

**MINUTES**  
**SAGE NSW Inc.**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**held via Zoom**

**11.00 am on Sunday 22 August 2021**

**ATTENDANCE**

Sarah Cooper, Cath Reilly, Mark Barraclough, Stuart Whitelaw, Jan Maitland, Neil Dolphin, Sandra Makdessi, Trevor Moore, Peter and Susan Heyward, Dallis Tanner, Marie Zuvich Judith and Jeff Scott, Shani Keane.

**APOLOGIES:** Penny Cook

**WELCOME BY PRESIDENT**

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM**      **Moved:** Neil Dolphin    **Seconded:** Stuart Whitelaw

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** none

**REPORTS:**

**President's Report**

This has been another tough year for many in the community. We barely recovered from the fires, then the floods and hail hit destroying many crops, all with an ongoing COVID 19 overlay. Resilience is often discussed and boy we have needed it in spades. Surprisingly we, I mean SAGE, have still achieved quite a lot. Sadly, gone have been the Friday night get togethers' and the regular solstice dinners, the social side of SAGE which is such a feature has been an obvious victim of COVID. But as conditions have allowed we have continued with the working bees, a few select functions, some important structural stuff at the committee level and full steam ahead out at Stepping Stone Farm. And we have not missed one Farmers Market day which is a remarkable feat in itself. Last August we conducted a survey asking for feedback on a number of issues that are important to SAGE. Pleasingly we got around 100 responses, thank you. The results were very helpful in informing our strategic plan workshop which, after a number of delays, was held at the end of November at the Botanic Gardens with a professional facilitator. The outcome of this workshop was finally adopted by the committee in June. This is now available on the website and I encourage you to check it out. The redevelopment of the website was another big project. Late last year we employed e-chic as our developer and set up a working group consisting of Trevor Moore, Sandra Makdessi and Cath Reilly to manage the day to day detail. We are now live with almost all of the scope implemented with the Farmers Market, e-market, the last and more complicated component due to be live at the end of August this year. We will now be publishing regular newsletters, pushing out notices of upcoming events and allowing membership renewals online.

The Farmers Market continues to go from strength to strength, not missing a market day providing fresh produce to our community. This year we had a change of market managers, a big thanks to Amy Whiting and we welcomed Deb Lickely to the role in December. The economic impact of the market for both our growers and business community continues to rise. The Economic Impact Survey conducted throughout 2019/20 demonstrated a 14% increase in vendor sales and overall increase in

economic activity for the wider business community of 35% when compared to the previous survey in 2014/15. The full EIS is available on our website.

The e-market is providing a vital service to those who don't want to line up or require delivery. This would not be possible without the dedicated volunteers including Lorna Calder, Susan Heyward and previously, Cath Reilly who rally the troops to pack and despatch an average of 25 orders every week. The garden has been the source of much discussion by the committee. Sadly Kat Cathgart has decided to take a different direction so for this next season Linda Machon will be growing crops in the commercial beds whilst we decide on the longer term strategy for the garden.

The volunteers play a vital role in running SAGE. Susan Heyward has developed an engagement strategy to properly recognise your efforts and to form the basis for recruiting more volunteers. We have the community food group, the working bee group, the Vegies for all group, the Duffers, the Stepping Stone Farm group, the mowing group, the catering and events team in all numbering around 120. It is such a statement on the individual commitment to SAGE and to thank you we had planned to have a function for you and your families, however COVID has thwarted these plans but we remain hugely thankful for your efforts and commitment.

Like volunteers, members also play a vital role. A Membership Review has been undertaken looking at how we can enhance the membership offer and improve the administration. This report will be tabled at the next committee meeting.

We rely on grants to fund our various programs. This year we have been successful with the following grants:

- IMB grant for \$15,000. The Vegies for All program will provide raised beds for bush fire effected residents as well as refurbishing the wicking beds at SAGE for the community food program.
- ESC grant \$5,000 for website redevelopment
- 2021 Volunteers grant \$5,000 which will provide for new gazebos for the Farmers market, and for Stepping Stone Farm a computer and a defibrillator.

The catering and events team have, understandably, not had such a busy year but still have maintained the high standard of deliciousness and enthusiasm from the team led by Sandra Makdessi.

The events have been:

- Two Growers gatherings, one at SAGE and one at Old Mill Farm
- Ten Cook to Grow workshops
- Deua Valley Bush Fire Recovery Sports and Community day
- Seasonal Spread in March
- Narooma Oyster Festival VIP tent in May
- Two Moruya Book shop events
- Two LLS functions

To put some context to the time line it was late June last year that Joyce Wilkie, who I introduced at the last AGM commenced out at Stepping Stone Farm. The interns, Shani Keane and Josh Gowers started in October 2020. So much has been achieved in these last 8 months, many lessons learnt, and some adaptation has been necessary given the experience of extremely heavy summer and autumn rains. Shani and Josh ably led by Joyce and supported by a regular crew of volunteers have turned these kikuyu paddocks into a very productive farm. Further support for the farm can be demonstrated by the generosity of donations including a solar power system from Bunya Solar, a composting toilet from Leanne and Steve Luther and two anonymous cash donations of \$10,000. Whilst our sales to year end are short of our budget we are confident that this next year we will be cash flow positive.

