

Administrator's Message



During COVID 19, so many of our great festivals were postponed which was heartbreaking for the organisers and the participants who look forward to these annual events. Where possible some organisers were able to put on their creative hats and find a way to put their events on – albeit with changes.

One such example was the “Girls of our Town” event held in collaboration with Foster Secondary College and Prom Country Aged Care in March. The day before the event, the first COVID restrictions came into place. Organisers had overnight to notify the attendees, caterers, presenters and the public of the cancellation and to plan for the integration of both events and be ready for presentation at the next day. Now that’s adaptability! The event celebrated the achievements of local women past and present and showcased the musical talents of students and community members. The feedback was wonderful and the event uplifted spirits.

Another event that managed to proceed was the 2020 Fish Creek Tea Cosy Festival – eCOsy. The event couldn’t be delivered as planned due to COVID restrictions, and the committee decided to switch to an online event. A new Instagram competition to be known as Tea Cosies in Isolation was established to create some fun and purpose for those feeling saddened, stunned and stranded by COVID restrictions. During the period of the festival over 5000 people visited online including people from Canada, Spain, UK, America, South Africa and the Netherlands. The festival continues to attract attention with over 1200 online viewings in July.

These examples show the resilience of the South Gippsland Community, their ability to use imagination, hard work and a positive attitude in difficult times and I congratulate those organisers.

COVID-19 has been such a difficult and stressful time and we all look forward to a time when the festivals of the Shire can return. Meanwhile let us all enjoy the spring sunshine as the warmer weather returns.

It’s also worth mentioning that support is now available for our tourism industry through our COVID-19 Visitor Economy Grants. If you operate a local tourism business and have experienced a downturn as a result of COVID-19 you may be eligible for a \$1,000 grant. Applications close 18 September so get in quick! Visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/covidsupport for details.

Speaking of congratulating local organisers, Julie and our CEO Kerryn Ellis were lucky to attend the virtual Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective Launch Event with over 100 other participants. It was a wonderful event and it is fantastic to see the support for social enterprise in Gippsland. Those wanting to learn more about the Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective are encouraged to visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gippsec/

Finally, we just wanted to update those that may have received a text message from the Victorian Electoral Commission stating 'Council elections will be held by post in October. Make sure you are correctly enrolled by 4pm 28 August 2020'. This was a generic message and does not apply to South Gippsland this year – it's a great idea to to update your electoral details but our elections won't be held until October 2021.

We hope you are all keeping safe and well. Don't forget if need something to keep yourself occupied during this time our local libraries are offering a click and collect service, you can learn more at www.wgrlc.vic.gov.au/resources/click-collect/

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown –Administrators