GOLDEN SQUARE POOL INC.





OUR ORGANISATION



COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Sam Kane President
Barbara Lomas Vice President
Margaret Hand Secretary
Linda Howell Treasurer
Helen Barton
Catherine Doyle
James Courtman
Bronwyn Soko
Casey Ely
Debra Butt
Natalie Kurzke
Janene Hewitt

MANAGEMENT

Bronwyn Soko Pool Manager
Barb Lomas Volunteer Manager
Tracie Kane Kiosk Manager
Linda Howell HR Coordinator - Staff
Sam Kane, Nat Kurke Lifeguard Managers
Natalie Kurzke SwimSafe Bendigo Manager
Helen Barton Operational Management Team
Catherine Doyle Maintenance Coordinator

TEAMS

Pool Operations
Andrew Penna, Bronwyn Soko
Adam Reaper
Maintenance and Facilities

Catherine Doyle, Margaret Hand, Andrew Penna, Rhonda Schepers, Harry Schepers, Ian Schepers, Erik Werps, Dave Kane, Brian Kurzke, Shane Howell

Media and Communications
Sam Kane, Barb Lomas
Carol McCormack
Lap Club

Deb Gordois

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It's my pleasure to present Golden Square Pool Inc.'s 2020/2021 Annual Report – a year that, despite the challenges of the pandemic, our passionate team and community proved our local meeting place is still as needed and as relevant as ever – perhaps even more than before.

Our summer season commenced on Saturday 21 November – and it was a real thrill to see members of our community again after 2020's lockdowns and restrictions. The smiles as patrons walked back in the gates to plunge in over that first week are something none of us will forget – and the many conversations I had with members reinforced how important outdoor recreation spaces like ours are to connect people together.

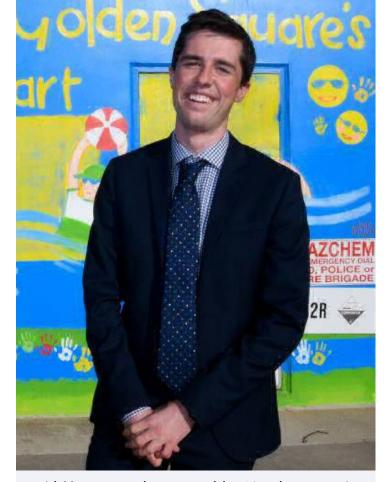
Due to requirements imposed as a result of the pandemic, numbers were capped at just 100 patrons on Opening Day. We were at capacity in just the first hour – with a line waiting to get in most of the day! We were honoured to have our local ward councillor Mayor Cr Jen Alden and our number one ticket holder State Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards MP officially open the season.

The pandemic posed challenges for the whole organsation across season – from patron caps, extra cleaning requirements, check-in requirements, being unable to hold our community events, and, a lockdown in February 2021 which kept us away for five-days. I give my praise to all in the team for how they adapted to the times and did everything with a smile – ensuring our operation always, first and foremost, listened to the advice and kept our community safe.

Our diverse program offerings remained popular this season. Since our live music events and our annual New Year's Eve and Australia Day events were deemed highrisk, we worked hard to grow our health and fitness class offering instead. This still gave people the benefit of socialisation with fellow community members and a focus on personal wellbeing. These programs included Water Aerobics, Lap Club, Yoga, Kids Yoga, Metafit, VicSwim and a community bike ride with Bike Bendigo. Offseason, in partnership with art collective Nacho Station, we also painted a massive new mural on half of the kiosk building. It has transformed the space – representing the nostalgic, colourful, vibrant vibe of who we are.

We value our strong relationship with local schools and enjoy working with them to provide a safe space for young people to learn vital water safety skills. Across the season we were proud to host eight schools as they held their swimming programs and events at our pool.

This year we were proud to form a new relationship with Life Saving Victoria and Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services to redesign and relaunch our highly popular, free adult and multicultural swimming program, SwimSafe Bendigo. Coordinated by a



paid Manager and supported by 10 volunteer swim instructors, this program ran twice per week and offered 22 free hour-long water skills lessons to 35 members of various multicultural communities from around Bendigo.

We also held four social events at the pool for SwimSafe Bendigo participants and their families, allowing members of communities who may not always be confident to frequent the pool, the opportunity to connect to their local area - also responding to the impacts of COVID-19 such as community isolation.

