

CHAIR REPORT

Well what a year it's been! For the first time since EGMI's existence (11 years), the funding agreement with Council needed to be put through a different procurement process, meaning that we had to participate in an open tender. We were thrilled to be announced successful of a four year contract in August. This tender response required a large amount of work on top of the already huge workload of the team. On behalf of the board, we would very much like to thank Hayley, Megan and Lauren for their work in the successful outcome.

We'd also like to again thank the stakeholders for the unwavering support of EGMI during the past year, especially with the uncertainty during the tender process. The relationships and networking despite COVID's best efforts, are continuing to grow and strengthen.

Our need to be adaptive has been needed now more than ever before, with the lockdowns happening on an as needed basis, and in some cases with little warning, our programs are sometimes adjusted on the fly. It's a new world we're operating in and finding ways to succeed is both challenging and exciting.

The new contract with East Gippsland Shire Council provides at least a 4-year clear path to develop long term projects as well as focusing on the yearly Marketing Plan. We're looking forward to seeing what we can do as a team with this new arrangement. We'd also like to thank Destination Gippsland for yet again being a wonderful support to us this year. They're a wonderful team to work with.

We as a board are very proud of the EGMI team for the countless hours of work they do above and beyond the expected. This year has unfortunately seen both Lauren and Megan move on to pursue other careers. We'd like to acknowledge their amazing service to EGMI during their time with us and wish them well for the future. As a result two new team members have joined and we're very excited to warmly welcome Fiona and Ellie.

Joining the board at the last AGM was Rebecca Steenholdt, Chris Banson and Madeleine Preece. Rebecca has a strong background in marketing, events and tourism. Madeleine has decided to relocate permanently after visiting for 20 years and is a director of a Marketing firm based in Melbourne. Welcome to you both, we're glad to have you on the team.

Our task is to find the opportunities that present as challenges, and look positively into the future of 21-22.

Patrick Carson
Chair



Winter Festival of Lights

MARKETING MANAGER'S REPORT

What a rollercoaster of a year.

2020 was spent mostly in lockdown, with East Gippsland recovering from bushfire and businesses adapting to online and takeaway. Many businesses used this time to renovate, learn new skills or build their social media following. Over the course of the year, EGMI also spent time building up our library of images, technology and content.

In 2020 and 2021, EGMI launched the new Visit East Gippsland website along with the new Visit Omeo website and also assisted in content creation and development of the East Gippsland Winter Festival website! Collectively, these websites have been designed as part of the customer funnel to encourage visitors to explore the region.

During the year we achieved over \$2 million worth of publicity for East Gippsland. This is a massive team effort, working with both Greta Donaldson Publicity and Gemini Communications Consulting, local photographers and videographers and pulling everyone together (sometimes at the last minute) to ensure that East Gippsland businesses end up front and centre.

Our social media coverage also grew over the past 12 months, seeing a large spike during the East Gippsland Winter Festival, with interest in our local producers, artists and regional travel.

A massive thank you to the team - Megan, Lauren, Amanda and Nick, who have worked tirelessly through the year. Everyone has worked well beyond their usual hours to provide support wherever needed.



Hayley Hardy
Marketing Manager

LIVE IN EAST GIPPSLAND CAMPAIGN

During the year, it became apparent that living in a regional area was a key priority for many people living in metropolitan areas. To showcase more of the benefits of living in East Gippsland, EGMI created a social media campaign around the benefits of working from home, in East Gippsland.

This campaign reached 142,000 people across the social media platforms and was designed to be rolled out across train advertising and other media. Parts of this campaign had to be put on hold due to COVID restrictions.

EAST GIPPSLAND WINTER FESTIVAL

For the first time in 2021, EGMI was the auspicing body for an external event organiser as well as being the marketing support body.

The East Gippsland Winter Festival was founded and created by Adam Bloem. The event aimed to showcase the diverse East Gippsland arts, food and wine community to visitors and locals through a series of events held across the whole of East Gippsland during the winter months, when visitation is at its lowest. The event was born out of the Black Summer Bushfires, originally intended to be held in August 2020.

