

Willunga Farmers Market

2010-2011 Annual Report

Chairpersons Report	p 2
Treasurers Report	p 6
Market Manager's Report	p 9
Marketing Report	p 13

Chair Annual Report

Overview of the last year

WFM has had another great year of growth and success. Our weekly market has been attended by tens of thousands of happy local shoppers, visitors from farther afield and overseas. New stalls with a range of different produce - from coorong mullet and seafood, carob products, marron, oysters, smoked garlic, patisserie goods to olive tapenade - have begun trading at the market over this year adding to the diversity and choice for WFM shoppers.

The late winter/ wet spring of 2010 was challenging both in terms of wet market days and late arrival of spring crops combined with an Australia-wide turn down economically. The market did a lot better than the retail sector in general however and with the advent of warmer weather and seasonal crops, customer numbers and sales for stallholders increased once more.

The Christmas twilight market was a huge success giving shoppers access to the best seasonal festive produce just in time for Christmas. This coming year Christmas is on a Sunday so the Saturday market on Christmas Eve should prove very popular.

In February WFM celebrated its 9th birthday. Zannie Flanagan AM, founding WFM Chair, unveiled the installation of Sir Wilmark – the market's mascot - in the Town Square. Simon Bryant cooked up a feast and entertained the crowd and all enjoyed a huge birthday cake baked by the market's great brekkie crew Bush Pepper Catering.

2011 trading has continued to be very steady with shoppers reflecting the trend across the country to buy more fresh food and cook for their families. People want to support local growers and eat following the seasons in ever increasing numbers. This is reflected in WFM's growing membership numbers as well.

The Treasurer's report later will also highlight the ongoing financial strength of WFM – revenue has increased again over the last financial year without a need for an increase in fees. The basic business model of this community owned market is very sound – and best of all self sufficient.

Staffing

The new team in 2010, Steve Ashley Market Manager and Billy Doecke, Assistant Manager have now been through the whole yearly WFM cycle – and a very steep learning curve it has been. A lot of changes have happened in the office with a big IT upgrade last year and staff training and development getting ready for the rollout of the NBN in Willunga very soon.

The Assistant Manager role will be reviewed and fine-tuned shortly by the incoming committee. The job description will be adapted to the changing needs of the market, its growing membership numbers and the rapidly changing world of marketing and advertising in the internet age.

Thanks to Ed McBain who stepped down in Feb after 5 years as the Sat morning casual staff member with Julian Salter taking up this role. Carolyn Coventry has stood in as well as Assistant Manager when required and thanks to her as well. Many thanks to the entire management team for all their hard work over the year.

School Kitchen Garden Project

WFM has been running a program of grants to local school kitchen garden projects for 3 years now. Eleven local schools in all have now benefited from these grants with wonderful and varied uses ranging from berry gardens, citrus orchards, to compost bins and spades.

(Cyn)thia Elliot, a WFM member and former stallholder has over the last 2 years visited each school and audited these grants. Many thanks to (Cyn)thia for volunteering her time and enthusiasm to this project.

WFM has had great publicity from these SKGP grants across all the media in our region and raised the profile of participating school's programs too. Two of the participating schools – Aldinga PS and McLaren Vale PS have gone further and now both been awarded grants under the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program. Congratulations to them both.

McLaren Vale Protection Bill legislation

WFM is a member both of the MVGWT (McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism) association and the SCC (Southern Community Coalition) who have been lobbying the State Govt over the last few years re protection of the agricultural part of the Willunga Basin.

Pip Forrester, committee member and also Chair of MVGWT has been a crucial part of the submission process to the State Govt re its proposed legislation to protect and preserve the McLaren Vale and Barossa Valley agricultural areas.

Jude McBain as WFM Chair also made a contribution to the SCC submission on behalf of WFM and sent letters of support from WFM re both submissions to the Minister for Planning John Rau.

The whole Willunga Basin community is now waiting on the outcome of this process and is hopeful that the preservation legislation will be passed by the State Government in the near future.

