

Ballarat PERMACULTURE Guild



Annual Report 2022

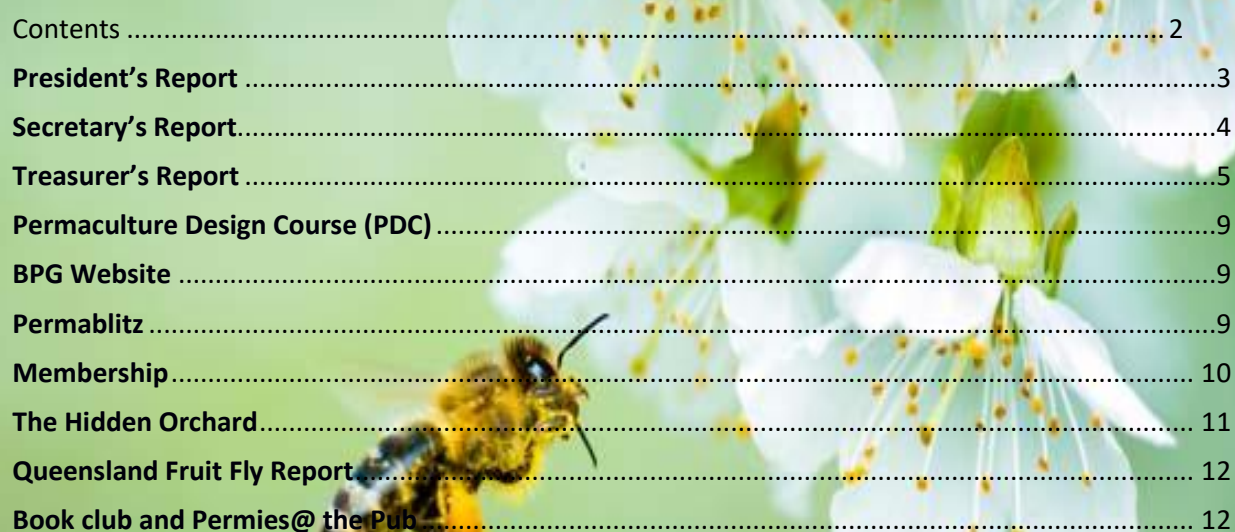
Vision

Our vision is to have a resilient, creative, strongly-connected local community.

Purpose

We build personal and community capacity through sharing permaculture knowledge and sustainable lifestyle skills in our workshops, skill shares, community working bees and annual Permaculture Design Course. We connect people through diverse social activities, including farm & garden tours, public talks, book clubs and informal gatherings at local pubs & markets.

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This report covers the period from 9 November 2022 to 15 November 2022.

The Ballarat Permaculture Guild Incorporated (BPG) committee at the time of the report comprises:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| President: | Steve Burns |
| Vice President: | Fiona Williamson |
| Treasurer: | Jean Watson (also Queensland Fruit Fly project leader) |
| Secretary: | René de Jong |
| Ordinary Members: | Ellen Burns, Barry Gibson, Breánna Hodges (resigned), James Hosking, Liz O'Dwyer (resigned), Rhea Thorn. |

President's Report

An AGM is a natural time for reflection and as I am retiring as President this year, I'm looking back on the last three years which have been dominated by the COVID pandemic. It has been a time of much reduced activity for BPG although I'm pleased that we managed to run two Permaculture Design Courses during that period. Many of our activities, including Permablitzes, workshops and social events, have been suspended since early 2020 and are only slowly returning. It was great to have the recent Permablitz at Uniting (Corner Queen Street and Dyte Parade). The Hidden Orchard ran a pruning workshop earlier in the year and Permies @ the Pub has been very well supported in recent months. These are just the start of our return to a fuller program. I encourage everyone to come along to whatever in-person activities BPG might be offering... and perhaps get involved in organising some of them! (If there's something you think BPG should be doing, please contact a committee member to help make it happen. We'll put you in touch with the right people).

