

CELEBRATING
70 YEARS
1953 - 2023



THE Y GEELONG
COMMUNITY
IMPACT REPORT
2023



CELEBRATING 70 YEARS

Seventy years ago, a group of visionary individuals came together with a shared dream - a dream to build a place of community, belonging, and positive change. Little did they know that their dedication and foresight would lead to the vibrant, thriving community we see today. We pay homage to those pioneers, who, through their unwavering commitment, set us on a path of excellence and purpose.

2023 the Y in Geelong celebrates seven decades and recognises all those who have contributed to impacting the lives of young people; to our past participants, volunteers, staff, board members and presidents who have steered this ship through the ever-changing seas of time.

They have been the guiding lights, the steady hands, and the driving force behind our mission. Each one has contributed to the unique tapestry of our history, leaving their indelible mark on the YMCA Geelong story.

To our past and present board members, staff and volunteers, your leadership, dedication, and passion have been the bedrock upon which we have built our foundation. Your tireless efforts have transformed countless lives, providing opportunities, support, and a sense of belonging to generations of community members.

As we look back with pride at our history, let us also cast our gaze forward to the bright future that beckons. The Y Geelong of today is a testament to our enduring commitment to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Together, we will continue to innovate and adapt to the evolving needs of our community, ensuring that our legacy remains relevant and impactful for the next 70 years and beyond.

Acknowledgment of Country

We, the Y Geelong, acknowledge the Traditional owners of the land, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to the elders both past and present. We thank the Traditional owners for their Custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wadawurrung people acknowledging the memory of their honourable ancestors. We also welcome all Aboriginal persons present today.



THE 50'S

During the 1950's a provisional committee of Geelong community minded people was formed and would have the stewardship of the Y for the first two years of its operation.

The reaction of the Geelong people to the venture provided hope of Y activities, which included clubs and special interest groups for boys and young men.

▶ The first of these was the Y's Men's Club.

Y's Men's Clubs were set up in the early stages of a new association and assisted in providing programs. Meeting of the club members aged 21-36 years were always held on Mondays.

▶ The next step was the formation of a Viking Club for young boys on Saturday Mornings.

The Y Program structure had an emphasis on boys and younger men with the Saxons (16-18 year olds) and Danes (14-16 year olds).

▶ The YMCA Basketball Club first competed in the Geelong Amateur Basketball Association competition in 1954, after being formed by the Geelong YMCA's first executive director, the late Jack Terrill and has enjoyed an excellent reputation in terms of the quality of its players, coaches and administrators.

The Club has produced many fine players over the years including many who have represented Geelong in representative basketball in the SEABL and NBL as well as Victorian Country state teams.

Two of our players, have gone on to represent Australia at the Olympic Games

▶ **Russell Riches**

▶ **Trish Fallon**

▶ **Craig Herbert represented Australian at U23 Championships.**

In the late 50's the Y was on the lookout for a suitable site for youth camps, it was Jim Urquhart who noted the Queenscliff site would make a good site for a camp and this began a more than 30 year relationship for Jim and Camp Wyuna, he was the caretaker and supervisor until the end of the 1980's.

Y volunteers and their families spent many of their hours participating in working bees over a number of years to get the camp up and running. From sleep outs under the stars in the earliest times to helping erect the Y frame and bell tents before the bunkhouses were built.

In 1957 the Y was officially incorporated Association under the Hospital and Charities Act and by 1959 the construction of the shops on the perimeter of the Yarra Street building were constructed in Little Malop Street to provide a source of revenue to support the Association's sustainability.



THE Y FOUR PILLARS

We have four guiding pillars at the Y Geelong. These pillars are sustainability, community, a just world, and meaningful work. We use these pillars to shape our Y into a warm, safe and welcoming environment that will lead us into the future. Join us as we explore these pillars further, looking at how they have shaped us over the past year.

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COMMUNITY WELLBEING



SUSTAINABLE PLANET



MEANINGFUL WORK



JUST WORLD

Message from the CEO

There are so many incredible stories that make up a year in the life of the Y Geelong.

Our report showcases some of the achievements and accomplishments of our amazing teams and illustrates the difference that our programs and services make in the lives of young people and their communities.

It brings to life our activities which are designed to strive towards Vision 2030 and encompass the four pillars of our strategic plan – Community Wellbeing, A Just World, Meaningful Work and a Sustainable Y and Planet.

In a year where we achieved a rating of “EXCELLENT”, the highest possible rating in our Safeguarding Independent Review..

We recognise how being inclusive, fostering a culture of respect and safeguarding children and young people, is all part of what we do...

From marking the milestone of 70 years of inspired young people, through to demonstrating the impact that our athlete ambassador program makes in the lives of young people and listen to their voice to make a positive change for their futures. – There’s just so much to celebrate!

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their ongoing support and trust in me to lead the organisation, my leadership team for their engagement and hard work towards our vision and goals over the past 12 months, and to all of our wonderful team members

– thank you for your dedication and commitment, put simply, we cannot do what we do without you.



This year we worked to implement our new strategic plan – Towards Vision 2030. As we did this, the world pivoted with new external factors impacting on our journey, yet as we always do.

Our Strategic Plan would drive us towards four key pillars, with our efforts towards ‘Meaningful Work’ needed more than ever as the education and care and sport and recreation sectors seeing the crippling impact of workforce shortages throughout the year.

I thank all of our staff teams who have stepped in to work extra shifts, or work that little longer to ensure that our families and communities continue to be able to access our programs during this period.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, I wish to acknowledge of all our dedicated staff teams for their drive, passion and commitment to the mission that has made all of these achievements possible.

The Ongoing Journey

As part of the Y’s commitment to reconciliation, we commissioned artwork from a local indigenous woman Ruby Evans, a Yorta Yorta woman who has grown up on Wadawurrung country.

The story behind “The Ongoing Journey” symbolizes everyone’s ongoing journey of education via storytelling.

As an Aboriginal woman her connection to the land, the ocean and the stars is really important and that is what she has put in this art piece. Another thing that is extremely important to Ruby and the Y is supporting young people and their journey.

The big circle in the centre symbolises the ongoing journey of truth-telling and education of the oldest and continuous living culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for 80,000 + years have told stories, shared ceremonial practices, shared recipes and educated people via paintings.

At the of bottom piece there are sand hills and the ocean. For Ruby and many other Aboriginal people the ocean plays an important role of supporting mental wellbeing.

As someone who who grew up by the ocean her entire life she have noticed that every time she went out for a swim or a surf she felt cleansed. This is why during her work as a mental health worker she ensures that the young people she works with have access to swimming and surfing.

At the top of the artwork, there are the stars, Bunjil the Creator and three symbols that represent a man, a woman and a person. Bunjil is the creator spirit of Wadawurrung lands and the people which this art piece was created on and where Ruby has grown up and learnt about her culture.

The artwork was commissioned in 2023 to celebrate the commitment YMCA Geelong has to the traditional owners and the stories of their peoples’ connection to the land, water and sky.

Through the Y’s work in the community we honor and respect country and believe in the power of inspired young people and the role we each play in their ongoing journey.

Shona Eland, CEO



Presidents Report

It is with immense pleasure to present and welcome you to the Y Geelong Community Impact Report for 2022/23.

It highlights our commitment to empower young people and to stand by them to create a brighter future.

It is in our DNA; to educate, amplify their voices and support them to flourish in a united and sustainable world.

With success and challenges a part of any journey, it is the people who that matter most and I send my sincerest thanks to all of the Y staff, my fellow board members, and the Senior Leadership Team for your continuous dedication and commitment to the communities of the Y.

When the Board and Senior Leadership Team came together to develop and launch our Strategic Plan – Towards Vision 2030; we knew that the continued ability of the organisation and our people to be flexible to the events of the world and the needs young people and our communities would hold us in good stead as we launched Year 1 of the strategy in July 2022.

Over the past year we have continued to see the legacy of the pandemic impacting on our people and communities in new and different ways, with the cost-of-living crisis and the impact of workforce shortages having a significant impact on day-to-day interactions.

We have acknowledged our role ensuring we remain a constant to our communities by providing access to all of our programs for our community members.

The needs of young people continue to evolve, and we continue to witness the impact of the pandemic and how it is changing the way in which we provide support, empower and stand alongside young people now for a brighter future.

As a board, we hear our young people, and remain steadfast in our commitment to standing alongside you in making a better future for you.

I'd like to thank my fellow Board Directors for their support. I'd also like to acknowledge the role of Bianca Paridaen, Vesna Allan, Mark Wilkin and Brandon Howard who resigned from the Board in the past 12 months and who served as a Board Director over the past 3 years. Thank you for your contribution.

After running a successful recruitment campaign to replenish the board and add further experience, we are delighted to welcome Joel Williamson and Annabel Watson to our Board.

With success and challenges a part of any journey, it is the people who that matter most

and I send my sincerest thanks to all of the Y staff, my fellow board members and the Senior Leadership team for their continuous dedication and commitment to the communities of the Y.

Our hardworking, creative and driven teams are the reason the Y has the impact in communities that we do, ensuring children and young people have access to safe and fun environments that provide opportunity for a bright future.