This season we worked hard to grow our organisational capacity. We continued to implement changes to Royal Life Saving Australia's Guidelines for Safe Pool operations. We also developed a suite of internal policies in response to the growth in volunteers and staff involved in our organisation – now, collectively at 135, as well as the need to ensure we remain compliant in areas such as Human Resources, chemicals, operations, first aid and safety. This remains an ongoing task, as detailed in our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, and we continue to remain committed to responding to, and mitigating, the risks of operating an aquatic facility.

Ensuring the organisation takes a risk and business approach to all areas of operation is important and will remain so as we navigate continued changes to legislation and operating guidelines. It is also important to understand that our organisation is treated no differently to any other commercial operator managing facilities – meaning due-diligence in decision making and action must remain our highest priority.

This year we introduced a new operating model. This included the employment of a Pool Manager to oversee our daily operation, supported by an internal Operational Management Team and the wider staff

team of 10 lifeguards and a Project Officer (SwimSafe Bendigo) and Pool Operations contractors. This new structure is part of the organisation's wider commitment to see the function of the pool's operation led by a paid Manager, guided by the voluntary Committee of Management, in order to allow for greater capacity and to strengthen our sustainability.

This new operating structure was successful, however will undergo changes to better respond to the unique nature of our operating model. As part of refining our operational and business model, we continue to consult widely within the aquatics industry.

Renewal and maintenance works remain a high priority, and key tasks were completed this year. These included maintenance of the plant and operations areas, works on the pool shell, and grounds works. The City of Greater Bendigo also completed upgrade works to the kiosk and office spaces, in response to 2020's fire. We thank the City for their work here.

We continued to implement initiatives under our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, to ensure we remain committed to our vision of working hard every day to be a vibrant, dynamic and empowering community hub that connects and grows Golden Square and Bendigo. As you will see later in the plan's Annual Update – key areas of this have advanced. I continue to remain proud that our organisation never rests on its laurels and is always striving to be better in all areas, not just the pool itself.

We are in a strong financial position. As part of our financial and project planning, we were successful in increasing our receipt of grants outside operational grants to \$55,369. This has allowed many of the strong community projects we have and will undertake in 2021/2022. We thank the many funders, donors and supporters for their belief in what we do at the Square.

This year the organisation also held a Special Meeting of members to endorse a change in rules to allow an application to apply for Deductible Gift Recipient status. I thank members for their unanimous endorsement of this change.

The future of Golden Square Pool is exciting. This year we officially endorsed the implementation plan of the Golden Square Recreation Reserve Master Plan. This plan outlines how Option 1 of the Master Plan will be achieved. Particularly, it allows our organisation to progress with our own site-specific Master Plan and continue to renew and maintain the site with a certain path forward. Our Major Projects and Upgrades Committee have done a power of work in imagining what a modern aquatic and community centre could look like, to create a space for future generations.

I am confident that the steps we have taken over the past year are further setting our organisation up for longterm sustainability and success. Continuing along this path will make sure the organisation remains responsive to its obligations, and can ensure delivery of a safe, highquality service.

15,434 patrons passed through our gates across Season 2020/2021. It is important to note that this is 3,500 patrons lower than the previous season. This decline, however, is

correlated with the pandemic – operating each day of season with patron caps, a five-day closure due to the state-wide lockdown during peak season, and the cancellation of our entire event season. A strong number of memberships were also sold throughout the season – a total of 380.

This patronage number is still strong and reflects again, as it has every year since we reopened in 2013, the need for this facility, and indeed the strength in what our community organisation provides. I look forward to seeing this number again rise in the coming years, health advice pending.

120 volunteers – aged from 5 to 85, worked hard across so many areas every single day to make our facility operate, and quite simply we couldn't achieve what we have if it wasn't for every single one of them. From kiosk to maintenance, pool operations to painting – our volunteers have truly showed again, as they have since 2013, why the Square is truly 'The People's Pool'. I can never wipe the smile off my face when I walk in and am greeted with the smile of a member of our mighty team – this is your place, and you make me so proud.