SAFMA

Several committee members have participated in a range of meetings and working groups composed of representatives from farmers markets around SA to help form a state association of farmers markets. A working party was set up late last year of reps from ASFM, WFM, VHFM and the AHFM to write a draft constitution for this proposed peak body. The first draft has been written and is now being circulated to all groups for comments and review. A second draft will be sent out in the near future. SAFMA will hopefully become a reality in 2012. There is a great need for a peak body with more farmers markets coming into being every year. Mt Pleasant is not far from opening and a working group has been set up to form a market at Murray Bridge. Fantastic to see these markets opening up opportunities for small growers and customers alike across the state.

Committee issues

The WFM Committee had a number of changes over the last year. In January Heather Budich and Julian Salter both resigned from the committee, Heather because she was about to have her first child and Julian because he joined the WFM staff as the Sat morning casual staff member. Many thanks to them both.

Diana Bickford, former WFM Chair and Jill Lieblich community member were co-opted to fill these vacancies. Many thanks to them for volunteering their efforts.

The committee has spent time over the last year looking at and reviewing a number of policy areas including reselling, signage, extreme weather policy among others.

In June/July the committee faced a difficult conflict resolution situation. The situation was resolved after receiving legal advice which exposed a number of areas in the current Code of Practice that need reviewing by the incoming committee. In early August Jude McBain resigned as WFM Chair after the handling of this conflict resolution by the committee.

Other ongoing issues arising from the growing complexity of the market in the ever more complicated legislative environment we all live in are issues of competition, guest stalls, space and expansion of the market.

10th Birthday approaching

In Feb 2012 – just 5 months away – WFM will celebrate its 10th birthday! A milestone for both WFM and the farmers market movement in SA as Willunga was the first farmers market to open in SA in Feb 2002. It has been a decade of effort from a very large number of people; the original organising committee, ongoing committees, staff members, local council and supportive local businesses, and most importantly the effort of all the individual stallholders, whether farmers, gardeners, bakers or food producers – week in, week out they have continued to turn up and showcase the best produce this region can produce.

And then there are WFM's amazing members – the backbone of the market who continue to support their local food producers both through their annual membership fee and through their increasing numbers shopping on market day.

Congratulations to everyone involved – a decade to remember.

Preparations are now underway for the birthday celebrations and will be outlined by Steve, Market Manager in his report.

Best wishes and year ahead

Finally, it just remains to thank a few more people. Vicki Osland, Deputy Chair is stepping down after serving 4 years as a community member; Richard Bennett, Pauline Gum and Liam Burns are also stepping down from the committee – many thanks to them all for all their contributions to the market.

Many thanks to Jake Fowler our wonderful volunteer who continues to lend a willing hand year in year out.

Thanks also to Cathy Phillips who resigned as WFM's bookkeeper after more than 5 years earlier in the year and thanks to Mel who has taken up this role.

And again thanks to the City of Onkaparinga who have always supported the market and its development into one of the very best farmers markets in Australia.

To the incoming committee and the entire WFM community– all the very best for the year ahead .

Treasurers Report

I now table the auditors report in its entirety and will give a brief summary of the last financial year of the WFM.

2010 -2011.

In September 2009 we proposed that the fees were increased to allow us to employ a part time Assistant Manager.

The fees were increased and with very little negative response from members.

As a result we have been able to operate in the last year with a full time Manager and a part time Assistant Manager.

Financially the increase in fees was enough to pay the bills.

Income for year end was \$180,603 compared to \$150,361 in the previous year.

(stall fees were up by approximately \$21,000 and membership fees were up by \$10,000)

Expenditure for the same period was \$174,524 compared to \$138,688 in the previous year.

(as expected the wages increase is the main component of the increase in expenditure.)

This gives us a profit of \$6,079 for the 2010-11 year compared with \$11,673 from the previous year.

On the balance sheet

Our Net assets are \$65,273 compared to \$59,194 in the previous year, an increase of \$6,079 or 10% growth.

Profits from trading have to be allocated into appropriate areas to grow the market place.

For the current year

It is the role of the new committee to consider the allocation of funds.

At the last committee meeting several options were put forward for the use of the funds and these included

- Improved facilities for the guest chef (2012 will see six guest chef events)
- Improved facilities at the breakfast area (tables and chairs)
- Shade options for meat street

Additional to the Chairpersons Report.

I would like to thank the nominees for positions on the new committee, but unfortunately some one has to miss out .