Congratulations and thank you.

Natalie McColl, President



Management Team

CEO

Shona Eland

Newtown/North Geelong Manager

Paul Barbagallo

Newtown/North Geelong Director

Katrina Degoldi/Eliza Burge

Bannockburn Coordinator

Jessica Claridge

Camp Manager

Andrew Kidd/Janet Mason

Marketing, Communications & Design

Liz Tobolov

People & Culture Director

Adele Andrew

CFO

Tina Ferguson

OSHC Coordinator

Jess Claridge

School Holiday Program Coordinator

Katelyn Hancock

Risk & Safeguarding Lead -

Leah Pierazzi/Phoebe Broadwood

Board Members

President

Natalie McColl

Treasurer

Steve D'Andrea

Deputy President

Bianca Paridaen

Deputy President

Vesna Allan

Mark Wilkin

Kitty Wilson

Brandon Howard

Michelle Martella



THE 60'S

The YMCA in Geelong expands its youth-focused programs and begins to establish a reputation as a hub for recreational activities and support for young people in the region.

The formation of the Valkyries and support of the wives and mothers from the various clubs along with the formation of the Y's Menettes in 1967 and the ladies badminton members gave a much needed balance to the Y family profile

This decade the Y focus was on participation with cricket, U15/18 football and of course basketball.

The Geelong Little League Football was renowned as an extraordinary sporting program across the region, which first played at Geelong West then expanded to the South Barwon Reserve with more than 500 juniors playing the competition weekly.

▶ In 1962 YMCA Judo was another club established running from the Geelong Rowing Club shed along the Barwon River.

It provided people with an outlet for physical and spiritual discipline. The club needing to find new premises, moved out of the Geelong Rowing Club, and found home in Rippleside for the next three years. The Club boasted its fair share of Victorian Champions in open weight competition.

▶ Michael Greenhalgh was the first junior player in Geelong to gained first dan at the year of 17, at the time Michael was the youngest judo black belt in Australia replacing fellow club person, 21-year-old John Hurst.

Basketball was a young sport in the 60's and the YMCA took the initiative in setting up coaching programs for players and parents. The junior basketballers of the 1950's like Ron Dawson were drawn into the coaching roles. Y Basketball was established at the South Barwon Centre.

▶ The Y's philosophy of basketball participation saw all players receiving equal court time with a clear focus on participation; this focus still lives through the leadership of Y Basketball Club under Craig Herbert and the committee.

Until 1964 basketball in country Victoria was played on an adhoc basis in various parts of the state, in some cases all year round but mainly in the summer months.

It was not until 1966 that it was decided to establish a genuine country basketball governing body and YMCA Geelong CEO Jack Terrill was the founding President from 1967 to 1973, then Y Basketball legend Ron Dawson led the organisation from 1973 to 1978.

▶ In the early days of Camp Wyuna, tent accommodation was the main stay for the seaside experience, which primarily consisted of tents erected in the sand hills as the bunk houses were still on the drawing boards.

In the non-football season many of the young men from the Y Youth Clubs where involved in youth camping programs held regularly at Camp Wyuna organised for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. For many children this unique holiday experience was their first time away from home.

The Y was known for its many and varied youth groups that had developed across the Geelong communities of Norlane and Hamlyn Banks.





OUR IMPACT

Our People

In the tapestry of our shared mission, each thread represents an essential element

Whether you are an employee or a volunteer, your contribution is a vibrant hue that weaves together the fabric of our success.

Thank you, each and every one of you, for being an integral part of this extraordinary team. Your contributions are not just noticed; they are cherished and celebrated.

Together, we are not just employees and volunteers—we are the architects of a brighter future.

► **Our employees, bring not just their skills, but their heart and soul into the work they do.**

Their expertise and professionalism sets the standard, inspiring those around them to reach greater heights. Each task they undertake, no matter how seemingly small, is a brushstroke that paints the larger picture of our shared success.

► **Our volunteers, are the unsung heroes who generously give their time and energy without expecting anything in return.**

Their selflessness and enthusiasm breathe life into our endeavors, proving that the power of goodwill and compassion knows no bounds.

Our People



Our Participants





OUR CENTRES AND SERVICES

Camp Wyuna

Positive Starts at Camp Wyuna!

The Positive Start program was a Victorian Government initiative to re-engage primary and secondary aged students from government and low-fee non-government schools whose learning had been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Camp Wyuna was one of the sites to access the funding and deliver funded camps.

Positive Start aimed to promote students physical and emotional health and wellbeing, with the objective to enable students to experience a school or holiday camp, perhaps for the first time.

Partners in the delivery of the project were the Australian Camps Association (ACA), and the Victorian Government.

Camp Wyuna was able to successfully deliver fully

funded Positive Start programs to four separate schools consisting of 204 students in late 2022 and early 2023. These students had never experienced the impact of attending a school camp before, and multiple students also visited the beach for the first time!

▶ **204 students experienced a camp with us. These programs were fully facilitated by the Y.**

“This experience was exceptional to say the least. Both students and parents have expressed their sincere thanks for giving their children such a valuable opportunity they otherwise would not have got.”

Autism Camps Australia

Camp Wyuna partnered with Autism Camps Australia, a not for profit organisation that delivers family camps for young people, their siblings, and the parents, who live with autism.

It's an experiential learning camp program that helps form an initial engagement for many isolated young people living with autism and works as a stepping-stone to mainstream inclusive social and community participation.

The camp program takes an authentic strengths based approach to the health and wellbeing of young people living with autism and their families.

At the camps, we celebrate neurodiversity, embrace difference and nurture individuality.

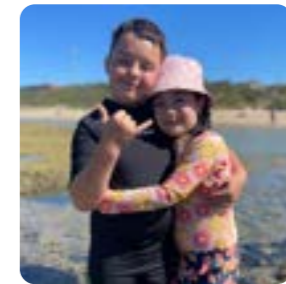
We aim to develop confidence and independence, increase social connection, develop new and lasting friendships and celebrate our campers autistic identity, and also, we want our parents/carers and siblings to build increased resilience, enhance their social networks and have a greater ability to maintain informal supports for their young people.

The Program enables:

- ▶ Young people living with autism, to take part in a program of therapies, social learning and life skills activities;
- ▶ Young people living with autism to build connections easily by socialising with their peers;
- ▶ Young people living with autism to explore sensory and emotional regulation in a dedicated sensory and proprioceptive space;
- ▶ Siblings to take part in a program of outdoor activities and adventure challenges and a peer-to-peer sibling support program; and
- ▶ Parents have the time enjoy a break (while the children are in activities between 8.30am-4.30pm) and take part in parent/carer educational support and self-care programs.
- ▶ The success is through repeat numbers and a strengthening of the bond between Y Geelong and Autism Camps Australia.

We delivered 10 camps with 536 participants through the 2022-23 financial year with another 10 booked for 23-24. The camps are regularly selling out with repeat campers.

Camp Wyuna Happy Snaps



“Thank you.... this is a fantastic offering for the Autistic community. It was great to come and relax and not be judged as a bad parent because your child is different.”

— Kellie, parent



Bannockburn Recreation Centre

Y work anywhere else?!

This year, the Y Bannockburn was invited to showcase their talent and career pathways at the inaugural, Golden Plains Shire Career Expo.

The event was funded in partnership with Department of Justice and Community Safety and the Mayoral Youth Initiative and aimed to promote the opportunities toward career pathways for young people in the Golden Plains Shire.

Armed with newly branded banners, promotional material, water bottles and all the attractive things youth tend to flock to at expos, whilst adorning their brand new Y uniform, Y Bannockburn and OSHC staff members headed off to showcase what the Y Geelong is all about, what we have to offer and all the career pathways available across our five sites.

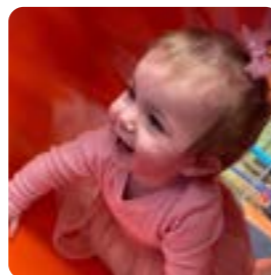
Whilst initially nervous, the team had a great day with positive experiences had all round.

“The Y Geelong is a vibrant community organisation that goes beyond providing recreational activities and programs. With a strong focus on personal development and career advancement, Y Geelong offers a range of opportunities in the career industry.

One of the primary offerings at YMCA Geelong is its comprehensive career pathway program. Whether you’re a fresh graduate, a young professional looking to make a career change, or someone seeking growth opportunities, YMCA Geelong provides traineeships and coaching opportunities to help you succeed.”

We will aim to go back for the second annual expo in 2024 - armed, of course, with more goodies!

Bannockburn Happy Snaps



Newtown & North Geelong

With a new year comes new and exciting partnerships for Newtown and North Geelong!

Partnering with the City of Greater Geelong, we helped run a Community Family Day in the Grovedale area (where we don't have a physical presence).

The area has a very diverse population and minimal recreation services in the locality

Three staff represented the Y Geelong on the day and lead a fun gymnastics circuit for children, they also ran some basketball activities and manned an information stall.

Approximately 450 people attended on the day, and the majority of attendees were from culturally diverse backgrounds.

