

## *Give Where You Live Stories*



The Mumbulla Foundation was established 15 years ago as a charitable not-for-profit organisation to support local community activities of a non-business kind. It raises funds from private donations, its own fund raising activities and from the local Bega Valley Shire Council. Funds totalling about \$75,000 a year are returned to the community as small grants of up to \$7,000 each, helping small groups to carry out projects in a wide range of areas. Since its inception the Foundation has provided almost \$1m to over 80 groups.

In regional areas like the Bega Valley charitable organisations such as the Mumbulla Foundation play an important role. Not only are average incomes generally lower than in major cities (Bega Valley incomes are 30% below the State average) but regional communities rely more on small community groups to provide social cohesion and purpose. The Bega Valley Council in being a financial partner in the Foundation's work recognises this reality. Unfortunately while the need for funds is greater in lower income areas, the task of fund raising itself is necessarily more challenging with relatively few large businesses and fewer potential individual donors.

The Foundation is very aware of the importance of returning as much as possible of the funds it raises back to the community. Administrative costs are kept to a minimum. No staff are employed with costs largely being of an unavoidable regulatory kind. A group of volunteer directors is responsible for running the business.

Over the years the Mumbulla Foundation has supported up to 35 projects a year covering all kinds of worthwhile community activities including small university scholarships. Here are just a few examples of Mumbulla Foundation grants.

### **SPAN, suicide prevention action network.**

Last October, about 120 people walked in solidarity to raise awareness about suicide prevention. Midway through the walk a huge parachute was used to connect the walker in activity symbolic of SPAN's lifesaving support service.

SPAN, the Bega Valley Suicide Prevention Action Network used their Mumbulla grant of \$1,000 to organise and promote their second *Walk With Us* community activity. Funds were used to hire and set up a marque, with promotional balloons, ribbons, brochures and the parachute while the fifties band, the Hooks entertained the crowd.

Liz Seckold, SPAN's chairwoman said "The aim of Walk With Us is for the prevention of suicide in our community as well as reducing the impact on those bereaved by suicide."

SPAN aims to reduce the stigma of suicide by encouraging people to access support services. “We aim to deposit information everywhere and let people know its okay to ask questions,” Ms Seckold said.

Family and friends of people who suicided walked with local police, mental health workers and community members along the rehabilitated Bega River and near the Old Bega Racecourse on a return walk.

SPAN patron and former Member for Eden-Monaro Mike Kelly said, ‘As we know, living in a rural area can amplify the feeling of isolation and many people aren’t aware of where to go for help, but people should reach out and not let things fester,’ he said.

SPAN relies on volunteers and supportive local businesses and organisations such the Salvation Army, NRL, Rotters-bikies, Ability Links, the Reach out Foundation, the Schizophrenia Fellowship and Work Ability and community members to help promote and facilitate the project.

### **Pearls Place Kitchen**

Pearls Place kitchen located at the Pambula Masonic Centre has been upgraded using funds provided by the Mumbulla Foundation. A grant of \$7,500 provided to the Reaching Out Foundation paid for the purchase of two commercial refrigeration units, ten dining room tables, steel shelving and a lockable storage unit as well as a variety of kitchen items and utensils.



Pearls Kitchen provides healthy meals to marginalised members of the community and at the same time offers a friendly and welcoming environment. Guests are often trying to survive on a low income or may be socially isolated or just lonely. By offering basic sustenance and opportunities for social inclusion the facility serves a very worthwhile purpose in the community.

### **Southern Women’s Group**

A grant of \$2000 was provided in 2015 for the Women’s Life Skills Toolbox Project. This allowed funding of workshops in art, cooking, gardening and fitness to build self-esteem, confidence and team building.

## **REAP by OzHarvest**

REAP by OzHarvest collects and chills food from food businesses and primary producers in the Bega Valley area and provides it to charitable organisations for distributing as meals to needy people. The Mumbulla Foundation provided a grant of \$2000 in 2015 to help with the purchase of portable powered refrigerator/freezers.



*Self funded REAP Food Rescue's Christine Welsh and Peter Buggy receive their Mumbulla Foundation Grant from Foundation chair, Gary Potts and Mayor Michael Britten.*

## **Jellat Rural Fire Brigade**

The Jellat Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) provides firefighting, mitigation and emergency services to a wide area covering South Bega, Black Range, Jellat, Kalaru, Wallagoot and Bournda as well as backup to Bega HQ and Tathra brigade. The Jellat volunteer brigade also provides safety and a social focus for the local community and is actively involved in fund raising and educational campaigns.

The Mumbulla grant of just over \$2000 was used towards essential ancillary items not provided by the NSW RFB such as hand tools, first aid kit, radios, torches, specialised personal protective equipment (PPE), GPS units, weather monitoring equipment and furniture and fittings for the fire station.

## **Twofold Aboriginal Corporation – culture through art workshops**

The Mumbulla Foundation grant of \$7,500 was used by the Twofold Aboriginal Corporation to conduct a series of workshops with elders at the corporation's Jigamy Farm in Pambula. Twofold Aboriginal Corporation provides support services for Aboriginal clients who are frail, aged or disabled to assist them in living independently at home, while the farm assists with the creation of training and employment opportunities for the local Aboriginal community. Coordinator, Julie Nagle, said workshops were held on topics as diverse as family history, natural plant dyes, ceramics and pottery.

“The aim of the workshops was to help preserve Aboriginal history of the local region by developing new skills through which local elders can pass on their stories using a variety of

art methods and mediums,” Julie explained. The pottery and ceramic workshops were especially popular with elders with one participant commenting, ‘I was doubtful at the beginning but I’ve made plates and bowls, six articles that I will pass on to family members. Memories of me when I’m gone.’

Julie said the project was a way for people to contribute to Aboriginal history of the local region, helping to preserve the culture and history. “In the past Aboriginal families were force to leave and move around. This made it difficult to preserve any possessions,” she said. A compilation of stories recalling the local indigenous history was published in a booklet.

*Pottery workshop and artifacts*