My thanks to the City of Greater Bendigo for their ongoing operational support across a range of areas this year. We have a strong and valuable working relationship with the City that will only continue to strengthen and grow. In particular, I'd like to thank Ray Smith (what'd we do without you, Ray!), Amy Johnston, Lincoln Fitzgerald, Matt Kerlin and the whole Active and Healthy Lifestyles Team, as well as Josh Owens from Projects.

I'd also like to also offer my personal thanks, and that of the organisation, to our Committee of Management – whose strategic leadership and governance has ensured we could continue, in the midst of a pandemic, to provide a quality and professional service that makes a difference to people's lives. Barb, Marg, Linda, Catherine, Helen, James, Nat, Janene, Bronwyn, Casey and Deb – my deep thanks.

My thanks also to Bronwyn Soko, our Pool Manager, for all her work in ensuring a safe and compliant operation across season. These thanks extend to all of our staff and contractors.

Thank you to our patrons, members, supporters, sponsors and donors for their belief in what we do here at the Square. This vibrant community hub wouldn't be here without the many people who make our place what it is – who support us on so many levels, from a swim to pro-bono guidance.

I'm immensely proud of what team Golden Square Pool has achieved in this – our eighth year of community management, and believe that this season, more than ever before, we demonstrated together how important local community, and the local pool, is.

I can't wait to see how our organisation continues to grow and build on the achievements of this year.



FROM OUR MANAGER

The Golden Square Pool 2020/2021 season was another opportunity for our wonderful staff and volunteers to share in supporting their local community pool.

While the outdoor pool is only operational over summer months, there is always much preparation behind the scenes during the cooler months, with a dedicated team of volunteers working to prepare the pools for the summer.

We are proud of our lifeguard staff, with many returning from previous seasons and new recruits welcomed throughout the summer season. Working as a team, the lifeguards are a welcoming face for patrons; new and returning ones, to enjoy the cool, safe environment throughout our summer months.

An in-service training with staff and volunteers brought the cohesive team together to learn new skills. While COVID-19 kept the official events away, staff and volunteers still enjoyed Christmas, New Year and Australia Day, celebrating public holidays at Golden Square's Beating Heart.

Many birthdays and other celebrations were also enjoyed during the summer, as the public appreciated the benefits of the wide-open community space.

Ensuring the outdoor pool is operational day in and day out, our team strive to keep everything in smooth running order; handling bookings and activities, managing chemical levels and water quality as well as the overall cleanliness of the pool. All these factors keep the happy patrons returning to enjoy their local community pool.

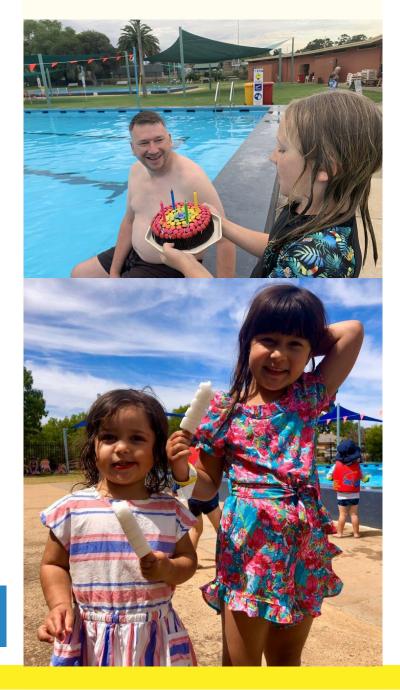
The pool was a buzz of activity during the first and last terms of school, as many local primary and secondary schools took the opportunity to learn water safety and swimming skills. It was wonderful to see the students thrive in the pool and have dedicated swim teachers sharing vital life skills.

Continuing learning over the summer holidays, children from near and far joined in the VIC SWIM program. The swimming and water safety program is continually upskilling the community with important water safety skills for around the water.

My thanks to the whole team for a wonderful season at our fantastic Golden Square Pool.

BRONWYN SOKO





FROM THE KIOSK

Season 2020/2021 presented the kiosk with a range of new challenges as well as some great highlights.

Restrictions around the pandemic created the first hurdle with the volunteer induction process needing to move to a completely online program. The new system was very successful and gave people the opportunity to work through the steps in their own time.

Following the kiosk rectification works, volunteers were thrilled to walk into a brand-new kiosk with a great open feel and all new furniture, fittings and appliances. Everyone quickly adjusted to the changes in processes, including replacing the cash registers with tablets and using Square to manage sales.