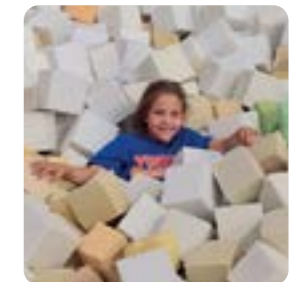
The purpose for the Y Geelong's attendance was to showcase our programs, raise the profile of the organisation, to reach out to a new demographic and to partner the Greater City of Geelong.

The high number of attendances on the day led to a successful event

It was a very positive community experience and the good attendance surprised us

- Maggie

Geelong Happy Snaps





School Holiday Program (SHP)

Why the Y is the place to be during school holidays!

Combining learning, fun, and adventure is the reason our School Holiday Program families love coming back to the Y.

At the Y, we understand that children thrive when their minds, bodies, and spirits are nurtured, which is why our School Holiday Program is designed to promote holistic development, addressing educational, physical, and social aspects.

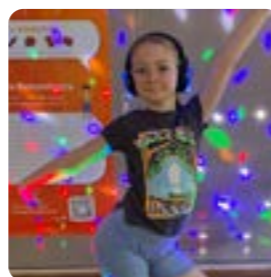
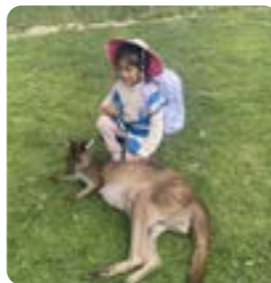
Every holiday season is an opportunity for adventurous explorations such as;

- ▶ Fun days out at Adventure Park
- ▶ Learning how to be a Ninja Warrior
- ▶ Getting up close and personal with animals at Ballarat Wildlife Park
- ▶ Heading off to Camp (Wyuna and Dewar!)
- ▶ Catching the latest cinema flick
- ▶ Taking a step back in time at Sovereign Hill

Whatever we're up to, you can be sure it will always be fun!

“The staff were so incredibly welcoming and supportive and made him feel at ease straight away! As they did for me as his mum...”

SHP Happy Snaps



Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

Supporting children, post Covid

YMCA Bannockburn St Mary Mackillop OSHC Program, held a Parent Information Session, with expert guest panellists, to help provide families with information on how they can support their children living with ASD and how to notice the signs, post Covid.

The information session was a positive experience with many useful outcomes, providing well needed information parents were hoping for.

Our very own OSHC staff member, Jessie Wise, took a huge leap of confidence, and delivered a speech. Standing in front of a small crowd she explained her experiences, living with diagnosed ASD, throughout school, living in the community and within a work setting. Jessie provided insight to parents as to how a child would feel, what they see and why their behaviour and reactions are the way they are during difficult situations.

Many parents felt, moving forward, they could use the information provided to support and create personal strategies for their own children.

The topics covered for the parent information session were;

- ▶ What are the trends we are seeing in children post-covid
- ▶ Anxiety in children what you should look for
- ▶ When should you be worried
- ▶ How to support your child
- ▶ What supports exists in our community for families
- ▶ Lived experience of young person with ASD

OSHC Happy Snaps



THE 70'S

The organisation continued to grow and adapt to the changing needs of the community, offering a wider range of sports and fitness programs.

1973 saw the passing of the Y's founding General Secretary Jack Terrill and the arrival of the Terry Cliff as the Executive Director.

Terry had a strong background in sport and recreation and children's services, which shaped the direction for the next three decades.

The Y expanded to establish South Barwon YMCA and Corio Shire Y.

Y programs scattered across the communities of:

- ▶ Deakin University
- ▶ Belmont
- ▶ Grovedale
- ▶ West Tech (now Western Height's College)
- ▶ Newcomb High School
- ▶ Norlane High School

Outreach programing was a viable offering to the community without having a place to call home.

▶ The Judo Club had strengthened with the progression of juniors and the adult program was maturing after several years of training.

▶ The gymnastic program was initially conducted as outreach program in various school gymnasiums and then in the last 70's the Y secured the old RSL woollen mill in Pakington Street.

Terry had expertise and an interest in gymnastics having coached NSW state womens' team for eight years and thus, Y Geelong Gymnastics club began.

▶ A Little League Soccer program was played outdoors at West Tech and Belmont high.

The Y oversaw the management of the Monahan Centre at Queenscliff reserve with Phil Bainbridge from 1979.

This was a small centre catering for pre-school programs to adult squash, basketball and volleyball.





COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Athletes in Action

Jessie Rawson YMCA Geelong Gymnastics Club

Placing first not once, but twice, Jessie put on a spectacular performance at the Victorian Championships, Special Olympics.

Held at the North Geelong Arena, we were incredibly proud and loved watching all of her routines.

Jessie is a great role model to all of our athletes.

Overall in her category, Jessie placed;

- ▶ 1st place on Vault and Victorian Champion
- ▶ 3rd place on Bars
- ▶ 1st place on Beam and Victorian Champion
- ▶ 2nd Floor
- ▶ 2nd Overall

Hugh Buckby YMCA Geelong Basketball Club

Our YMCA Geelong Basketballers are IMPRESSIVE, to say the least with our very own, Hugh Buckby having been selected to represent Country Victoria!

Hugh, who plays in the Geelong United Basketball (GUB) competition with YMCA Geelong, has been handpicked for the state honour to play in the Victoria Country Boys team, to compete at the U16 National Championships.

An emerging superstar who could dunk at the age of 13, Hugh earned himself a spot on the team after impressing at the Australian Junior Country Basketball Cup in Albury in January.

Hugh Buckby ▶



Rhian Jamieson International Development Squad Coordinator (the Y Geelong)

Rhian was one of just nineteen high performance pathway coaches, selected to take their career to the next level after being appointed to the Australian Institute of Sports Elevate Coach Program.

The program focuses on supporting and developing coaches who work with emerging, developing, and podium potential athletes.

The program kicks off with a three-day face-to-face workshop on the Gold Coast which includes cohort specific needs analysis team building activities and challenges.

They will then undertake a 16-week online program before regrouping at the AIS to share insights and future plans.

The program is delivered in partnership with La Trobe University and the University of Sydney.

Rhian Jamieson ▲



Jessie Rawson ▶



COMMUNITY EVENTS



59 years strong and counting!

In 2022, the event celebrated its 59th year!

The event showcased local talents young people who auditioned for eight park busker positions and enabled them to proudly present themselves and their music in a live event.

The addition of a Christmas market was a new initiative before the main event the Carols by Candlelight performance with star of the show being a visit from Santa.

The Y is most grateful for all the support and help we received in the lead up to and on the day from:

- ▶ The City of Greater Geelong
- ▶ Geelong Connected Communities
- ▶ Gayle Burrows
- ▶ Abbey Bow
- ▶ Alisha Nurnaitis
- ▶ The many volunteers who helped stage the event

... Bringing the best in local talent, community, families and volunteers together for over 50 years ...

Carols by Candlelight Happy Snaps



Carols by Candlelight

Annual Christmas staple in the Geelong Community.

The return of the Carols by Candlelight to Johnstone Park Geelong brought the community and families together to celebrate the talented artists and musicians and the spirit of Christmas in our community.

- ▶ 2022 marked the event's 59th anniversary
- ▶ Showcases talented young locals
- ▶ Introduced a new Christmas Market initiative
- ▶ With a surprise visit from the big man himself



THE 80'S

During this decade, the Y becomes increasingly involved in community development initiatives and begins to offer childcare services to meet the needs of working parents.

Programming for young people was an important part of the work of the Y in the 80's.

Pioneer Course program for young people between 16-18 years of age was developed.

This was a 7-day physical and mental challenge with activities including;

- ▶ Mountain Climbing
- ▶ Snorkelling
- ▶ Bush Walking
- ▶ Orienteering
- ▶ Water Skiing
- ▶ Daily Fitness Testing
- ▶ Yachting

▶ Throughout this time, the gymnastics program continued to grow from strength to strength and in 1988 rural gymnastics squads were training every Sunday morning – that year saw the development of a 7 step coaching program that streamlined training and development pathways in the sport.

It was the first year YMCA gymnast entered in the individual and teams championships at the Victorian Gymnastics Championships at Bulleen

Coming home with both individual and team championship honours.... No mean feat considering that they had never trained in a fully established gym!

▶ The Judo Club was fortunate to appoint Eddie Leoni in 1980's as the Junior Coach and Peter Farrow was overseeing the senior program.

During 1983, Eddie and Peter completed the first Level 2 National Coaching Accreditation Course.





YMCA GEELONG CLUBS



YMCA Geelong Basketball Club

The Club has an amazing year on and off the court.

Which is due to the hard work and dedication of the Committee and the volunteer coaches who support the development of junior basketball.

For the first time since the formation of Geelong United Basketball, YMCA has claimed the GUB Club of the Year title.

The winner is determined by allocating points for wins in Geelong United Basketball's Winter Championship divisions.

Ten points are allocated for each win in Senior Men's and Women's Championship and six points in underage competition.

Special Mention: Hugh Buckby

Hugh Buckby, who plays for YMCA at an Under-16 and Senior Men's Level in the GUB Winter Community Competition, made the Victorian team after being named an emergency last year.

