

MITTAGUNDI

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

Directors Report / From the Mittagundi Council Chair

I am sitting by the river at the front gate as I write this, reflecting as the Director and the Council Chair, on the year so far. Wow what an un-precedented time this year has been for Mittagundi. It seems that the pandemic that hit the world unfortunately also had its impacts on our small isolated little place here. As you may know, Mittagundi has struggled this year to get staff to run the place. As I mentioned last time, we were very lucky to have four amazing staff members for the start of the year and this crew have done the most amazing and incredible job in the face of some very difficult times for them. Mittagundi did manage to run a few courses prior to winter which were fantastic, and we had many volunteers come to help with this.

In true Mittagundi style we managed to pull off running a normal Mittagundi winter against all sorts of challenges. This was an incredible effort and a credit to the many volunteers that came to help us do it. All those people who were at Mittagundi should be exceptionally proud of themselves as we did it and we gave amazing experiences to 180 young people. It just reminds me of one of the Mittagundi philosophies - you can achieve anything you want in life if you just put your mind to it. We set out to run a normal winter, initially without enough people to do it and we got there. I am very proud of the Mittagundi staff team for the effort they put in and the result that was achieved because of this. Fortunately, along the way we found a few more staff to help over winter (read more further in this newsletter), Emma Hellings, Ebony Hearn, David Jones, and Sam Jones. David and Sam came for winter, David in the program/camp manager role and Sam as a staff member. Mittagundi was very fortunate to have these two fellas come and help. Ebony initially just came for winter, but Mittagundi got into her, and she has decided to stay for the rest of the year which is great, and Emma started in July and was always planning to stay until the end of the year which is also fantastic for Mittagundi. These extra staff became a pivotal part of our staff team which helped us to achieve the winter.

Mittagundi was a buzz of enthusiasm and excitement all winter, there were many projects started – some finished and a few more ongoing. There was lots of incredible meals and delights produced in the kitchen and in the huts. We tried a change of menu this winter which has been a resounding success, with many comments about how fantastic the food was, which is fantastic feedback for us.

The winter snow was not super reliable, there was a huge dumping early on in June but that was about the best of it. All the ski trips involved walking into Mac's hut, with a day of skiing at Buckety plain and Raspberry Hill but all groups got some time on the snow

Toward the end of winter, the council made the difficult decision to cancel all the spring courses, this was solely due to the in-ability to find enough staff to safely run the courses. This was a very difficult decision as you might imagine. We had several volunteers willing to help, but we just didn't have enough. Thank -you to those that offered, your generosity is appreciated.

Kallum and Zara (staff from the start of the year) made the difficult decision to leave Mittagundi and follow their passion to be working with young people in other places. I want to thank them for all their hard work and passion to Mittagundi over the year. I am hopeful that we will see much more of them into the future getting further involved in Mittagundi.



Shae and St. Phillips staff cooking up a feast.

Belinda our amazing booking officer and bookkeeper has also decided to step down from the booking's role. We fully understand this, however this is an incredible loss to Mittagundi. Belinda has been the stable person for us over the last few years and her commitment and dedication to Mittagundi is unbelievable. I would have been lost on so many levels and occasions if it were not for Belinda. Thank-you Belinda. Fortunately, we have managed to convince her to remain as the bookkeeper



The staff enjoying a break.

Following the decision to cancel winter we were still looking for some leadership on the ground at Mittagundi. After winter I needed to return to my job as such, I was not able to remain at Mittagundi, even though I have remained on as the interim director – all be it from afar. But as often seems to happen we have been very lucky to convince Mossie/Amos/Amy (ex-staff and current council member and staff support) to spend the remainder of the year at Mittagundi. Mossie is awesome, Mossie gets Mittagundi, works way too hard, is passionate and caring to the staff. Thank you, Mossie, for giving up your time to be at Mittagundi. Mossie has also taken on the role of the Mittagundi Bookings officer and as usual we have lucked out as she is doing a ripppa job of this as well

Hopefully you will all know by now, but the best bit of news we have had for a long time is that we now have directors for next year and beyond. Michael and Dani Donovan. This is incredibly fantastic for Mittagundi and now means that we can plough on ahead for next year with hopefully running full and meaningful Mittagundi courses. All we need is a few more staff for next year, especially some with Outdoor Education experience/qualifications. We have committed to and are running a mixed New Years course, which we have managed to staff with the current staff, Michael and Dani and several volunteers.

