

Yarra Valley

ecoss

ECOLOGICAL &  
SOCIAL  
SUSTAINABILITY



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020

# ABOUT YARRA VALLEY ECOSS

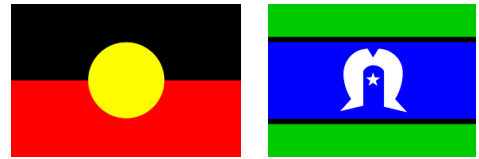
**We support the Yarra Ranges Council  
Climate Emergency Declaration**

**With Sustainability at the CORE of everything  
we do on site.**

Yarra Valley ECOSS acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of this land.

We pay respects to elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to actively seeking ways in which to create a safe, inclusive hub, striving together for a thriving future for our Indigenous families.



Yarra Valley ECOSS is an inclusive workplace, we invite all genders and nationalities to come together and work for a better future for this planet.



OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT IS—an environmental and educational not-for-profit organisation committed to showcasing best sustainable solutions.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL IS—aimed at restoring natural capital in our environment:

—A rural recreational and training facility that demonstrates innovation and best practice in regenerative land-use, renewable energies and resources, and the local production of food.

OUR LEARNING GOAL IS—aimed at developing human capital in our people is:

—A program of activities that inspires and enables the acquisition of the knowledge and skills needed to develop sustainable lifestyles.

OUR SOCIAL CAPITAL IS—aimed at improving social capital in our community is:

—A cooperative enterprise that is owned by the community, managed by the community, for the community and expresses the community's spirit.

OUR FINANCIAL GOAL IS—aimed at building financial capital and financial security in our community:

—A range of integrated enterprises that provides local employment, stimulates the growth of the regional economy and provides income to support our operations.

—Care for the Earth, its life forms and ecological processes, as stewards for future generations

—Care for People, through respect and the provision of opportunity for everyone to reach their potential.

—A Fair Share of the Earth's renewable and non-renewable resources for all members of current and future populations.

OUR VALUES ARE—

—We foster a culture of respect for the environment and community

—We work with honesty and integrity in our interactions

—We are committed to modelling best environmental practices

—We approach every challenge with enthusiasm and humour

—We are innovative and relevant in our thinking and practices

—We work together, everyone gets heard and we do what we say we'll do

—We strive for cultural and social inclusiveness

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Front Cover Photo: West African Immersion (Photo Credit: Ryan Tews)  
Above Photo: The Valley Market ECOSS (Photo Credit: Lauren Hutchison)



# REPORTS

## Executive Officer's Report

Who would have expected that the turning of 2019-2020 would be such an amazing year of chaos for us to really show our value in the world. Whilst Metropolitan Melbourne and the Yarra Valley was in Stage 4 lockdown, we began running a successful weekly produce market - which has evolved to become The Valley Market, and we were able to still host our volunteers in the Community Garden.

Covid highlighted the importance of outdoor spaces, healthy living and connection.

As all the staff worked from home, Zoom became our connection platform enabling us to continue working effectively. This worked well to our advantage in collaborating with grant applications in which we found ourselves mostly successful.

We also enjoyed having Baya Litchfield as our caretaker over this time. Baya has been incredibly helpful around the site, and when we were able to return it looked loved and cared for.

We were able to enjoy the Sun Festival on 21/9/2019, which was the last big event ECOSS was able to host before the impacts of COVID-19.

We had to cancel Ecotopia 2020 due to Covid, which was devastating after so much work, but all performers were willing to recreate it in 2021.

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to present a slideshow to Yarra Ranges Councillors at the start of 2020. We were proud to show all that we have achieved thus far, and have a visual display of all the wonderful aspects of the ECOSS Site. Yarra Ranges Council are our primary supporters offering us a partnership agreement for both the site and Ecotopia Festival.

We have welcomed 5 new businesses to the ECOSS Site in 2019-2020 including Tonantzin Chocolate, TC Tiny, Bushwood Creations, Melganics, Judith Lay Felting, and the Bee Happy Biodiversity Nursery located at ECOSS for more than 6 months of this time.

We are looking forward to 2021 hosting Permaculture Yarra Valley running their Permaculture Design Course in the Coop on Tuesdays, Aladdin's New Fathers Group on Mondays, Yarra Valley Drummers on Mondays, Circus and Dance on Tuesdays, Pottery Classes every week, Volunteers in the Crops for Community program every week multiple days, Qi Gong in the Coop on Thursdays, YV Bee Group one Sunday per month, Beans and Bananas Food Co-op on Thursdays, The Valley Market every Friday, and other casual events and site bookings.

Upcoming projects for 2021 include the ReCycle Hub which will be linked to the Girt By Dirt bicycle maintenance workshops, where we will upcycle bikes for charity and run youth groups with Beyond All Mountain Youth Group.

**Chelsea McNab**  
Executive Officer

## President's Report

At the beginning of 2020 who would have predicted what was to come. ECOSS, like many other community organisations, had a huge challenge operating under very difficult circumstances.

Luckily we were able to operate to a limited extent because of our community garden and the very popular Friday market. Thanks to very supportive and loyal supporters we developed into a hub for people to gather safely, coming out to shop for food in a very restricted but safe outdoor setting. Leanne Arvanatakis-Hall and her team of volunteers provided an amazing, safe and controlled atmosphere that introduced a whole new group of people to ECOSS, many of whom hadn't experienced ECOSS to that point.

With some significant support from State, Federal and local government grants ECOSS has come out the other end of Covid in a very strong position with lots of exciting projects and programs to take us to an exciting future.

I would like to acknowledge our long-serving, retiring president, Ian Cuming, for his many years of service to ECOSS, going back to our first committee in 2006. Ian's expertise in ethical and Biodynamic farming practices was invaluable in helping the committee form policies around all our food production and gardening plans. He also had a deep understanding of the meaning of sustainability and the impact of climate change and was very realistic about ECOSS' vision and program development.

We were very pleased to welcome Peter Preuss and Meg Lloyd onto our committee during 2020 and we look forward to their invaluable contributions.

I would also like to particularly thank the other ECOSS board members- Bernie, Kellie, Tom, Karina, Josh, Joe, Julian Guess [the ex-officio YRC rep] and Jim Child. Similarly thanks to our sponsors, partners, volunteers and especially our staff: Chelsea McNab, Kylie Barnes, Leanne Arvanatakis-Hall, Andrew Olive, and Mel Daymond for their work and for sharing our vision.

**Ric Butler**  
President





# COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT



## Left to right above:

<b>Julian Guess</b>	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Sustainability Project Officer</b>
<b>Tom Neil</b>	<b>Natural Building Centre Representative and Site Committee</b>
<b>Meg Lloyd</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Joshua Tucker</b>	<b>Site Committee and Silvertine Farm Representative</b>
<b>Ric Butler</b>	<b>Incoming President (July 2020) Site Committee</b>
<b>Karina Doughty</b>	<b>Warburton Environment Representative</b>
<b>Joe Butler</b>	<b>Secretary Admin Sub Committee Chair Community Engagement Committee</b>
<b>Peter Preuss</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Bernie Lobert</b>	<b>Treasurer Secretary/Chair Admin Committee</b>
<b>Cr Jim Child</b>	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Representative</b>
<b>Ian Cuming</b>	<b>Outgoing President (July 2020)</b>
<b>Kellie Gee</b>	<b>Vice President / Upper Yarra Landcare Representative Site Committee</b>



# STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



Leanne Arvanitakis-Hall, Chelsea McNab, Kylie Barnes, and Melanie Daymond

## Staff Members

Chelsea McNab:  
Executive Officer

## Casual Staff

Kylie Barnes:  
Earth Educator

Leanne Arvanitakis-Hall:  
Community Engagement, Market & Events Co-ordinator

Andrew Olive:  
Youth Program Officer  
Grounds Maintenance

Melanie Daymond:  
All Abilities Program Facilitator

Zarah McIntyre & Melanie Daymond:  
Cleaning

## Supporters and Consultants

Catherine Aulich of Upper Yarra Valley Bookkeeping:  
Accountant

Karina Doughty:  
Environmental Educator: Earth Education Program

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited

Cire Services

Judd Zekas of Yarra Valley Hosting  
Tech Support

Graeme George of Yarra Valley Permaculture

Cultural Inclusivity Advice:

HICSA (Healesville Indigenous Services Association)  
Aunty Kim Wandin - Wurundjeri Elder

Aladdin Jones  
Men's Health Worker

## Volunteers

Our Volunteers are the backbone of ECOSS and we are deeply grateful to all those who have given generously of their time and skills throughout the last 18 months. Including all of our Ecotopia, Fashion Parade, Ngulu Festival, Valley Market and Spring Festival Volunteers.



# SPECIAL THANKS & VOLUNTEER STORIES

## Special Thanks

Karen Meuleman Festivals Support, Yarra Ranges Council  
Little Yarra Steiner School for advertising support  
Brad Charman -Yarra Valley Signs for incredible generosity in signage support  
Yarra Junction Opp Shop for grant support of our projects,  
Ben's Shed for Ecotopia support  
Mountain Views Mail  
3VYV FM  
Yarra Ranges Life TV  
Julian Guess YRC - for generous support.  
Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association-  
for community lunches and creating opportunities  
to connect with our Indigenous community.  
Aunty Kim Wandin for advice and care  
Antonia Green for facilitation of Kick-Ass Climate Activists  
Be Seen Hire  
Kimberly Rae for phenomenal building and maintenance  
Ruby Jane Stormer for support with disabilities programs  
Sean Marler for always being there to help clean up  
Akira Giddings-Hall young volunteer extraordinaire,  
And to our wonderful Valley Market volunteers who  
turn up every week, and remain utterly dependable,  
particularly: Pierre Rispoli, Evan Necker, Jackie  
Williams, Nadine Imber, Shona Rich, Andy Moyes.

## Jackie's Story

Jackie Williams relocated to Warburton in 2020 by herself a week before hard lockdown in Victoria. She did not know anyone in the area at all and struggled with the isolation and not being able to meet people. Once hard lockdown had eased she contacted ECOSS about volunteering and was welcomed immediately. Jackie has been volunteering for 6 months already and thoroughly enjoys her involvement at the markets and has got to know the staff at ECOSS as well as the broader local community.

Volunteering every week on market day has been life-changing for Jackie as she has begun to build a solid social circle and has become more involved in other aspects within the community through ECOSS. Without this opportunity she would really be struggling to find her footing within the community, so it is of a huge benefit not only to herself but to other volunteers. Jackie feels very grateful and honoured to be able to be able to give back and continue this rewarding relationship.



Jackie Williams

## Pierre's Story

Pierre Rispoli started volunteering with ECOSS about 10 years ago at Ecotopia, doing setup and stage assistant. He was really keen to get live music to the Yarra Valley and promote local and original singer/songwriters. Some years later Pierre became involved with the Warburton's Makers Group Fair which rekindled his involvement with ECOSS. He volunteered at the Warburton Summer Produce Market until Covid 19 came along and now Pierre volunteers every Friday at The Valley Market ECOSS and once a month with The Valley Market Warburton. His roles have varied from car park attendant, sound engineer, stage and event management, first aider, moral support and many more roles.

Volunteering at the markets has impacted Pierre deeply and he is overwhelmed with the number of local people that access the market for their daily needs, which shows how important it is to purchase locally sourced and grown produce. On a personal note, volunteering at the market gives Pierre a sense of community that he has not experienced in the Yarra Valley since living here. It gave him the humanity he needed to get through the insanity of the isolation. Pierre is very grateful to The ECOSS Market for giving him the feeling of being important and useful. The ECOSS Market has become his new family and he looks forward to his continued support of the market into the future.



Pierre Rispoli



# ECOSS COMMUNITY

**During the Covid lockdown of 2020, ECOSS became a major community hub for the Upper Yarra region through its produce markets, All Abilities Program and on-going co-location enterprises, all under strict adherence to Covid regulations.**

## Staff and Committee

During much of 2020 staff worked from home and communicated via zoom. Despite the limitations of that situation a lot was achieved, particularly in terms of updating policies and reviewing our programs. Chelsea McNab continued her dynamic role as Executive Officer while Kylie Barnes enthusiastically managed the Education Program and Mel Daymond coordinated and developed the All-Abilities Program. Leanne Arvanitakis-Hall initiated the Produce Market once a Council permit was obtained and it grew from strength to strength as the numbers attending (all following Covid regulations) grew rapidly. Andrew Oliver continued as Maintenance Officer.

The Committee of Management is responsible for the overall direction and systemic compliance of the organisation. It is made up of volunteers who meet monthly and also contribute in a number of ways at other times. In September our long-standing President, Ian Cuming, resigned when he moved out of the area. We will really miss Ian's considered and capable leadership. Ric Butler has taken over as President. In October we were very pleased to welcome Meg Lloyd and Peter Preuss as new members of our Committee of Management.

## Volunteers

Most of our regular gardening and maintenance volunteers were unable to attend during lockdown although some all-abilities volunteers attended one on one with a support worker. The produce market attracted many dynamic volunteers who really ensured the smooth running of the markets. Once lockdown lifted, most of our volunteers started attending again. They contribute in many ways, significantly adding to the ECOSS sense of community.

## Events, Participating Organisations

Unfortunately, once again due to Covid restrictions, 2020 was the year of the cancelled events – Ecotopia, the indigenous Ngulu Festival, the Tiny House Expo were all cancelled as were some smaller events. The planning will not be wasted, however, as the events will hopefully all be run in 2021. In December a special Twilight Market was held and the response was overwhelmingly positive – a large and exuberant crowd attended with someone labelling the night as “the best Upper Yarra community event I’ve ever been to.” Some groups were able to continue functioning and Cire Community School students attended on a weekly basis until April. The local Permaculture Group, under the guidance of Graeme George, is continuing to design and develop the Food Forest with plans to start earthworks in the near future. The Yarra Valley Bee Group has continued to meet, outside lockdown, in the

Coop. Similarly, the Pottery Studio was quiet during lockdown but Lucy Pierce has started running her popular classes again. Beans and Bananas Food Coop is functioning on site again now and Yarra Valley Landcare has restarted its re-vegetation activities. Early in the year they generously organised a re-veg project in our Biofiltration area above the dam. Warburton Environment is again very active at ECOSS, running Tall Trees workshops and other activities in the Education Program.

## Co-locating Groups

2020 saw an increase in the number of co-locators at ECOSS. These sustainably-minded enterprises add to the sense of community so obvious now at ECOSS. New tenants include TC Tiny, Bushwood Creations, Tonantzin Chocolate House, Judy Lay Felting, Bee Happy Biodiversity Nursery and Peter Preuss’ demonstration vineyard. The original co-locators are still operating – TinyHouse2Go and Silvertine Biodynamic Market Garden. There is also planning for a Youth Bike Hub in 2021.

