



## Annual Report 2023

From humble beginnings, offering just three classes a week, Castlemaine Circus has gone from strength to strength over the past ten years and now offers over 30 classes a week in Circus Arts, Aerial Arts, Parkour and Performance for 2 – 82+ year olds.

Castlemaine Circus has created a fun, welcoming and dynamic space where students improve their physical and performative skills as well as develop their self-esteem, resilience and connection to others.

“When I walk through the door I am accepted for who I am and if I wasn’t here I would be at home on the couch. I love coming here, I am part of a community, a family.”

In ten short years, Castlemaine Circus has become a highly successful creative arts organisation, operating without hardly any government funding. It is an integral part of the local community and attracts students, trainers and audiences from all over Central Victoria. “Who else has a circus in regional Victoria? I dreamed of being in the circus”.



## The Numbers

<p>Taught 30 classes a week in Circus Arts, Aerial Arts, Parkour and Performance. Student Age Range 2 - 76 years. Plus facilitate parkour jams, acro jams, contact jams and workshops in Handstands, Clowning, Stunts and Hula.</p>		<p>Enrolled 677 students throughout the year and up to 400 students a week. Nearly all classes were full with a waiting list of 200, 50% of enrolments. School Holiday programs had 497 participants.</p>
	<p>Employed 12 amazing trainers many from NICA or equivalent and mentored 6 junior trainers who have been our students or studying circus for many years.</p>	
<p>Provided 109 circus and parkour classes for local primary schools, secondary schools, kindergartens as well as the homeschooler community.</p>		<p>Funded 36 Social Circus and Parkour classes for FLO Castlemaine Secondary Students for 6 months and created murals and graffiti signage on the outside of the new space.</p>
	<p>17 students and trainers performed at the Castlemania Circus Festival and Castlemaine Circus Show and 5 students and trainers attended and performed at the Canberra Circus Festival</p>	

## General Managers Report 2023

### Circus at New Venue - Etty St

At the start of 2023, we moved back to the old high school gymnasium, our first home, as the Goods Shed was being renovated. The Etty St gym was a bigger and better space compared to the Goods Shed with strong wooden floors, storage area, high beams for aerials and independence from other users but it's ambient temperature has proven much harder to work in.

The bigger space has made it easier to run classes and manage equipment and it has enabled us grow. In 2023, we successfully ran two classes at the same time and increase the number of students and trainers within some of the classes.

By the end of 2023, the Goods Shed had not begun its renovations and there was no sizable permanent space for us to return to at anytime, so we committed to staying at Etty St. Excitedly, we were offered permanent tenancy and drafted up a long term 15 year lease to be signed.

Throughout 2023, we realised that the new venue would need renovating to make it viable long term, specifically around the ambient temperature – heating, cooling, roof and wall insulation, windows and doors. Potentially up to \$200,000. A fundraising campaign is in order.

### New equipment & classes and community engagement

To fit out the new space we needed to spend some reserve money. We purchased a tall ladder and some pulleys for the aerials. We also purchased our most exciting piece of circus equipment ever, the acromat, which we have lusted after for many years, as well more aerials, mats and other teaching aids! New staff have brought in their equipment including a tight wire and rola bolas and the parkour guys continue to making new shapes.

In 2023, we started a parkour program for homeschoolers and ran circus and parkour workshops for various local schools, including Campbells Creek Primary, Olivet for two terms, both primary and secondary, and visiting Curinya Childcare once a week all year. We developed a relationship with one of our neighbouring organisations, FLO Castlemaine Secondary College and piloted a twice weekly parkour and circus program for their students. We successfully received a Mount Alexander Shire Grant to run the program for two terms, into 2024 and we have created a really sound and sustainable model for ongoing classes.

We saw an increase in demand for circus from adults and we ran clowning workshops for adults and established a new Adults Acro class. We had a bumper year for the school holiday programs. We have grown our community engagement and hired out the



space for stunt workshops, handstand intensives, hula classes, African drumming and dance, contact jams, acro jams and parkour jams. The space continues to be well utilised by our staff and students for extra training, rehearsals and workshops.

## Students and Trainers

Throughout the year we enrolled 677 students, with our biggest enrolment number ever in term four – reaching over 400 enrolments! We ran 30 classes throughout the week, two more than 2022, plus the schools.

We employed 16 staff across the year, 10 adult trainers and 6 youth trainers. We hired two new staff, the Lukes, who are professional circus performers with amazing skills in circus and performance as well as a new junior trainer from our aerial troupe. On a professional development note, three of our troupe/aerialists, plus Nichola and Caz attended the Canberra Circus Festival where they did a week of circus training and watched and performed with youth troupes from all around Australia. And three trainers became accredited Mental Health First Aiders.