Regulations around COVID-19 included a new sign-in system, a strict cleaning routine, periods of wearing masks, limited numbers in the building at any one time and an added complication of contact tracing. The volunteers rose to the challenge and were generally very diligent and thorough in adhering to the guidelines.

This season saw not only the retention of most of our volunteers but also a surge in new members to the team. Many of our volunteers now comprise family groups, which further enhance our commitment to building a family-friendly, inclusive and welcoming community – a place for all.

BARB LOMAS & TRACIE KANE KIOSK MANAGERS









BY THE NUMBERS

Season 2020/2021 by the numbers

Season operated by community	8
Season entry total	15,434
Combined entry total (2013-2021) 12	23,652
Members	380
VicSwim visits	965
School programs and lessons visits	5,724
SwimSafe Bendigo free lesson hours	220
Volunteers	109
Volunteer hours during the	1,026
summer season	
Junior Volunteer Team hours	411
worked during season	
Followers on social media	4,060
Water Aerobics visits	135
Yoga visits	118
Lap Club participants	37
Friends of Golden Square Pool	242









MEMBERS

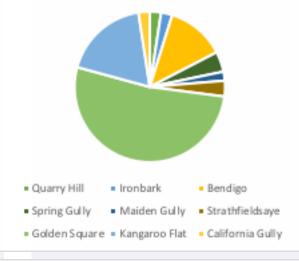
Memberships at Golden Square Pool are a great way for people to show their support for the pool while gaining access to a great range of benefits, including discounted classes.

All our members are valued as part of the Golden Square Pool family, signing up to be part of our community and enjoying summer at the Square. All funds from GSP memberships and City of Greater Bendigo Season passes sold at Golden Square Pool stay with our community organisation and are used to finance programs, events and new infrastructure, as well as to support day-to-day operations.

This year, we had 380 members - shared between Golden Square Pool only and City of Greater Bendigo memberships.



Golden Square Pool members by suburb



City of Greater Bendigo members by suburb



Maiden Gully

- Kennington

- Strathfieldsaye
 Golden Square
 Kangaroo Flat
 California Gull y
 - Lockwood



PEOPLE

Golden Square Pool's commitment to building an inclusive and welcoming community is reflected in the success of our volunteers and staff.

Every season sees an increase in the number of people joining the volunteer team and members come from all sorts of backgrounds and occupations, representing a variety of ages – from primary school children to retirees.

Our hardworking volunteers take care of day-to-day operations, run events, carry out maintenance, undertake governance and work on plans for our future. This year the volunteers took in their stride the extra responsibility of ensuring COVID-19 protocols were followed, including sign-ins and cleaning regimens.

The dedication of our volunteers allows us to live out our hope to provide a safe, welcoming and affordable recreation facility where all people can belong.

It has been satisfying to see members of the volunteer team upskill and transition to more responsibility as swim teachers, program managers and lifeguards. Our role in providing a vital community asset is even more apparent when we are able to transform volunteers to paid staff members. This is part of our vision to create opportunities and develop skills to help people grow and become vital members of the community.

Our staff also worked excellently this season to ensure a safe facility for all in our community. They went above and beyond in everyway - working under the challenges of the pandemic to respond to community need. Together with our volunteers, our staff make the beating heart truly beat.

Junior Team

Our Junior Team has continued to grow strongly with many having returned season after season and they make a significant contribution to the day-to-day running of the organisation. Many of our Juniors have now progressed into the adult team, with many of them taking on more responsibilities and solo shifts. The skills developed in the volunteering sector has also helped many of them gain after school jobs.





FRAINING AND UPSKILLING

As part of our commitment to building community and developing skills to help people grow, Golden Square Pool offered volunteers and staff a number of training opportunities throughout the 2020/2021 season.

Call Push Shock

Before the commencement of Season 2020-/2021, volunteer Casey (who is also a paramedic) offered to run an online training session on the use of the defibrillator. This was a great introduction for our volunteers who took part in the session via Zoom. The success of the training prompted a more in-depth session at the pool during the season, where volunteers had an opportunity for a more hands-on experience. This was also a great opportunity to educate volunteers in emergency management and demonstrate how they would be able to play a part in assisting lifeguards and emergency services in the event of an incident.

