

# IMAGINING BETTER

Imagining and achieving better lives



above: Ross with Araluen's most potent staff recruitment magnet, Trevor

## Playing to our strengths

Araluen's Senior Leadership Team is changing to drive growth and innovation

Since 2007, Ross Coverdale has shaped and embedded Araluen's vision, mission, values, culture and distinct personality as Araluen's CEO. Ross will now handover the CEO role to Tamara Cattach in a career move that will enable him to focus on what he's best at.

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A R A L U E N



Summer 2019

## From our new CEO

We have entered the first stages of implementing Araluen's new Strategic Plan. It's very exciting to see that we're well-placed to benefit from new opportunities. Our expansion into the Northern Growth Corridor, further development of unique strategic partnerships and focus on designing and delivering quality, measurable supports will enhance Araluen's reputation as a prime provider and innovator within a vibrant new Disability sector.

As Ross assumes an important new role, I'm very grateful for the opportunity to lead Araluen as the Acting CEO for the next 12 months. Araluen has been a significant part of my life for 23 years and my passion. Ross has worked hard with the aim of making Araluen the best disability service in the country. I thank him for his legacy of innovation and determination that inspires us to reimagine what's possible and find new ways for people to live great lives.

In 2020, our new look Senior Leadership Team is ready to respond to the challenges and expectations that implementing the Strategic Plan will entail. Our path is clear and our respective roles set each of us up to succeed.

I want to thank all involved at Araluen for contributing to such a busy and dynamic year. Our highly motivated staff teams have again fully committed themselves to the task of continuously improving the innovative ways that we support our participants.

We're fortunate to enjoy positive and open relationships with families, carers and members of our community. Thank you for your input that helps make Araluen the wonderful place that it is.

I send a big THANK YOU to our volunteers for your tireless and much-loved efforts again this year. You have made many individual goals possible with your generous, positive support.

Araluen's Board members are diligently applying their expertise to ensure that Araluen is well-governed, and assessing the changing landscape of the Disability sector while remaining focused on the individuals who rely on our support and the well-being of Araluen's staff. All Board and many Committee members fulfil their valuable leadership roles on a volunteer basis. I thank each of them for the time, support, knowledge and vision they bring to the organisation.

May you each have a safe and happy holiday period and enjoy time with your families and friends. Relax and get ready for a big year in 2020!

**Tamara Cattach**  
Acting CEO, Araluen

## Key Dates:

### Day Support Service Holiday Dates

Day Supports close:  
**Friday 20th December 2019  
12 noon**

Day Supports resume:  
**Tuesday 28th January 2020**

Araluen's Administration will operate intermittently during holiday time. RecScope will operate during January.

Our 2020 Day Supports Calendar can be found here:

-  [www.araluen.org/  
community](http://www.araluen.org/community)
-  [admin@araluen.org](mailto:admin@araluen.org)
-  **9439 2805**

## A welcome new role for Ross

**It has been an honour and privilege to have been CEO of Araluen for the last 12 and ½ years. From the moment I first visited Lower Plenty when Trevor Oxley offered me a bus driver's job and told me that my car was a bomb, I was hooked.**

It has been my consuming passion ever since to do everything possible to ensure that Araluen achieves great lives for its participants. It is imperative that we are a quality provider that is driven by our values and integrity. The question we must keep asking is "if that was my kid what would I expect".

At Araluen we are deeply indebted to our frontline staff. I am proud of them. Certainly, they are not perfect (nor am I) and we have fallen short of our standards on occasions. We must keep training and developing people of character to maintain strong staff teams. If my kid had a NDIS package, I'd want Araluen staff providing support.

My goal has been pretty simple since day one; lead Araluen to be the best. We have come a long way from being a beige provider of programs in a charity model to a leader in support provision in the commercialised NDIS world. Our journey is far from complete. I'm so pleased that Tam Cattach as the new CEO will keep our momentum up and I have a meaningful and permanent role.

In addition to being an honour and privilege, I have increasingly felt the burden of the CEO role. To me, Araluen has always been more than just a job. The NDIS is challenging and not every day is easy or fun downstream at Araluen. I'm not looking for sympathy but maybe a bit more sleep. We are in a massive transformation and I'm very pleased to move away from governance, compliance and financial management. Fortunately, the Board have been brilliant, as have our Managers. Thank you.

It's time to focus upon my strengths. I am energised about developing new and innovative ways to support people. We have a once in a generation opportunity to make a difference. We are not short of ideas. As an organisation we are well placed to respond to the enormous unmet need in the Northern Growth Corridor and continue to position Araluen as a premium provider. Our best years are ahead of us. I am energised to have another leadership role.