With multiple funding sources, many hours of work within communities, a large amount of marketing and media coverage and COVID 19 restrictions to manage, the EGWF ran between June 2020 and July 2021 with more than 85 individual events across the region. There were 47 different event organisers. Estimates of attendees from the event organisers total 18,720 - one of the largest events ever held in East Gippsland!

FINANCE

Over the past 12 months, EGMI has spent \$210,000 on marketing, which included \$20,000 on investment related marketing, \$30,000 on the new Visit East Gippsland website (East Gippsland Shire contributed \$15,000 to the build), \$11,000 on lifestyle marketing and \$65,000 on tourism marketing. The remaining amount has been spread over a variety of campaigns.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE

EGMI created a new visitor website, which went live in late June 2021. The new website reflects current website standards, including more images, up-to-date news feeds and more than 100 pages about the region. Website traffic over the year has increased by 5% to 106,193 new visitors. Given COVID restrictions, visitor bookings are down on 2019.



RESEARCH

EGMI has been conducting research kindly supported by Deloitte Touche Tomatsu. This research shows the numbers, demographics and perceptions of East Gippsland visitors. The research began in November 2020 and will continue to run until end October 2021.

In the data so far, we have:

- 358 respondents
- 70% are travelling with a partner with 29% travelling in groups of 3-4
- 85% said they would come back to East Gippsland soon.
- Visitors spent on average \$128 on travel, \$212 on accommodation, \$233 on food and wine and \$76 on attraction

Other Research

East Gippsland received more than a fifth of the total visitors to Gippsland (according to Tourism Research Australia).

Spend by visitors within the region was significantly higher than previous years (Spendmap) as well as the high-spending season being much longer than the usual Summer and Easter. In 20/21 the spending season ran from December through till the end of June.

The total number of residential building approvals increased by 32% in 20/21 from 2019/20 (REMPPLAN).

MEDIA

Over the past 12 months, East Gippsland Marketing has achieved over \$2million worth of media coverage. This includes numerous articles in metro media publications Herald Sun and The Age, feature articles in major tourism publications such as Out and About with Kids, Traveller and The Captain and many radio interviews.

During 2020, EGMI worked with the TV show 'On Tour with Allan Border' to promote caravanning and road tripping through East Gippsland. The TV Show aired on 7Mate during the weekend and had over 460,000 views and over 1.363million impressions. The show was then available on 7plus for streaming and has so far delivered over 118,000 minutes of viewing.

We also had strong coverage across digital media which resulted in additional engagement across our social media platforms.

DESTINATION MARKETING

EGMI has offered to work with each BTA and have been working with Lakes Entrance, Nowa Nowa, Metung, Mallacoota, Bemm River, Cann River and Omeo on current and future marketing plans. Over the past year, EGMI has assisted the towns with photography, videography, social media, websites, advertising (such as Mallacoota being placed in Caravanning Victoria) and branding.

Lakes Entrance was featured on the TODAY show in 2020, as part of the bushfire anniversary.

The show featured the segment on its social media page resulting in further coverage for the region.



Highlights of the past 12 months included below.



Omeo

Over the past 12 months, EGMI has been involved in branding the Omeo Region in preparation for the opening of the Omeo Mountain Bike Trails. This also included the building of the Omeo Region website. www.visitomeo.com.au

Tracks & Trails

EGMI created (and financed the design of) a hardcopy rail trail map with the East Gippsland Rail Trail Committee. This map has been printed and distributed throughout Gippsland.

Touring

EGMI created a touring map through funding we received from Regional Development Victoria, allowing tourism businesses across the region to participate in the map at no cost. This map has been distributed through Victorian Visitor Centres, through Melbourne hotels and into NSW, ACT and South Australia. So far, 20,000 maps have been distributed since printing in October 2020.



During the year, Tourism Australia created 'Guide to' Australian regions as part of its road to economic recovery on its Instagram and Facebook pages.

Raymond Island image from the Love East Gippsland social media channel was chosen as the leading image as part of the guide. Tambo Wines, Captain's Cove, the Mitchell River Silt Jetties and the Gippsland Lakes were also featured within the guide.

These guides are great examples of generating interest in a region during lockdown and encouraging bookings to areas that some people may never have visited before.

Tourism Australia has a following of over 5m on Instagram and over 8.4m on Facebook.