I have been continually amazed and humbled by the number of people that have and are offering to help Mittagundi in what has been a very difficult time for us. I hope you may understand that the staff at Mittagundi and those helping are doing the best they can in difficult circumstances. We



Slither Leaving Mittagundi in his Rolls Royce.

welcome any assistance and advice and I hope that if offering this you may do it in a constructive and helpful way and understand that we may not get some things done.

Lastly, I was recently sitting at the director's cabin with Mossie, and we were trying to nut out one of the many daily challenges when a couple of old vehicles came up the drive. Driving on of these was a long time Mittagundi supporter and councillor who just dropped in for a visit. In true Mittagundi style, Slither (Simon Swaney) quietly said to me, just let us know what you need, and we will try to make it happen. I have no doubt that when I ask, it will.

I hope your enjoying the wet spring (its great for the river levels and paddling). Don't forget the Bush dance and the Mittagundi Festival on January 13th, 14th, 15th. If your available to help out with the festival, please get in contact with the farm. Hope to see you all then.

Mittagundi is definitely buzzing and the place is full steam ahead,

Regards,
Mike Heff

Newer faces of Mitta



Ebony

Ebony Hearn – she is the golden girl from Mansfield meets Mittagundi. A young person in 2018, she is back for more and has joined our 2022 staff team. When the working day is done, catch Eb wearing her PJs in any shade of pink. She is the best smelling at Mittagundi by a country mile. Ebony has ensured the drying room linen cupboard has reached a new level of organisation this year. Between reading, exploring the Glen Valley and lighting the shower, this organisation lady loves to keep this place in good nick. Ebony is great fun to laugh with and doesn't mind taking the mickey out of herself. She may not be frail but she sure loves a fall. If you lose Eb while you're on a walk together maybe take a look on the ground.

Emmah + Martha

In late June of 2022 Emmah the Maffra/Briagolong gal turned into the Mittagundi zen chicken. This horse riding, poetry writing, bass playing, nature nerd (although she loves to move around) has already found her place in the Glen Valley. Em loves the seasons, the Mountains, the ocean and the rivers. Her little six month old four legged puppa Martha (Nicknamed Goob) brings the best light and laughter to both Mittagundi and many a road trip. This happy hippy sauce queen has already brewed a few batches of Mittagundi Oxymel and many a pot of chai. The first batch of (Kom)buch is hopefully on its way to bottling thanks to Emmah. She finds and builds peace from slow living and mindfulness. If you're on the farm and you find Goob you will no doubtedly find Emmah nearby.





Amos / Mossie is back!!

This spring, the legendary Amos...or Mossy, is back. Some of you might know her from her early days as a young person, others perhaps recognise her as a staff leader from 2018, or in more recent times - Mittagundi council member. This time around she'll be stepping in as some extra hands on the ground and support for the crew until early 2023. So far, her electric, bubbly aura and attitude has encouraged many smiles as well as laughs for the team, and her delicious sweet potato nachos hit the spot after a long day on the tools. Mossy is a wonderful grounding presence with a passionate powerhouse drive, and we are so happy to have her back at Mittagundi once again.

Other Staff News

Farewell Zara & Kalum

As we move into spring, we will be waving off two of our beloved 2022 program leaders, Kalum and Zara. Both of these go-getter individuals have brought so much to this place over the last nine months.

KALUM – The keen ski bum and cold enthusiast, has brought a passion for the snow this winter, encouraging many to embrace the white topped mountains and find a new love of their own. Always itching for a paddle, the Mitta Mitta River has had a lot of attention this year from Kal and the other staff have found warmth in his enthusiasm and guidance when rafting. He has been our staple whip cracker and will leave the farm with a new niche interest of chain sawing (dead/fallen) trees to use for his new skill – building post and rail fences, and the many wooden spoons he is yet to whittle in the future. Cheers for the FUN Kal-Dog.