Recently I was overseas where I met a well renowned researcher who was a little disparaging about day service providers. When I informed him that I was CEO of a day service he dismissively said there are only two day services in Victoria that are worth their salt; Araluen and another. When I told him where I was employed, he congratulated me, bought me a drink and asked me where we find all the good staff. Next time I meet him here's hoping he says that "Araluen is the best, by miles".

Thanks for your support, encouragement and trust. I am excited about our future, but when things go wrong; call Tam.

**Ross Coverdale**  
General Manager - Strategy, Growth & Innovation  
Araluen

## Learn more



Araluen's new Strategic Plan and further information about our new look Senior Leadership Team can be found on our website:

 [www.araluen.org/news](http://www.araluen.org/news)



Chancez

Above: Cr Craig Landon (Banyule City Council), Leigh Morante, Ruby, Jacob, Andrew and Pam



Stay tuned to Araluen Facebook and Instagram - the winners of the Northern Business Achievement Awards will be announced on Thursday 5th December

## Northern Business Achievement Awards Recognising innovation that makes a real life impact

**"My team and I are honoured to be nominated for The Northern Business Achievement Awards. The growth of Chancez Cafes is proof that better outcomes can be achieved when partnering organisations focus on a shared goal and work together to reach it. Our participants inspire us everyday with their determination and enthusiasm to learn. This is a team effort"**

- Leigh Morante, Manager - Chancez Cafes

Araluen is proud that Chancez Cafes were recently nominated for a Northern Business Achievement Award (NBAA). The NBAA Awards are a partnership of industry, education, local and state government and decision makers across Melbourne's north. They recognise the business achievements of small to medium enterprises and encourage business excellence, growth and competitiveness.

Chancez Cafes were nominated in recognition of the efforts of Leigh and her hard-working team to create community-based learning opportunities that improve the future employment prospects of participants. Araluen has worked with several supportive partners to open cafes in popular locations where a demand for this service exists. These include Banyule City Council and Melbourne Polytechnic.

## Community Pitch Night Locals love Chancez

Chancez Cafe Possum Hollow was selected to take part in the Heidelberg Community Pitch Evening organised by the East Ivanhoe and Heidelberg Branches of the Community Bank. This event puts local businesses who would like to 'give back' to the community into direct contact with groups and organisations who operate worthwhile initiatives. We thank the Bank and all the local businesses and organisations who supported Chancez Cafe at Possum Hollow. Funds will be used to create a more efficient working space and upgrade equipment.

Generous local businesses donated **\$5,600** to Chancez Cafe Possum Hollow.

See who at:



[www.araluen.org/news](http://www.araluen.org/news)

East Ivanhoe and Heidelberg  
Community Bank® branches



## NDIS Planning

### Did you know...? We can help you prepare for your NDIS plan review

Everyone's needs and goals change over time. This means that your NDIS Plan will change too. Araluen can help you get ready for your plan review so you can optimise your funding and ask for all the supports you need.

Annual plan reviews are an opportunity to think about your goals and whether your plan and supports are working for you. It's important to be well prepared for your review meeting with the NDIA. This will give you a better chance of getting a plan you're happy with.

We recommend you talk to us about what you'd like to achieve from your plan review. Araluen can provide the quotes you will need for your application. Remember to allow enough time to prepare.

#### NDIS Plan Review Help

Learn what to do next:

Contact: Josh Brouwer

✉ [joshuab@araluen.org](mailto:joshuab@araluen.org)