We feel very fortunate to be in partnership with Yarra Ranges Council. Currently Cr Jim Child attends Committee of Management meetings and Julian Guess, as the Council representative, is a co-opted committee member. The Council’s support, both financial and advisory, has added to our success as a community hub and we can see our place in the local community growing ever more significant in the next 12 months and beyond. We extend heartfelt thanks to all those people who, through their involvement at ECOSS, contributed to our expanding development in 2020.

**Joe Butler**  
Secretary



# FESTIVALS, MARKETS & EVENTS

**We have expanded our key programs and events at ECOSS again this year reaching more people both in the local community and beyond. We have been able to include more members of the community by reaching out to people living with disabilities, our First Nation people and multicultural members and groups within the community.**

## Chelsea & Leanne: Festivals & Events

### SUN Festival 2019

This festival was supported by Regional Arts Victoria and Yarra Ranges Council and we made the theme around various Cultural Celebrations of the Sun. We were lucky to be able to employ Videographer Ryan Tews to create this wonderful video of the day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRDA4Cx26vU>

We had Sun Weaving by Vicky Basdeo, an Aztec Sun Sand Mandala by Antonia Green and Fernando.

Despite the rain and wind the day was well attended, with lots of great food to warm the crowd.

Events on the day included 'The Great Ecological Race', a wheelbarrow race with teams undertaking an obstacle course whilst one member is in the wheelbarrow and another pushing. This hilarious event was made more vibrant by the excellent MC and piano skills of performer Will Tait.

There was the launch of the Dr Annie Yoffa Project via a live stage performance amongst a full day of live performances on the stage.



Dr Annie Yoffa Project Launch - Sun Festival 2019

### West African Immersion - 2019

West African Immersion gave everyone the opportunity to Immerse themselves in West African Culture for a full afternoon of African Rhythms, Dance and Food! Workshops were run by Master drummer Bassidi Konè and Dancer Kwame Tosuma!

Everyone then Danced into the evening with Kofi Kunkpe & Yarra Valley Drummers with Special Guests Roderick McLoad, Bassidi Konè & Valanga Khoza.

Thank you to The Victorian State Government-MultiCultural Commission for funding this event.



West African Immersion 2019

### Creation Story Mural

At the beginning of 2020 we started working with Auntie Kim Wandin and Artist Nikki Browne to create The Creation Story Mural. This is to depict The Creation Story of The Wurundjeri People.

Thank you to funding from Yarra Ranges Council for funding this project.

We were able to make a start but as with most things in 2020 the mural was put on hold and the official opening-Ngulu Festival was postponed to 2021.

### Permaculture Week Yarra Valley 2020 + Formidable Vegetable

One event that was able to go ahead in 2020 was Permaculture Week in the Yarra Valley

Permaculture Week Event: Leanne had the great idea of creating 'Permaculture Week in the Valley'; we loved this idea, chose a date and collaborated with Permaculture Yarra Valley and Peace Farm. Permaculture Yarra Valley designed and facilitated a whole week of site tours to properties of interest around the valley. PEACE Farm launched Permaculture Week at the Tomato Festival and ECOSS wrapped up the week with a concert event by Formidable Vegetable. We sold ECOSS grown curries for dinner, and it was a massive success.



# FESTIVALS, MARKETS & EVENTS

## Landcare for Singles

Landcare for Singles Event by Intrepid 29/9 This event was a collaboration between ECOSS and Landcare, with a focus on revegetating the BioFiltration swales running near the polytunnels into the dam. It was also a romantic opportunity for the planters to find a new love.



Landcare for Singles

## Annual Rare and Heritage Fruit Tree Grafting Day

The annual Rare and Heritage Fruit Tree Grafting Day and Scion Swap was held again in winter. About 50 people attended and learnt the art of grafting, and preserving rare and heritage varieties of pears, apples and plums. This is a low key event organised by Permaculture Yarra Valley, ECOSS and the Rare and Heritage Fruit Tree Network. Catering was provided by Susanna Leubbers Catering for the day.

## ECOSS hosted and supported many community group events:

Most of the following events were funded by various grants and organisations. We are incredibly grateful for this support, enabling us to offer our events to the community either free or very low cost.

Aladdin's Men's group; meeting weekly

Coop Hire - parties and events

Kofi Kunkpe Music lessons weekly

Kick Ass Climate Activists

School Holiday Clay Play

Children's Week Activity Nature Play

Permaculture Yarra Valley design event

Recycled Fashion Parade Event

Intrepid Landcare Event : Environment Film screening

Traditional Mexican Cultural Cacao Ceremonies

## Community Sound System

Yarra Valley ECOSS formed the Upper Yarra Community Collective with The Valley Market, River Folk Festival, KOHA Community Cafe, & RMAG (Reefton McMahons Creek Action Group). This enabled us as a collective to apply for a number of grants to purchase a new Community PA, train sound engineers and pay for them to operate the sound system at a number of community events to be held in early 2021.

Thank you to Bendigo Bank - Warburton & Yarra Junction branches and Yarra Ranges Council for supporting this project.



West African Dance Workshop

**From March 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, ECOSS had to cancel the following events:**

ECOTOPIA festival 2020

Ngulu Festival

SUN Festival/Tiny House Jamboree 2020

Comedy Night for Pottery Studio

The Rare and Heritage Fruit Tree Grafting Day



The Valley Market ECOSS



# THE VALLEY MARKET ECOSS



## By Leanne Arvanitakis-Hall

The Valley Market ECOSS is one of the true success stories that has come out of 2020 and Covid-19. Here is the story of how it all began!

It was Friday the 13th of March 2020 at the Warburton Summer Produce Market when it felt like everything just started crashing down around me. I was running the market and there was a big storm coming in. Marquees were blowing over and we were trying to get everything covered before the rain hit.

News was coming out about restrictions coming in as the Covid situation was increasing in Victoria. Chelsea was calling me to say we need to decide whether to cancel Ecotopia: the River Folk Festival was cancelled that night, and I watched a whole stream of festivals, events and gigs all cancel indefinitely.

I literally ended up in tears. It was the last Summer Produce Market for 2020.

People wanted to know where to buy their produce now The WSPM had finished... so, the following week Silvertine BD Farm started selling produce from their Market gate at ECOSS. It all happened organically. A few other stalls asked if they could come along, and from there the seeds of The Valley Market ECOSS were born.

I then started to come along each Friday to support the stallholders to comply to Covid Restrictions, putting out hand sanitiser and marking out social distancing on the ground. (I became known as the social distancing police!)



Simultaneously there was a global panic buying frenzy! The Market became very popular as the need to support local became more and more evident. At Supermarkets across the state, the toilet paper isles were bare, and the shelves were basically empty.

It felt more important than ever to support our local food producers and businesses. It was an ideal time to focus on localising our economy.

The Market has been a lifeline for our community during this time of isolation, for so many it was the highlight of their week. As restrictions tightened it was the one place people could go out and do their shopping in a safe open air environment.



As the Event Coordinator at ECOSS and The Warburton Summer Produce Market Coordinator, it worked perfectly to marry the two. Hence The Valley Market at ECOSS was born. The Valley Market has successfully run weekly at ECOSS, and in addition we will run a monthly market- 'The Valley Market Warburton' instead of the Warburton Summer Produce Market. As things open up and we go back to our busy lives, I hope the community continues to support our local food producers. It feels so important for so many reasons.

'The Valley Summer Twilight Market' on Friday 4th Dec. Was a big success and felt like a reward for the challenging year we all endured. It was well attended with approx 40 fantastic stalls and live music from Dr Jazz & Yarra Valley drummers!