We now have under cultivation just short of an acre and plan to open up more ground this coming year when our new intern crew are on board. To this end Campbell Page, in partnership with Stepping Stone Farm, have secured funding to provide for two lots of six-month internships for six people paying award wages, plus a supervisor and associated tools of trade. The value of our part of this funding is over \$300k. This is a game changer for us and will set the farm up for future success. Thanks go to Alison Walsh in making this happen.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to SAGE, I trust I have adequately acknowledged everyone’s contribution. You can be assured that your efforts are making a difference.

Neil and Michelle Dolphin, who have put us on a very solid foundation over the last 3 years will, sadly, be stepping down as treasurer. Marjolein Kromhout will be stepping down as secretary, and during the year Kath Stonestreet resigned from the committee. Thank you all for your involvement and guidance.

Lastly, I wish to express my appreciation for the support and contribution, the committee, the subcommittees and convenors make to keeping us a vibrant, inclusive and organisation.

**Treasurer’s report**

A copy of the audited financial statements for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 are attached. During this financial year SAGE was steadily returning to a state of “normality” compared to the final 6 months of the 2020 financial year. This has obviously changed since the end of the 2021 financial year.

Overall, Sage returned a profit of \$6,389 for the year. In the underlying divisions the Farmers Market recorded a small loss of \$646 and Sage a profit of \$7,036. The results continue to show the strength in the Sage operation and the benefits of having a large breadth of different activities.

For Sage, the highlight was revenue and resulting profit from events. Events income was high over the January to June period and this contributed approximately \$4,000 to the Sage profit. Other income and expense items were consistent with 2020.

The Farmers Market showed a large increase in e-commerce sales, \$74,187 for the year as compared to \$42,731 in 2020. Stall revenue was down \$3,000 on 2020.

Over the period the cash held increased from \$10,859 to \$37,319. This is largely due to the receipt of \$30,000 grant income in August 2020. The grant was included in the 2020 profit and loss statement. The receipt of the grant plus the overall Sage profit lead to the increase in available funds, leaving Sage in a strong cash position for the new financial year.

The loan to Stepping Stone Farm increased from \$36,299 to \$51,309. As noted in the 2020 Treasurer’s Report, this is viewed as a long term loan with no set repayment date or schedule.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as treasurer at this AGM. I’d like to thank my wife Michelle for all her work assisting me, paying bills, writing invoices, attending to queries etc over the three years. It’s really been a treasurer “team” effort and I couldn’t have done it without her.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with Sage and I wish Sage and you all the very best for the coming years.

**Dissolution of current committees and Returning Officer takes over running of meeting to elect new committee.**

**Election of Executive Committee**

POSITION	NAME	<i>Nominated by:</i>	<i>Seconded by:</i>
<b>President</b>	Mark Barraclough	Susan Heyward	Stuart Whitelaw
<b>Vice-President</b>	Sandra Makdessi	Mark Barraclough	Trevor Moore
<b>Secretary</b>	Susan Heyward	Mark Barraclough	Stuart Whitelaw
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jan Maitland	Mark Barraclough	Adrian Cram

<b>Ordinary Committee Members</b>	Stuart Whitelaw	Mark Barraclough	Susan Heyward
	Trevor Moore	Mark Barraclough	Sandra Makdessi
	Cath Reilly	Mark Barraclough	Wendy Jones
	Sarah Cooper	Mark Barraclough	Wendy Jones
	Dallis Tanner	Mark Barraclough	Jan Maitland
	Peter Heyward	Mark Barraclough	Stuart Whitelaw

#### Sub-Committee

<b>SUB-COMMITTEE</b>	<b>CONVENOR</b>
<b>Farmers Market</b>	Penny Cook
<b>Education and Events</b>	Sandra Makdessi
<b>Facilities Coordination</b>	Adrian Cram
<b>Grants</b>	Sarah Cooper
<b>SAGE Community Food</b>	Kathryn Maxwell & Alda Rudzis
<b>SAGE Garden</b>	Wendy Jones
<b>Marketing &amp; Communications</b>	Cath Reilly

#### Election of Stepping Stone Farm Inc committee members

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<i>Nominated by:</i>	<i>Seconded by:</i>
<b>President</b>	Mark Barraclough	Jan Maitland	Stuart Whitelaw
<b>Vice-President</b>	Alison Walsh	Mark Barraclough	Stuart Whitelaw
<b>Secretary</b>	Stuart Whitelaw	Mark Barraclough	Sandra Makdessi
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jan Maitland	Mark Barraclough	Stuart Whitelaw
<b>Ordinary Committee Members</b>	Trevor Moore	Mark Barraclough	Sandra Makdessi
	Fraser Bayley	Mark Barraclough	Jan Maitland

**Attachments:** Sage21.pdf  
P&L By Division 2021.pdf

**Next Committee Meeting:** Monday 13 September at MacKay Centre at 5:30 pm

Signed:

Mark Barraclough  
President