The new committee has a big job ahead of them as there are increasing pressures on the committee, and the role of the committee will be important to the operation of the WFM into the future.

We have budgeted for a turnover of \$200,000 and we have a major salary bill that has to be met.

The new committee will have to consider a lot of things this year.

- We will have to have a governance training session for the new committee members.
- We will have to review the Code of Practice as there are several areas that need reviewing.
- We need to review the whole concept of issuing licences to trade.
- We have to continually review our staffing needs and staff training.
- We have to decide whether the WFM wants to be part of the SAFMA(their constitution is about to be published for consideration by the farmers markets.

And

- we have to continually improve the market and increase membership.

To do all these things we will need more sub-committees and possibly more meetings per year.

I am sure we can do it while still remembering that we are an organisation consisting mainly of volunteers who want to see the market grow.

Market Managers Report

Good evening everyone, and thanks for attending the AGM here tonight.

As staff, firstly can I tell you that Billy & I are proud to be associated with this Market. We never cease to be amazed at the excellent feedback we receive at the humble information stall each Saturday morning – from locals, city folks, intra & interstaters as well as visitors from far flung places overseas. The consistent message is that we have something special here, an atmosphere... something that people resonate strongly with and want to be a part of... and for that matter the food and produce isn't bad either!

Of course this is no accident. Over the past 9 ½ years, Willunga Farmers Market's reputation has been steadily built and lovingly - sometimes tryingly nurtured by our shining lights, committees, volunteers, stallholders and staff to the point that we are now a Market the envy of many and second to none. Next February (the 26th) we will turn 10 and this will be a landmark moment and of course an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the journey so far. More about that shortly.

As the Chair's report has rightly highlighted, this past 12 month period has been a steep learning curve for us as a relatively new staff team following the resignations of both Graham and Zara in 2010. With over a year's direct experience managing the Market on a week by week basis now under our belt, we are confident that we have the bases well and truly covered and look forward to working with the incoming committee into the future.

This being said, we want to extend our thanks also to all outgoing committee members. We have valued and appreciated your input, encouragement and support over this past 12 months. Particular thanks go to both Jude Mc Bain, ex-Chair and foundation market member – and to Vicki Osland outgoing Deputy Chair for efforts above and beyond the call of duty. We were deeply saddened with the passing Vicki's partner and WFM legal adviser John Roger recently and wish Vicki and family our best wishes for the future. Also to Steve Scown – a big thanks for stepping up to take on Acting Chair responsibilities, as well as continuing with the Treasurer portfolio in recent weeks.

Other noteworthy personnel changes this past year have included Julian Salter ably taking over the important casual operational support role on Saturday mornings following Ed McBain's decision to spread his wings overseas and Melanie Armstrong recently replacing Cathy Phillips as bookkeeper. Many thanks to Ed and Cathy for your contributions and a warm welcome to both Julian and Melanie.

As for the business of the Market, in summary I report that the hallmarks of the WFM's activities this year can be reasonably summed up under the headings of consolidation, steady growth, reinvigoration and financial sustainability:

Consolidation:

With the increased staff hours now available through the creation of the Assistant Manager role (28 hours a week) a variety of duties traditionally covered by volunteers have now been consolidated and professionalized into core market business. (eg production of The Fleurieu Forager newsletter and media relations as well as ongoing administrative duties).

The issue of dogs at the market has always been contentious for some market goers. Towards the end of 2010 following some complaints the committee sought direction from the City of Onkaparinga. On their recommendation, we undertook an extensive survey over the course of three weeks to gauge public opinion. The results showed a 50/50 split with those members who were pro- dog and those who were not. After further consultation with the City of Onkaparinga the committee chose to keep the market open to dogs, but to promote owners taking responsibility for their dogs actions. The bottom line being that the market site is deemed a public place and hence dogs cannot be banned from this precinct.

Steady Growth:

Analysis of membership statistics and trends over the past three years show a steady increase both in market memberships and overall income. This holds true in this past year despite a particularly harsh winter as already mentioned in the Chairs report. Both new memberships and renewals are growing at a steady and sustainable pace. The increasing regular return market shoppers is our best advertisement and survival strategy and augers well for the long term. (See

attached data) It's also a fantastic demonstration of shopper satisfaction with what the market is consistently offering.