Ninety Mile Beach video by Hooked on Sand Lakes Entrance was featured on Tourism Australia's Facebook page

Facebook: 54,000 views, over 5,000 engagements



Reshared Love East Gippsland Instagram story by WOTIF.

WOTIF has 14,800 followers and reshared the story about Lakes Entrance Burrunan dolphins.



WELCOME

When you see the car park at the end of the road, you'll know you're in the heart of the town. The car park is a great place to park your car and enjoy the view of the town. The car park is a great place to park your car and enjoy the view of the town.

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MALLACOOTA
VICTORIA'S BEST WORMWATER TOWN

IT'S TRULY ISLAND
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DESTINATIONS

RAYMOND ISLAND

Raymond Island is a beautiful island in the heart of the town. It is a great place to visit and enjoy the view of the town. The island is a great place to visit and enjoy the view of the town.

GETTING THERE

From Melbourne, head west for three hours on the Princes Highway towards the beautiful town of Mallee. The Princes Highway is a great road to travel on and offers a great view of the town.

STAYING THERE

There are a number of accommodation options in the town. These include hotels, motels, and holiday homes. All of these options offer a great view of the town and are a great place to stay.

WHEN TO GO

Visit Mallee any time of the year. The weather is great and the views are beautiful. The town is a great place to visit and enjoy the view of the town.

MOBILE INFORMATION

For more information, visit www.visitmallee.com.au

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6 reasons to visit Omeo

1 POLO, RODEO, RACES
The Easter long weekend is a busy time for this historic town on the Great Alpine Road. Easter Saturday sees the annual rodeo in the heart of town showcasing steer roping, bareback and wild bull riding, including the amateur barrel race where young women on quarter horses make tight clover leaves around three 44-gallon drums. (Park St, March 31, 10am-6pm, \$25 entry, facebook.com/omeorodeo)

Next day it's the whack of mallets out at Cobungra Station for the Dinner Plains Geobung Polo. There's music and the singing of the Banjo Paterson anthem *Waltzing Matilda* before the first chukka, as well as music, food and wine; the day is a lot more than just ponies and mallets. (Cobungra Station, April 1, 10am-4.30pm, adults \$40, geobungpolo.com.au). Also that day is the nearby Tambo Valley Picnic Cup at Swifts Creek. (tambovalleyraces.liron.com)

2 GOLDEN AGE HOTEL
The Golden Age was a magnificent Victorian hotel, three storeys high and wrapped in iron lace and verandahs. Then in the summer of 1939, fires raged out of the mountains and engulfed many of the historic buildings built at the height of the gold boom in the 1860s. The new Golden Age was rebuilt with some magnificent late art deco features including the curved wood reception desk

and the iron exterior light fittings. Now painted an ochre-hued gold, this great old pub offers a comfortable accommodation and decent meals. **7 Tongio Rd, 5159 1344, goldenageomeo.com.au.**

3 GOLD FIELDS
There's an ochre-red scar torn through the earth on the banks of Livingstone Creek where, from 1876 to 1904, the Oriental Company mined for gold using high-pressure water to blast apart the alluvial earth that formed the small gorge containing Livingstone Creek, 2km from the heart of town. In that time more than 170kg of gold was extracted. The area is now a historic park managed by Parks Victoria - the Oriental Claims site. Reef gold was also found between Omeo and Swifts Creek at what was to become the Cassilis mining region. It was once a thriving mining settlement - now it's a ghost town, the remains of which are protected. **Parkweb.vic.gov.au and omeoregion.com.au.**

4 SWIMMING HOLE
One of the beauties of small towns in the High Country are the swimming holes. In the past, a creek or small river was partially dammed, often serving as the town's drinking supply for humans and stock alike. Most were dismantled, while others were washed away. A short walk down Omeo's Creek Street leads to a dam across Livingstone Creek. On

Connection Road towards Benambra. This offers spectacular views of the High Country and drops down into the shallow basin of Lake Omeo and then the historic town of Benambra. **RICHARD CORNISH**

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Meet the sardine fishermen of Lakes Entrance

RICARDO COLLIER | April 24 2018



Richard Collier interviews with Gerry and John...