# ECOSS EVENTS



# YARRA VALLEY ECOS\$

# SUN FESTIVAL

**Cultural Celebrations of the Sun  
Sustainable Living Festival Stage Line Up**  
 September 21st 2019 - 10:00-4:00 pm

**Nguruk Yinga Stage**  
 10:00-10:05am- acknowledgement of Country  
 10:05-10:35am- Sun Yoga with Vickie Basdeo  
 10:35am-11:05am - Jayda Holman  
 11:20 -11:50am- Arvo and Tomi  
 11:55-12:30pm- The Dreaming Place  
 12:35-1:00pm- The Dreaming Place  
 1:10-1:50pm - Alpha Brao1  
 1:50- 1:55pm - Electric Vehicles Association end of Victorian  
 tour arrival!  
 1:55- 2:00pm - Kick Ass Climate Activist Song  
 2:20- 2:50pm - Tapes  
 3:00 - 3:30pm - MOOP Patrol  
 3:30-4:00pm - Kofi and YV Drummers

**Santha Press Songs for the Earth 11am - in the COOP**  
**The Great Ecological Race 10am-12pm - Recollection Fire Pit**  
**Vinod Indian Flute Sun Songs - Roving**  
**The Dreaming Space Circus - Play 2pm - Village Green**  
**LYSS Class 3 tiny houses display in the COOP**  
**Climate Change Art Exhibition- in the COOP**  
**Mexican Sun Altar all day - Village Green**  
**Tiny House on Display - in the Carpark**  
**Electric Vehicles on Display all day - in the Carpark**  
**Recycling Activity all day - near Scaable**  
**Sun Mandala Weaving all day**  
**Clay Play - Pottery Studio**

Yarra Valley  
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Inviting you to:

# The Great Ecological Wheelbarrow Race

A Parent & Child fun activity

- Open to all 6-12 year olds to come and race with their parent/guardian
- Complete the ecological activities at each station along the race track
- Great Prizes to be won including family skate pass and horse riding!
- Offered FREE by Yarra Valley EcoSS with funding from YRC Middle Years Program

at the  
**EcoSS Spring Festival**  
**Westburn**  
 10 am – 12 noon  
**Saturday 21 September 2019**

Please contact: Kylie Barnes, School Facilitator at EcoSS to register  
 email: [eartheducation@ecos.org.au](mailto:eartheducation@ecos.org.au)

Phone: 0400 114 274

Yarra Valley EcoSS: 711 Old Warburton Road, Westburn Vic.  
 Phone: 0907 2416 / [www.ecos.org.au](http://www.ecos.org.au)

# West African Immersion



Drum | Dance | Music | Food | Culture  
 Y.V. Drummers w/ Special Guests  
 Valanga Khoza & Bassidi Kone  
 Sat. Oct 12th | 3pm: Drumming  
 5pm Dance | 7pm: Concert  
 @Yarra Valley ECOSS  
 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn

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Yarra Valley  
**ecoss**

**Pre-Sale prices**  
**Full Day: \$35/\$45**  
**Workshop**  
**\$15/\$20 Each**  
**Concert: \$10/\$15**

Bookings:  
<https://events.humanity.com.au/west-african-immersion>



VICTORIAN  
 multicultural  
 commission  
community engagement

**VICTORIA**



Yarra Valley ECOSS Presents...

# Formidable Vegetable

Mal Webb & Kylie Morrigan

**SATURDAY 29TH FEB 2020 6PM-9PM**  
 At ECOSS- 711 Old Warburton Rd. Wesburn.  
 or \$25/\$20 Conc... under 12 free

**Tickets:** [/events.humanitix.com.au/formidable-vegetable-sound-system-at-ecoss](http://events.humanitix.com.au/formidable-vegetable-sound-system-at-ecoss)

**For more details, visit:** [www.ecoss.org.au](http://www.ecoss.org.au)

Yarra Valley  
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 presents . . .
 

# ECOTOPIA

## EARTH FESTIVAL 2020

Sunday March 29th, 10am-4pm  
Yarra Junction Parklands  
[www.ecoss.org.au](http://www.ecoss.org.au)

The Valley's Got Talent  
 Neesly & the White Pearls  
 Healing Haven  
 Showcasing  
 local NFP  
 Dr Jazz the Band  
 Healthy Food  
 Waste Free!  
 The Anecdote  
 The Whales Tale  
 Climate Choir  
 ERL Flexi Van  
 and storytime  
 2 Solar Powered  
 Stages



*Illustration by  
Suzie Dullman*











Yarra Valley ECOSS Presents....

# Y.V. Produce Market



**EVERY FRIDAY**  
**3PM-4:30PM**  
**ECOSS- 711 Old Warburton Rd.**  
**Wesburn.**  
**For more details, visit:**  
**[www.ecoss.org.au](http://www.ecoss.org.au)**

Yarra Valley  
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# NGULU FESTIVAL

Reconciliation Week 2020  
**DREAMTIME MURAL OPENING**  
**DRMNGNOW Featuring Neil Morris**  
**PIRRITU**  
**WAYAPA WUURRK-Michelle Atwell**  
**WELCOME TO COUNTRY & SMOKING CEREMONY**  
**with Aunty Kim Wandin**

**Sat. 30 May ~ 1pm-4.30pm ~ \$20/\$15**  
**Yarra Valley ECOSs**  
 711 Old Warburton Rd Warrbur  
[www.ecoss.org.au](http://www.ecoss.org.au)

Proudly funded by

Yarra Valley  
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Yarra Ranges  
 Council

THE  
**VALLEY**  
• **MARKET** •



**ECOSS Twilight Market**  
Art Craft Produce  
Entertainment  
Dec 4th | 3.30 pm - 8pm  
Yarra Valley ECOSS  
711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn  
For more details, visit  
<http://valleymarket.com.au/>



Yarra  
Ranges  
Council

ecoss



# KEY PROGRAMS

**The number of key programs at ECOSS have increased again this year reaching more people both in the local community and beyond. The variety of initiatives have attracted diverse audiences via events, workshops, schools projects and celebrations.**

## **Practical Earth Education Program by Kylie Barnes**

The Earth Education Program continued with regular weekly visits from Cire Community School and other school excursions until the Covid-lockdowns meant that we had to cancel the on site programs until safe to resume in 2021. The end of 2019 and first term of 2020 saw a number of new schools visiting Yarra Valley ECOSS and participating in the growing array of activities that the program has on offer. The Practical Earth Education Program caters to the age group of the participating students, and usually begins with a tour of the site to provide an overview of ECOSS. Groups then participate in some hands-on activities, such as composting and seed propagation, while often finishing with some earth building. The students enjoy the range of activities throughout the day, particularly knowing that they are contributing in a very real and physical way to the projects that give benefit to the broader community to use and visit in the future.

It was a great year for researching into developing the education program at ECOSS and we were able to connect with other environmental educational organisations and collaborate with ideas. We met with Edendale Farm, The Woori Yallock Farm School and Collingwood Children's Farm.

The following schools participated in programs at ECOSS:

- Cire Services: The Cire Services Community School came weekly throughout the year 2019 and for the first Term of 2020. The students worked on a number of ongoing projects around ECOSS including earth building of the earth seat and the bottle room. They learnt about various types of earth building including recycled bottle walls, earth rendering and mud bricks. They also worked on the new pizza oven in the Coop and the Upcycled Playground.



**Mud Brick Building**

Before the lockdown, the students worked with local indigenous Artist Nikki Lee Browne, painting the Dreamtime Mural. A highlight of the program is the end of term celebrations for all regular school groups where we make delicious wood fired pizzas and acknowledge everyone's work with Certificates of Achievement.