ZARA – There's not much she won't have a crack at. Zara has been an absolute gun in the outdoors at Mitta, bringing a beautiful combination of life experience alongside joyfulness to the expeditions and programs. The fences at Mittagundi have received a lot of love this year, and our horses Winnie and Arby have had the luxury of her real deal equine gal experience at their disposal. When it comes to guiding the raft, you can always trust Zara to get stuck in a daydream when headed towards a rapid or a hanger – keeping us on our toes and prompting a good laugh. Zar has brought many stories with her to Mittagundi and we hope she will leave with many more xx

Our programs this year have been in safe hands, and for those who got to work alongside them – be it other staff, volunteers, or young people – both Kalum and Zara's dedication and hard work has not gone unnoticed; we appreciate all that they have given to Mittagundi as leaders this year. On behalf of everyone, we wish them all the best for their next adventures and hope their enthusiasm for outdoor ed and the natural environment, take them to some amazing places. Don't be strangers you two... Love the 2022 Mittagundi Crew

David & Sam Jones

From the whole Mittagundi team, we'd like to extend a big thankyou to David Jones and his son Sam. The pair put in some hard yards and rode the rollercoaster with the rest of the team to deliver six back to back programs. Among many things, Sam offered some great blacksmithing knowledge to the young people, and David did well to keep us all fed and supported along the way. We look forward to having them here again soon.



Thanks to Belinda Black

Belinda Black has been a woman of many hats here at Mittagundi, and the time has come for her to pass a few of them on. Belinda will be stepping down from her roles as Booking Manager and Public Relations but will remain a vital part of our behind the scenes team as our book keeper. From all at Mittagundi, we would like to thank Belinda for her ongoing efforts, chugging away in the background and keeping the boat afloat, especially given the fluctuation in programs this year.



WELCOME 2023 DIRECTORS

Michael and Dani



Michael and Dani Donovan are coming to us on Boxing Day all the way from New Zealand. Both keen outdoor eders! Michael has worked at Mittagundi in the past, but his South African Wife Dani has not. We are told there are some staff hired, yet we are still in NEED of MORE! Send some love and support their way and spread the word to help a full crew be hired so that Mittagundi and return to running all the programs in 2023. We are so grateful for Michael and Dani and super excited for their journey to begin.

Winter Programs

An Overview

After the July break, the staff (both old dogs and newcomers) were feeling the pre-rush of the winter to come. The Mittagundi calendar started off with the delightful Winter follow up and then turned to the school programs. Mt Bogong presented a playground full of opportunity and adventure. Overall, the trips boasted many big grins, challenges and mindsets full of self-determination, a bunch of firsts from seeing snow, to carrying a pack and cross country skiing, as well as bulk hot choccies and soup. The walls of McNamara's hut are now filled with enough stories, laughs and riddles to keep themselves standing until next winter.

Winter Follow Up

The Winter Follow up program was our first follow up program of the year. It was so nice to see passionate and fun young people returning to Mittagundi and adventuring up to the snow with us for our first course of the winter season. The program was fast paced and the energy was there to match it. Pre dinner soup and hot choccy became the staple go to after both days of walking, and classic riddles opened up some good bonding moments around the campfire in mac's hut. A big thankyou to Andy Ellis for helping us run the program and everyone who came along and brought their appreciation and enthusiasm for Mittagundi. What a way to kick off our winter courses!! – Zara

Oberon College

The winter school programs kicked off with Oberon College, and WOW what a ripper program. The young people, alongside our amazing Volly's Ollie and Daire, and the school staff Andy and Georgia, showed a beaming love for being amongst the mountain landscape, jumping straight into anything Mittagundi plated up, displaying a keen attitude towards skiing adventures; Whether it was early morning milking Monica, cooking up a kitchen storm, woodchopping, orchard work or fencing - they gave 110%. The days were well spent and afternoons were often topped off with whip cracking and fruit consumption. Big thanks to this group for magic memories and a bunch of laughs. We hope to see them back soon – *Ebony*

St. Phillips College

In July, St. Phillips came to town. This was our first dual program over winter. There were many great moments with each group, both on the farm and up in the snow. The grand steps project started, the garden received some love and as usual many loaves of bread were baked and consumed. It was wonderful to have an interstate group and share the Mountain environment with young people, of which most had not ever seen snow before. They were an awesome bunch of young people who embraced everything Mittagundi offers and were a lot of fun – *Kal*