One sad aspect of the pandemic was the division that took place as people adopted hard line positions for or against vaccines and/or mandates. These debates have raised questions about sources of information, validity of evidence, science, conspiracy theories and the degree to which personal freedoms can be curtailed for the sake of the public good. Unfortunately, a deep schism has arisen in the permaculture community with most prominent permaculture figures supporting a science-based, pro vaccine approach and a couple of others being highly vocal in the opposite direction. Those adopting an anti-vax and anti-mandate view moved to an extreme libertarian stance which saw some of them promoting far right parties (with terrible human rights and environmental policies) at the 2022 federal election. I have good friends on both sides of this debate and I fear that the division will harm the permaculture movement for many years to come.

What can we do in response to such times and dilemmas? I suggest that we review our actions at two levels: household and community. COVID saw many Permies households relatively well prepared for lockdowns, with veggies and fruit trees already planted, chickens in runs, food in the larder and skills already acquired! While shoppers scrambled to stockpile toilet paper, many Permies were happy with the level of household resilience and independence they had already achieved. Others identified gaps in their preparedness and quietly went about filling them. Although the pandemic restrictions have retreated, the benefits of household resilience and freedom from reliance on large external systems (e.g., supermarkets & national and international supply chains) have been well demonstrated so I encourage everyone to continue to build stronger more independent households.

Building community resilience is more important than ever. Perhaps the most important part of community resilience is the social network of support and cooperation that arises when people consciously decide to connect. You can live in a town surrounded by people, but that doesn't mean there is community. Community happens when we make the decision to get to know each other and spend time together. That might mean working together, cooperating on projects, or it might mean sitting laughing in the pub or under a tree full of blossom.

Over the coming months of Spring and Summer, I encourage all BPG members and friends to make the most of the season, to build both household and community resilience. Please join in with our BPG events (and help organise them!) but also create your own informal gatherings to learn, grow or simply be together.

I wish you all a bountiful 2023! Let it find us happier, healthier and more connected than ever!

Steve Burns

Secretary's Report

I came onto the committee in November 2020 and was happy to be involved in several activities and sub groups including becoming Secretary with the changes through the year. I take minutes, put out agendas and respond to correspondence as required. I have also worked on compliance and renewal of rolling documentation, also a required role of the secretary. Throughout the Covid-19 restrictions, I would need to set up Zoom meetings.

I applied for, and was successful in obtaining an Australian Registered Body Number which increases our eligibility for some grants plus give us access to better internet technology emailing options.

As a group, the committee has progressed some written statements around our privacy policy, actions and attitudes about the Covid-19 pandemic, things that get easily put on the backburner but I persisted in leaving it on each of the monthly agenda items until they were actioned.

I will be stepping down from the Secretary role but wish to stay on the committee of the BPG to focus on delivering more hands-on activities and working more broadly with the membership and the Ballarat and surrounding community to enhance our relationships with, and resilience of the community.

My passion is healthy food and access to it so expect me to bob up in this area in the future.

René de Jong



Treasurer's Report

Financial Report 2022

1. Part A: Balance Sheet

BPG Inc.

Balance sheet for the year ended 30 June 2022

As of 30/06/2022 (in Australian Dollars)

Current Assets

| Notes | Account | 30/06/21 Balance | 30/06/22 Balance |
|-------|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>Bank Accounts</i> | | |
| | ASPDC Account | \$19,873.67 | \$12,392.44 |
| | Membership Account | \$8,894.79 | \$10,677.42 |
| | New General Account | \$645.17 | \$424.61 |
| 1 | The Hidden Orchard Account | n/a | \$921.36 |
| | TOTAL Bank Accounts | \$29,413.63 | \$24,415.83 |
| | <i>Investment Accounts</i> | | |
| | Term Deposit | \$40,789.69 | \$40,932.23 |
| | TOTAL Investment Accounts | \$40,789.69 | \$40,932.23 |
| | <i>Petty Cash</i> | \$172.65 | \$353.70 |
| | Total Current Assets | \$70,375.97 | \$65,701.76 |

Non Current Assets

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 | Trailer | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| 3 | Trailer Contents | \$1000.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| 4 | Library Books | \$6,618.64 | \$6,618.64 |
| 5 | Books on hand for Sale | \$795.00 | \$1,112.21 |
| 6 | T-shirts on hand for sale | | \$680.00 |
| 7 | QFF Traps for sale | n/a | \$184.00 |
| 8 | THO Assets | \$1,756.00 | \$1,756.00 |
| | OVERALL TOTAL | \$80,545.61 | \$77,052.61 |

2. Part B: Income Statement

BPG Inc.

