



Walking the Walk at the Water Wheel

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited has recently forged a powerful new partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation League in sponsoring the Platypus Walk at Warburton's Water Wheel Centre.

For more than 60 years the NRCL – an independent, non-profit provider of environmental education to students of all ages – has played a role in the conservation and sustainable management of native forests, soil, water, plants and wildlife on both public and private land throughout Victoria.

In late 2007 NRCL relocated from Toolangi to be closer to the pristine eco-systems of the Upper Yarra and is currently developing closer links with the burgeoning regional tourism market.

After a temporary presence at the Warburton Business Enterprise Centre – known locally as the Business Incubator – NRCL successfully tendered to the Shire of Yarra Ranges to lease the upper level of the Water Wheel Centre, relocating earlier this year.

As well as offering a range of educational programs for school groups – including a range of local tours – NRCL's new site features a purpose built, interactive Discovery Centre: a unique 'journey' which will introduce



visitors to multiple aspects of forest life and showcase what the Upper Yarra has to offer.



'UYCEL's sponsorship of \$3000 will ensure the Platypus Walk becomes a major feature of the Discovery Centre,' said UYCEL Executive Officer, Geoff Vickers.

'We applaud this initiative and look forward to continuing our great relationship with the NRCL.'

Above: The entrance to Platypus Walk in the Water Wheel Centre, proudly sponsored by UYCEL; NRCL tours often include the magnificent Skywalk at Cement Creek; Branch Managers Adam Whitworth (Yarra Junction) and Darren Pennington (Warburton) get to know some of our wildlife; the NRCL logo – an increasingly familiar sight around the Upper Yarra.

Community Grants update

We have supported a truly diverse range of community projects this time around: a new chainsaw, a kitchen refit, hot water systems, tents, wildlife research and documentation, a playgroup, and even a 'Master Plan'!

The diversity and quality of these submissions reflects our community's enterprise and willingness to 'have a go'.

Warburton Wool Crafters – \$500 for materials to make quilts for needy children

Warburton Wool Crafters are a small group of locals who get together twice a month to knit and sew.

They often produce goods for donation to worthwhile causes; for example, the Crafters recently made fabric dolls for children in KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) through the Uthando Project (www.uthandoproject.org).

They have now turned their talents to making quilts for children in the Valley who, by necessity, are living in tents and caravans. The grant will enable the group to buy wadding (or 'batting') for these quilts – members and friends donate the other materials required.

Crafter Corinne Vaswani is delighted with the funding. 'UYCEL's generosity will go a long way – for many winters to come,' she said. Anyone interested in participating is invited to call Corinne on 5966 5627.

Upper Yarra Anglican Parish – \$3700 for a kitchen upgrade



St Mary's Anglican Church has been an integral part of the community for 120 years and is available at low cost for a range of activities – from their popular monthly community market to table-tennis and fitness training to a range of private functions.

As new Council regulations for multiple-use kitchens have come into force over recent years, the Upper Yarra Anglican Parish successfully sought a \$3700 grant from UYCEL to enable them to modernise the Church Hall kitchen – and thus continue to offer an affordable venue to the community.

Warburton Bowls Club – \$1000 contribution towards a computer and printer, Internet connection and partial refit

A long-established local club with about 100 members and run entirely by volunteers, WBC needed to upgrade its record-keeping procedures and stay in touch with other clubs and ruling bodies with the purchase of a new computer, printer, Internet access and associated works.

Warburton Advancement League – \$2500 for Warburton Up & Running 2009 plus \$2420 for maintenance of River Walking Tracks



One of UYCEL's strongest traditional partners, the League (affectionately known as WAL) has been a prime mover behind countless community initiatives for more than 50 years.

The Warburton Up & Running 'Family Fun Day', inaugurated in 2004 and held every March, attracts competitors from all over Australia (occasionally, from overseas) and has become a popular event on athletes' calendars – as well as a highly-valued occasion for Primary Schools throughout the Upper Yarra.

Warburton's famous river tracks, started in 1993 as a League project and since extended to more than six kilometres, need constant attention from the equally famous 'River Crew' – all of whom work voluntarily.

'Both of these activities help to promote the beauty of our township while encouraging young and old alike to enjoy fresh air and exercise,' said WAL secretary, Sue Slusarek. 'Ongoing support from our Community Banks helps us keep these projects "up and running".'