Hamilton Boys Group

The Hamilton Boys course was a rainy one, but that didn't seem to sway this group of keen young fellas. Many rounds of timber were split and the wood shed now looks all the better for it. The cows had entered a daily escape routine by this stage of winter, so regular round ups became a daily mission. Despite this, Hamilton boys (many of them from farming backgrounds) took it all in their stride. The snow was a good place for some fun and to get to know one another outside the usual classroom. Cheers boys, the Mittagundi fence lines have never looked better – *Shae*

Cathederal

Upon a late sunny arvo, a fleet of Wangarattas finest rolled into mittagundi. You could sense the mix of emotions bubbling in the brisk mountain air; young people with bouncing minds, some tired from the bus trip, others filled with curiosity and excitement for the days ahead... whatever it be,

there was a gut feeling of the good to come. An adventurous crew, they brought their snow experience with them and even showed Zara and I a few ways to up our ski game. The trip was filled with many kooky happenings (cheers Full Moon) that sparked lots of laughter, resulting in sore cheeks and increased abdominal strength. Some funny moments on the farm included the collection of a somewhat thirty bardi grubs - courtesy of Zara's fencing crew - which were cooked in garlic butter and served alongside the roast on the last night. The leftover stragglers were consumed by one of the young people after losing a game of 'what are the odds'. We all enjoyed witnessing the ordeal. What was most prominent throughout this program was the group's ability to look after one another, be proactive, step outside their comfort zone, be sensibly silly and embrace Mittagundi life. Thanks Cathedral, you ruled – *Em*

Hamilton Girls Group

What a beautiful, noisy, funky and wonderfully creative program! As the last hurrah for winter, the Hamilton girls were our "goodbye" program for the snow season. Highlights definitely included the sunny days (it felt like spring was on the way) and of course the Kath & Kim trivia in McNamara's hut before dinner, followed by silly staff dress-ups and makeshift garlic naan (macs hut has seen some elaborate meals this winter). Many of the Hamilton girls came with a bit of background farming experience which was very exciting for the staff. It was also lovely to share the farming lifestyle with young people that didn't get that experience back home. A special note goes out to the snow that was falling as the second group drove up to Trapyard Gap Gate. It felt very magical. Such a special send off for the Mittagundi 2022 winter - *Marti*



Young People from St. Phillips in Mac's Hut on Winter program, alongside Andi Ellis (Former staff) and Mittagundi Leaders.

Winter Happenings

The Hop 2022

Each year comes a special time when Mittagundi and Wollangarra folk from all years and all backgrounds, are welcomed back together to get their Bush dance on and raise some funds for our beloved organisations. This year we saw the humble Coburg Hall transform from its city self into a place full of rowdy howdy's and yee-ha's. The evening started off with a sort of suspense in the air, and as the sun said its final goodbyes, bit by bit the hall was transformed into a different world for the night – A Mittagundi, Wollangarra world. Bunting and fairy lights gave character to the walls, and the smell of Ally's cooking filled the air, calling us to feel at home. Redback's, Blundstone's and Akubra's from far and wide started to roll in. As hat tilts, hugs and handshakes took centre stage and friendly smiles began to exchange, one couldn't help but feel the stories of past, present and future collide; reminding us that this is a place where strangers aren't strangers for long and that family indeed extends further than bloodline.

As the conversations grew louder, the voice of Hamish (Ex Wol Staff) floated happily outwards, accompanied by the soft lull of his acoustic guitar. It wasn't long before the one and only Sal Kimber – in her broad brim hat, called the collective to join the first bush dance. The four-piece string ensemble became a protagonist of the evening. Fast paced and energy fuelled, no matter whether you were an experienced dancer or had two left feet, the music was full of zest and the steps fast paced (it made running for the Mittagundi telephone look easy). After a good feed and commitment to the dance floor, the opportunity for a cheeky auction arose. Maeve and Andy put on their drama kid alter egos and brought their A-grade sales pitching skills to the table, leaving the community's hands happy and full of handmade goodies like wooden spoons, stools, trowels and fire pokers. Here here to another jolly good year and a fun filled Hop Fundraiser.