Income statement for the year ended 30 June 2022

| INFLOWS | Notes: | | |
|----------|--------|--|-------------------|
| | | Grant Income | \$0.00 |
| | | Fundraising: THO Sausage Sizzle | \$746.27 |
| | | Interest Income (incl. Term deposit) | \$145.20 |
| | | Membership | \$2,728.72 |
| | 9 | PDC fees | \$0.00 |
| | 10 | Returned Honorarium | \$150.00 |
| | | Sales | |
| | | Books | \$223.60 |
| | | QFF Traps | \$486.63 |
| | | THO: Jams etc | \$293.50 |
| | | TOTAL INFLOWS | \$4,773.92 |
| | | | |
| OUTFLOWS | | | |
| | | BPG Admin | |
| | | Bank charges | \$7.60 |
| | 11 | ASIC | \$422.00 |
| | 11 | ARBN | \$67.20 |
| | | BPG Marketing | \$70.90 |
| | | Consumer Affairs Victoria | \$60.10 |
| | | PO Box | \$144.00 |
| | 12 | Exec Committee Member Payments | \$0.00 |
| | | Insurance (Trailer & Members) | \$210.00 |
| | 13 | IT Services | \$953.82 |
| | | Trailer registration | \$61.40 |
| | | TOTAL BPG Admin | \$2,238.93 |
| | | | |
| | | PDC | |
| | | Admin, bookings/payments, offsite coordination | \$2,189.60 |
| | | Catering | \$34.40 |
| | | PDC Student Books | \$76.28 |
| | | Presenter Fees | \$2,002.50 |
| | | Venue Hire | \$180.00 |
| | | TOTAL PDC | \$4,482.78 |
| | | | |
| | | QFF Program | |
| | | Traps | \$890.73 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| | Education and stall expenses | \$475.41 |
| | TOTAL QFF Expenses | \$1,366.14 |
| Purchase of items for sale | Sausage sizzle expenses | \$272.25 |
| | Books | \$303.48 |
| | TOTAL Purchase of items for resale | \$575.73 |
| Member benefits | Calendars, envelopes & postage | \$947.07 |
| Member training | | \$0.00 |
| | TOTAL Member benefits | \$947.07 |
| Workshops | Consumables | \$28.80 |
| | Presenter Fees | \$176.24 |
| | Refund of workshop fees | \$0.00 |
| | Venue Hire | \$75.00 |
| | TOTAL Workshop | \$280.04 |
| | TOTAL OUTFLOWS | \$9,648.78 |
| | OVERALL TOTAL | -\$4,874.86 |

3. Part C: Notes to the financial statements

BPG Inc.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2022

Part A:

1) The Hidden Orchard Account

A separate account for The Hidden Orchard project was created on 26/11/21, and \$880.07 transferred to this account in recognition of past THO fundraising.

2) Trailer

The value of the trailer is assessed at \$0 as it is fully depreciated, however for insurance (replacement) purposes it is valued at \$1,000.

3) Trailer Contents

The contents of the trailer, tools etc. is currently valued at \$1,000 and for insurance (replacement) purposes is also valued at \$1,000.

4) Library Books

Last year's value plus cost price of new books.

5) Books on Hand for sale

Unsold books purchased for resale. Valued at cost.

6) T-shirts on hand for sale

T-shirt stock appears not to have been valued in the past but at \$680 this is not insignificant.

8) QFF Traps for sale

23 traps in stock. These are sold at \$8 to members (close to marginal cost) and \$10 to non-members. They have been valued at \$8. Some trap sales are also reflected in increased holding of petty cash, as they were sold at the market stall.

9) THO Assets

Tools valued at replacement value.

