

MEDIA RELEASE - IMMEDIATE

History-making community mosaic project

'The Great Steps of Warburton' begins – all invited to create

Upper Yarra, Tuesday 25 March 2014:

The Warburton streetscape will soon feature one of the most beautiful and enduring permanent art installations ever created in Australia.

'The Great Steps of Warburton' is a large-scale mosaic that will be created by an entire community in a series of workshops through April and May 2014.

Warburton, a picturesque township in the Upper Yarra Victoria, has a rich history and is noted for its natural beauty and abundant wildlife – themes that will define the mosaic design, which will 'flow up the staircase' at the existing 'Waterwheel' complex on the main street as a reflection of the Yarra River and the flora and fauna that are native to the area.

The project facilitators, and Upper Yarra locals, Sioux Dollman, Sandy Peeters and Aileen Wright have been inspired by international community mosaic projects such as the [San Francisco 16th Avenue Tiled Steps](#) project and the [Puento Alto Urban Mosaic](#) project in Chile. They have collaborated on the design and will share their artistic and technical skills as a way of 'meaningfully engaging the community to create something that brings sparkle and magic to the town,' says Sioux, who is highly regarded for her mosaic work, which can be seen at Melbourne Zoo and more recently at Werribee Park.

More than 300 people are expected to attend the free workshops being offered at the Warburton Community Space, where community members, school children, traders and anyone who wants to be a part of the project, can participate in creating a 'sense of place' and their own piece of Warburton history – and learn mosaic skills in the process.

There are 26 steps and materials to be used will include ceramic, stone, glass, mirror and slate. Mosaic is one of the oldest art forms recorded and this project seeks to establish an Australian response that is fresh and free in style, which honours the tradition but brings a uniquely Australian perspective.

'The vision for our town is to be known as beautiful, artful and edible. 'The Great Steps of Warburton' will connect vital aspects of community life – the Rail Trail, new skate park, community gardens, Visitor Information Centre and the village green,' says co-facilitators Sandy and Aileen.

The first free public workshop will held on Thursday 10 April from 1pm to 3pm. A free workshop will also be offered on Tuesday 15 April from 1pm to 3pm at Warburton Community Space, Thomas Ave, Warburton. All welcome, no experience necessary.

A joyful and magical official launch will be held in June.

The project has been made possible through the generous support and visionary approach of the Yarra Ranges Council and The Warburton and Yarra Junction Community Bank® branches.

For an interview or for further information please contact Sioux Dollman on 03 5966 5936.

'Manmade things should be as pretty as nature.' Sioux Dollman, March 2014



Interesting Facts About 'The Great Steps of Warburton'

- The mosaic will expand over 26 steps, each more than 5 metres in width
- More than 20,000 tiles will be used, and the design will cover almost 20 square metres
- The project will take more than a month to complete
- Two major grants totalling more than \$15,000 have been given in support of the project, and many materials have been donated by members of the community and local artists
- A secret 'inspiring' piece of poetry will be hidden to be 'discovered' in the design
- School groups from local primary, secondary and VCAL student bodies will participate, as will groups from U3A, local traders, councillors and other interested groups that represent community life (in addition to an open invitation to members of the public)
- A timetable of workshops will be available on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/thegreatstepsofwarburton

- Workshops will also be held during the Warburton Harmony Festival 16-19 May
- Workshops are suitable for all ages, no experience necessary
- The mosaic is permanent and will provide inspiration and an aesthetic to Warburton for generations to come
- **'The Great Steps of Warburton'** will be one of the unique tourist attractions of the region, and Australia wide



Existing steps



Artists' vision

