TRACK Talk

MTHCS Mallee Track Health and Community Service

November 2026

Green Lake Mosaic project completed for Sea Lake Neighbourhood House

“The artwork is beautiful, but the friendships, conversations and sense of belonging created along the way are just as valuable.” Kellie Matthews, Sea Lake Neighbourhood House coordinator.

A mosaic is composed of broken parts reassembled to create a new whole and is symbolic of reinvention and resurrection. In Sea Lake an inspiring example of community engagement is its new, massive mosaic representing the town’s favourite gathering spot.

And surprisingly, it’s not Lake Tyrrell represented, rather Sea Lake’s Green Lake!

“We wanted the mosaic to represent something meaningful to the people of Sea Lake. After consultation with several community members, it was decided that although Lake Tyrrell would look great it is more of a tourist destination, so Green Lake was the choice,” explained Kellie Matthews, Sea Lake’s Neighbourhood House Coordinator.

“Almost everyone has a connection to Green Lake, whether it's childhood memories of swimming, family camping trips, fishing, boating, water skiing, walking around the lake or spending time there with friends.”

The idea for a mosaic evolved from conversations about creating a new art project for its local Neighbourhood House, which sits adjacent to the town’s MTHCS Sea Lake Health Centre. Different ideas were brainstormed, initially from fairy doors to individual tiles for a gathering wall, and eventually the community coalesced around celebrating Green Lake.

Sea Lake has a strong history of community creative projects, but this mosaic was and is unique, not only by scale, but by the number of contributing volunteers over an extended period. “Rather than ... having one artist complete the piece, it has genuinely been created by the community, with people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities all contributing to the finished result.”, boasted Ms Matthews.

“The original idea was to create an opportunity for community members to come together, particularly during challenging times for our farming community,” she continued. “We wanted something that would encourage people to get out of the house, enjoy a meal, have a conversation and connect with others in a relaxed environment. Rather than simply holding a series of gatherings, we wanted to create something lasting that everyone could contribute to and feel proud of.”

The task was guided by local ceramic artist Kristie Dean, who worked closely throughout. “Kristie has been wonderful at making the project accessible to everyone, from school students through to older community members, including those who had never attempted mosaic work before,” said Ms Matthews. “Her patience, creativity and willingness to guide participants have been invaluable, particularly given the size and detail of the artwork. Kristie helped develop the design and prepare it so that people of all ages and abilities could contribute, regardless of whether they had any mosaic experience.”



Image: Sea Lake community members and Kellie Matthews working on the mosaic project at Carinya, Sea Lake’s Neighbourhood House

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Timing the project was another essential, to correspond with affiliated grants restrictive time frames. Since mid-August more than 50 locals have locals assembled several times a week around the nitty gritty of creating a mosaic: breaking, smashing and grinding. Then reassembling.

The finished result is a giant picture measuring almost 3 square meters.

The Neighbourhood House coordinator sought funding from Gather Around the Table project, made possible through the Victorian Government's Look Over the Farm Gate initiative, whose stated goal encourages social connection and support mental wellbeing, “particularly in rural communities experiencing challenging times,” explained Ms Matthews. She also applied for the Youth Fest grant and Riordan’s Community Chest.

As for Mallee Track’s principal support, Lyndal Munro MTHCS Director of Community Service said with pride, “At Mallee Track Health and Community Service, we recognise that community wellbeing is about much more than healthcare. Projects like the Green Lake Mosaic demonstrate the important role our Neighbourhood Houses play in bringing people together, strengthening social connections and creating a sense of belonging. We are incredibly proud to support initiatives that celebrate our communities, encourage participation across generations and contribute to the health and wellbeing of people living along the Mallee Track,” said Ms Munro.

“Surprisingly, it was the purple plates that proved the hardest to fossick, slowing progress when that colour was depleted. “People were quite active at looking in op shops for the required coloured plates.”, continued Ms Matthews.

“We are incredibly grateful to everyone who donated materials, volunteered their time, helped prepare tiles or simply called in to see how the artwork was progressing,” said the coordinator, concluding “Every tile represents a small contribution, but together they have created something much bigger — a celebration of Green Lake, our community and the connections we share.”





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