Known for his elite shooting and ability to dunk from a young age, Buckby was selected after impressing at the Australian Junior Country Basketball Cup in Albury in January, where his Vic Goldminers, won the gold.

He eventually made the final 10 after a March combine.

"It was pretty exciting," Buckby said of when he got the news.

"The goal is to make the Australian team after nationals, hopefully I perform well and get that opportunity."



Special Mention: Gold Nugget Selection

This year our athletes also represented our club with much pride at the 2023 Gold Nugget Camp

Congratulations to all of the Under-14 athletes selected;

- ▶ Lily Cain
- ▶ Jade Chow
- ▶ Georgia Marles
- ▶ Maggie McDonald
- ▶ Eddie Brown
- ▶ Nate Parker
- ▶ Archie Sleep
- ▶ Cooper Williams

Our U12 athletes, Nate McGregor, Asha Albones and Eve Kasper were also selected to participate in the Basketball Victoria U12 Country Jamboree which was held in Echuca in September.

Junior Basketballer of the Year: Georgia Marles

We are super excited to announce our Junior Basketballer of the year for 2023 is Georgia Marles!

In just the last 12 months Georgia has done a fair bit on the basketball court:

- ▶ YMCA U14 Championship player
- ▶ Geelong United Division 1 player
- ▶ Basketball Victoria Future Development Program athlete
- ▶ Competed at the Australian Country Junior Basketball Cup as a Vic Country Athlete
- ▶ Competed at Country Metro Challenge as a Vic Country Athlete

And to top it all off, Georgia is a wonderful young lady who we are proud to see in a YMCA uniform

Congratulations G!

Basketball Club Happy Snaps





YMCA Geelong Judo Club

In a year of some amazing personal achievements, the Dojo was filled with inspirational performances and a vision to expand the reach of the sport to more young people.

The Club had outstanding results at the Australian National Judo Championships June 2023.

- ▶ Wade Paterson Gold Kyu Mens U 73kg
- ▶ Jake Bensted Gold in U 73kg Senior Men

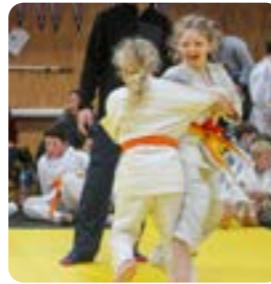
The culmination of the international calendar was Jake Bensted representation at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in August 2022, where he claimed a Bronze medal. The thrill of seeing a home grown athlete was amazing for the up and coming juniors back at the Dojo cheering him on.

Thanks to the coaches at the Club, our programs have grown and many young people are able to participate in weekly training, and this year we had several athletes competing at the KIC Cup and Judo Club Competition as well as the very successful Club competitions that saw the Y transformed into a dojo

We were saddened by the loss of Greg Bensted an adored father, inspirational coach and committed volunteer of the Y Judo program who was a member for more than 20 years and coached for more than 10 years.

Greg was honoured with Life Membership of YMCA Geelong in 2019

Judo Club Happy Snaps



Y Service Ladies

Presidents Annual Report 2023

Membership has remained the same as last year but we are still hanging in there and enjoying ourselves at the same time.

During the year sadly two members husbands passed away Joan Robertson – Graeme and Sue Fry – John. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this sad time in your lives.

Our monthly structure is the same with a meeting on one month and an outing the next. We have enjoyed many different outings, from ferry trip to Sorrento to lunches out in Meredith, Ballarat and Geelong to movies in Ballarat (what an experience that was – we could not have picked a more violent and coarse language film, if we had tried, much to the amusement of a group of young fellows in front of us.)

Our fundraising has been almost non-existent this year but we were still able to make donations to

- ▶ Time of Fast - \$50
- ▶ Y's Menettes International Project - \$50
- ▶ A member's daughter - \$50, who did the Surf Coast Trek of 26kms. Overall she raised approximately \$250 for the charities Give Where you Live and Kids+ (Geelong Charities).

The total amount raised on the day by all participants exceeded \$200,000.

Congratulations are in order.

Kangaroo Flat must be congratulated on their organisation for the social Gathering at Cricket Willow and hopefully we will be able to please all next year when it is our turn. (I think I have it worked out, just needs fine tuning).

Also Geelong Club is responsible for the Annual Meeting in 2024 and for filling the RD role. Busy year for us in 2024.

Thanks must go to all members who make us a CLUB, the Office Bearers past and present for putting your hand up or continuing with your position.

Also thanks to CEO of YMCA Geelong, Shona and her staff who have been very helpful and welcoming, in setting up the Board Room for us to have our meetings there.

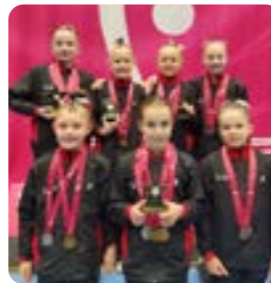
We may be small in numbers (compared to some other clubs,) but we are just as big in friendship and we enjoy ourselves immensely.

Helen Lewis, President





Gymnastics Club Happy Snaps



YMCA Geelong Gymnastics Club

The gymnastics program is one that seeks to cater for all ages and abilities.

From Little EdGym (6 months old) to our Adult Gym programs, we seek to offer the community with affordable and accessible programs.

The club could not be successful if it wasn't for the work of the coaches, parents and volunteers that contribute to the many social and community events and fundraising activities.

There many highlights this is year but none more exciting than seeing our Men's Artistic Gymnastic return with the first competition in two years being hosted at Warrnambool Gymnastics Club In July 2022. We also celebrated the hard work of our adult gymnastics in the Masters Competitions and Cheered home athletes in the Special Olympics divisions at the Victorian Championships.

The competition season saw the club's nearly 200 competitive athletes showcasing their skills across more than 14 competitions.

Senior International Level

16year old Asher Bayles competed in the Senior International session against Australia's best gymnasts. Asher did an incredible job, hitting her routines to rank 9th All Around, in Australia.

Asher was also part of Team Victoria, who worked their way to a Silver medal in the Senior International category.



Outstanding Achievement

Charli Cox Level 8, Queensland Border Challenge

- ▶ 1st All Round
- ▶ 4th Vault
- ▶ 3rd Bars
- ▶ 1st Floor

Geelong Gymnasts Shine

Geelong Gymnasts Shine at Gymnastics Australia - National Championships on the Gold Coast

YMCA Geelong Gymnastics Clubs' athletes took centre stage at the Australian Gymnastics Championships 2023.

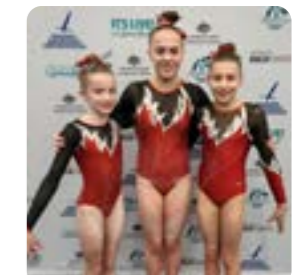
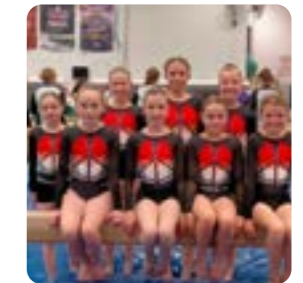
Over the course of two weeks in May, gymnasts from across Australia vied for the title of Australian Champion 2023, and our very own talented Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) athletes achieved outstanding results during the competition.

CEO of YMCA Geelong, Shona Eland, paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of the athletes and their families and the coaches,

"It's been a difficult couple of years in the sport and these athletes have worked incredibly hard to achieve top 10 results in all levels, that's something to be celebrated. It's super exciting to witness the next generation of talent coming through the sport and we are hoping that the home of the Commonwealth Games 2026 Gymnastics, being in Geelong, will have a home ground advantage for these up-and-coming athletes".

YMCA Geelong Gymnastics Club had six athletes selected to represent the Victorian team in 2023.

Gymnastics Club Happy Snaps



Future International Level

Under 14s

▶ Olivia Meaney, 12 years old

Won Silver on Vault and is now ranked 2nd in Australia. She was also a Silver Medallist on Floor and Bronze Medallist on Beam.

Olivia is currently ranked 4th in the U14 category.

14 & Over

▶ Vivian Bayles, 13 years old

Was the Silver Medallist All Around ranking her 2nd in Australia in her level. She also ranked 6th on Vault, 4th on Bars and 5th on Floor.

▶ Charli Cox, 13 years old

Was Silver Medallist on Vault and ranked 2nd, Silver Medallist on Floor and is currently ranked 10th in Australia.

Level 8 Under

▶ Mia Fewster, 11 years old

Had an excellent competition representing Victoria at her very first Nationals. She placed 7th on Floor, 8th on Beam and 14th All Around.

Level 10

▶ Natalie Pianto, 17 years old

Competed at Level 10, the highest level stream, and is currently ranked 10th in Australia for her age group.

She also placed 10th on Vault 9th on Beam and 10th on Floor

All of our athletes did an incredible job during the competition and we couldn't be prouder of their achievements.

We look forward to watching them soar to new heights.

