing what I loved but which was flexible enough to allow me to work part-time.

I did some research, trained as an executive coach and qualified as an accredited mediator with Regents College London. It was around this time that Ray decided he also had had enough of corporate life. Then my best friend broke the news that she and her Australian husband were moving to Queensland. I went home and suggested to Ray that a move to Australia might be the change of environment that we both needed. A few calculations later and a check on what the requirements were for a retirement visa for Australia and the decision was made.



Hilda and Ray Rhodes: Hilda will be a speaker at the Forum at Sale in February.

It took us about 18 months to sell our houses (we had two) and sort out all our affairs. During this time I was introduced to Shirlaws, an Australian business coaching company which was just starting up in the UK and suddenly, I had found what I really wanted to do.

We arrived in Melbourne last August and fairly quickly decided that we wanted to live in Gippsland. We bought a lovely house in Maffra with great views of the mountains and lots of

garden for our dogs. Everyone, particularly our good friends Jim and Heather Phillipson made us feel very welcome.

Ray had decided that he really wanted to retire and Maffra provides the ideal environment for his passion of bike riding and lots of other outdoor activities.

I wanted to meet new people and see if I could do some business coaching. Our visa allows me to work part-time.

Heather mentioned my aspirations to her sister Beth Ripper who invited me along to the Maffra /Stratford Sculpture Garden Project.

At my first WwMB meeting, Beth volunteered to take over the project officer's role from Deb Milligan. With my business background, it seemed only natural to offer to support Beth in that role.

Beth's energy and determination to make things happen have provided the momentum to make the Sculpture Garden happen. Amanda Goodge's creative talent, coupled with practical ideas and perseverance have also been inspirational.

Many others have and will be involved with this project but for me, working with and supporting these two women with their unique and special qualities has been an enlightening experience.

I now wonder why I waited 20 years to make the move.

Lerida brings dance wear to the country

Lerida Watt describes how her passion for dance motivated her to open a dance wear shop in Leongatha:

A sea change resulted in a different lifestyle in South Gippsland and allowed precious time to reflect on the opportunities awaiting her, when Lerida Watt relocated from Melbourne to Venus Bay in February 2004.

A former dancer, who performed with companies in Australia and overseas, Lerida opened a retail shop, wear2dance, last year. Shortly after moving to South Gippsland she started working with the Lisa Pellin Dancers in Leongatha as a part-time administrator and quickly realised there was a need for a dance wear outlet in the area.

People had been travelling great distances to source these things before and after opening the shop in Leongatha it meant, for many people, being able to save both time and money by buying locally.

Some years ago, when I was considering starting my own business, a financial planner



Lerida Watt is continuing her passion for dance at Leongatha by opening a dance wear shop.

advised me that the most successful businesses are those that have developed from a hobby or passionate interest. At that time I was considering doing something quite different

but I realise now how true those words of advice were.

You must really enjoy what you are doing and I feel people have confidence in me because of my long involvement and expertise in dance.

The focus, discipline and work ethic instilled in me during my dance training had prepared me for whatever challenges lay ahead and my former position in Melbourne, as Registrar of the National Theatre Ballet School, provided me with the knowledge of suppliers and contacts in setting up the shop.

The importance of timing, background knowledge, passion or belief in what you do and the need to create a niche for yourself is critical.

Happily all these things came together for me and resulted in wear2dance. With my partner Bert I have recently taken up residence in Leongatha to be closer to my shop and I am looking forward to providing a more extensive range of dance, active and leisure wear in the future as the business grows.

Profiles...

Website an outlet for Gippsland artistic talent

Ingrid Thomas wondered if there was life after raising a family and a teaching career:

After a lifetime of bringing up a family and teaching, not having a regular job was a daunting prospect. I wanted to take up with my artwork again, having put it on hold for a decade.

I had been down the track of carting my paintings to and from artshows around the country, but now I didn't even know which art-shows were on.

During an inspirational week of painting at one of my favourite spots, Wilsons Promontory, I thought about ways of more easily showing my works. The internet seemed such a natural step, particularly as "he who pays the bills now" works in interactive web design.

With the aim of promoting artists I have set up the Gippsland Artists Website (<http://gippslandartists.com>). It should provide a focus for both artists and art lovers.

It works by giving the artists their own free web-page or a link to their existing webpage.

All artists are listed as well as notices about their, and others, up-coming exhibitions.