**The Coop as a classroom**



**Bottle Wall Room**

The Melbourne Adventure Hub brought out a large group of students from Melbourne as part of their Outdoor Education Camp. The students spent 4 days at ECOSS working on various projects including earth building and bush regeneration.

Caulfield Community School had a wonderful day of woodfired pizza making with fresh ingredients from the community garden, and creative time in the Pottery Studio.



# KEY PROGRAMS CONTINUED



## Tree Planting

Sophia Mundi Steiner School had their entire high school visit at the beginning of Term 1 as part of their camp. They worked very hard building earth seats, the recycled playground and on the biodynamic farm.

Ghilgai Steiner School had a visit to the farm and also worked in the community garden, afterwards enjoying a well earned play in the new playground.

ECOSS hosted a Children's week activity where children enjoyed Clay play and a Yidarki Workshop by Didgeridoo Australia.

ECOSS was fortunate to receive a Yarra Ranges Council Grant to support groups to come and participate in a Practical Earth Education Program. This will financially support groups to visit ECOSS with a discount on their excursion.



Sofia Mundi Steiner School students

Chelsea and Kylie presented a sustainable building workshop at the annual Eastern Alliance of Sustainable Learning Conference. The conference is an inspiring opportunity to learn and network with other sustainability educators from the region.

Kylie and Ruby Jane also worked with Yarra Ranges Council to support Warburton Primary School to create their Time Out Teepee in their school grounds. This was a fun and collaborative project designed and made with the students. Plans are underway for another unique project with St Joseph's in Yarra Junction.

ECOSS Hosted Swinburne Volunteers - We were contacted by Swinburne regarding hosting a group of new migrant young women who needed to interact with the community. Joe designed and facilitated the implementation of a beautiful Butterfly garden outside the Pottery Studio.

A special thank you:

Our long time volunteer Rod Neason, retired at the end of 2019. We would like to acknowledge all the work Rod has undertaken at the ECOSS Site, all the knowledge he has shared with the students over time. The countless hours he put into planning, procurement, and physical labour on many projects. Thank you from all of us Rod.



Melanie Daymond - All Abilities Program Co-ordinator

## All Abilities Program Report by Melanie Daymond

Thanks to all our wonderful ECOSS volunteers. We have had a very productive 18 months. During Covid lockdown staff were only permitted very limited access and the site was very very quiet. Thanks to our existing All Abilities volunteers from Interchange who were still permitted to continue to work in the community garden on a one-on-one basis with a carer, our Community Garden was well cared for. They diligently tended to the garden and once



restrictions were lifted it was amazing to see how wonderful and loved it all looked. They kept the community garden thriving and ECOSS alive during these difficult times.

ECOSS is happy we could continue to provide our volunteers with a low risk outdoor space to come to as part of their weekly routine working to increase a general sense of well being.

Christmas saw us holding our annual volunteer BBQ's and smoothie cycle celebration where participants received a certificate of achievement presented to them by our ECOSS President Ric, Secretary Joe, and Executive Officer Chelsea.

I would like to acknowledge all of our volunteers of all abilities for their huge contribution to ECOSS. From helping out at the weekly Market and festivals, working on general site maintenance and tending to the community garden. Special thank you to volunteer Cailie Coney and Natalie Wallis who received certificates of achievement celebrating two years of volunteerism at ECOSS.

We were very happy to improve many of our paths to be wheelchair accessible:

## Wheelchair Accessible Pathways



Benefits the volunteers have from their time at ECOSS include:

- Improved skill development opportunity, experience and knowledge. Propagating, growing, harvesting, preserving, cooking and retail skills.

- Volunteer Increased sense of well being through enjoying the fresh healthy food they have grown, building relationships, giving back to community, gaining knowledge and new skills.

- Increased access to Organic harvested food.



**The Smoothy Cycle**

- a schedule on a seasonal calendar so volunteers can work independently on the program anytime within ECOSS opening hours. This increases accessibility and supports the sustainability of the program. Enabling greater involvement by community members/ volunteers in a well coordinated program.

We welcome new volunteers of all abilities to join our program. Please email John at [cropsforcommunity@ecoss.org.au](mailto:cropsforcommunity@ecoss.org.au) or Melanie at [allabilities@ecoss.org.au](mailto:allabilities@ecoss.org.au) to enquire about joining our dynamic volunteer team at ECOSS.



**Potting Up for Seed Raising**

# WITH APPRECIATION TO OUR SPONSORS & PARTNERS



Community Bank  
Warburton and Yarra Junction



THE  
**VALLEY**  
• MARKET •



THE  
HUGH WILLIAMSON  
FOUNDATION



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

VICTORIAN  
multicultural  
commission



Education  
and Training



And special thanks to The Yarra Valley Community Op Shop and Beans and Bananas.



# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

**Our on-going environmental and sustainable projects are our priority. All activities and training on site must have a sustainable element as we attempt to engage the community and all ECOSS visitors in working towards a greener future.**

**We support the Yarra Ranges Council Climate Emergency Declaration**

**With Sustainability at the CORE of everything we do on site.**

**By Karina Doughty**

## Less Air and Noise Pollution

During the 2020 lockdowns, here in the Yarra Valley we enjoyed the benefits of reduced use of private vehicles and industrial transportation. The Valley's air quality increased (less post logging burns) and the reduced sound of large vehicles and tourists resulted in a tranquil environment.

## Food Security

- The commencement and ongoing success of The Valley Market located at ECOSS has increased the local resident's opportunity to buy locally grown and made produce. This activity reflects ECOSS's commitment to Local Food Security initiatives and reduces local residents' carbon footprint.

- All abilities programs continued to grow and harvest vegetables in the community garden.

- Silvertine biodynamically grown vegetable farm onsite.

- Working with Permaculture Yarra Valley planning an onsite Native Food Forest.

- Beans and Bananas Food Cooperative operating on site - providing locally sourced affordable food.

- Organic demonstration vineyard was planted at ECOSS

- The chicken run within the Heritage Fruit Orchard continues to fertilise the orchard and provide local eggs.

## Working with Environmental Organisations/Groups

ECOSS supported the following groups to have their meetings on our grounds, run educational stalls and fundraising at our events and courses:

- Permaculture Yarra Valley

- Yarra Valley Bee Group

- Warburton Environment

- Upper Yarra Landcare

- Community Supported Herbalism

- Community Action for Climate Emergency

## Climate Emergency

Adrian Whitehead from Community Action for Climate Emergency (CACE) presented the case for a climate emergency and Karina and Chelsea helped facilitate over 50 community members' participation. The meetings encouraged the Yarra Ranges Council to declare a Climate Emergency.

ECOSS committee and membership declared a Climate Emergency and placed a sign to reflect this.

## Carbon Footprint and 'Slow Food and Fashion'

In October 2019 we decided to hold the Recycled Fashion Parade (an annual event which used to be held as part of Ecotopia) in the Coop, with the particular focus on slow fashion and slow food for a sustainable future.

We did catering using only locally sourced ingredients and were sponsored by local artisan cheese and chocolate makers. We inspired people to re-create and celebrate used garments, waste, reused fabrics, objects etc...

This event was created to raise awareness around the Fashion industries environmental footprint - one cotton shirt uses about 2,700L of water and then there is transportation, waste & carbon. Non-organic cotton uses 23% of the world's insecticides and 10% of all pesticides.



**Recycled Fashion Parade**

# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUED

## Sustainable Enterprises

The number of co-locators has increased onsite during this time. These sustainable enterprises provide opportunities for sustainable living exhibits and education. They also provide solutions to difficult social and environmental justice issues of our time. For instance, demonstrating affordable/sustainable/small footprint housing options, re-using timber to create art, sustainably sourced cacao, organically and biodynamically grown vegetables (decreasing the use of toxic, insecticides and pesticides), propagation of native plants.