Big thanks to Aly Nicholls for catering, Hamish plus Sal Kimber and the band for the music, The young people who helped set up and run the event, our array of beverage servers throughout the night, keeping us all in check, all the behind the scenes vollies who contributed to the evening, Coburg hall and the Darebin Council, Jodie on doors, as well as all the smiling faces that came on in for a boogie and a chinwag.

With Warmth, Emmah

A Day with 'Friends of the Mitta'

On the grand final weekend, the Mittagundi crew jumped into the troopy to go join many other helpers who had gathered at Anglers Rest to share their passion and give back to areas along the Mitta Mitta River. Our staff team made their way to Hinnomunjie Bridge, where they spent a sunny morning weeding and constructing tree guards around some planted native trees. The weekend was topped off with a celebration on Saturday night and a cheeky paddle down The Gorge on Sunday, where some of the staff enjoyed a happy river and beautiful sunshine - *Kalum*

Visitors galore

The Mittagundi driveway over the last month or two has been getting a bit of a workout. Visitors old and new have rolled on in. Ex staff members Wendy Waite, Lynda Newman, Gerry Gerish and her daughter Elsie have all graced this place with their handy helping hands as of late. We'd like to thank them all for coming to stay and sharing their time, skills and happy smiles with us here on the farm.

We also had The Omeo Gardening Club come share a cuppa and some warming soup with us, as we chatted about the local community, Mittagundi and our shared passion for gardening.



Gerry and Elsie in the chook shed.



Wendy and Lynda share a cuppa with Ian at kitchen table.

A spontaneous visit from Ian

How lucky were we to have a surprise visit from the man himself, Ian Stapleton.

The 2022 staff had an opportunity to sit down with a cuppa in hand and have a good chat with Ian and ex-staff members - Wendy Waite and Lynda Newman, grasping a taste of a previous Mittagundi life as the three shared stories of the good ole days. Current Mitta staff had a yap about the Mittagundi adventures and memories they've made this year. It's fair to say that the love for this place and the mountains, has and will continue to exceed across all generations of those who choose to embrace this wonderful environment.

Recipes of the season

Introducing our most recent column addition to the Mittagundi newsletter, brought to you by Marti and Emmah, the kitchen / pantry wizards for 2022. Here we'll share our favourite recipes of the season. If you take to the kitchen and try them out, be sure to write us a letter telling us what you think. Happy eating!!

Spiced Coconut Overnight Oats

We all know the porridge pot gets a bit of a workout here at Mittagundi (and Wollangarra too no doubt), but to spice things up a little (literally), we have put a new spin on the old classic. This recipe sprung from a conversation about tomorrow's breakfast, whilst an empty can of coconut cream sat in eye range on the kitchen table - fair to say, Emmah's curiosity got the best of her - and a new favourite was born.

Ingredients (Serves 1):

(Experiment and tailor spices + quantities to your own liking)

Rolled Oats *(to match hunger)*

½ can of Coconut cream

Fresh Ginger *(grated or finely chopped)*

Ground spices: Turmeric, Cinnamon, Cardamom, Cloves

Pinch of salt and a Crack of black pepper

¼ cup Water *(add more if needed)*

Dates or Sultanas

Maple syrup or honey *(optional - for sweet tooth)*

1 TBSP Chia Seeds *(Black or White or Both)*

Method:

Place all ingredients in a good jar (with lid) and combine with a spoon. Shake well.

Leave in fridge overnight, or for an hour or so until ready to consume. Pour into saucepan *(heavy based)* and cook until oats are soft or reach desired consistency.

Remember to stir so they don't burn. Top with extra honey, maple syrup, jam, toasted coconut, yoghurt, or any fresh fruit of choice. Tuck in.

Winter Oxymel (Immune boosting tonic)

Oxymel *(latin for Acid and Honey)*, is a traditional herbal tonic that uses the fermentation process to up the anti of many immune boosting herbs and ingredients. It may also help aid the digestion process. We've been pumping this liquid gold here at Mitta and if anything else, it does well to warm the cockles on a cold mountain day.