Cultural Competency Training

In February, thanks to funding for the SwimSafe Bendigo program, we were able to offer many of our volunteers and staff the opportunity to take part in Cultural Competency Training. This was run in conjunction with Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services and covered many topics designed to give our team a greater insight into various challenges faced by new arrivals to our community. Participants found the session to be very informative and also a great chance to get to know their fellow volunteers a little better. The session focused on knowledge that is directly transferable to the aquatic setting.

Lifeguard in-service

Lifeguards also underwent their required induction and inservice training sessions throughout season. This year's induction training focussed on the organisation's new Supervision Plan, which implements a systematic and planned approach to lifeguard action and deployment across the facility.

These training sessions of volunteers and staff ensured that all in the organisation had the skills to assist further within their role.

SWIMSAFE BENDIGO

After Golden Square Pool Inc. officially took over the water safety and swimming program SwimSafe Bendigo at the end of the 2019/2020 season, it was all systems go during out of season to begin recruiting a wonderful team of volunteers to undertake the AustSwim Teacher of swimming and water safety course. To begin the 2020/21 season, we had a team of 10 new and returning volunteer instructors keen and ready to go. This was made possible through funding from Swimming Australia.

In partnering with Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services and advertising the program in our local community, enrolment night at the pool for participants was a tremendous success and resulted in 35 registered participants to begin the season. Lessons were run for an hour each Monday and Wednesday night funded through a grant from Life Saving Victoria. Led by our more experienced instructors and supported by those in training, we averaged 11.7 participants per lesson and 19.9 per week!

We were honored also to receive a grant from VicHealth about reconnecting people within our community during vulnerable times and to those who had been isolated during COVID 19. Through the funding we were then able to fund more participants for their entry to the pool, purchase some valuable swimming and safety equipment, run three social events and a workshop for

our volunteers and lifeguards from the pool regarding ways we could connect more with multicultural communities.

During the season along with LCMS, we were also fortunate enough to be able to produce two educational videos regarding Water and Sun Safety – Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide.

There were some amazing achievement's by both our participants and instructors throughout the season with major goals being reached! If I had to pick one highlight from the season it would be the story of two of our amazing participants, we named Grandma and Niece! Enthusiasm was a plenty from these two ladies, not only had they never been in a pool, but they also spoke English as their second language. They jumped right in and turned up to every lesson, with an Interpreter in tow and participated in everything with the biggest smiles on their faces as they left each lesson. By the end of the season what they had achieved was truly astonishing and their reason for joining the program "To bring the children they cared for to the pool and be confident enough to swim with them".

Many friendships were made throughout the season, social connections established, water safety and swimming goals ticked off and most of all a sense of belonging to our wonderful community.

NAT KURZKE MANAGER SWIMSAFE BENDIGO













OUR NEW MURAL

Over the course of six months, Golden Square Pool collaborated with Nacho Station to develop a new community mural and art project at the pool - to represent our vibrant community, our retro past, and the wonderful suburb we call home.

The mural is a culmination of community feedback on the theme 'What Makes Golden Square Great?' The piece represents what our community love about the Square - the rocking 70s and 80s, summer fun and long days by the pool, intertwined with our connection to nature and the creek, and fun and vibrancy to show who we are today.

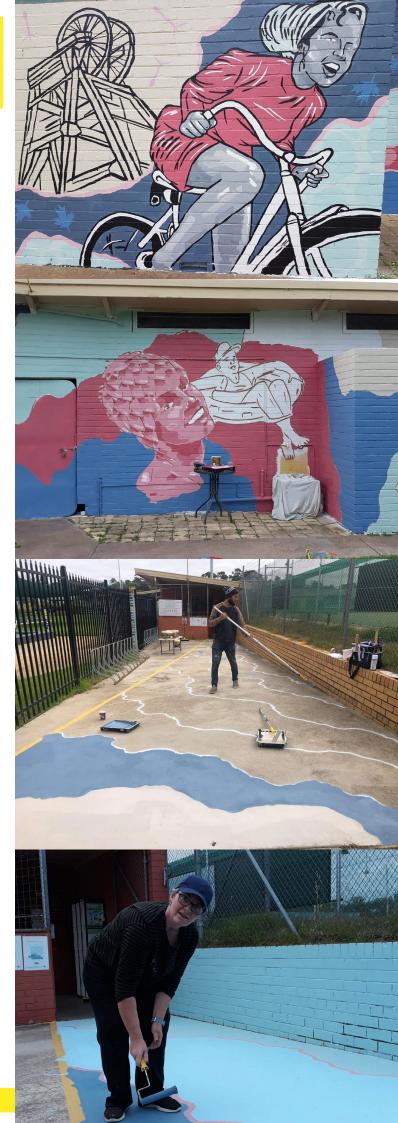
This design is continued in our entrance way - to give our community a striking splash of colour as they come to the Square. The entranceway was painted by one our community partners, Distinctive Options and members of our volunteer team.