As of compiling this report we currently have a total of 2,277 members and growing, approximately half of whom live locally, and a further quarter near local with the remainder from elsewhere.

There is also continual and growing interest and demand from new /would be businesses interested in trading at the market. With the inclusion of seasonal producers the market site is currently at capacity and with extra future demand will require careful planning and decisions around quality /quantity and market mix. Of course this is a good problem to have and can only improve quality over time.

The option of expanding the current site has been investigated, with some options proving not to be possible. We are still investigating the other options available to us.

Reinvigoration:

The Market can currently boast perhaps the most diverse and best mix of primary produce and value added goods in its history with a number of new businesses being attracted to trade this past 12 months. The Chairs report has already highlighted some of these.

Upgrades both in the office and in the operational market site precinct have also value added to the Market's activities this past year. These have included IT /computer upgrades, NBN pre-connection, phone system upgrade including purchase of office mobile for out of office accessibility, infrastructure installation in preparation to move phone system to Skype as well as purchase of new hands free headset microphones for guest chef presentations. A new quality red gazebo has also been purchased for use as the information stall with the resulting improved professional look, as well as a second market A-frame sign, ensuring information on market membership is available at both ends of the market.

In the Market site we have installed a new power outlet box on the toilet block, built (share funded with Council) an extended storage area with gate access behind the nissan storage hut, successfully encouraged Council to upgrade slate curbing and risk averse brick paving (trip hazards) and fully re-cover /bark the site.

A community streetscape grant application was also submitted to Council for a range of other potential site improvements. Additional seating (bench) and permanent feature Market sculpture (Sir Wilmark) were also installed as part of the 9th Birthday celebrations.

Sustainability:

As per the Treasurers and Auditors financial reports tabled, the Market has maintained healthy financial bottom lines over and above increased cost for staff time and infrastructure/site upgrades. We look forward to continued growth 2011/12.

As we head into the market's 10th anniversary plans are developing nicely for the birthday event. At this stage we can confirm Cheong Liew, market patron, will be guest chef on the birthday market. I am currently developing a more comprehensive guest chef program to run throughout the 2012 year. Mayor Rosenberg will also attend as a special market guest as well as the market choir, Soul Food, who will be performing on the day.

We anticipate highlighting the involvement of the local Schools in the WFM school kitchen garden project.

Finally we have been honoured with winning the Advantage SA Regional Award for Community Group in 2010. We have also been nominated by some community members for a wide range of other awards, which continues to encourage us in what we are doing.

WFM Marketing Report

Current membership demographic:

Female, mid fifties, local residents, financially comfortable.

Demographic taken from focused studies of WFM, from both Flinders University and South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) early 2010.

Anecdotal evidence of significant increase in young families and females aged 25-35 throughout 2011.

There is always a large number of tourists, however not focusing marketing efforts towards tourists as they are financially not good for WFM business. They contribute to the atmosphere but do not buy from the primary producers, nor become members.

Summary:

Advertising cut right back, with some funds saved to go towards special marketing campaigns for the 10 year anniversary.

Number of feature articles has risen, directly resulting in higher new membership numbers. This can be tracked through new membership forms. Result: Higher community awareness through editorial, with higher consumer credibility than advertising. Growth in new memberships a direct result from taking this strategic approach.

While the majority of new members state Word Of Mouth as how they found out about the market, growth in new memberships are also attributed to increased online presence with a number of new members citing an awareness of the market via online medium, also including the media and local news papers.

Up-coming Campaigns:

A: *Virtual Tour*: Developed in response to a number of factors

- 1) Community response to website, where it can be hard to find particular produce or stallholders
- 2) Roll out of the NBN

3) Limitations of current public website.

The Virtual Tour will allow shoppers to view which stalls are available on a weekly basis and where to find them in the market. They can search for key words eg 'organic' or 'rhubarb' and see total profiles and video interviews of who sells it, when it is available and where to find the stalls that do.

Tour will be available online and across all platforms (eg pc's, iPad's, smart phones etc). Tour mock up available for inspection at the end of the meeting.

B: Post Cards

Developed as one off marketing campaign, distributed throughout the 10yr anniversary year. Postcard series to be distributed free of charge, through a variety of outlets. Images to reflect the market, coming from professional images taken on 17 September 2011 and 1 October 2011.