Queensland Border Challenge

The Y was thrilled to announce the 2023 Border Challenge Team, selected to represent Victoria

Level 7

- ▶ Isabell McDermott
- ▶ Lucy Riddle

Level 8

- ▶ Poppy Masters
- ▶ Abbey Bow, Team Coach
- ▶ Reserve: Millie Goulding

Club Events

Every year, our club events provide an opportunity for the club members and their families to come together and celebrate connection and friendships.

This years events included;

- ▶ Fright Night
- ▶ Secret Santa
- ▶ Club Championship
- ▶ Gymsafe Championship
- ▶ Easter Sleepover (athlete led)



SUSTAINABLE PLANET

Doing Our Part

The Y Geelong has a commitment to the sustainable planet

and through our support of Y Services Procurement team we access supply arrangements in key categories of environmental impact with the benefit of engaging with providers whose environmental focus, responsibility and commitment has been assessed by Y Procurement.

Our focus around emissions reduction, consume less and wasting less are important strategies that we are building out with our people and communities.

Our initiatives include;

- ▶ Paperless Roll for classes
- ▶ Recycle product initiatives and the bottle top project
- ▶ Reduction of waste food products to compost and vegetable gardens and chooks at Camp
- ▶ Recycling of uniforms

Sustainable Planet

The best billboard for the Y is its people and our new Y national uniform was an opportunity to deliver on our commitment to a sustainable planet,

it was designed and developed with sustainable and/or recyclable materials.

Since launch of the uniform and other sustainable product initiatives from Y services, we have contributed to diverting 84,000 plastic bottles from landfill.

Each saved bottle is another step in the reduction of ocean pollution and landfill waste, underscoring the power of championing sustainable practices.

Our uniform recycling initiative provides a full circle solution and minimises the impact on the planet.

THE 90'S

The organisation continues to evolve, emphasising its commitment to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

After years of looking for the right premises, it was in 1995, that the YMCA stadium location was discovered.

So the wheels were in motion with considerable financial, physical and organisation to bring to life in 1996 the purchase and redevelopment of a Campbell's Cash and Carry Warehouse in Riversdale Road, Newtown to the gymnastics hall and two basketball courts.

The establishment of Newtown stadium showed the depth and commitment of the YMCA family with teams of volunteers transforming an empty building to a then modern facility for all.

▶ Judo in the 90's was difficult with a number of senior athletes retiring and others moving to Melbourne for university and the club went into a brief recess in 1993.

▶ **Amateur wrestler, Greg Bensted decided to try judo, became a regular tournament winner, and gained his first dan.**

Greg started to assist Eddie with the junior program.





MEANINGFUL WORK



Youth Parliament in action ▲

The Y Youth Parliament

2023 marked the 37th annual, Victorian Youth Parliament at Parliament House.

The Y Youth Parliament empowers young people to stand up and be heard in Parliament chambers.

The Victorian Youth Parliament supports young people aged 16-25 years old to speak up and be heard about issues that they are passionate about.

In the Victorian Youth Parliament's 37-year history, more than 30 pieces of state legislation have originated in the Youth Parliament, including:

- ▶ Roadside drug testing for drivers
- ▶ Over the counter availability of the morning after pill
- ▶ Mandatory wearing of a bicycle helmet
- ▶ Removal of glass from identified high-risk entertainment venues
- ▶ Gun reformation laws

The 2023 Victorian Youth Parliament ran from November 2022 until July 2023.

The Y Geelong entered a team of young people to write and defend a bill in a mock parliament against other youth teams.



Y Geelong Youth Parliament Team ▲

The Y Geelong 2023 Youth Parliament Team, consisted of:

- ▶ Chase
- ▶ Ruby-Rose
- ▶ Jack
- ▶ Angelo
- ▶ Y Geelong Youth Parliament Coordinator, Alisha

We were one of 20 teams participating. The bill that the Y Geelong wrote was the Disability Inclusion in Victorian Secondary Education Bill 2023. This was a long process that included working with a mentor to develop bill writing skills.

The bill at the end of the writing process was extremely successful and the participants learnt all about the bill writing process.

The camp experience was positive for most team members, with lots of parliament development skills and personal development skills learnt.

“The team was very welcoming and I felt supported”.

– Angelo, 19

The team members worked together on several challenges bonding as a team.

They also broadened their knowledge on parliamentary processes and how to both present and defend their bill in court, as well as arguing against other bills.

The week of Youth Parliament proved quite successful for the Y Geelong team, with their bill passing with only one vote against it. Y Geelong team member Angelo von Moller was elected Deputy Premier, taking on extra responsibility.

“Incredible opportunity to create and defend a Bill” and “the lifelong friendships made through the program”.

– Ruby-Rose, 16

Youth Voice - Change Agents Cohort 5

The Y Change Agent program is a global leadership development program to empower young leaders as change-makers in their own communities.

The program has been run by World YMCA since 2013 – that is 10 years of empowering, connecting and engaging young people all over the world!

The program took a short break in 2022 – thanks to COVID-19 – and reignited in 2023 to help young people demonstrate their extraordinary capacity to lead change; implement local solutions to tackle problems their communities are facing and deliver impact for YMCA Vision 2030.

The project is centered on creating a space where young people can just ‘be’

Y Geelong Nominee

Y Geelong’s nominee, Alisha Nurnaitis has been immersed in the developing knowledge and skills to “Make Change Happen and has developed an understanding of philanthropy and fundraising through the “Making friends with money” course.

Monthly meetings in small group has seen Alisha develop friendships with other young people from around the world.

The Change Agents will work on a combined project and two individual projects, leading one and supporting one. The combined project is a Youth Festival centred on music and creating a space where young people can just “be”.



The Green Project

The individual project that Alisha is leading is the Green Education project.

The outputs from the project is the creation of standardised green education that will act as a foundation for all sustainable projects in the future. This project best reflected what the Y Geelong is currently working on and could act as leaders in sustainability projects in the future, leading on from the solar panel project.

The project Alisha is supporting is the Youth Global Forum project. This project is about bringing young people together on a global platform. “I am super excited to support this project” Alisha told us “I also had the incredible opportunity (outside of the Change Agents program) to be on the interview panel for second stage for the role of Executive of Marketing and Communities of the new Y Careers.

This was an incredible experience to learn about Y Careers, something which I think the Y Geelong are already leaders in with our traineeship program. I learnt a lot from being on the other side of the interview and I am grateful for the experience.

Our Athlete Ambassador Program

The newly formed committee consists of past and present athlete representatives from all gymnastics streams (except Recreation, which is currently open for expressions of interest).

Supported by Wellbeing Coordinator, Shani Cashin, the purpose of forming the Athlete Ambassador Committee was to ensure young people within the service have a voice, the committee provides athletes the opportunity to be a voice for other athletes, as some young people may not always feel comfortable to speak up to their coach.

The meetings were originally scheduled quarterly however, due to demand, have increased. Shani noted, we aim to ensure everything is said and there are no barriers to our young people being heard.

Athlete Ambassador Projects

Working under the guidance of Y Geelong Senior Staff, the Athlete Ambassadors outlined projects they have helped have an input on, including;

- ▶ **The Easter Sleepover** – Athletes pushed management to hold a sleepover event and were very involved in the design, execution and leadership of the night. Athletes were in charge of running games and encouraged all competitive athletes to attend. Due to the event success, it will now be held annually.
- ▶ **Gymnastics Renovation** – Advice was given from an athlete’s perspective prior to commencement of the gym renovation.
- ▶ **Pink Week** – After an accident left Ava, a gymnast from Queensland, paralysed, the ‘Walking with Ava’ fundraiser was launched in which athletes wear pink to bring more awareness to how individuals can help Ava in her recovery journey.
- ▶ **Fright Night** – Working with the Fundraising Coordinator, Abbey Bow, helped brainstorm and organise the annual Halloween Event.
- ▶ **Social Media** – growing our social media presence in comparison to other clubs.
- ▶ **Fundraising Events** - Looking at hosting future social fundraising events in which athletes can then choose where the money goes.



THE 2000'S

During this decade, the Y expands its reach and services, focusing on promoting health and wellness in the community.

It renovates and upgrades its facilities to provide state-of-the-art fitness and recreational options.

At the 50th anniversary in 2003, the Y had more than 3,000 people using the facilities weekly across Yarra Street, Newtown, Camp Wyuna and Belmont Recreation Reserve,

▶ Two services Clubs with the Y Service Club of Geelong (otherwise known as the Y's Men's Club) and Y' Menettes Club of Geelong and Gymnastics, Judo and Basketball all having their own community support committees.

▶ Camp Wyuna had bunkhut accommodation for 60 people along with powered caravan sites and other amenities such as kitchen, dining and recreation rooms, which had been developed and built in the 70's and 80's by the team of volunteers and represented by many of the families in the rooms tonight.

Belmont Recreation Reserve, South Barwon was the home of the YMCA Little League Football with more than three divisions from 9-12 year olds and administered by volunteers lead by Murray Box.

▶ **The Judo Club celebrated its 40-year landmark in 2002 with Michael Greenhalgh and Peter Farrow remaining with the club through its entire history.**

The junior program has been the cornerstone of the club and produced many champions.

The emerging presence of Jake Bensted in the International Judo Competitions in 2008 provided the club with excitement about the pathways it could create for aspiring athletes.