Upper Yarra State Emergency Service – \$1195 contribution toward a new chainsaw plus \$900 contribution toward communications room upgrade

VICSES is a volunteer-based emergency service that supports regional communities in the event of floods, severe storms, earthquakes, road accidents and search and rescue situations.

It also performs an invaluable role in supporting other emergency service agencies such as Victoria Police.

UYCEL and our neighbours at Woori Yallock and District **Community Bank**[®] each contributed 50% toward the cost of a much-needed new chainsaw and overdue improvements to the Comms Room at the SES base in Wesburn.

Probus Club of Upper Yarra – \$1374 for a new data projector

Probus Clubs provide retired members of the community – particularly former businessmen – an opportunity to meet, share experiences and support one another.

The new data projector will enable their regular guest speakers to deliver digital content to their audience, such as DVDs and Powerpoint presentations.

Established for 25 years, the Probus Club of Upper Yarra meets every month at Yarra Junction Bowling Club and spouses are welcome.

River Valley Church – \$9000 for a portable office

A part of our community since 2001, River Valley Church serves the Upper Yarra in providing a range of practical support to those in need, particularly families on low incomes, the economically disadvantaged and people who find themselves isolated.

Its current programs include youth groups, a playgroup, a breakfast program for primary school children, a free weekly barbeque lunch, a food pantry, support groups for women and men respectively, 'Careworks' counselling, emergency assistance, chaplaincy and parent programs.

The portable office will be installed behind RVC's shop-front premises in Millgrove, offering more flexible use of the site during visits by social support agencies – such as the Salvation Army, LinC, EACH and St Vincent de Paul – particularly when privacy is required for confidential interviews and counselling.

Wesburn Junior Football Club – \$2964 for two new hot water systems for their Clubrooms

A good hot shower after a game of mid-winter footy isn't much to ask!

WJFC is a family-friendly club of 115 members with a mission to develop strong, confident players by focussing on skills development, fair play and sportsmanship, respect for others, discipline and teamwork.



It fields both female and male teams in the local League and shares its facilities with Yarra Junction Cricket Club.

The UYCEL Board was delighted to assist a valued and long-standing community-based club improve its facilities and, in doing so, help it continue delivering opportunities to local children and teenagers.

Warburton Pathfinder Club – \$3000 contribution towards replacement tents for outdoor activities

Warburton Pathfinders is a member of the worldwide SDA Church Pathfinder organisation and the local Club is about 50 years old.

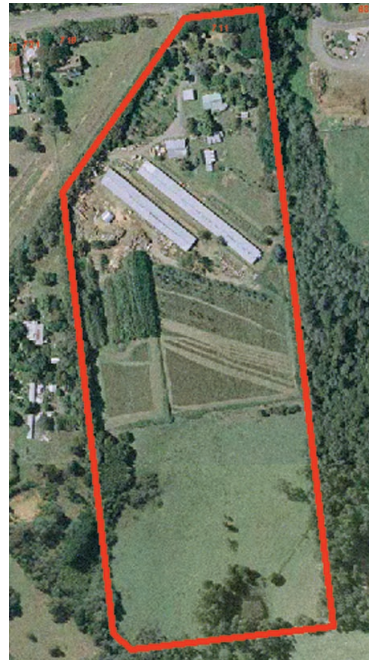
Pathfinders' mission is to encourage self-development, leadership capacity, healthy social interaction, a sense of supportive community, Christian values and strong self-worth in young people.

Much of their activities involve camping out: during 2008 the group has participated in five major outdoor excursions.

Despite a range of ongoing fundraising activities, WPC needed UYCEL's support in replacing their old, much-used and leaky tents – which had started to become a genuine safety challenge.

'The Pathfinders are doing a great job in our community and it was a pleasure to help out,' said UYCEL Director, Max Magee.

Upper Yarra Community Environment Park – \$5000 contribution toward a Master Plan



A local community-based organisation, UYCEP's mission is to develop a vibrant and innovative community environment park which supports and demonstrates sustainable living solutions in the Yarra Valley.

Situated in Old Warburton Road, Wesburn, the Park is a priority project of the State Government supported Upper Yarra Community Building Initiative. It is partnered by the Shire

of Yarra Ranges and Upper Yarra Community House, and strongly supported by State MP for Gembrook, Tammy Lobato, Swinburne University and CERES CEP in Brunswick.

