



Creative Producers report to the Creative Clunes 2021 AGM

Creative Clunes has had a year of transitions and of adjustments, and of collaborative creative thinking to plan and work a viable and exciting program, involving sometimes the disappointments of event cancellations, and pivoting online when necessary. Working with covid restrictions and staff changes, Creative Clunes also had the opportunity to embrace creative solutions, try new ideas and programming and to reflect on our learnings that will take us well into the future.

2020: July – December: Booktown on Sundays moved five sessions to online platform, with excellent attendances and feedback, and a very successful children’s science session with Dr Karl Kruszelnicki.

2021:

- January, February, March – a transitional time at Creative Clunes – with staff and board members moving onto other ventures and a creative program needing to adjust to Covid restrictions beyond our control. Covid meant a relook and transition of Clunes Booktown Festival to become a smaller Turn the Page Festival without a street closure, originally intended to run across the month of May.
- February - Book Town on Sundays online: Mature and Marvellous in conversation.
- April / May - I landed in Clunes and hit the floor running, with the expert help of Sharon Hughes Administrator and Marketing, who had been holding down the fort for some months. Programming, marketing, publicity through House of Webb, a small but dedicated hard working logistics team, a Safety and Covid Officer brought on to ensure a covid safe festival, local volunteers recruited and covid trained - all were engaged, and we were ready to go for the month of May.
 - Turn the Page – intended and planned originally as a month-long celebration of the book and reading to take place across 3 weekends.
First Weekend – Turn the Page Opened event with smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country by Dja dja Wurrung Aunty Paulie Ugle. Author’s Talks were held in Town Hall and Attitude Building. Local Popup Bookshops, entertainment in street and book sales were held in Warehouse building. Over 1000 people enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and stimulating book discussions.
 - Second Weekend Skills Development postponed to October, and further postponed rolling out as a series of online video and expert panel events as Life Cycle of the Book.
 - Third Book Club Hubs weekend, again cancelled due to lockdown and pivoted to a series of online offerings during lockdown (see below)
- June and July
 - Four Book Club Hubs online sessions provided an opportunity for our audience in lockdown to participate. This is the first time these sessions have been offered on this platform, with most being well attended. Some session saw audience joining in from interstate.



- Reconciliation storytelling event – with Maya Coff from Nalderun Youth program, postponed due to lockdown
- Booktown on Sundays – sold out online – Keith Banks, Chaired by Leslie Falkiner Rose
- Naidoc Week – Maya Coff Storytelling - Tarrengower and Lalgambook and Jaara learning activities for young ones, held across four Hepburn Libraries; Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, and Trentham.

Looking forward: July 2021 - 2022 rolling lockdowns meant creative program was a moving feast during 2021.

August - September:

- Creative Clunes took the opportunity to relook at planned programming for the remainder of 2021 into 2022.

October:

- Booktown on Sunday and Authors Online Series - Graeme Simsion and Anna Buist.
- Ceramics Awards postponed until October 2022 due to Covid restrictions

November: A big start to Nov with:

- Visioning and Planning workshop for Booktown Festival 2022 and programming.
- Community Engagement Activity: Book Launch in partnership with Clunes Neighbourhood House and Attitude - Tess Brady's "sometimes true" History of Booktown introducing Sue Beal and Jon Hawkes.
- Final Authors Online Series for 2021: Lucia Osborne Crowley and Chris (readings) My Body Keeps Your Secrets
- Life Cycle of the Book Series will continue online with an expert panel around Writing & Editing to conclude our 2021 programming.

December:

- Creative Clunes Open Day and Community consultation - to be held in our office, The Railway Station. Family and community afternoon with all invited. Looking forward into the '22 Booktown Festival with suggestions and feedback from community.

Programming and plans for 2022:

- Creative Clunes aims to be a Creative Hub, connecting and inspiring communities through books and story. 2022 planning and programming is working on a collaborative model, to support artists and community to exchange stories through various art forms.



- We are offering options that reflect and build a regional profile, building relationships with local Jaara community and presenting both face to face and hybrid events, with the ability to pivot online where necessary.
- Monthly from February: Life Cycle of the Book: Building on the success of our online offers in '21, we will keep the online format for Life Cycle of the Book, short films, and online series during 2022, with opportunities for personal skills development sessions during the year. Topics will include Book Design and Layout, Understanding Printing, Embracing the Digital World, Marketing and Sales.

Monthly Book Town on Sundays and Author's Talks Series – beginning February, bringing artists and community together to discuss the big ideas.

Outdoor Activation – January – community day for kids and families and community. Align with Neighbourhood house TBC

The Clunes Booktown Festival will return in a covid safe event weekend – 30 April – 1 May '22

Creative Program for young people, also mentorship, interns etc.

Poetry Month

NAIDOC week celebrations to include storytelling and community engagement

Book Week

Ceramics Awards

Celebrating traditional and building new partnerships – a continual work in progress.

- Hepburn Shire Council and Creative Victoria as major funders
- Clunes Neighbourhood House partnering with Creative Clunes to produce:
 - Supporting monthly book talks at BOOM
 - Audio Trail – QR codes and history – including Clunes Railway, Creative Clunes offices.
- RACV
- Wesley at Clunes
- International Organisation of Booktowns
- McPherson's Printing Group
- Readings
- V/Line
- VicTrack

Suzi Cordell
16/11/21