At this, stage 35 staff resourced the Association with 6 permanent and 29 part time employees

▶ In order to develop a footprint in Camping and Outdoor Education area the Yarra St Site with sold and significant investment commenced with the redevelopment of Camp Wyuna which was completed and open for business in 2008.

The huts were removed, making way for four lodges that could accommodate 105 visitors per night.

▶ Children's Service's such as School Holiday Programs and Before and After School Care programs gained importance as the society started to see a shift in families returning to work after children commenced school.

While the initial programs at Hamlyn Banks Primary School and the Central Y-Yarra Street program was migrated to Newtown School Holiday Program in mid-2007, the school holiday program was now licensed to program for youth and children with the Department of Education.

▶ **Gymnastics was growing in appeal for young people across the region and this demand meant that no longer was it viable to rely on volunteers to provide coaching in the specialist field, it now recognised as a profession and the Y employed teams of coaches to deliver the program for recreation and competitive pathways.**





A JUST WORLD

Inclusive and Welcoming

Y Geelong has a commitment to empowering young people, and for many this is brought to life when they feel safe, supported and provided the opportunity to thrive.

Jessie Wise joined the Y in September 2022, as a young person seeking to develop your skills in the early educator and care sector with the appointment to OSHC Educator and undertaking a Diploma in School Aged Educator and Care.

“My vision is to work in a school setting to support young people with additional needs”

Jessie has lived experience of ASD and found the journey through school challenging, but her experiences have shaped how her peers think about the educational programs and relationships with children living with ASD in our Before and After School Care and Vacation Care Programs.



“I have learnt so much from Jessie, she communicates how she is feeling, the over stimulations and sensory challenges that the children we work with have and the children relate so well to her” said Outside School Hours Care Coordinator (OSHC), Jess Claridge.

“Our service is a better place for having Jessi on our team”

- Jess, OSHC Coordinator

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE MEMBERS

Years of Service 2022/2023

Amy TWYFORD	STAFF	3	Lily DAWSON	STAFF	5
Charlotte STACEY	STAFF	3	Meg BASSETT	STAFF	5
Liz TOBOLOV	STAFF	3	Michael PHILP	STAFF	5
Elly BAYES	STAFF	3	Damian ISBISTER	VOLUNTEER	5
Molly FISHER	STAFF	3	Natasha BIDDISCOMBE	VOLUNTEER	5
Ashlee BENSTED	VOLUNTEER	3	Peter TEAGUE	VOLUNTEER	5
Kitty WILSON	BOARD	3	Steve D'ANDREA	BOARD	5
Fattah SAMAT	STAFF	5	Eleanor BEVERIDGE	STAFF	10
Adele ANDREW	STAFF	5	Abbey BOW	STAFF	15
Carmelo MIGUEL	STAFF	5	Lisa TRETOWAN	STAFF	15
Emma MILLER	STAFF	5	Neal FALLON	VOLUNTEER	15
Eneko FISCHER	STAFF	5	Paul BARBAGALLO	STAFF	20
Jessica CLARIDGE	STAFF	5	Shona CASEY-ELAND	STAFF	25
Leah PIERAZZI	STAFF	5			





LIFE MEMBERS

Life Member Inductees

Life membership is considered the highest possible award for an individual member of the YMCA of Geelong.

Life membership is a way of acknowledging exceptional people involved in the YMCA Geelong Inc and a way of showing appreciation of their contribution to the Association over a number of years.



RACHEL CRAWFORD

Life Member Inductee

Rachel joined the Y in 2000 having come to the Geelong community from Wagga Gymnastics Club.

In the early days Rachel combined working as a gymnastics coach with being an educator in the school holiday program and before and after school care services.

Rachel's passion for gymnastics has seen her develop her craft over more than two decades. She has been the driving force behind the Y Gymnastics Club and has not only developed hundreds of young people through her coaching and mentoring but has helped shape careers of so many young people who have worked at the Y.

Rachel understands the gymnast's well-being and support needs and her own experiences have shaped the focus of our programs.

There truly isn't a role in gymnastics that Rachel hasn't done in her career.

From Ed gym to recreation and MAG and WAG coordination and spearhead behind the competition calendar and hosting of Club events

Rachel puts her hand up to help where she can and helping people selflessly. Her generosity during COVID, unbelievable.

Throughout the COVID pandemic Rachel offered assistance across many departments and stepped into several roles including:

- ▶ COVID Marshall
- ▶ Car Park Attendance
- ▶ Schools Gymnastics.

Rachel has also taken on and embraced the Pre-School Coordinators role, listening to staff, making measured changes to ensure the viability and quality of the program is increased. Recently, Rachel has taken on oversight of the MAG program while we are working on a long term solution. Rachel has shown to be caring of staff and athletes, selfless and self-sacrificing in her approach.

Rachel has played a significant role in the gymnastics community and has fulfilled judging role and represented our club proudly as a Gymnastics Victoria Head Coach and Personal coach on numerous occasions.

Rachel's passion for gymnastics has seen her develop her craft over more than two decades.

We are indeed grateful to have the Rachel at our club and are indebted to her the leadership, support and commitment she has provided to some many young people throughout her career.

Congratulations Rachel!



JAKE BENSTED

Life Member Inductee

When Jake first took to the mats in the sport of judo, he was six years of age, he didn't expect to be a two-time Commonwealth Games or an Olympian.

- ▶ Won the Oceania title in 2013, 2015 and 2016
- ▶ Won Junior Titles in 2012-2014
- ▶ Won Bronze at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014.
- ▶ Qualified for the Olympic Games in Rio.
- ▶ Was number 1 of the IJF World Ranking for Juniors U73kg in 2014.
- ▶ Won Gold at the 2021 ACT International Open in Canberra
- ▶ National Champion in 2022
- ▶ Clinched a Bronze medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham
- ▶ Won the gold medal at the Melbourne International Open in 2023.

Jake has travelled all over the world with Australia's National Talent Identification and Development Squad, and he won his first senior national title at age 18 in 2012.

He took gold in the Men's U/73kg division and this propelled him to more senior victories and podiums, and into the Australian team for the Commonwealth Games in 2014. Jake returned from Glasgow with the bronze medal.

2014 brought more success for Jake, as he won the ACT International Open and took a silver medal at the Oceania Championships, before winning another national crown.

Jake has long been dividing his time between Australia and the rest of the world for the purposes of training and competition, and he reaped the rewards of this dedication with selection in the Australian team for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

When he was back in Australia he was in the Y Dojo, supporting and mentoring the next generation of Judo athletes.

Since 2021 Jake has played an active role in the coaching program at the Y and ambitiously seeks to ensure more young people are provided the opportunity to experience the sport that provides discipline, self-awareness and friendship and connection.

This year Jake and a team of Coaches and volunteers staged the first YMCA Geelong Judo Competition, which was an outstanding success.

We acknowledge Jake's outstanding career as an elite athlete, his many honours and accomplishments and celebrate his commitment to giving back to the next generation of young judo athletes.

Congratulations Jake!



SAM BUCKBY

Life Member Inductee

Sam has been involved with the YMCA Basketball Club for more than 16 years.

Sam's involvement with the Club has extended from coaching, co-ordinating the Junior boys program, long term committee member and Vice- President of the YMCA Basketball Club.

Sam has been a prominent part of both, our Community Competition with YMCA and in the Geelong United VJBL ranks as a Head Coach. While recently also taking on the challenge of our Youth League 1 Men.

Sam's visionary focus on the Clubs development have become infectious.

He genuinely seeks to ensure that the Y not only provided our community with access to play the sport but also focused on opportunities to develop young people to continually improve and set themselves up for whatever is the next step in their basketball journey.

Make no mistake, he coaches to win but development is always paramount.

Sam provides balance of enthusiasm, player development, team dynamic and competitiveness and has achieved success for in the Y Basketball Club over many years which has seen the participation in the Club out strip resources such as coaches and courts for training.



Sam believes in the 'Y' way which is with total respect to the opposition: win, lose or draw. Sam is always at the forefront of any club initiative to makes the club stronger and more relevant to our families. Sam is always there to help with other teams and has inspired others to become coaches.

Through his hard work, Sam has helped make the YMCA Basketball club a destination club within Geelong. His commitment to the kids and our program is unconditional and in fact a family affair with Tenille, Grace, Hugh and Adelaide all playing for the Club.

Clubs such as the YMCA do not exist without volunteers like Sam whose contribution over a long time has been immeasurable.

Congratulations Sam!

THE 2010'S

The Y in Geelong embraces technology and social media to engage with the community and promote its programs and services.

It also becomes more environmentally conscious, adopting sustainable practices in its operations.

Gymnastics and Basketball both increased in appeal to the young people of Geelong and district under the guidance of Brad McDowell and Jared Arklay.

▶ The Y Basketball Club under the leadership of President Craig Herbert, along with an invested committee saw growth in participation across all aged groups for male and female participants in the local domestic competitions.

▶ The expansion of the camping program saw the Y sign a lease for the lodge in Queenscliff to accommodate the over flow of visitors from 2010-2013.