## Zero Waste and Reducing Landfill

ECOSS used the 'Wash Against Waste' (a kit of reusable cups, bowls, plates) at all their events and on a daily basis. This resulted in ECOSS leading the way on Zero waste initiatives and creating very little (food related) landfill waste onsite.

The Wash Against Waste Kit was also hired out to the following: Little Yarra Steiner School, Fest Verdi Healesville, Healesville Music festival, Ghilgai, Sean Marler, Ringwood Sustainability Fair, Peace Farm Tomato Fest, Private functions.

The Holy Fools donated their trailer to ECOSS to be retrofitted to house the kit. We are still seeking funding for this.

## Earth Education

Environmental education is central to ECOSS's mission. The Practical Earth Education program which ran tours and education sessions with school children in 2019, shared crucial environmental principles about how to care for the earth, tend to the soil, grow/harvest food, build sustainable homes, live simply and understand the importance of intact eco systems.

In all our education sessions we also aim to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land past/present and emerging and recognise that there is still a lot we can learn about how they managed the land.

## Native Forest Protection Advocacy/Activism

Warburton Environment continue to base themselves at ECOSS, holding meetings, participating in earth education about our endangered local plants and animals and holding information stalls. During this period, they have (working closely with WOTCH, Kinglake Greater Glider, and other environmental groups) protected native forests in and around Big Pats Creek, Warburton and Mt Bride through legal action, focusing on the endangered Tree Geebung (*Persoonia arborea*) and Greater Glider. They have worked closely with indigenous leaders to advocate for the protection of our local native forests from logging, including gathering together with hundreds on the steps of parliament in February 2020 before lockdown.

## Youth Climate Activism

Kick Arse Climate Activist meetings were held for youth to create and learn by participating in art, activism and events. We facilitated this group of youth initially weekly, then fortnightly during 2019. The group undertook artistic activities such as: screen printing t-shirts and other clothing items that they sold at the Sun Festival. They also created an Art Exhibition that was displayed at the Sun Festival. They made a large Banner and marched united in one of the Student Climate Rallies in Melbourne. Their activity supported the Council's decision to declare a Climate Emergency by attending the meeting, addressing council and displaying their banner for the local news. Maleka Steel - the leader of the group was then invited to officially open a Yarra Ranges Council Climate Conference



Youth Climate Action

## Upper Yarra Landcare

Upper Yarra Landcare co-locate and hot desk at ECOSS. There were a number of projects undertaken including the planting of the carpark and regeneration of the biofiltration system.

## Environmental Initiatives with Yarra Ranges Council

Ecosse worked with the Yarra Ranges Council on some environmental initiatives including; the solar farm meeting and planning, planting from the 'Ribbons of Green' project, Biochar educational opportunities.



# A NOTE FROM OUR CO-LOCATORS

**ECOSS warmly welcomed a number of new Co-locators to the site, including Bushwood Creations, Tonantzin Chocolate, Bee Happy Biodiversity Nursery, TC Tiny, Melganics, Peter Preuss's demonstration vineyard, and Judy Lay felting.**

## Silvertine Farm

Silvertine Farm is continuing to provide beautiful healthy produce to the local community and further abroad.

We have slowly expanded our range and size and really feel that we are at a size now appropriate for our farm and our work energy. The Valley market has created a nice link between us and our customers and we are very grateful for this.

## Tonantzin Chocolate

Fernando has opened a beautiful and delicious traditional Mexican chocolate factory at ECOSS. Tonantzin Chocolate are keen to share their cultural knowledge and offer Traditional Sweat Lodges and Cacao Ceremonies. ECOSS is happy to support the sharing of healthy traditional practices that nurture and educate the community.

## Bushwood Creations

Shlomit Moria is a local chainsaw artist and wood carver creating beautiful artworks from found wood.

'EcoSS has been so welcoming and perfect for me since I moved in. I have a better space than I could have imagined and I am so grateful to be part of the lovely community. Best move ever!'



Owls by Bushwood Creations

## Melganics

Melganics is ECOSS's local Organic & Biodynamic shop. We aim to supply as much local grown and made produce and products from the Yarra Valley as possible, as well as sourcing fresh produce and products from further afield when local is not available. Melganics has grown significantly since its small beginnings during winter 2020.



Melganics

## TC Tiny

Tom Coupe, I have been designing and building Tiny Houses on Wheels since 2016. I have been concentrating on developing Bushfire Resistant Tiny Houses since 2018 and have recently completed my third fire resistant Tiny House with more to come in 2020.



TC Tiny

## Peter Preuss

Peter Preuss has established a small vineyard at ECOSS to demonstrate organic grape growing techniques and exemplify the benefits of a unique grape variety - the Amazing Roohoodler. Roohoodler has proven to be extraordinarily disease resistant and the variety provides enormous potential from social, educational, financial, and certainly environmental perspectives as it requires little or no chemical disease prevention.

# CO-LOCATORS CONTINUED

## Bee Happy Biodiversity Nursery

The nursery was inspired by Jane's time as a community volunteer at ECOSS. During chats with the other gardeners, farmers & apiarists on site she became aware that there were significant challenges in providing enough bee forage to grow hives in the Upper Yarra.

As a Landscape Designer and horticulturalist who is inspired by good site specific design, she started researching plants that are high in nectar and pollen, and how to design gardens that will entice bees. ECOSS supported Jane in a grant application and allowed her use of a greenhouse to begin propagating a range of high nectar and pollen plants, and the YV Bee Group has shared their extensive knowledge as well.

By having four flowering species at any given time in your garden you are able to provide good bee forage. Jane is passionate about this venture because bees pollinate 1 in 3 of every mouthful of the food we eat. The Nursery is now based at 21 Dammans Road Warburton, where she has been invited into a collaborative space, open Wed to Friday & Sun 10am-3pm, or by appointment.

## Judy Lay Felting

Judy has created a beautiful creative space in the Bottle Room at ECOSS to share her crafts and skills in felting.



Judy Lay Felting Creations

## Tiny House 2 Go

The Tiny House 2 go team is continuing to manufacture tiny houses at ECOSS, providing opportunities for local trades people. The group has a particular interest in providing emergency housing and involving council and authorities to change planning laws to be able to increase availability and affordable housing options.

## Kofi Kunkpe African Drumming Class

Kofi Kunkpe is running weekly African drumming classes at ECOSS on a Monday evening. This evolved after Kofi and The Yarra Valley Drummers performed at Ecotopia. The class is expanding with new beginners joining to create more performance opportunities at local community events. They are open to more participants joining them.

## Yarra Valley Bee Group

The popular local group was unable to meet during the lockdowns but have continued to care for the hives at ECOSS and attend the Valley Market to sell honey. They also run educational sessions and attend ECOSS events, offering important information about bees.

## Community Pottery Studio Yarra Valley

The Pottery Studio has been gently and slowly unfurling with the pause of the lockdowns. Weekly facilitated open studio spaces and classes are a warm and sheltering place for folk to continue their individual practices of working with clay, some handbuilding and others on the pottery wheel. We are so grateful to share this space with so many good folk and hope to continue in this way. We are dreaming of some improvements to the space, and hoping to bring those changes into being soon. Blessed to share in the beautiful unfolding of the Ecos family.