The Master Plan will document the future direction and management of the site and will incorporate a Strategic Plan encompassing a site plan, costings, funding opportunities, zoning recommendations and organisational governance.

UYCEP Secretary, Joe Butler, said that the grant represents an important step toward achieving the project budget of \$40,000.

Warburton Christian School Playgroup – \$2000 ongoing funding

Running once a week for more than two years in the former Seventh Day Adventist School in Warburton, the WCS Playgroup welcomes newborn children up to four- and five-year-olds, each accompanied by a parent (occasionally a grandparent) – all of whom are invited to engage in activities.

The Playgroup, which serves the entire Upper Yarra and has achieved a 5-star rating with peak body Playgroup Victoria, employs a paid professional kindergarten teacher and encourages children to learn and socialise through play and more structured activities, such as music and storytime.

The popularity of the Playgroup – currently averaging 18 children and up to 18 adults every Thursday morning – means that it is running at close to full capacity much of the time.

An important principle behind the Playgroup is accessibility to everyone so participants are only charged a 'gold coin' admission, which makes it difficult to cover rising costs.

UYCEL's contribution will be supporting a truly worthwhile project.

Warburton & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry – \$1500 towards ‘Owls of Warburton’ project

Auspiced by the Chamber of Commerce, local entrepreneurs and naturalists Paul Colcheedas and Alan Seppings plan to seek out and photograph the many species of owls – largely undocumented – in the Warburton region.

The photos will be reproduced as limited-edition fine art prints using the finest available papers and inks, framed and sold to raise funds for Friends of Leadbeater’s Possum, Upper Yarra Conservation Society and the Natural Resources Conservation League.

Planned for public launch as part of Winterfest 2009, the project will feature an information session with specialist guest speakers and an exhibition of the artworks.

A major outcome of the Owls of Warburton project will be greater awareness within the broader community of the biodiversity of our district.

LinC Yarra Valley – \$5000 to cover a regional Medical Support Program

A network of local churches established in 1992, LinC uses teams of trained volunteers to deliver an emergency relief program, a family support program and community transport for the frail aged and people with disabilities.

The Medical Support Program will help meet the needs of chemotherapy patients who have little or no family support by providing trained ‘support companions’ to accompany patients to treatment and see them settled back at home.

Peter MacCallum Hospital will refer patients to LinC and it is expected that other hospitals will become partners in the program.

What’s in a logo?

Observant readers will have noticed the new graphic on our masthead.

Several months ago, the Board resolved to develop a new logo which truly reflected our identity, aims and visions as part of the Upper Yarra community, as well as reaffirming our great partnership with Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited.

A widely publicised open competition was held between August and October. The successful designer proved to be a talented local – Carolyn Maud.

‘I wanted to capture a range of elements in my design,’ said Carolyn. ‘The gumleaves are synonymous with our beautiful local environment and the pair of leaves is symbolic of partnership.’

‘The larger, fully-grown leaf represents the established security and wisdom of Bendigo Bank; the younger leaf, whilst still a Gum leaf, represents the individuality and enterprise of our unique Upper Yarra community.’



Have a say in the **future** of your **community**

Director, Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited

Expressions of interest are invited for the position of Director of Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited, operators of Warburton and Yarra Junction **Community Bank**[®] Branches of Bendigo Bank.

As a volunteer Director you will act as an ambassador for our Branches, actively building their customer base. You will also provide the leadership and management skills at Board level to support and drive the Company’s strategic direction, goals and objectives.

Although the position is voluntary, as a director of our Company you will have a real say in the future direction of both **Community Bank**[®] Branches and your community.

Further information is available from Geoff Vickers on 5966 9028. Please forward your application to: P.O. Box 434, Warburton, VIC. 3799

Community FOCUS

Warburton and Yarra Junction District Bus

The District Bus, jointly supported by UYCEL and the Warburton Advancement League after a successful funding submission earlier this year, has now been in operation for seven months.

Over this time the 21-seater – available from \$20 per hour inclusive – has been used for day and weekend trips by various sporting and community groups, as well as for private functions.

It is available on a ‘first come – first served’ basis, so book early to avoid disappointment!

Call 0437 095 327 for more information – or log on to www.upperyarra.net.au and click on the ‘Community Bus’ link.



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