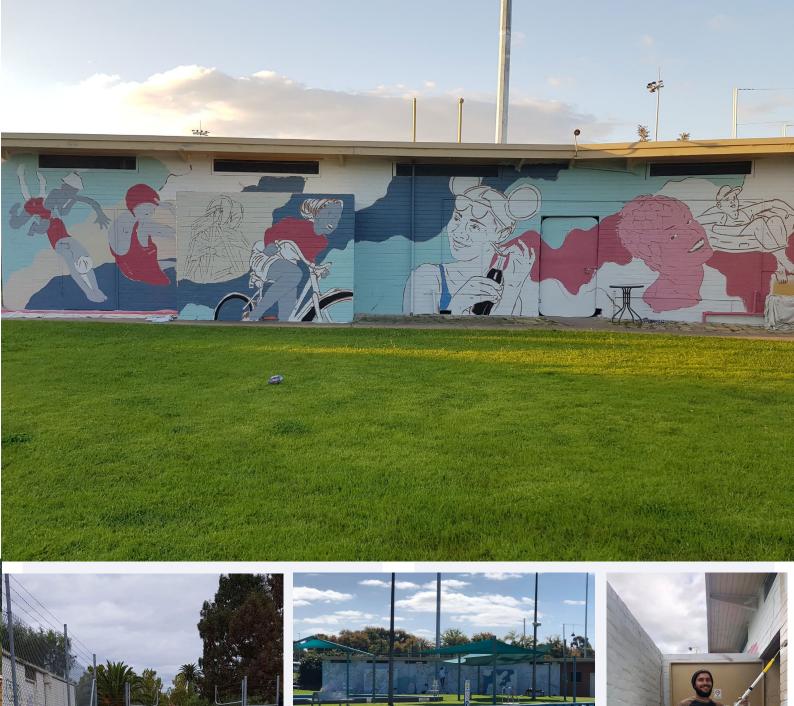
The Mural Project was led by Sam Kane and Natalie Kurzke and was brought to life by Nacho Station, lead artist Jesse and his helpers, our volunteer team, the prep crew of Harry Schepers and Erik Werps, Distinctive Options and Haymes Paint Bendigo. This project was funded by the Victorian Government.

At the Square we love fun, friendship, health, happiness, connection and community - and we believe this project brings all that together, and more, to show what a wonderful place we have become.



















HEALTHAND

At Golden Square Pool we are committed to promoting the physical, mental and social health of our community by offering a place of connection and growth. In 2020/2021 we were limited in our programs and initiatives by the restrictions of COVID-19.

Yoga

We were able to continue to offer Sunday yoga, with a slightly longer season and the addition of new Yoginis to the team. All participants relished the chance to take part in yoga in the open air, making the most of soft green grass and the tranquil atmosphere of the pool on a Sunday morning.

Many thanks to the instructing team of Lynne Saunders, Kate Watts, Julie Jones and Carolyn Jones

Water Aerobics

Water Aerobics continued to be a popular part of our program with two classes running most weeks. In addition to a dedicated core of participants, the classes attracted many newcomers as well as sporting teams, to make the most of the low impact exercise in the hot weather.

Many thanks to our dedicated Water Aerobics instructor Tanya Gill who cajoled, encouraged and motivated the participants every week with such enthusiasm.

Lap Club

Golden Square Pool is so fortunate to have the expertise of swimming coach Deb Gordois who provides excellent coaching for kids and adults throughout the season in Lap Club. Run twice per week after school, Lap Club is a unique opportunity for people to improve their swimming technique in the 50-metre pool.

HEALTHY GOLDEN SQUARE

This year we were thrilled to receive funding to provide a health and connection program for young people in our community.