▶ In 2011, the Newtown Stadium mezzanine floor was built accommodating the Judo Club; Y Services Board Room and administration offices.

▶ The Judo Club strengthened in the community due its focus on junior participation and credited to the passion of Paul and Greg Bensted, Michael Greenhalgh and Peter Farrow.

Jake Bensted, now frequently representing Australia on the international stage at the International Championships, Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014- where he brought home a Bronze Medal and Rio Olympics in 2016.

▶ The Y secured the management rights to the Golden Plains Shire's Bannockburn Recreation Centre in 2011 and delivered a range of sporting programs from;

- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Netball
- ▶ Soft Tennis
- ▶ Karate
- ▶ Aussie Slammers
- ▶ Steady Feet
- ▶ And fitness programs to the Bannockburn community.

▶ In 2014, YMCA Geelong secured the lease of the Arena and the Geelong Gymnastics Club program when the club was unable to operate a sustainable model.

While the initial merger was difficult, it provided an opportunity to streamline the gymnastic experience across the two locations.

In the 2015, after a pilot program, Y Geelong Gymnastics embarked on the development of an international pathway for athletes.

It had come at a time when the talented club athletes were pursuing high performance programs and our club had neither the resources nor the structures.

But we were committed to trying to enable the athletes to stay training within our club, while living with their families and attending local schools, for as long as possible.

▶ In 2016, the high performance program had outgrown our capacity and several athletes began training at the National Centre for Excellence in Melbourne, and our coaches had transitioned to NCE.

- ▶ Elly Bayes
- ▶ Mila Blythe
- ▶ Rose Blackhall
- ▶ Mirana Perkins
- ▶ Lhogan Foxman

All represented the Club at a National level.

This gave rise to the Club to recognise the opportunity before us to learn from the previous program and develop a model that focused on the coach development and athlete pathways that could be delivered regionally.

At this time, the State Centres for excellence structures had collapsed.

Athletes perform and train best in their local environment surrounded by family, friends and communities that support them.

This presented an opportunity for the Club to develop coaches' capacity and capabilities and with the support of an active and engaged parent's community.

The International Development Stream currently exists to provide a pathway for our future international athletes.

▶ **We currently have 33 athletes in this program and recognised in the sport as one of the leaders in the sport.**

In 2016, the Y entered a partnership with two other Y Associations to form an entity that oversaw the delivery of the 13 new school building projects across Geelong, Bannockburn, Surf Coast, Whittlesea and Melbourne.

The 13 schools were built over three years with all schools community facilities, before and after school care programs, early learning centres one pool operational.

This shared vision will continue to provide additional funds to the Association for 26 years of the lease agreement.

An agreement was signed with Y Victoria on 2016 for the Geelong Lawn Tennis Club operation however, this ceased operations in 2019.



HALL OF FAME

Hall of Fame Inductees

The Hall of Fame honour is awarded every five years and those eligibility of selection may come from:

Volunteers, Life Membership (Hall of Fame automatic), Professional Staff, participants, and Donors in recognition of outstanding service to the Geelong YMCA in one or more of the above categories over a period of at least 10 years and and/or

Outstanding personal achievement bringing credit/honor to a YMCA Geelong program.

This year we induct six new inductees;



Rhian Jamieson

Rhian has been with the Y for 16 years and has been recognised tonight for her passion and relentless pursuit in developing a gymnastics pathway for young people to stay in their community and train while enabling them to compete at national level.

- ▶ Rhian was the driving force behind the International Development Stream.
- ▶ She is deeply focused on her athlete's well-being.

Rhian worked tirelessly to provide the International Development Squad athletes with remote training opportunities through the COVID period.

Not only did she use her team of coaches to work out appropriate training programs, while following the Gymnastics Australia and Gymnastics Victoria guidelines but, organised regular parent catch-up sessions to check in with families to ensure they are ok, and, that their children are coping with the situation and enjoying the training being presented by the IDS team.

She regularly requests their feedback to allow the program to be adaptable and flexible for all families involved.

Rhian is always looking for ways to engage our athletes and keep them motivated and positive, she has arranged online training sessions with other clubs to promote engagement and social contact for the athletes and coaches to interact with others who are in the same situation as we currently are.

Rhian goes above and beyond her role to ensure the IDS program continues to flourish and grow in a positive manner.

She has been rewarded in seeing the recognition of the her athletes success in Victorian and Australian Championships and most recently has been thrilled with the success of Asher Bayles in her debut international completion later this year in Belgium.

Rhian is indeed a Program Pioneer and deservingly is inducted into the YMCA Hall of Fame.

Congratulations Rhian!



Lisa Trethowan

Lisa has been the cornerstone of the Y Newtown Stadium customer experience for more the 15 years. Her leadership style promotes hardwork, thoroughness and diligent in her work and leads by example.

She approaches all the customer service team in a caring and encouraging manner.

She was the recipient of the Commitment Award in 2020. But it's the work Lisa has done over her career to development young people to be the best that they can be.

She has mentored dozens of the young people and provided a supportive environment that has fostered empowerment and a sense of belonging and purpose in the Y traineeship program.

As one of her previous protégés said "Lisa deeply cares for those around her and is like a mother to some many young staff members".

Lisa is invested in the purpose and Mission of the Y and embodies it in the significant role she plays in believing in the power of inspired young people.

Congratulations Lisa!

Ashlee Bensted

From the time Ashlee could walk she was at the Y Judo dojo, often with her cousins just waiting to have her turn. That day came and for the last 22 years Ashlee has been a regular in the Dojo.

- ▶ Ashlee received a Bronze medal at the Australian U20 Championships Perth in 2011 in the weight of U52kg.
- ▶ She finished with a Bronze medal at the Australian U21 Championships Wollongong in 2013 at U57kg.
- ▶ Ashlee won a Bronze medal at the Southern Cross U21 International Open Melbourne in 2015 in the category U57kg.
- ▶ Claimed a Bronze medal at the Southern Cross International Open Melbourne in 2015 at U57kg.
- ▶ Clinched a Bronze medal at the Australian Championships Geelong in 2016.

For over a decade Ashlee has been a consistent face around the Y Judo community and has supported her uncle Greg Bensted with the coaching of the junior program.

Positive and empathetic, Ashlee provides young girls with a positive role model.

More recently Ashlee has worked with Jake to take over the leadership of the Dojo and shape it for the future direction of the sport at the Y.

We recognise Ashlee for her achievement and voluntary contributions she has made over the last decade.

Congratulations Ashlee!



Shona Eland

From the moment Shona stepped into the role of CEO at the Y Geelong, her work and efforts have been nothing short of outstanding.

Over a period of 10 years Shona has lead the Y Geelong staff, volunteers and local community with dedication, inspiration, motivation and encouragement, developing an amazing culture within the organisation and giving a great sense of security in their physiological safety.

Spearheading the importance of safety amongst children and young people, Shona has continually promoted the importance of youth having a voice and ensuring they will be heard - loud and clear.

- ▶ Beginning her career with the YMCA in 1998, Shona has dedicated 25 years service to the Y.
- ▶ Ongoing commitment to the YMCA Geelong Basketball Club
- ▶ Coordinates the annual Carols by Candlelight event for the Geelong and surrounds community
- ▶ Consistently and passionately advocates for youth and young people living with disabilities

We recognise Shona for the inspirational pioneer she is, knowing that her ongoing commitment and passion for her work will impact generations to come.

Congratulations Shona!

Andrew Kidd

Andrew was appointed Director of Camping and Accommodation when the redeveloped Camp Wyuna site was officially opened in 2008.

Andrew was tasked with establishing an Outdoor Education Program that provided a focus on a place that connected young people through a positive experience, a community where everyone belonged and prioritised quality place to eat, sleep and play.

Starting with a blank slate after the redevelopment, with no customer base, Andrew set about building a team around him and creating a program offering that utilised the beautiful natural environment of the Queenscliff sand dunes, seaside views and coastal vista.

Creating relationships is key to Andrew's demeanour and this was evident through the number of visitors that returned to the Camp Wyuna year after year.

Andrew went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that both his visitors to camp had a memorable experience and there was never a job at Camp that he wouldn't pitch in to help with from cooking, programming or housekeeping and grounds and maintenance.

Congratulations Andrew for your outstanding contribution to the development of what we now know to be a successful Camping and Outdoor Education program.

Congratulations Andrew!



Abbey Bow

Abbey joined the Y Geelong over a decade ago, having competed as a gymnast and coach with Geelong Gymnastics Centre.

In Abbey's 15 years' service with Y Geelong, she has contributed above and beyond to the Y. As a valued coach in the IDS program, Abbey has represented the YMCA Gymnastics Club as a Coach and with Gymnastics Victoria at National Championships.

But it is passion that Abbey has demonstrated to ensure that the club has the resources to support that athletes with equipment that has lead Abbey to stand out from the pack.

She is a motivated go getter who has developed innovative events to generate funds to support the upgrading of equipment. Much of the work Abbey has done in the last 14 years in the fundraising space has been done in a voluntary capacity.

Abbey is never shy about taking on new challenges and has taken a leadership role in delivering a range of gymnastics and fundraising events for the club.