Part B:

9) PDC Fees

No PDC was held during 2022 due to Covid-related disruptions and burnout in the education team during 2020 and 2021, as well as perceived Covid-related financial risk. PDC expenses in this report are those remaining from the 2021 PDC.

10) Returned Honorarium

Secretary honorarium returned by Lisa Hofler after her move to Queensland.

11) ASIC and ARBN

Registration for ASIC and ARBN are one-off expenses.

12) Office-bearer Honoraria

Payment of honoraria to office-bearers was overlooked until after the end of the financial year, so payments for 2022 will appear in next year's accounts.

13) IT Services

IT Services include web hosting, Zoom subscription, and s2member.

Jean Watson

Permaculture Design Course (PDC)

The full BPG Committee held a special meeting to consider our educational offerings in 2022 and decided NOT to run a PDC during that year. Financial members can access the Milkwood Permaculture Living course at a 25% discount. Workshops and social events returned and we expect the momentum to build for another successful PDC in 2023. We intend the 2023 PDC to be a 'full contact' PDC similar to those conducted in recent years.

Steve Burns

BPG Website

Ballarat Permaculture Guild's website blog continues to provide updates regarding the latest news from the Committee and interesting articles. Due to COVID and the lack of physical activity the number of updates has been limited. We would really appreciate some writers to contribute to the blog with interesting articles. Articles are also shared to Facebook to provide further reach and interest in the Guilds activities.

The website also allows members to access their member benefits as well as joining/renewing membership, with online payments via Stripe.

Barry Gibson

Permablitz

We had a very successful relaunch of Permablitz post-2021 lockdowns. This is the only Permablitz activity since last year's AGM report and highlights the features of this activity.

Held on 2 October at UnitingCare. 15 people attended (several new young people to Ballarat plus housemates, partners and other interested people). Many neighbours slowed for a look-see and several popped into chat and took info from our reception stall at the front gate, including on PDC.

Althea Oliver, Emily Stewart and Jenny Tait Murnane assisted in the planning session. On the day Emily and Jenny were joined by Rhea as co-facilitators. Other committee members to attend: James and René.

Jenny's husband Damien, ran a skill share demo in the construction of world's most robust compost bays. Jenny explained the reason behind the sun orientation of the new vegetable patches to the participants. Rene gave a 'Composting 101' (verging towards Advanced Composting) to the participants over lunch. Ivan and staff from UC generously held a BBQ and put on tea/coffee for the team.

Achieved on the day:

- We installed four raised garden beds
- With Rene's help, rediscovered the hidden irrigation system
- Replaced a long rotten garden bed edging
- Removed a rotten garden bed and placed soil in other beds
- Rebuilt two compost bays
- Cleaned out the courtyard and weeded the beds
- Planted herb beds in the courtyard
- Planted succulents into the raised concrete beds
- Weeded, weeded and more weeding!



Fiona Williamson

Membership

As of the 24th October 2022 BPG had 131 memberships (household memberships are counted as 2 members), with many of those being couples or family memberships. Although membership has grown slowly in 2021, it *has* continued to grow which is pleasing.

People are able to join, renew and pay online. Automated renewal notices are sent to members shortly before their membership expires. Earlier in the year the renewal function had a few issues, resulting in members not receiving their renewal notice or not being able to pay. BPG emailed those people individually to check if they wish to renew.

All members who renewed by October 31st, 2022 will receive a free Permaculture 2022 calendar (valued at \$13.95).

Member benefits include:

- support our local permaculture group
- access our Intro to Permaculture, Permaculture Design and other courses at a reduced cost.
- take advantage of our arrangement with Milkwood whereby BPG members can have access to their courses & the Milkwood book at a 25% discount.
- discounted Queensland Fruit Fly sticky traps as part of our community engagement and education program.
- have access to our extensive Permaculture library
- may access significant discounts on certain items as and when available. (We recently ran an arrangement with Permaculture Principles Bookshop whereby members received 15% off books purchased)

This year, the committee has decided to introduce a life membership category to be awarded to a person, or people, based on a set of criteria developed for consideration of life membership. This

year, two (a single person and a couple) worthy members have been nominated and will receive their awards at the Annual General Meeting. They are Mick and Jackie O'Meara and Karen Fitzpatrick. The committee extends its sincere gratitude for their past involvement and the legacies they have left with the Ballarat Permaculture Guild and offers them our best wishes.