A similar approach is being developed for Art Galleries and Studios through out Gippsland.

Geoff, who does the behind the scenes work, has been very supportive of my project. I do however need to wait until he has the time to do additional work.

Ingrid Thomas has identified a need and created a website for Gippsland artists to promote thier work.



It has been a gratifying experience getting to know artists around Gippsland and putting together their web-pages. I had no idea of the breadth of talent in Gippsland.

I am presently working towards having an exhibition of Gippsland Artists that will feature a display of current works that are also on their websites.

Artists need only provide me with about five images of their work (either small digital images via email or photos by post) and some biographical material so I can prepare for them a basic web-page.

When they become 'members' of Gippsland Artists they can advertise their exhibitions on-line or participate in Gippsland Artist exhibitions. Artists wishing to be a "Featured Artist" pays a small annual fee, but otherwise no other costs are involved.

I have found that being involved with Women who Mean business has been very beneficial, in learning networking, communications and project management. I am only sorry I was not part of the project earlier to have learnt more the workshops that were offered.

Details: <http://gippslandartists.com>

Leona wants to keep old art and craft skills alive



Leona Lavell, of Buchan, shares her life experiences:

My name is Leona Lavell, my home is in Buchan

Valley beside the river. I went to the initial meeting for WwMB as I have been interested in art and craft and also the promotion of our district in this field.

We have a multitude of fine artists and skilled crafts person in our area and the thought that a dream we have had for some years of opening a display and selling venue on the Main Street could be possible was a further incentive.

I come from a farming background from self sufficient people whom not only clothed the whole family from their skills but who were adept at taking nothing and recycling it into something.

As on all farms in the Depression years, children were an integral part of the arts, crafts, preserving and farm work. The women in our family were treated as equals in all aspects of farm life and the men assisted with the pickles and brines for food preparation. Everyone lent a hand with jams and preserves.

As well as the usual crafts little girls learned,

the tanning of hides, the curing of bacon, fishing, shooting, riding and the eternal war on rabbits where we earned our pocket money were interesting to me also.

At the age of 13 we were encouraged to make and decorate our own clothes and do embroidery for our glory boxes.

Over the years the old skills have enabled me to supplement our income and educate our three daughters.

My marriage ended in 1945. I took work at Gibbs Bright Mill, cooked for a mustering camp in the Northern Territory and was taught textile technology with Anne Greenwood when a new world of colour and design was discovered.

Beading and pine needle basketry are my present interests.

In the Buchan WwMB project I can see a great opening for all ages, and I hope that through it the old skills can be handed down as they were to me and that the Old Post Office Art and Craft Gallery spreads its charm far and wide

Calendar of Events

Christmas Party: The Women who Mean Business end of year break will be held on Monday, December 12, at The Port of Sale at the barbecue area, 11.30 am. Everybody welcome! For catering purposes please RSVP by December 5 to Jenny O'Neill, (03) 5144 2461 or e-mail Jenny O'Neill at gezjen@bigpond.com

Another Christmas Party: Community Radio Station Life FM's Christmas party will be held on Saturday, December 3, from 11.30am to 3.30pm at Lake Guthridge in Sale. There'll be fun for the whole family with the Sale pedal boats, fishing poles and lots of other fun things to do; oh, and food too! Everyone welcome.

A Note from the Editor,

I have really enjoyed editing your newsletter this year and look forward to your participation in our final newsletter which we will put together after the Sale forum in February, 2006.

In preparation for our 'final fling', I encourage you all to e-mail to me your photographs and quiet or not so quiet reflections on your thoughts and feelings in regard to your personal journey, or that of your local community or society in general.

Such things are best done "on the

spur of the moment" or the moment will be gone; believe me, all such moments are precious and worth keeping.

You never know when you may inspire others, so let's share our thoughts or feelings with each other.

Meanwhile, I wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and New Year,

June Alexander

Editor

WwMB Newsletter

Briagolong Inspiration

Congratulations to Michelle Sandison, who has opened a shop in Briagolong selling 'Inspirational gifts' with her sister Vivien.

The shop opened on November 5, is called 'Auraz' and stocks paintings, gifts, homemade cosmetics, cards, Egyptian perfume bottles, hats, bags, jewellery, incense and lots of beautiful things.

Michelle, from the Stratford/Maffra group, featured in our Spring Newsletter, and both she and Vivien gained skills and confidence to launch their business as a result of participating in the WwMB project.

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