Congratulations Abbey!

THE 2020'S

So this brings us to the most recent decade...and wow what a start we had!

The Y navigated the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting its operations to ensure the safety of staff and members while continuing to provide essential community services.

We also continued to innovate and expand our offerings to the evolving community needs.

The essence of the Y during this time was to support the 150+ staff and volunteers as we remained closed from 20th March 2020 to 15 November 2021. Throughout this time, our operations opened and closed nine times for days or weeks at a time. Camp Wyuna remained closed for the two years.

▶ **In 2021, we formed a partnership with St Mary Mackillop Bannockburn to establish a before and after school care program servicing 146 children who attend weekly.**

▶ Our Gymnastics Club has grown to 1500 gymnasts across recreation and competitive streams in two locations

▶ The YMCA Basketball Club is booming as we enter a summer season with more than 500 players across U8's to Senior divisions

▶ The Judo Club is experiencing a changing of the guard as siblings, Jake and Ashlee Bensted lead the club's future direction.

▶ More than 300 families utilise our children's services programs and we are rebuilding our camping program to pre-covid visitors of more than 9,000 guests per year.

In 2022, we commenced the Master Planning process for Camp Wyuna and Newtown Stadium, with a focus on the facilities to meet the future needs of the community.

Led by the Board and Management, the Y has never been in a better position to continue its focus on inspiring young people in our communities.

We are embarking on a number of key projects that are focused on four key pillars which are highlighted in our recently launched Strategic Plan-Vision 2030 and this Community Impact Report;

- ▶ **Community Wellbeing**
- ▶ **Meaningful Work**
- ▶ **Sustainable Planet and Y**
- ▶ **Just World**

So picture this... by 2030...

▶ The Y is delivering evidence-based programs that reflect the growing need of young people who seek social connection to tackle the youth mental health crisis.

▶ We have a new home for YMCA Geelong Gymnastics Club. One that is accessible and inclusive with programs that will provide the region with a pathway from Recreational Gymnastics to, maybe one day, representing your country, all from a regional hub in Waurm Ponds.

▶ We are leaders in developing pathways for young people to obtain skills and experiences in workplaces. Pathways that will enable them to transition from education and training into workplaces of the future, having gained real life work experiences with an employer that seeks to develop, engage and hear the voices of young people.

▶ The Y Geelong has expanded the Camping and Outdoor Recreation programs to reach more young people and provides a place that ensures that the benefits of nature and outdoors, support the wellbeing of our young people.

▶ We are bold and courageous in our decisions to expand our offerings across the region and expand our Before and After School Care programs.

▶ With purpose and intent, we engage young people in the decision-making of the Association and to help us guide the Y to be a youth movement that values the voices of young people in the governance of our Y.

▶ **And finally, to provide young people alternative ways for them to engage and connect with education, outside the mainstream school system; imagine a Y School in our community, supporting young people being the best that can be.**

You can see, that without the hard work and commitment from those before us, we would not have the future we have in front of us.

HONOUR ROLL

YMCA Geelong Presidents

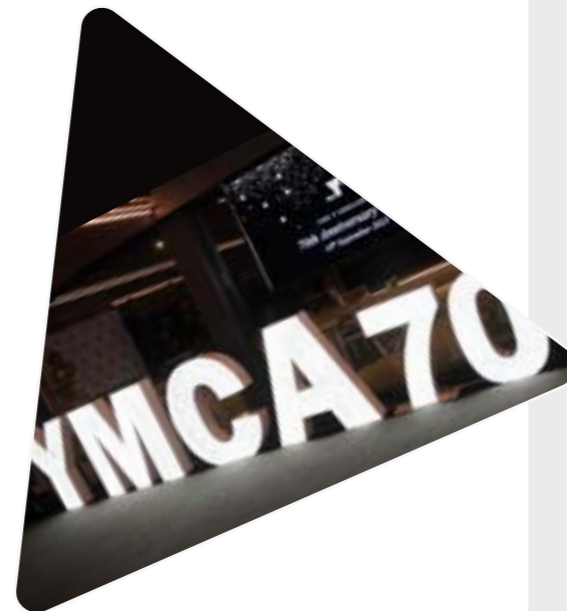
- 1953** A.W Males
- 1955** W.R Ling
- 1959** E.W Plumridge
- 1962** L.A Illingsworth
- 1964** A Birch
- 1966** D.G. Nelson
- 1968** G.A Chomley
- 1970** F.A. Roberts
- 1972** J.R Atkin
- 1974** K.L Carr
- 1977** A.T Bruhn
- 1979** K.G Soulsby
- 1981** K.W Stewart
- 1983** I. J Robertson
- 1985** K.F Grinter
- 1987** N.W Hooper
- 1989** D.P Esam
- 1991** T.J Tayler
- 1992** Bruce Peake OAM
- 1994** Michael Stafford
- 2003** Steve Bentley
- 2011** Vicki Gilbert
- 2013** John Weigl
- 2014** Katherine (Kate) Bibby
- 2016** Simone Boer
- 2018** John Weigl
- 2019** Natalie McColl

YMCA Geelong Life Members

- 1985** L.A Illingsworth
- 1991** A.T Bruhn
- 1991** K.L Carr. A.M
- 1991** K.F Grinter
- 1991** N.W. Hooper
- 1991** I.J McIntyre
- 1991** J.B Urquhart
- 1995** D.P Esam
- 1995** M Urquhart
- 1995** R.N Ashcroft
- 2000** P.J Bainbridge
- 2002** T. R Cliffe
- 2014** Craig Herbert
- 2017** Helen Lewis
- 2017** Daryl Lewis
- 2017** Elaine Thompson
- 2019** Greg Bensted
- 2019** Paul Bensted
- 2019** Michael Greenhalgh
- 2019** Peter Farrow
- 2020** Katherine (Kate) Bibby
- 2020** John Weigl
- 2023** Rachel Crawford
- 2023** Jake Bensted
- 2023** Sam Buckby

YMCA Geelong CEO's

- 1953** Jack Terrill
- 1973** Terry Cliffe
- 1999** Tony Featherstone
- 2002** Paul Williamson
- 2007** Colin Hunt
- 2015** Shona Casey-Eland



YMCA Geelong Hall of Fame Inductees

50th Anniversary Gala 2003

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Rob Ashcroft | Sheryl Gray | Graeme Riches |
| Phil Bainbridge | Jo-Anne Holmes | Hayden Shell |
| Chris Benning | Ken Grinter | Kevin Soulsby |
| Murray Box | Cindy Henderson | Michael Stafford |
| Trevor Bruhn | Craig Herbert | John Stubbing |
| Geoff Buller | Noel Hooper | Gordon Tarbett |
| Val Buller | Lance Illingsworth | Jack Terrill |
| Ken Carr (AM) | Mardi Kingston | Joyce Terrill |
| Terry Cliffe | Dr Roy Lang | Elaine Thompson |
| Laurie Cooke | Eddie Leonie | Jim Urquhart |
| John Corrigan | Daryl Lewis | Maria Urquhart |
| Bill Coyle | Joyce McIntyre | Gordon Walker |
| Tony Curtain | Heather Mitchelhill | Geoff Wallace |
| Ed Davies | Bruce Peake OAM | Phil Ward |
| Ron Dawson | Eric Plumridge | Geoff Williams |
| Dennis Esam | Lindsay Plumridge | Joan Williams |
| Geoff Everett | John Richards | |
| Frank Gerardi | Brenda Richards | |

2017

- Allan Knott
- John Pontefract
- Theo De Beer
- Val Clark

70th Anniversary Gala 2023

- Ashlee Bensted
- Lisa Trethowan
- Shona Casey-Eland
- Rhian Jamieson
- Abbey Bow
- Andrew Kidd



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Geelong and District YMCA Youth Services

INCOME AND EXPENSES	2023
Donations	\$32,023
Expenses	\$33,809
	(1,787)

YMCA Geelong Inc

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	2023
INCOME	
	\$4,995,103
EXPENSES	
	\$4,832,926
	\$162,177

BALANCE SHEET	2023
ASSETS	
Current Assets	\$1,968,773
Non-Current Assets	\$5,188,552
TOTAL ASSETS	\$7,157,325
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	\$970,977
Non Current Liabilities	\$31,021
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$1,001,998
NET ASSETS	\$6,155,327
EQUITY	\$7,157,325



SPONSORSHIPS & DONATIONS

Thank You

On behalf of everyone at the Y Geelong, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our sponsors and donors for their generous donations.

Your support is not just a financial contribution; it is a powerful investment in our shared vision and mission.

Your belief in our cause and community inspires us and fuels our commitment to making a positive impact. It is through the generosity of individuals and businesses, like you, that we are able to continue our important work and create meaningful change in the lives of our athletes, community and youth.

Thank you to;

- ▶ City of Greater Geelong
- ▶ Geelong Connected Communities
- ▶ Autism Camps Australia (ACA)
- ▶ Victorian Government
- ▶ Benjamin Heating and Cooling
- ▶ Kerr Hire
- ▶ Buxton Real Estate
- ▶ Roderick Insurance
- ▶ North Geelong Timber Supplies



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