

Daylesford District Community News Association

Annual Report for the 2021-22



Introduction

The main business of the Daylesford District News Association is to publish The Wombat Post. We have now successfully completed our third year of publication.

The [Wombat Post](#) is an online, community controlled local news and information service. It fills a gap created by the decline of local print news.

Our aim is to inform the Daylesford and Hepburn Springs about news and events that contribute to community building and community well-being. We want to promote a positive image of the local community, to contribute to the historical record, and to provide a medium for advertising activities, clubs, associations, services and trades offered to the community.

Wombat Post

The Wombat Post has again grown considerably over the past year. Our list of subscribers is now nearly 650. We regularly attract around 1200 weekly readers and around 3000 page reads (see below). We have now published more than a1500 stories on local news and features.

During 2022 we had regular columns Petrus Spronk, Victor Szwed, and Tania Loos. Raquel Stevens has joined recently as a columnist and we have had occasional pieces from Gib Wettenhall and Celia Waldron. Many other groups and organisations in the community have submitted local stories and events.

We regularly get local media releases and news letters, and we monitor regional releases for stories that are relevant for Hepburn Springs and Daylesford. Submissions and stories are collected and edited during the week by the editors and the editorial committee.

We thank our many contributors. Local contributions are vital for our success.

The editorial committee, led by our editor, Tim Bach, meets virtually on Thursday evening, reviews the stories for the week, determines priorities,

plans for the following week and deals with any other issues that have come up. The edition for publication is prepared on Friday morning. A weekly update goes out to subscribers shortly after publication and the [Wombat Post facebook page](#) and other social media sites are updated with the main stories.

Over the past year we have maintained our events calendar and letters page and added a jobs board for local employment opportunities. We have also established a partnership with Hepburn Radio and we are a member of the Community News Association of Victoria.

We continue to strive for accuracy and balance and to provide news, features and creative pieces in line with our editorial policy.

We are keen to give individuals and organisations a local voice. To that end we have introduced a letters to the editor section.

Of course without our members, subscribers, readers, advertisers and sponsors there is no Wombat Post. We thank them for their support.

Statistical overview

During the past 12 months to the end of October the Wombat Post had 49,847 visitors and 134,523 page views. This was a 28% increase in engagement with readers over the past year.

The Wombat Post has published 1,513 posts in total over its life-time. This year stories on elections, local icons like the Macaroni Factory, storms and the weather and development controversies like 'sky barrels' were popular. COVID and the Rex were less so.

The top 10 stories this year are listed in the table

Story title	Readers
Northern Lights Coming to Daylesford	3082
Federal Election Candidates for Ballarat	1578
Savoia Welcomes Locals Back to Their 'Local'	1387
Macaroni Factory Gets a New Lease on Life	1307
Bleakley Street Units Removed from Sale	945
Residents Meeting Opposes Dan Murphy's Development in Central Springs Rd	913
Lake Daylesford Threatened by New Gold Mine (April Fools Story)	838
Major Vincent St Accommodation Development Proposed	775
It's Wet and Risky on the Roads and Tracks	701
Help Bring the Big Rainbow to Daylesford	697

Governance

The Wombat Post is published by the Daylesford District Community News Association Incorporated. The members of the DDNCA Community Board are:

Hal Swerissen	President
Mark Rak	Vice president
Kate Redwood	Treasurer
Celia Waldron	Secretary
Tim Bach	Member
Dudley McArdle	Member
Robyn Rogers	Member

The Wombat Post is operated by an editorial committee. The members of the Wombat Post Editorial Committee are:

Tim Bach	Editor
Hal Swerissen	
Celia Waldron	
Mark Rak	
Kate Redwood	
Dudley McArdle	
Robyn Rogers	

Subscribers and members

Our membership and subscribers are critical for the Wombat Post. This year both have continued to grow steadily. Both are up by around 10 percent over last year.

Financial members	74
Subscribers	638

Social Media

The Wombat Post has a Facebook 811 followers (up by 19% over last year), 657 likes (up by 18%) and a regular reach of 400-600. About 70% of our Facebook followers are women and 30% men. About 80% of followers are over the age of 45.

Financial Report

The Association had income of \$5072.23 for the 2021/22 financial year and expenditure of \$2,159.56 for an annual surplus of \$2,912.67. The accumulated surplus on the balance sheet at 30 June was 8,563.33.

Income was mainly generated through memberships, donations and advertising. The main items of expenditure were for insurance and the website.

Income and expenditure

Income	
Members and donations	\$4033.55
Advertising	\$1035.00
Interest	\$3.68
Total	
	\$5,072.23
Expenditure	
Insurance	(\$1,231.56)
Website	(\$473)
Meeting costs	(150)
Printing	(205)
Consumer Affairs Registration	(60)
Community News Association Victoria	(40)
Total	
	(\$2,159.56)
Surplus/(Deficit)	
	\$2,912.67

Assets and liabilities

Assets	
Cash at Bank	\$8,563.33
Total	\$8,563.33
Liabilities	
Creditors	\$ -
Total	\$ -
Net Assets	
	\$8,563.33

Next Year

Although COVID remains a risk, it's impact has diminished. We have seen a progressive return to a more open community with many events returning. This year we proposed to focus on consolidating and strengthening the Wombat Post to ensure its ongoing sustainability. To that end we will:

- Encourage more regular contributions and columns
- Seek additional sponsorship and advertising
- Explore opportunities to increase our engagement with members and subscribers
- Broaden the demographic of our audience