We employed new administration staff in 2023. Caz Walsh worked one day a week as the Enrolment Coordinator taking a large and detailed area of work off Kirsty. We have also trialled a marketing role fulfilled by Bron Willis. Bron delivered 4 articles about the Circus in the local paper and is working on the fundraising project for 2024. And Bek Connors reviewed and updated our Child Safety Policy.

## Annual show and performances

The circus troupe and the emerging aerial artists had the amazing opportunity to perform before a big crowd under the big top at the Castlemania Circus Festival and they performed again at our first Castlemaine Circus Show in the gym. Our annual show was successful, again the bigger space meant we could sell more tickets, around 400 tickets, up from 300. Our circus troupe and emerging aerial artists stood out and the aerial performances were on par with the professional artists.



## Values

“Castlemaine Circus is unique, it’s creative, physical, mentored, connected, engaging, inspiring and it sits just outside the mainstream”

### Culture of Care

- Welcoming and accepting all people, no matter what their stars or stripes
- Creating a community where we care for each other
- Nurturing the whole person - physical, social, emotion, mental
- Respecting that the trainers are the key assets

### Fun and empowering teaching model

- Making learning fun
- Encouraging all students to do their best
- Supporting safe risk taking
- Collaborating rather than competing

### Supporting circus arts excellence and innovation

- Creating pathways for emerging circus artists
- Creating high quality, entertaining performances
- Inspiring the community and increasing the love of the arts

### Organisational strength and uniqueness

- Being self sustaining and growing slowly
- Listening and responding to organisational and community needs
- Having a loyal, connected and committed team
- Providing an alternative to competitive, team based sport
- Balancing access and excellence

“You’re never too old to try new things and the circus does that, allows all of us to try something new”



## Staff

“The trainers know the best way to push me, when to stop pushing me and how to make it fun and enjoyable.”

**Lead Trainers:** Nichola Hall, Caz Walsh, Flynn Patrao, Cameron MacLeman, Bek Connors, Mandy Field, Robbie Brassington, Armstrong Scherlies, Luke O'Connor, Luke Taylor, Naomi Wilde, Nina Robertson

**Junior Trainers:** Rita Fortune, Milou Albrecht, Sam Campbell, Kaeleb Glinski, Mitch Hughes, Ez Hall

**Admin Staff:** Kirsty Sutherland, General Manager; Caz Walsh, Enrolment Coordinator Bron Willis, Marketing Coordinator; Bek Connors, School Holiday Program

**Committee:** Jane McCahon (Chair). Lauren Jefferies (Secretary), Kerry Bourke (Treasurer), Armstrong Scherlies, Liz Stearne

## Supporters

Mount Alexander Shire Council Grants – FLO Social Circus & FLO Mural Project

Castlemaine Hot Rods – our wonderful landlords

All photos by Stewart Carter, Penny Ryan and Bryan Nash

All our beautiful volunteers 😊

“Here you're encouraged to do your best, championed when you do your best, championed for just turning up. It's so inclusive, the trainers just do it intrinsically, it's natural to them. I have no words for the gratitude I have.”



# Financial Report 2023

Castlemaine Circus Inc  
PO Box 903, Castlemaine, VIC, 3450  
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## Profit and loss report

Cash mode  
01 Jan 2023 - 31 Dec 2023

	Total		
	Actual	Last Year	Variance %
Income			
Class Fees			
Term One Fees	62,277	57,647	8
Term Two Fees	61,957	55,903	11
Term Three Fees	73,533	60,787	21
Term Four Fees	75,388	63,688	18
Term Fees - previous year	2,046	0	-
Membership	6,910	6,779	2
Total Class Fees	282,112	244,804	15.20%
Workshops			
Education Based Workshops	9,201	3,509	162
School Holiday Workshops	16,237	10,561	54
Workshops Other	1,368	182	652
Total Workshops	26,806	14,252	88.10%
Performances			
Performance - Mid year - Tickets	0	1,802	-100
Performance - Mid year - Grant	0	455	-100
Performance - EOY - Tickets	5,637	2,788	102
Performance - EOY - Grant	0	455	-100
Performance Troupe Fees	700	0	-
Total Performances	6,337	5,499	15.20%
Grants			
Mt Alexander Shire Council	3,000	3,000	0
MDCB - Equipment	0	3,000	-100
Total Grants	3,000	6,000	-50.00%
Community Support			
Donations	235	0	-
Total Community Support	235	0	-
Merchandise			
Merchandise	55	1,195	-95
Total Merchandise	55	1,195	-95.40%
Hire			
Venue Hire	36	87	-58
Birthday Hire	605	0	-
Total Hire	641	87	634.40%
Total Income	319,185	271,838	17.40%
Gross Profit	319,185	271,838	17
Expense			
Class Expenses - Trainer Wages			
Wages - Trainer Term 1	30,724	28,714	7