Public Relations:

WFM has seen a significant increase in media articles, even including an interview with Channel 10 news re the incoming NBN. This is a direct result of focusing on fostering relationships with the media.

Results: a number of members signing up stating the 'local paper', 'media' or 'news' as how they heard about the market.

A professional photographer has been engaged to take profile photos of all stalls, stallholders and produce in response to media queries. We will now have photos of the majority of stallholders to use for media enquiries, to accompany media releases and articles and for future promotions.

The following is a brief snapshot of articles of significance featuring WFM:

- Adelaide Now, 5 July 2011, *Willunga Farmers Market plans virtual tours with NBN*
- Onkaparinga Magazine, Jan 2011, *Recipe For Success*, p3
- On The Coast, Feb 2011, *Willunga Farmers Market pulls huge crowd*, p18

- On The Coast, Mar 2011, *Book Signing at market*, p23
- On the Coast, Jun 2011, *Move to protect regional identity of local foods*, p7
- On The Coast, Nov 2010, *Regions Best Awarded*, p6
- On The Coast, Dec 2010, *Let Willunga Farmers Market help plan your Christmas Feast!*, p1 & 24
- SA Life, Feb 2011, *No Ordinary Spuds*,
- Smart Farmer, Sept 2010, *Markets Grow within region*, p10
- Smart Farmer, Feb 2011, *Shop local for steady prices*, p10
- Southern Times Messenger, 6 October 2010, *Local Produce the Lure*, p8
- Southern Times Messenger, 13 October 2010, *My Holiday, upcoming events down south*, p33
- Southern Times Messenger, 1 Dec 2010, *Preparing a feast*, p21
- Southern Times Messenger, 23 Feb 2011, *St Briefly: Cooking demonstration*, p3
- Southern Times Messenger, 5 July 2011, *Willunga Farmers Market plans virtual tours with NBN*
- Sumptuous, Oct/Nov 2010, *Market Yourself*, p84
- Sunday Mail, 9 Jan 2011, *Week Ahead*, p14
- Sydney Morning Herald, 19 Oct 2010, *Five Best Markets*, p4
- The Victor Harbor Times, 21 Oct 2010, *Regions Best Awarded*, p4
- The Victor Harbor Times, Feb 2011, *Best to shop locally*, p11

I am confident there are a number of other mentions of WFM across a broad range of media that we are unaware of, as media monitoring not in place.

Marketing schedule drawn up for next 12 months covering major events, any paid advertising and possible stories.

Taking a dual approach to marketing within the immediate region, with view to increase membership and repeat customers over day trippers.

Paid advertising:

All paid advertising within local media outlets. Paid advertising significantly reduced with a focus

on securing editorial and new media. This approach trialled over the last 12 months has proven successful, with expenditure down and new members and visitors up.

New Media:

Official facebook page with more than 800 subscribers, growing continually. Reaping results, as demonstrated in the opening summary.

Provides an easy to monitor forum to manage information going out into the public arena and ensure all queries and issues are addressed by an informed party, not speculation. Performs similar role of FAQ section on website, as queries can be seen by anyone looking at the page. Aim is to take ownership of online branding.

'Connect McLaren Vale' iPhone app – initially actively participated however have let it lapse. Was not seeing much return on investment and do not plan on continuing with it past expiration of current membership.

Facebook and Youtube are free services, taking only time. Connect McLaren Vale cost WFM \$297 for 12 months at a discounted rate and have not seen any solid return on investment.

Youtube: uploading quick videos on Saturday mornings, and linking to facebook page. These videos highlight what's new or fresh, abundant in the market on any given Saturday morning. It also acts as an informal virtual tour as anyone watching can get an idea of the atmosphere of the market and the variety of produce available.

Website: proving to be difficult. Does the job, looks very professional but not up to speed with current IT expectations and what we need to do with it. Currently need to pay the developer to upload anything that is not text or a photo and cannot embed links. In sort it is outdated and we are looking to upgrade shortly.

Branding:

Letterhead and envelopes now professionalised.

Fleurieu Forager relaunched with a new look and more in-depth stories on WFM stallholders.

Distributed electronically to email database, uploaded onto website and linked to facebook.