Ingredients can include: **(Measure to your heart's content and use 2 parts ACV to 1 Part Honey)** Garlic Cloves, Fresh Ginger, Fresh Turmeric, Fresh Chilli *(if you like spice)*, Cinnamon Quills *(Ceylon if possible)*, Cardamom Pods, Whole Cloves, Black Peppercorns, Cracked Fennel seeds, Fresh or dried Rosemary, Thyme and Oregano, Orange + Lemon Juice and Rinds, Brown or White Onion, 2 Cups ACV/ Apple Cider Vinegar *(with "The Mother")*, 1 cup Honey, Dried Juniper Berries, Elderberry, Rosehips and Fresh Horseradish Root if you can find them.



Speedy Oxymel brewing on the stove.

Method: Roughly chop fresh ingredients and place in a decent size jar with all other ingredients. Add ACV. Place a piece of baking paper in between the jar and lid - secure with string or elastic

ban and seal jar. In a cool, dry place, leave in jar for 1 - 2 months and shake once - twice daily (*don't forget to label the jar with the date to keep track of brewing time*). When the brew is ready, strain liquid into a bowl or jug and mix in honey. Pour into bottle or jar and leave in a cool, dry place. Take a smaller daily shot for preventative use (*1tbsp/15ml*) or a little more if you've copped a cold (*2 tbsp / 30mls*). Happy brewing!!

The speedy version: *You can also place all these ingredients in a pot with some water, bring to the boil, then let simmer for a few hours for a quick yummy yet potent winter alternative.*

On The Farm

Animals



Cows: Mittagundi is cow central at the moment. Early in our winter, our beloved cow Tess passed away and left behind Sarah. Nicknamed Sez, she now roams Mittagundi confidently, having been brought up on the bottle, and we're certain she identifies as a dog. She loves a scratch and even joins us on our silt trap cleaning missions. We have two poddy calves – Alex and Liv, who will be milkers when they are old enough. The cheeky Rowdy calf went to the butchers. He has been providing many good diners, and the staff now have a devoted appreciation for him. Our next meat cow will be the Hereford – Billie. Gordy cow was swapped in return for a jersey – Stuey. The most recent additions to the bovine family are Genie and her calf Dane. Genie is being familiarised with human interaction and has started her training to be the next milker. Our current challenge is keeping them all out of the homestead paddock which should improve when the fences are finished – *Shae and Marti*

Pigs: Over winter we had two pigs arrive at Mittagundi. Donny and Davo (Named after Mittagundi's Favourite babies) have loved all the leftover scraps produced by the winter programs. Some people have suggested that perhaps they are past the cute stage of their lifespan, however they have been a lovely presence on the farm. Sometimes you can hear them snoring or playing in the mud from various spots on the farm. When it comes time to say goodbye to these oinkers, we will be thankful for their time here and grateful for their meat - *Kal*





Longbeak enjoying a cuddle.

Chooks: Despite being as cold as an esky in the snow this season, the girls have continued to put out. Egg count dropped off for a bit there, but with continued love and morning porridge feeds, we are on the up again. Myself (Emmah) has taken over this job area from chook daddy Kal and am now dubbed the designated chook mumma for the foreseeable future. In attempt to be sworn in as “Crazy Chook Lady”, I have accepted Kal’s challenge and have named all fourteen of these cheeky chickens. Longbeak and I most often cross paths on the farm, including one time when she took rest on my leg when fixing a whipper snipper, as well as a sneaky visit from her in my cabin whilst I was napping with the door open. Another Hen - Babs, has been nicknamed “Broody Babs” as she spends most of her time clucky. I look forward to getting to know all their individual personalities as time goes on - *Em*

Produce and Property

Fences: Mittagundi’s fences have been in need of some labouring love lately. I’d like to thank each winter course that came through, for contributing to our fencing projects: Our Wills paddock gate, a few new assemblies in our stable paddock, and our new boundary fence for the knocker paddock. Hopefully all this helps keep our houdini calves in from now on - *Zara*



Kal and Em fencing.



Blue Dog helping with the weeding.