Community Pottery Studio

## Warburton Environment, Landcare and Upper Yarra Landcare

Kellie Gee and Anne Fitzpatrick from Landcare and Upper Yarra Landcare can be found in the second office at ECOSS. With Karina Doughty from Warburton Environment in the 3rd Office. This makes for great collaborative hot desk opportunities to work together on various projects.

## Upper Yarra Landcare

UYLC held online meetings this previous year. We are hoping to reinvigorate our group and plan future activities! We currently have a small online membership base, who receive landcare-themed emails; we also have a facebook page & group. People are welcome to join! Native local plants were also grown this year, as with other years, and are in the process of being planted locally.

## Beans and Bananas

This Food Co-op is run on site fortnightly and supplied by local producers including Silvertyne Biodynamic farm. This cycle of food production to sale on site is a closed loop system, therefore reducing carbon emissions and increasing nutritional value.



# TREASURER'S REPORT

## Annual Financial Report for the 18 month period ending 31st December 2020

The Treasurer and Committee of Management members submit the financial report of Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc. for the financial year ended 31 December 2020.

This has been an unusual and historic financial year. In January 2020, we held a Special General meeting to change our financial year, from the usual July to June financial year, to a January to December calendar financial year. This decision was made for a number of reasons. Firstly, as a not for profit organisation, there is not the imperative to be aligned to the usual taxation year. Secondly, it makes the preparation of the Annual Report easier, as the activities now relate to a calendar year and are not so difficult to recall than the previous July to June schedule.

To align the previous 2018-2019 financial year, which ran from July 2018 to June 2019 to a calendar year reporting period, the 2019-20 financial period covers a reporting period of 18 months, from July 2019 to December 2020.

The other unusual and historic aspect of this financial year, is that 2020 was the year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yarra Valley ECOSS, like most organisations and businesses across the country, was thrown into uncertainty in March 2020, and we waited with much anticipation to see what could be offered by the government to support our organisation, and our staff, as we went into and endured many months of lockdown.

Like the rest of the country, our staff worked from home. Our usual activities were curtailed, and there was a lengthy period of time when there weren't many people on site. Thankfully, we qualified for a number of support mechanisms provided by all three levels of government, federally with the Cashflow Boost and JobKeeper, state government support from opportunities through Business Victoria and COVID support through Yarra Ranges Council. Thanks to these business support programs, we were able to retain all of our staff over this uncertain period, we were able to have a continuity of remote work activities, and we were able to meet our overheads at a time when income virtually dried up.

We are immensely grateful for the generous support from all three levels of government. Their combined support means Yarra Valley ECOSS is well placed to continue to grow and thrive.

## Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year have not altered.

## Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

## Operating Result

The profit (loss) for 2019-20 (18 months) amounted to \$42,793. In 2018-19 (12 months): \$2,790

## Income from Grants, Partnerships, Sponsorships & Donations

In the 18 month period ending 31st Dec 20, Yarra Valley ECOSS received \$144,202 collectively through the ATO Cashflow Boost and JobKeeper program. Separate to this, Yarra Valley ECOSS obtained a total of \$132,686 in grants, and \$23,338 in donations and sponsorships from various sources. As mentioned, we received extremely generous support from both the Federal and State governments. We also continue to receive considerable ongoing support from our partner organisations, especially Yarra Ranges Council. Council supported us with the renewal of the annual partnership agreement funding until 2022 and the annual partnership agreement for our Ecotopia Junction Festival until 2022. Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited (Bendigo Community Bank branches at Warburton and Yarra Junction), along with the RACV and Cire Services Inc. also provided sponsorship for the 2020 Ecotopia Junction Festival. We also received funding from Yarra Ranges Council to create a Dreamtime Mural of the Woiwurrung people and to hold the Ngulu festival that honours Sorry Day and our First Nations people. We were fortunate to receive a grant from FRRR (Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal) for a Disabilities & Volunteer Project Development position.

## Highlights:

- July 2019: FRRR Community Futures Program – Disabilities & Volunteer Project Development Officer (\$20,000)
- July 2019: Australian Geographic Sponsorship – Wetlands Rehabilitation Project (\$1,500)
- August 2019: Yarra Ranges Council – Sponsorship of Ecotopia Junction Festival 2020 (\$12,000)
- August 2019: Yarra Ranges Council – Partnership agreement funding 2019-20 (\$15,000)
- September 2019: Regional Arts Victoria – Sun Culture Project Launch (\$3,000)
- September 2019: Department of Premier & Cabinet - Multicultural Festivals & Events 2019-20 West African Drumming (\$1,590)

# TREASURER'S REPORT CONTINUED

- September 2019: Reece Plumbing Pty Ltd - Reece Grey Water Grant – materials in kind (\$2,700)
- October 2019: Yarra Ranges Council - Small grants ECOSS Sun Fest (\$1,000)
- October 2019: Yarra Ranges Council – ECOSS Practical Earth Education (\$8,500)
- October 2019: Yarra Ranges Council – Dreamtime Mural of the Woiwurrung people & Ngulu Festival (\$10,000)
- December 2019: Melbourne Water - Melbourne Water's River Health Incentives Program (\$2,332)
- December 2019: Yarra Ranges Council – Schools Hub partnership with Warburton Primary School Time Out Tee Pee (\$3,406)
- February 2020: Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited – Sponsorship of Ecotopia 2020 (\$2,000)
- February 2020: RACV – Sponsorship of Ecotopia 2020 (\$1,500)
- March 2020: Yarra Ranges Council – Schools Hub Partnership with St Josephs Primary - Butterfly Garden (\$3,591)
- June 2020: Business Victoria – Business Support Fund (\$10,000)
- July 2020: Yarra Junction Op Shop - Food Forest Project (\$1,500)
- August 2020: Business Victoria – Business Support Fund (\$10,000)
- August 2020: Yarra Ranges Council – Partnership agreement funding 2020-21 (\$15,000)
- August 2020: Yarra Ranges Council – Festival & Events sponsorship for the 2021 Ecotopia Junction Festival (\$12,000)
- October 2020: Yarra Ranges Council – COVID-19 Community Relief & Recovery (\$5,000)
- November 2020: Business Victoria – Business Support Fund (\$10,000)

## Rental income

The Yarra Ranges Landcare Group, Upper Yarra Landcare, Silvertine Farm, Yarra Valley Community Pottery Studio, Tiny House 2 Go continued as tenants. In 2020, we welcomed Tom Coupe from TC Tiny who builds Tiny Houses, and Shlomit Moria from Bushwood Creations, who creates sculptures from wood. Later in the year, we also welcomed Fernando Ramirez from Tonantzin Chocolate, who makes organic chocolate and runs a cafe.

Regular users of our site were the Yarra Valley Bee Group, Permaculture Yarra Valley, Beans & Bananas Co-Op, Kofi Kunkpe African Drumming and Tipi Ceremony. We had multiple bookings for use of The Coop, our large multi-purpose space. They were one off users, both groups and individuals. In 2019, Cire Services Inc. used the site for their regular school program. Other schools including Mt Scopus Memorial College and Ghilgai Steiner School, brought groups to use the site. In 2020, we had very few schools use the site due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our rental and school program activities brought in a combined income of \$33,837, which was a decrease of \$12,262 from the 2018-19 financial year.

## Auspicing

We were able to auspice the following grants. This helped community organisations and individual community members, so they could run various activities and events.