	Total		
	Actual	Last Year	Variance %
Wages - Trainer Term 2	30,156	25,666	18
Wages - Trainer Term 3	35,874	30,919	16
Wages - Trainer Term 4	38,731	33,422	16
Wages - Travel Trainers	440	800	-45
Wages - Trainer Meetings	978	1,072	-9
Wages - Class Curriculum	202	0	-
Contractor - Trainer fees	100	1,467	-93
Super - Trainers	16,180	11,912	36
<b>Total Class Expenses - Trainer Wages</b>	<b>153,386</b>	<b>133,972</b>	<b>14.50%</b>
<b>Equipment</b>			
Circus Equipment	2,720	1,783	53
Circus Equipment Maintenance	1,901	2,576	-26
Venue Fit Out	359	0	-
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<b>4,980</b>	<b>4,359</b>	<b>14.20%</b>
<b>Workshop Expenses</b>			
Wages - Workshops Education	6,204	1,740	257
Wages - School Holidays	8,823	4,900	80
Wages - Workshop Other	1,040	0	-
<b>Total Workshop Expenses</b>	<b>16,067</b>	<b>6,640</b>	<b>142.00%</b>
<b>Performance Expenses</b>			
Performance Mid Year Show expenses	0	2,748	-100
Performance - Circus Mania	0	1,300	-100
Performance EOY expenses	7,362	2,316	218
Performance Troupe development	2,490	0	-
<b>Total Performance Expenses</b>	<b>9,851</b>	<b>6,364</b>	<b>54.80%</b>
<b>Grant expenses</b>			
Mt Alexander Shire Grant expenses	1,924	2,999	-36
MDCB - equipment	0	3,000	-100
<b>Total Grant expenses</b>	<b>1,924</b>	<b>5,999</b>	<b>-67.90%</b>
<b>Merchandise</b>			
Merchandise expenses	182	1,522	-88
<b>Total Merchandise</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1,522</b>	<b>-88.10%</b>
<b>Admin - Wages</b>			
Wages - General Mgr	55,328	54,267	2
Wages - Admin Assistant	8,745	5,358	63
Wages - Enrolment Coord	8,190	0	-
Wages - Marketing Mgr	3,432	0	-
Super - Admin	8,212	6,118	34
<b>Total Admin - Wages</b>	<b>83,907</b>	<b>65,743</b>	<b>27.60%</b>
<b>Administration Costs</b>			
Venue Rent	15,619	15,000	4
Venue Utilities	1,981	654	203
Venue Supplies	1,019	860	18
Venue Move	1,039	0	-
Office Supplies/Equipment	1,338	722	85
Office software subscriptions	3,211	3,176	1
Phone/Internet	589	436	35
Banking charges	114	76	50



	Total		
	Actual	Last Year	Variance %
Cleaning Labour	2,820	3,706	-24
Insurance	2,438	2,014	21
OHS / First Aid	94	500	-81
Governance	577	61	843
Marketing	3,766	4,515	-17
Memberships & Licences	1,000	577	73
Meeting Costs	319	396	-19
Scholarships	250	0	-
<b>Total Administration Costs</b>	<b>36,176</b>	<b>32,694</b>	<b>10.70%</b>
<b>Staffing Costs</b>			
Professional Development / First Aid	1,196	1,035	16
Workcover	2,558	1,549	65
Staff Gifts/Dinner/Tshirts	1,301	920	42
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>	<b>5,055</b>	<b>3,504</b>	<b>44.30%</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>311,529</b>	<b>260,797</b>	<b>19.50%</b>
<b>Operating Profit</b>	<b>7,656</b>	<b>11,041</b>	<b>-31</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>			
Overdue Show expenses - previous year	1,045	0	-
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>6,611</b>	<b>11,041</b>	<b>-40</b>

Balance sheet report

Cash mode  
31 Dec 2023

	Total		
	Actual	Last Year	Variance %
Asset			
General Cheque Account	59,865	68,062	-12
Petty Cash	1,000	500	100
Circus Equipment	4,382	0	-
Venue Equipment - Fit Out	6,469	0	-
Office Equipment	515	0	-
Total Asset	72,231	68,562	5.35%
Liability			
GST Collected	6,285	6,005	5
GST Paid	(1,072)	(1,154)	-7
PAYG Withholding Payable	7,702	5,478	41
Super Accrual Liabilities	0	5,526	-100
Total Liability	12,914	15,855	-18.55%
Net Assets	59,317	52,707	13
Equity			
Current Earnings			
Current Earnings	6,611	11,041	-40
Total Current Earnings	6,611	11,041	-40.12%
Retained Earnings	52,706	41,666	26
Total Equity	59,317	52,707	12.54%