



# Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club



## Annual Report 2020 -2021

I would like to begin by thanking all those present for continuing to show their support. I will begin by reminding everyone of the Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club Vision.

***'We want to create an environment that fosters rowing in the local community and provides rowers with a pathway and opportunity to compete and be involved on the National & World Stage.'***

I would like to take this opportunity to point out that this is the 137<sup>th</sup> Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club AGM but also the 160<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Ballarat Rowing Club. There is only 1 other club in Australia that can claim a longer history.

Covid once again impacted this past season presenting again challenging conditions. We spent the year dealing with rolling lockdowns that cancelled some regattas and reduced competition numbers across the season. Perhaps one of the most disappointing elements of the risk that COVID placed on the regattas was the lack of spectators. It was a particular disappointment to both the parents and rowers competing for the first time. This problem was particularly evident at the Head of the Lake. For the first time one of the quietest regattas of the year. The committee must be commended for their resilience during this time working with the cards they were dealt and keeping numbers on the water when possible.

We were very lucky this year with the **WBRC Regatta** going ahead largely uninterrupted and drawing reasonably strong numbers. We had good numbers competing and very strong supporter numbers. We negotiated the covid requirements very well and the regatta was once again a great success. Other regattas during the season were perhaps not so lucky, and disappointingly some regattas had limited numbers and were not allowed to have spectators. Our volunteers were once again critical in the regatta's success, and we especially appreciated the work of some of our newest members in running a stall to raise money. Sponsorship was strong and the revenue from the regatta was most welcome.

Throughout the season we had many crews compete commencing with the Omnium held on Lake Wendouree for the first time. We then had crews compete at most of the regattas throughout the season ending with the Australian Rowing Championships and the Australian Masters moved at the last minute to West Lakes South Australia. At this regatta Lee-Anne Martin represented Victoria and was triumphant in picking up a gold medal. At the Wendouree Ballarat Regatta we had competitors in 24 events. This was a fantastic effort and it was testament to the strength of the club.



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**W**BRC travelled to Tasmania with 3 crews to compete at the Australian Rowing Championships at Lake Barrington. The event is critical in introducing the younger rowers in the club to the national stage and helping to promote the WBRC. We were successful in progressing the crews to the finals in each of their respective categories. Importantly the rowers were richer for their experience.

The club would like to thank **Paul Blanchfield** for his leadership and management of the Youth program and without his input the nationals experience would be very different.

**O**ur youth program has continued well this year and reflects the work of the rowing committee. We have also had good growth in the learn to row and adult rowing programs which have been exciting to see. This season we have a growing group of regular rowers getting involved in the regular water sessions, helping with coaching and getting involved in the committee.

**T**he club has invested in several boats this year as well as completing the payments on past years purchases. We have now completed the payments on the **Ralph Murphy** and the **Tim Wright**. Two boats that have been to the Nationals 3 times now and provided a high level of equipment for all rowers. We have also invested in 4 top of the range Croker Sweep oars as well as some sculling blades. The club has also placed orders for 2 new pairs that will be the beginning of a fleet of small boats to replace the aging small boat fleet. There are also 4 new sculls on order that will arrive along with the pairs sometime in September.

**T**his season we also added a new women's coxless quad to the fleet and had a well-attended boat christening in March this year. The new boat was christened the '**1960's Women's Crew**'. This was in honour of the first women's crew to compete for the club and one of the first in a sport largely dominated by men up to that point. Alicia Ivory organised a terrific event for the international women's day and attracted enormous positive attention. The crew members all attended the event including, Mary Wright, Joanna Bajenoff, Coral Gibb, Penny Fawcett and cox Bruce Wilding.

**T**he club has been very successful in attracting sponsorships and donations this year. We managed to raise good funds at the WBRC Regatta and separately to fund the purchase of equipment. As a result, we have improved the finances of the club this year and improved the boats and oars.

**T**he maintenance of the shed continues to be a challenge. While we strive to attract funding to rebuild the shed the main task at the moment is to keep up with maintenance. Over the next 12 months we will continue to repair and maintain the jetties and replace the façade on the north façade of the shed. We appreciate the good work **Neville Collins** and **David Rowe** have contributed to the Building Committee.

**T**his year we say goodbye to some hard-working committee members. **Rebecca Stacey** has been an excellent Secretary for the club and has performed the role well over the last 3 years. We thank her for her valuable input. **Kelly Bevan** has been a great asset to the Rowing Committee and



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has been tireless in her commitment. **Lynette Egan** has helped on the Building Committee this year and has been a valuable committee member for many more. We especially appreciate Lynette's assistance at regattas and look forward to her involvement at regattas to come.

The club would also like to congratulate **Alicia Ivory**, Club Captain, on her appointment to the Rowing Victoria Board. This appointment is important for the club and rowing in regional areas as it allows us all to get a voice in the strategic direction and planning of Rowing Victoria. We believe Alicia is a great asset for the RV board as she has worked tirelessly to improve rowing for the club. Alicia has had strong input into the program as well as getting into many crews to make sure crews hit the water. Thank you, Alicia, for your valuable time and contribution to the club.

I would like to conclude by taking this opportunity to thank the committee in their support of the club and the hard work they put into making this a club that people like to belong to. The last 2 years has been very challenging, and the committee has risen and provided a safe and enjoyable environment for all to row in. I would like to make a special mention to **Yasmin Lloyd** for her work this year as Treasurer. She is new to this role and has provided great attention to detail and reliable reporting. I would also like to thank **Rick Blanchfield**, Vice President, & **Rebecca Stacey**, Secretary for their support.

Thank You.

**John King**  
**President**  
**Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club**