August 2018: Leanne Arvantakis-Hall  
- African Immersion (\$1,000)

January 2019: Chelsea McNab -  
EarthArtBeat Festival (\$9,000)

November 2018: Chelsea McNab - Dr. Annie Yoffa: Warburton to Walhalla (\$9,000)

## Future income

The ongoing financial aim of Yarra Valley ECOSS has always been to become financially sustainable. We aim to generate sufficient income from all our various activities to be able to pay our ongoing wages and operational expenses and undertake further projects and activities for the benefit of our community. Thanks to various support received over the COVID period, we weathered the financial storm which means we are well placed to undertake some new projects that we have been financially unable to do. Our focus for the coming financial year will be to keep increasing our site rental income by attracting new tenants and undertaking innovative programs and activities. As part of this looking to the future for further opportunities, we will be undertaking a major power upgrade to help our current tenants and ensure that events we run on site do not encounter power issues. We will at some stage in the future, reapply for DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) status, which will give us greater access to funding opportunities and the ability to attract larger scale donations.

Thank you again as always, to Catherine Aulich our bookkeeper, who has worked tirelessly and provided invaluable support throughout the year.

**Bernie Lobert**  
Treasurer



# Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Profit and Loss - 18 month period ended 31st December 2020

July 2019 - December 2020

	TOTAL		
	JUL 2019 - DEC 2020	JUL 2018 - JUN 2019 (PP)	CHANGE
<b>INCOME</b>			
ATO Cashflow Boost Stimulus	20,452		20,452
ATO JobKeeper Income	123,750		123,750
Bank Interest Income	145	269	-124
ECOSS Shop	3,219	144	3,075
Event Income	14,253	9,550	4,703
Grants / Sponsorships	156,026	116,824	39,202
Membership Income	105		105
Misc. Income eg. utilities contributions	4,241	5,967	-1,725
Rental Income	21,271	15,784	5,486
Schools Income	12,567	30,316	-17,749
Workshop Income	140	315	-175
<b>Total INCOME</b>	<b>A\$356,168</b>	<b>A\$179,168</b>	<b>A\$176,999</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>A\$356,168</b>	<b>A\$179,168</b>	<b>A\$176,999</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Amenities eg. milk/tea/toilet paper	1,966	1,434	532
Audit Expenses	550	550	0
Bank Fees	148	83	64
Bank Fees Merchant		133	-133
Bookkeeping	18,700	10,788	7,913
Communications eg phone/internet	2,699	1,484	1,216
Community Engagement eg. volllie catering / planter boxes	1,138	592	547
Compliance & Registrations ie. CAV fee / trailer rego	306	108	198
Computers/Software		81	-81
Cost of sales	1,910	4,703	-2,794
Depreciation of assets (refer balance sheet)	1,454	4,118	-2,664
Electricity	3,020	3,490	-471
Employment Expenses	198,770	66,846	131,925
Event - Coordination	2,405	2,050	355
Event - General Expenses	3,842	3,551	291
Event - Performers	5,636	4,859	777
Event - Signage/Marketing	3,055	1,292	1,762
Gas	834	254	579
Grants Expenses	29,422	49,666	-20,244
Insurance	2,429	1,700	729
Marketing eg. signage / printing	1,406	608	799
Miscellaneous		270	-270
Office/Stationery Supplies	464	51	413
Postage	181	118	63
Schools Program Expenses	683	4,033	-3,350
Site - Maintenance & Repairs	25,226	6,972	18,254
Subscriptions/Memberships	446	339	107
Volunteer Expenses	139		139
Water	1,466	3,952	-2,486

# Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Profit and Loss - 18 month period ended 31st December 2020

July 2019 - December 2020

	TOTAL		
	JUL 2019 - DEC 2020	JUL 2018 - JUN 2019 (PP)	CHANGE
WorkCover Insurance	4,328	1,047	3,281
Workshop Expenses	176	150	26
YRC Council Fees	576	596	-21
<b>Total EXPENSES</b>	<b>A\$313,375</b>	<b>A\$175,920</b>	<b>A\$137,455</b>
Other Expenses			
BAS Roundoff Gain or Loss	0	0	-0
Grant - Andrews Foundation (deleted)		458	-458
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>A\$0</b>	<b>A\$458</b>	<b>A\$ -458</b>
<b>NET PROFIT / (LOSS)</b>	<b>A\$42,793</b>	<b>A\$2,790</b>	<b>A\$40,003</b>



# Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

## Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2020

	TOTAL		
	AS OF DEC 31, 2020	AS OF JUN 30, 2019 (PP)	CHANGE
<b>Assets</b>			
Current Assets			
Accounts receivable			
Accounts Receivable	12,062	2,143	9,919
<b>Total Accounts receivable</b>	<b>A\$12,062</b>	<b>A\$2,143</b>	<b>A\$9,919</b>
Total Cash On Hand	112,317	63,318	48,999
Inventory	3,159	4,703	-1,544
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>A\$127,538</b>	<b>A\$70,165</b>	<b>A\$57,373</b>
Long-term assets			
Leasehold Improvements	45,944	45,762	182
Nursery Plant/Equip	1,447	1,447	0
Office Equipment / Furniture	2,653	2,171	482
Tractor / Farm Equipment	3,149	2,496	653
<b>Total long-term assets</b>	<b>53,192</b>	<b>51,876</b>	<b>1,316</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>A\$180,730</b>	<b>A\$122,041</b>	<b>A\$58,690</b>
<b>Liabilities and shareholder's equity</b>			
Current liabilities:			
Accounts payable			
Accounts Payable	4,388	3,224	1,164
<b>Total Accounts payable</b>	<b>A\$4,388</b>	<b>A\$3,224</b>	<b>A\$1,164</b>
ATO Liabilities	1,478	3,085	-1,607
Payroll Liabilities	5,952	6,125	-173
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>A\$11,818</b>	<b>A\$12,434</b>	<b>A\$ -617</b>
Non-current liabilities:			
Grants in advance	46,232	29,718	16,513
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>A\$46,232</b>	<b>A\$29,718</b>	<b>A\$16,513</b>
Shareholders' equity:			
Net Income	20,538		20,538
Equity	7,685	7,685	0
Retained Earnings	94,458	72,203	22,255
<b>Total shareholders' equity</b>	<b>A\$122,681</b>	<b>A\$79,888</b>	<b>A\$42,793</b>
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>	<b>A\$180,730</b>	<b>A\$122,041</b>	<b>A\$58,690</b>

# SVS Management Group Pty Ltd

Taxation, Management Accounting & Superannuation

12 Bell Street  
P.O. Box 490  
YARRA GLEN VIC 3775  
Telephone: (03) 9730 1708  
Facsimile: (03) 9730 1091  
Email: [info@svsmanagement.com.au](mailto:info@svsmanagement.com.au)  
Website: [www.svsmanagement.com.au](http://www.svsmanagement.com.au)

ACN 075 992 568  
ABN 28 075 992 568

6 May 2021

## AUDITORS REPORT YARRA VALLEY ECOSS INC

To the Members

### Scope

We have audited the attached special purpose financial reports in respect of the Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc for the 31 December 2020 consisting of statement of receipts and payments. The Committee is responsible for the information contained therein and have determined that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit on the financial reports in order to express an opinion on them to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the basis of accounting is used is appropriate to the needs of the members.

The special purpose financial reports have been prepared for the distribution to the members of the entity for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee's accountability requirements. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial reports to which it relates, to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial reports, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all material respects, the financial reports are presented fairly.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

### AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion the financial reports of the Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc presents fairly the receipts and payments of the entity for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Yours faithfully

*T Shortis*

**TROY SHORTIS MIPA  
SVS MANAGEMENT GROUP PTY LTD**

SVS Management Group Pty Ltd is a CPA Practice  
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**Annual Report Produced by**  
Kylie Barnes and Leanne Arvanitakis-Hall

**Designed by**  
Sam Watson