Healthy Golden Square is a program to encourage connection and participation amongst kids. The program got off to a great start with poolside Kids Yoga with Kate Watts in February and a stamina and fitness Kids MetaFit class with Tanya Gill. The program also included the purchase of new games and equipment at the pool.

In the Easter school holidays we were able to host a fun bike skills workshop in our carpark in partnership with Bike Bendigo. Kids aged 8 to 10 were given the tools to improve their riding, confidence and safety through games and skills activities.

The program will continue until the end of 2021 with some after school activities planned for the beginning of summer that will focus on water safety skills and getting kids 'pool-ready'.



We are in the second year of implementing our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. This plan provides leadership, vision and guidance to Golden Square Pool Inc. Committee of Management in establishing a strong, sustainable and viable future as Golden Square's beating heart.

This plan aims to solidify the operation from a business and financial perspective, while keeping and expanding the organisation's community focus. The strategic platforms were developed via a detailed analysis of current services and operations.

An Annual Review of the plan was completed by the Committee of Management in October 2021. This year, a range of milestones were reached, however, advancing many aspects of the plan were heavily delayed or impacted due to the effects of the pandemic. See to the right for a summary of key achievements.

The Committee of Management has valued having this plan to guide decision making - ensuring that the future of our organisation, and our community, is always front of mind.

STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE

Integration of online accounting, business and data management systems

New organisational structure including
Operational Management Team implemented

Quotes, plans and works scope progressed for pool modernisation project

Engaged in the Golden Square Recreation Reserve Master Plan process

New shed and funding secured for two new shade structures and a new mural

Restructure and growth in the SwimSafe Bendigo program

Health and wellbeing program growth - new kids initiative Healthy Golden Square



MAINTENANCE AND UPGRADES

Over the last twelve months, we've been working hard on maintaining the lawns and surrounds of our lovely Golden Square Pool. The Maintenance Team have worked on the following:

Lawns:

- Much of the 'high' level couch grass has been levelled
- Turf grass has been laid to regenerate levelled areas
- Community Garden has been dismantled in preparation for an exciting new garden
- Gardens behind barbeque area have been pruned and weeded to allow for new spring and summer growth
- We are currently working on pruning, weeding and generally improving, the large garden behind the kiosk and change rooms
- Underground irrigation system has been upgraded to improve efficiency and coverage of sprinklers Thank you to Rhonda and Harry Schepers, Erik Werps and Andrew Penna especially for all their work with the grounds this year.

Pools

· Painting of pool wall

Kiosk

- Last summer our fantastic, newly renovated kiosk became operational in time for the commencement of the season.
- The new roll down protective screens allowed us to take down the old metal grids over both windows. Much more welcoming for patrons!







SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

Our organisation cannot operate without the generous donations, financial and in-kind, from our supporters and sponsors. We can't thank them enough for all they have done for us:

Peter Ryall Foundation

VicHealth

Victorian Government

Lisa Chesters MP and the Australian Government

Bart n Print

Goldfields Tag & Test

Golden City Mitre 10

Macks Office Furniture

The Good Guys

Pam Uren

Deb Gordois

Nola Thomas & Terry Lamprell

Distinctive Options

WebSmith Productions

Golden Square Drycleaners

Fire Alarm Essentials

Wayne Sherrif

Central Victoran Property Maintenance Services

Haymes Paint Bendigo

Nacho Station

Hip Pocket Golden Square

AWARD WIN

Aquatics Recreation Victoria - Emerging Leader Award

In October 2020, our President, Sam Kane, was named as the winner of the Aquatics and Recreation Victoria Emerging Leader Award. This award recognises outstanding industry



achievements that demonstrate the leadership contribution in the industry in a person under 30 years of age.

Sam's dedication and commitment to the pool is without doubt, and since taking on the Presidency in 2018, despite living in Melbourne at the time and studying full-time, he has led the organisation through some challenging times and helped cement the pool as Golden Square's beating heart.

In making their decision the ARV panel took into consideration Sam's active and reflective approach to leadership, his industry achievements, the way he engages with the community and his commitment to the advocacy and improvement of the aquatics sector.

This award is not only a testament to Sam's leadership and commitment to our organisation, but also to the team of volunteers and community members who believe in him and who have helped him on his leadership journey.