The fishing port at Lakes Entrance is busy. Boats bring their fish and supplies, fish is made in nets and cages. The sea is filled with the constant presence of diesel. Fish and the fish...

Sardines are fast-growing and are also known as hatters, blue bell and mullet, depending on where in Australia you are fishing for them. They are fully grown at three years, about 15...

There are four different areas where there are commercial fishing grounds in Australia - one off the south east coast of Australia, one off the coast of South Australia and two off the coast of West Australia...

"For the past 30 years Australians have been obsessed with delicate, white-fleshed fish," says Adams. Father Harry has a twenty-year and a son joined by years of sea. "In the 19th century...

"During WWII," says Gerry, "we were fishing Australian salmon to be sent off for war effort". By that stage an oil rig engine had been mounted on the boat to power it out to sea. Australian salmon is a delicate fish...

It has never regained its popular status. Sardines formed 30 per cent of some people's diet in the 1950s. Gerry explains that in the mid-20th century there were substantial changes in refrigeration...

"That is basically what we do today," says Adams. "Except we use cones, the nets are pulled in by motor and we walk the fish up directly from the nets using this," he explains, pointing a big...

"They are about a fifth of what we did in the '50s," explains Gerry. "You lose a day of start to quality in about getting the fish out of the water and into the shop. It is as possible we can do it three days to a matter of seconds". Back on shore, the fish are sorted and some sent to the industrial quick-freezing (QF) machines...

"When asked what is the best way to enjoy sardines, Gerry says, "Just steamed sardines in flour. A little salt and they them in a hot pan with plenty of butter butter". Once we get home (once up to the family conversation), "Cook them in a very hot oven with a little olive oil and lemon juice" is one...

Mark Briggs, owner head chef here, lives in Melbourne. He is a regular customer of Melbourne's produce and uses a more casual style of cooking in the Lakes Entrance restaurant... (Text continues with details of the restaurant and chef's background).



Mark Briggs, owner head chef here, lives in Melbourne...

Back on the boat, Adams prepares to head out through "The first net" to Bass Strait. "The only trouble with sardines is that they're a wild catch," says Adams. "We can't control them like sheep. We have to go out and find them. That gives us plenty to take them into the markets all the time," he explains.

Try 'Coffee in Newtown', 'Open Latte' or 'Ramen'

A Food Lover to Gippsland

Gippsland has some of the best Victoria. In partnership with Joe Esky initiative, which encourages bushfire-affected regions, here's a car with a slew of edible offering stretch of Victoria.



Between the ongoing pandemic and the more important than ever to support the have been more affected. That's the philosophy...

Bassine Specialty Cheeses Bassine has been producing artisanal cheese for the second and third generations...

2125 Bass Highway, Glen Frisles 3991 bassinespecialtycheese.com.au

Sardine Eatery and Bar Some of the region's best fish and seafood joints have reopened. Raymond Hills... (Text continues with details of the eatery and bar).

Udder & Hoe A specialty outgrowth of Kildunya Gen... (Text continues with details of the eatery).

Smoking and brewing is done in-house in philosophy of sustainable consumption... (Text continues with details of the brewery).

Earth & Soul Pizza True to its name, Earth & Soul prices a whole delivery handcrafted pizza... (Text continues with details of the pizza shop).

122 Main St, Burnside VIC 3083 earthandsoulpizza.com.au

This article is produced by Bussell's... (Text continues with details of the article's production).

3AW 693 NEWS TALK (http://www.3aw.com.au) Home (http://www.3aw.com.au) News (http://www.3aw.com.au/category/news) / State's Made in Food... Kate's Week In Food: A rave review for a landmark's new restaurant 18/03/2018

THE AGE regional richard cornish goodfood.com.au | 7 Long road to the Long Paddock This chef couple plan farm from fertile farmland to create a country gem... (Text continues with details of the farm and chef's background).



C... ..