Garden: Apart from a sturdy supply of beetroots and silverbeet, the Mittagundi Garden went into hibernation mode over winter. Despite this, there were many groups helping prepare the soil via composting and as always - pulling weeds. As spring rolls around with the odd sunny day, we look forward to eating a lot of our own veggies and fresh produce again. We’re also excited to be prepping for mass tomato cultivation, ready to step into our preserving pants come early 2023 - *Kal*



Steps, Steps and more Steps:

When the plan to “Level out the steps” at the directors hut was interpreted as “Lets pull out the steps”, the Mittagundi crew knew there was a new project on hand. I was tasked with what is such a pivotal part of the daily runs for the phone. A special mention goes out to St. Phillips and Hamilton Boys group for battling through the process, as rain dumped down and the steps turned to mud pie soup. One burst water pipe, two new garden beds and a few feature rocks later (not to mention literal blood, sweat and tears) the new steps were sturdy, graveled and looking mighty fine. The run to the phone has never been more streamlined.

Horses: Arby and Winnie really kicked up their feet (hooves) this winter. They’ve both had a deserved break with lots of rest and happy grazing. Now that spring is upon us, it’s time to say goodbye to their chubby, fluffy, dad bods and bring them back into work. I’m sure they’ll be looking forward to many walks along the 107 track in preparation for summer hike programs - *Zara*



Wood: This winter, the stoves have been smashing through the wood. There are many dead trees waiting for attention and there’s a ton of chain sawing that remains. Good thing woodchop is coming up. The bee hives are looking wonderful post programs though, and they’ll be looking even better post woodchop.

Orchard: We’d like to congratulate The Orchard for being so patient as we slowly made our way through this year’s pruning journey. Thanks to the teachings and knowledge of Tom Jenkins and wonderful Sara Green, there is hope. Whilst we have been working at uncrossing the fruit tree limbs - we have been crossing all of ours in manifestation that we shall receive an abundant haul for 2023 preserve and fruit bottling season. Yummo!! - *Em*

Thank You

We have already received some lovely feedback from the young people involved in our 2022 winter programs - including some lovely letters. All of which has reminded us of the role Mittagundi continues to play within both the lives of these young people as well as the broader community. This wouldn't be possible without all those who have contributed to this place, not only this winter, but continuously over the lifespan of Mittagundi. There are many characters that make Mittagundi what it is, the majority of these people working quietly in the background. So as we continue to collaborate with one another and build upon this wonderful community, here's a special thank you to those who have contributed in one or more ways this winter alone:

Thank you to...

- Mike Heffernan/Heff for the countless hours of effort, leaving your other job and stepping in as Acting director and doing it for no payment. We appreciate your continuous commitment to Mittagundi and its vision. Winter would not have happened if you didn't come and go on and on about soup
- David and Sam Jones for being a wonderful help all winter!!
- All the amazing Vollies - Ollie, Gus, Lilli, and Imogen.
- Kev McGennan, Andy Ellis and Daire for being a pot full of expertise and passing on your knowledge to both staff and young people throughout multiple of our programs this winter.
- Kev again, for donating lots of little goodies and hike gear pre winter.
- Tom, Sara and Donny for your help on the farm, your warming presence and all the love you give continuously.
- Faith Atcherson for stepping in as staff liaison officer and being a huge support for the team.
- Sam Walmsley and Alena for gathering outdoor ed trained staff and volunteers for winter programs this season, as well as everything you do for Mittagundi.
- Gordy for the sawdust + constant help and advice.
- Pam Jones for the making of sleeping bag liners and soup
- Stuart Neil for our new milking cow (Stuey) plus various other cow assistance.
- Terri McNeil for Babysitting Stuey the cow.
- Mick Batty for other cow advice.
- Geanie and Jacob for our new cow Geanie and her calf Dane.
- Belinda Roper for her generous donation.
- Jack Skermer for gear shed building/advice and everything you do for us.
- Sal Kimber and all those who organised and attended The Hop.
- All those who cooked up and donated soup for programs including Charlie Roberts and her Mum, Judith from Omeo, the Omeo Ambo ladies and The Jones and Hudson Families.
- Tamsin Byrne for the Pot mitts, handmade preserves, sauce and jam.
- Roger Hearn for work gloves, axe handles and repair.
- Symo for fixing the generator and the vehicles.
- Billie for the round yard work and initial training of Arby.
- Central Hotel - Lakes Entrance, for donation of beds.
- All the helpers that came at the start of Spring.
- Phil and Dawn for the hundreds of garden goodies and seedlings.
- The Omeo show for the Mittagundi Stall.

