

**Title:** What goes around, comes around!

**Category:** Heart of the Community

**Club Name:** Dunedoo Sports Club

**Entrant:** Belinda Fergusson

- 1. Provide an outline of the program, project or cause that addresses each of the following aspects:**
  - a. The program/project/cause objectives**
  - b. The support the club provided, i.e. was it financial, in-kind, staff volunteers or use of club facilities?**
  - c. A timeline of activities/events**
  - d. Any developments made since implementation (for example: if the support spans multiple years, how has the program grown? Will the club provide support again? Will the program be enhanced in the future?)**

As with many Clubs, Dunedoo Sports Club has had its share of ups and downs, and right now we're in a green patch-literally!

Over the past few years an innovative and relatively youthful Board have stepped up, and under the guidance of several forward-thinking Presidents-who have inspired selflessness and dedication; and, with the employment of an enthusiastic, progressive and committed Secretary/Manager; we have managed to turn the Club around. We carry the hopes, dreams and expectations of club members as well as the responsibility of running the club on behalf of the members; and to plan strategically and implement measures to ensure the sustainable future of our club.

Club sustainability is more than financial sustainability, it is also ensuring the club has a sustainable number of participants and volunteers, access to suitable facilities as and when you need them (both for social activities and sport participation) and of vital importance-community support.

So, while managing the club on a shoe string budget; the Board, along with the support of many volunteers, have made gradual changes to become inclusive of more sports and to provide a welcoming and comfortable venue.

Consequently, we are now the Heart of the Community. Over the course of the year the Sports Club is the chosen venue for many significant community events held by individuals, businesses and community organisations. This has been fostered by adopting a community focus to all we provide and do.

Recent initiatives and future plans include

- Flexible opening hours-allowing for community use for events such bushfire evacuation meeting place, Drought Fodder drops, Bingo, funerals and wakes, birthday parties etc.
- Creating "Tunes On The Turf" music festival, which started out as a very local event with 400 people in attendance; now in its 9th year and attracting 1000+attendees

- Facilitating new sporting opportunities and events; touch football-junior & senior, 20/20 cricket, squash and tennis competitions, Ladies Pro-Am
- Recognising volunteers
- Hosting Community Sports Awards
- Refurbish Club interior
- Renovated outdated community kitchen
- Collaborating with organisations, notably; Men's Shed [recycling], both local schools [hosting cross-country running events and also fund raisers] and the Lions Club [Joker Draw every Friday, monthly meetings, Seniors Luncheon and Christmas Carnival] and
- in 2022, to host the Men's NSW Sand Greens Fourball Championship.

Our most recent initiative, in a conscious effort to give back to our community, is to donate a percentage of monthly raffle takings back local to community groups. Beginning in September 2020, CanAssist, Dunedoo Swimming Club and the Hospital Ladies were our first recipients. Following on in 2021 were the Dunedoo Preschool, Hospital Auxiliary, Dunedoo P&C, the Sports Club [mower], CWA, St Michaels P&F, Dunedoo/Mendooran Aged Hostel, Men's Shed, RSL sub branch and rounding out 2021 the Australian Paralympic Committee. 2021 saw a massive \$6568 donated back into community organisations.

This initiative is now part of our culture and will remain in place. What goes around, comes around. Our efforts to become a community focused club have reaped rewards in our time of need.

**2. Provide a brief insight into why this program, project or cause was supported by the club.**

**In your answer, summarise:**

- a. How the project, program or cause was first presented to the club. For example, did a member present it to the Board or Executive team, was it part of a ClubGRANTS submission, did it come from a local business or the community based on a need, was a survey conducted to identify areas of community need, etc.**
- b. Why it was important to the club to support this community need.**

With the installment of a new Director, and hence a fresh set of eyes, an observation was made that the Club generally supported the community, but we wanted to make a specific contribution to the community groups that allow the Dunedoo community to

\* interact and stay connected

\*share information

\*provide emotional support to reduce distress, depression, anxiety or fatigue

\*support physically and mentally well-being

\*stay clean



\*share experiences, education and practical activities

Hence the introduction of Community Contributions. End of Month Friday raffles are well supported, however with the introduction of this initiative, we have seen an increased number of patrons willingly support the program. Ticket sales over \$400 make up the donated amount.

Our motto is "Caring for the Community" and we want to uphold this value

### **3. Provide an outline of the positive impact the club's contribution had on the community.**

In late April, our small nine-hole golf course was tragically vandalized; four of the fairways and three sand scrape greens were torn up with a tractor and plough. Tens of thousands of square metres of grass were ploughed through, rendering the course unplayable. The damage left the members and community reeling. The Club is a community asset.

In a town where the motto is "Where the people make the difference", it wasn't long before we received offers to help with the restoration of the course-machinery, labour and time and from people who weren't members or had never played golf-an indication of the importance of the Club to the local community. By mid-June, 270+ volunteers state-wide contributed time [3000+ hours], skills, knowledge, materials and equipment to aid in repairing and fertilizing fairways and laying 40 000m<sup>2</sup> turf. As news filtered through of the vandalism, Dunedoo's plight struck at the heart of many golf, sports turf and turf production communities. In an incredible stroke of luck Southern Cross Turf and Dad and Dave's Turf "mobilised a veritable army" to source 40 000m<sup>2</sup> of turf, which was committed to help restore the Dunedoo course. This stemmed from an understanding of what it takes to get through the hard times.

Having experienced years of intense drought, the golf course provided a sanctuary, somewhere to come after a hard day, to interact with others while doing it tough and forget about it for a while. However, after the vandalism event, morale was at an all time low with the initial shock wearing off.

However, Dunedoo is a spirited and connected community and worked to overcome this setback. So, for the committee it was totally overwhelming to see and experience the magnitude and extent of generosity from individuals, Clubs, government, media and businesses; local, regional and state-wide.

Our dedication to the community unlocked all the resources necessary to facilitate the reconstruction of the Dunedoo Golf Course to better than we could ever have hoped for and dreamt of!

Course reconstruction was the result of Clubs in Collaboration, has led to a massive boost in Mental and Social Wellbeing of the community and sees the Club as the Heart of the Community.

### **4. Add any credits here (optional).**

We must acknowledge the awe-inspiring support of volunteers, sponsors, the NSW Government, Golf NSW and generous donors, both individual and Golfing Clubs, from all over the country, and around the world. The "turf-drive" was led by Paul Saad and Graham Colless and supported by many turf growers.

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STORY



Dunedoo Sports Club Directors:

Mark Gallagher

Justin Stoddart

Robert Whackett

Scott Russell

Paul Besgrove

Brenden Potbury

Joy Beames

Nigel Boyce

Belinda Fergusson

Secretary/Manager: Ricky Bush

Dunedoo and wider community

**5. Supporting material:**

- *To request copies of the supporting documents, please email [events@clubsnsw.com.au](mailto:events@clubsnsw.com.au)*