SIX REASONS TO VISIT ... BUCHAN

AS BUCHAN GROWS
 11 March 2021 1:07pm

RATCH
 In a fortnight's time the population of Great Creek will roughly have risen to 1200 when the former Shalvey Shire and Great Creek Shire merge to form the 11th Local Government Area (LGA) in Victoria. The rugged northeast has been carved out of bush and while it's not a beachside destination, it's the type of non-people-are-elsewhere - some might say - that offers a sense of peace and tranquility. Local entrepreneur Mark Shalvey has opened a new, Great Creek Beach Cafe, including the venue of the day. There will be the usual Salween on the left, the beach will have several of a bar named from a sea stack. There are 10 more generally accessible sites for those wanting to see and enjoy the beauty. February 17 Great Creek Beach Cafe, Great Creek Beach, Buchan, Victoria 3633. www.greatcreekbeachcafe.com.au

GAMES
 Some of the Buchan Lakes are now by Paddy's Winery, Paddy's Farm and Royal Cove are naturally connected with beautiful views, wildlife and scenic shapes. The lakes were discovered in 1957 and the facilities surrounding them developed in the 1970s in the style of California Longlake, giving the park a different character. There are lovely walks on the park and on the lake, consider a trip to the park for a well-deserved picnic. paddywinery.com.au

THE BUCHAN COTTAGE
 The old Buchan Cottage Hotel was built in 1911, a charming well-preserved building that was a focus of community life. When it closed down in April 2014, the people of Buchan started a crowd-funding campaign to restore it. Donations have given the community and around the globe raised \$400,000 towards the \$1.2 million rebuild. While a lot of the work was done, the new Buchan Lakes Hotel has a great look, from the former fishing net net from the traditional fishing and carpentry from fishing around the lake garden. The hotel contains old but new built from local stone and concrete finished elements. Come here for the atmosphere and scenic views. 11 Main Rd, Buchan, Victoria 3633. www.buchanlakes.com.au

BOOKINGS
 Eggs and Bacon (Limestone) have a farm just out of town where they raise Angus cattle and grow sheep. The main milk up to the burgers and pies in their cafe at the 2700 Buchanan Valley Roadhouse. Expect a delicious lamb shank and veg while you wait with golden potato in a shabby beef pie with seasonal seasonal vegetables the generous amount of gravy. There's a 12 seat cafe where you'll find some eggs and some bread, have a Buchan Egg. It's a great spot to have a quick meal on the table outside, where you can meet the number of dogs on the back of your pants by 11 Main Rd, Daily Town Sign, 3633 11 11 11.

Sardine Eatery and Bar puts good produce on the menu in Gippsland

RICHARD CORNISH Dec 18 2017 at 1:37 PM



Putting the produce on the table, sardine pâté on crumpets. Photo supplied

There's a large photograph of fresh sardines above the fireplace at this casual waterside bar and restaurant in Paynesville, East Gippsland. There are sardines on the menu – fresh from the port at Lakes Entrance – brined, hot-smoked, then served on a crumpet as pâté. And the little silver-coloured fish also lend their name to the new kitchen from former Vue de Monde head chef Mark Briggs and his partner Victoria Hollingsworth, who leads the front-of-house team.

Sardine Eatery & Bar sits in a new building looking over the water towards Raymond Island. The fitout is modern and beachy, with white walls, blue trim, blondwood furniture and polished concrete floors. There are 30 seats inside and a further 30 outside.

The menu is based on what Briggs' suppliers bring through the front door. There is so much good produce in the area," he says. "The seafood from Lakes (Entrance) is spectacular." There could be flathead pan-roasted in butter served on pearl barley orzotto with samphire, or, when Bass Strait bugs are in season, they might be served with grapefruit and rocket grown in nearby Lindenow.

While Briggs likes the produce to do the talking, he doesn't hide his mastery of modern fine-dining technique, so expect beautifully finished dishes based on a lifetime perfecting technique.

Open Tue-Thu noon-9pm, Fri-Sun 8.30am-9pm.

Shop 3, 65-68a Esplanade, Paynesville, 03 5156 7135, sardineeaterybar.com



BOOKINGS
 Eggs and Bacon (Limestone) have a farm just out of town where they raise Angus cattle and grow sheep. The main milk up to the burgers and pies in their cafe at the 2700 Buchanan Valley Roadhouse. Expect a delicious lamb shank and veg while you wait with golden potato in a shabby beef pie with seasonal seasonal vegetables the generous amount of gravy. There's a 12 seat cafe where you'll find some eggs and some bread, have a Buchan Egg. It's a great spot to have a quick meal on the table outside, where you can meet the number of dogs on the back of your pants by 11 Main Rd, Daily Town Sign, 3633 11 11 11.