Come and work at Mittagundi!

Program Leaders 2023

We are looking for applicants that have a passion for working with young people in an outdoor education and working farm environment. The position requires the leader to lead young people in outdoor adventure activities (cross country skiing, snow camping, hiking, white water rafting and abseiling), logistics activities in support of these activities, and farm-based projects (such as feeding animals and gardening). Alongside a variety of training provided, the role offers the opportunity for self-growth and discovery in a unique environment, whilst living and working in the stunning alpine region of East Gippsland.

See our website for more details on both roles www.mittagundi.org.au/jobs

How to get involved more

Follow us on social media: @mittagundi

Come Volunteer at Mittagundi

Mittagundi is passionate about providing opportunities for all to experience the outdoors and fall in love with the mountains. If this is something that interests you, then volunteering at Mittagundi may just be your cup of tea.

10 day program and follow up volunteers: We are always looking for enthusiastic and energetic volunteers to help throughout the year. Our 10-day programs run from September to May with shorter Follow Up programs interspersed. Spring and Autumn are particularly beautiful times to be up at Mittagundi and they are very productive times on the property too. There is always plenty to be done in the garden, with the animals and ensuring our programs run smoothly from behind the scenes. We would love your help and would welcome you warmly into the Mittagundi community.

Winter volunteers: Our Winter courses are 6, 7 and 9 days long and involve 3 day trips in the snow as well as time on the farm at Mittagundi. We require 2 volunteers per Winter program. There are many ways that people can help at Mittagundi during winter. Some volunteer helpers will go out on ski trips, some may be helping out at the base around Mittagundi milking cows, baking bread, chopping firewood and so on. It's a great way to be involved in a quality Outdoor Education program focusing on community, lifestyle and personal values. A great place to stay in the Mountains and a unique experience helping young people to learn and grow.

To enquire, apply or learn more, please visit our website: www.mittagundi.org.au or contact us on 0467 678 818

If you would like to help Mittagundi here is how you can

Check out our list of essential resource needs below. Any financial help you can provide this year to purchase these items would be immensely appreciated! Or maybe you know someone who can help? Give us a call on 03 5159 7238

- RESOURCES WE NEED -

- Large Photo Albums (Hard cover if possible)
- Paint + Paint brushes (Smaller sizes for letter writing + other various sizes)
- Large French press (coffee maker)
- A few sturdy kitchen whisks
- Saddle pack bags x 2 (good condition)
- Garden watering can
- Terracotta pots, plastic planter pots
- Gardening utensils: Hand Trowels, small spades, weeding utensils etc.
- Guitar Strings
- Sandpaper
- Timber nails
- Drill bits 5mm and under
- Various plywood
- Two decent double/queen bed sets and mattresses
- Stockwhip
- Gas Lantern Heads?
- Donations always welcome

Mittagundi is a non-profit organisation that receives no funding from the Government. Our programs are heavily subsidised and we are reliant on a fantastic community of supporters for about 30% of our operational costs.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

CHEQUE ATTACHED FOR \$ _____

I have made an electronic deposit to your Westpac Account of \$ _____
on ____/____ ACCOUNT DETAILS: Westpac Bairnsdale
BSB 033653 A/C 630000

Please debit my: Visa/Mastercard Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: ____ CCV Number: _____

Signature: _____

DONATIONS CAN ALSO BE MADE VIA THE WEBSITE: <http://www.mittagundi.org.au/donate/>

What is Mittagundi?

Mittagundi is an independent, not-for-profit organisation with outdoor programs available to all young people aged 14-17. It was established over 40 years ago with a commitment to provide opportunities for young people from all walks of life to live and enjoy the challenge of a remote and simple lifestyle.

The atmosphere at Mittagundi is simple, honest and happy. There are no watches, no timetables and no money. Instead, there is an opportunity for young people to live and work together in an environment where people matter more than anything else. Mittagundi is run by a professional and passionate team of volunteers and a whole community of support.

To book into a program or be involved with Mittagundi please visit our website www.mittagundi.org.au or contact us on 0467 678 818