Barry Gibson

The Hidden Orchard

The Hidden Orchard (THO) harvests fruit from backyard or public land fruit trees and distributes the harvest one third to the homeowner, one third to the pickers and one third to charity.

Founded in 2017, THO is a volunteer group auspiced by Ballarat Permaculture Guild.

Committee members: Ellen Burns (President), Karen Elford (Secretary), Will Sinclair-Huggins (IT and Data), Andrina Mitchell (Social media), Charissa Johnson

2022 stats (so far!):

Fruit harvested: 997.8kgs, harvest volunteers: 319, properties: 157, recipients: 19.

A big highlight this year has been adding two brilliant new members to our committee, Karen Elford and Andrina Mitchell. Both have settled in brilliantly and having a reliable secretary is making Ellen's job as President much easier!

We have lost some dear committee members this year too. Leo Rennie (previously Treasurer), Pat Withell and Kim Ali have all resigned due to overwhelm, burnout and competing commitments elsewhere. All were long-term committee members that have been involved for the last 3-4 years, and we thank them profusely for all they have contributed!

The Hidden Orchard has produced its own annual report for 2022 which is appended to this BPG Annual Report and further details of its activity can be found there.

Ellen Burns (THO President)



Queensland Fruit Fly Report

Early in 2021, Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) was found in our region for the first time by a member of BPG. After several committee discussions, it was decided that BPG should establish a monitoring and education program for the benefit of both our members and the wider community. Team members included Elizabeth Moss, Ben Nunquam (from THO), James Hosking, Breanna Hodges, Barry Gibson and Jean Watson. The group has a wide variety of skills and working together has been enjoyable and productive.

The program launched on October 9th, 2021 with a stall at the Ballarat Farmers Market, and was very well received by the public, with many members of the public thanking us for taking the initiative to establish the program. We have garnered a lot of positive publicity, including radio interviews, and articles in The Courier and Ballarat Times. The stall has also attracted attention from market-goers interested in joining BPG.

As of late October (2021) we had distributed more than 50 traps, with excellent coverage across Ballarat's northern and central suburbs. Southwestern suburbs were less well represented, possibly reflecting the typical make-up of attendees at the Ballarat Farmers Market. We also had volunteers monitoring in surrounding areas from Moyston to Ballan, and Clunes to Scotsburn. Further attempts will need to be made to find monitoring volunteers in under-represented areas including Delacombe, Warrenheip, Miner's Rest, Smythesdale/Scarsdale and Creswick. No QFF sightings were recorded through the Spring, Summer and Autumn period which was great news.

Our plans include continuing with the market stall until Christmas, with a festively decorated stall for the Christmas market. From January we will shift our focus from attracting monitoring volunteers to education regarding garden hygiene and prevention strategies. The team will take a break from May to August, starting next monitoring season in September 2023. If we find the market stall becomes very quiet later during the season, we will be ready to change our strategy, but the stall was busy last year and is proving to be an effective way of reaching the public. If we have reports of QFF we will consider making a bulk purchase of nets, to enable BPG members and members of the public to purchase these at cost price.

(Jean Watson) Rhea Thorn and James Hosking

Book club and Permies@ the Pub

These are social events. The book club is a lot of fun and whilst there is some structure and discipline required to read the book (RetroSuburbia, The Downshifter's Guide to a Resilient Future), we spread the reading load as 3 or 4 chapters per fortnightly session and these are spread over several weeks. Discussions can be on the book or something totally different but often prompted by the book's content. James Hosking is the lead organiser.

Permies@ the Pub resumed after the pandemic disruptions caused a break for around a year. The joy of meeting people in a pub was obvious. No topics, just conversations and connections made. We are doing the rounds of different pubs just because we can! Thanks to Ann Goeman for volunteering to manage this event.

James Hosking and René de Jong