Looking out the bridge, 11 Main Rd, Daily Town Sign, 3633 11 11 11.

THE BUCHAN
 This is where local limestone coal off in the hills. Made of the same limestone from which the caves are formed, the surrounding hills give with white and orange hues of above and below. As do here, the Buchan Lakes has formed a deep pool of water. Along walks. A grand beach gives way to a series of narrow paths to which ladders speak. Take the path to the lake outside, where you can meet the number of dogs on the back of your pants by 11 Main Rd, Daily Town Sign, 3633 11 11 11.

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Stalactites and books at Buchanan.

THE BOARD



Patrick Carson
Chair



Vanessa Medling
Deputy Chair



Tim Morrison
Treasurer



Chris Banson



Adam Bloem



Courtney Campbell



Tamara Cook



Chris Martin



Bryan McCormick



Madeleine Preece



Jaime Savory



Rebecca
Steenholdt



Lyn Wallace-Carroll

THE SUPPORTERS

MARQUEE SUPPORTERS

East Gippsland Shire Council
Patties Foods Ltd
Workways Australia Ltd

SUPPORTERS

Ace Radio
Ausure Insurance Brokers
3875 Design & Drafting
Accounting Solutions
Albert & Co Catering
ANZ
Bairnsdale Club
Bairnsdale Quarries
Bairnsdale Racing Club
Bairnsdale Refrigeration & Air
Conditioning
Bairnsdale Tyre Service
Blay Builders Pty Ltd
Brooker Builders
Bruthen Inn Hotel
Bullant Brewery
Cameron Outdoor
Captains Cove
Cashmans Industries
CM & HM Banks
Cold Az Refrigeration
Cranes Asphaltting & Bitumen
Sealing Pty Ltd
Crossco Consulting Pty Ltd

Crowther & Sadler
Cupcake Communications
Dahlsens Building Centres
Pty Ltd
Development Solutions
Victoria
Dwyers Gippsland
Dyers Gippsland Transport
Dyson's Bus Company
Eager & Partners
East Gippsland Asset
Protection
East Gippsland Variety Tours
Eastwood Retirement
Elders Real Estate Bairnsdale
Ensay Winery
Europcar Bairnsdale
Fenning Bairnsdale Pty Ltd
Findex Bairnsdale
Four Mates from Lakes
(Waterwheel)
Forge Creek Free Range
Kennedy Trailers
Gippsland Finance Solutions
Gippsland Solar
GJ Gardener Homes East
Gippsland
Grand Terminus Hotel
Hank Pty Ltd
Happy Changemakers
Inspiring Success

James Yeates Printing &
Design
Jansons Concrete & Haulage
Jarvis Sand and Soil
Jayco Gippsland
Kalbar Resources
King & Heath First National
Real Estate
Lakes Entrance Helicopters
La Riva
LA Photography
LEFCOL (Lakes Entrance
Fishermen's Co-op Ltd)
Lightfoot & Sons
Liv Mate
Mr D Food & Coffee
One Plan Land Development
Group
Metung Hot Springs
New Leaf
Nicholson River Winery
Northern Ground
Paul Moncrieff Electrical
Peter Dullard Motor Group
PFD Food Services
Reece Pty Ltd
Red Bluff Brewers
Ritchies IGA

Riviera Barns & Garages
Riviera Joinery
Riviera Nautic
Riviera Taxis & Hire Cars Pty
Ltd
Roots 2 Leaves
Saltwater Properties Pty Ltd
Sands Building Design
Sardine Eatery and Bar
Sea Safari Eco Tours & Water
Taxi
Signline Aust.
Simon Anderson Consultants
SLAP Architects
Sureway Employment &
Training
TAFE Gippsland
Tambo Valley Honey
Tambo Waste Pty Ltd
The Big Garage
The Long Paddock
The Riversleigh
The Stables
Warren, Graham & Murphy
Wayne Rowett Architect and
Aleada Pty Ltd
Wigney Osteopathy
ZCG Scalar