☎ 0410 639 590



## Annual Book Launch with Andy Griffiths The 117 Storey Treehouse

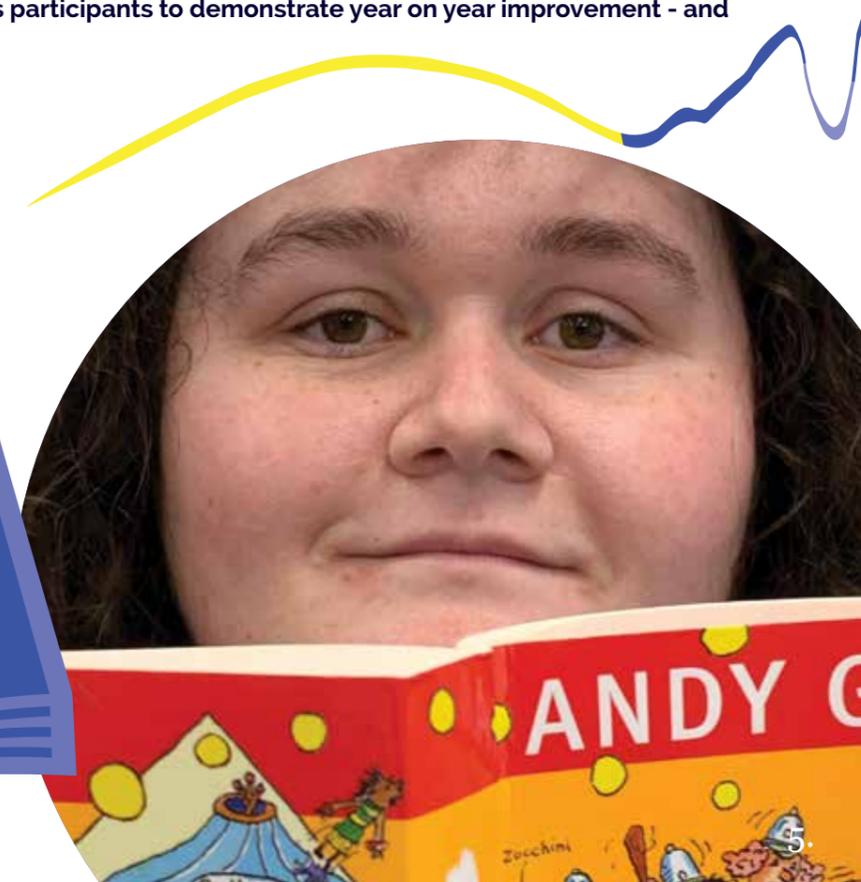
### Araluen Primed

Participants at Araluen Primed are inspired and motivated to improve their literacy and public speaking skills in a unique way. Well-known author, Andy Griffiths, has supported our annual book reading for the past nine years. This popular event allows participants to demonstrate year on year improvement - and eat ice cream!

Every year, participants eagerly await the release of the latest installment in Andy's "Treehouse" series of books. Each participant selects an extract to read aloud on the evening. Much practise goes into learning the text and presenting an original and personal interpretation of the story on stage at Heidelberg Theatre.

"I was nervous as heck and then I imagined people in their underwear and I was ok. Now I'm not so nervous because I've been given confidence by the book launch. I enjoy reading. It's so much fun. I like to make the audience laugh. I really like reading for Andy and his wife, Jill."

**Rochelle**  
experienced reader & event Co-MC



Options for Community Living

## Leading the way in choice-based housing solutions



Araluen's Options for Community Living (OFCL) Team is doing ground-breaking work to plan and develop better living outcomes that can be realised with NDIS funding. OFCL operates two teams that each have a distinct area of expertise. Here's a snapshot of each team's focus...

### For people looking for a better life in their home

The NDIA's Supported Independent Living (SIL) Quoting Tool enables service providers to accurately measure the supports people receive over a 24 hour period, 365 days a year. SIL is help with and/or supervision of daily tasks to develop the skills of an individual to live as independently as possible. These are the supports provided to a participant in their home. The SIL tool enables us to provide the appropriate staff supports to ensure participants are achieving their NDIS goals and have choice and control in their life.

### For people looking for a new home

Araluen is the only organisation in Victoria with a specialist accommodation-focussed Support Coordination team working towards investigating and exploring housing options for people who are looking for a home of their own.

[www.araluen.org/housing](http://www.araluen.org/housing)

Employer of Choice

## Celebrating long service



Lower Plenty-based Support Worker, Nicole Picarello (pictured to the right with Nathan), is currently Araluen's longest serving employee and only the second person to reach the 25 year mark. Congratulations, Nicole!



What a fantastic year it has been! Our staff continue to apply a level of dedication to their duties that demonstrates that for many, working at Araluen is much more than "just a job". Over the past 12 months, Araluen has seen a 16% increase in the number of people we employ and a key area of focus has been improving our 'People and Culture' function to better meet the organisation's needs, and to increase employee engagement. As we grow, it's important to recognise that our long-term staff represent our history and our future.

### Staff Achievement Awards 2019

Araluen would like to thank and congratulate the following staff who achieved significant service milestones in 2019.

Nicole Picarello	25 years
Brooke Hawthorne-Smith	20 years
Kim Hutchinson	15 years
Yvonne Graham	15 years
Debbie Hughes	10 years
Mark Hibbins	10 years

## Have fun your way in January Hot stuff - our Summer RecScape timetable is here



If you're looking for action and want to explore Melbourne or participate in a wide range of activities during January, RecScape Summer bookings are now open.

Araluen's leisure-focussed support will run most days between Monday 13th January until Thursday 23rd January. Play Laser Tag, visit attractions throughout the city, enjoy day trips to the beach and much more!

Participation in all RecScape sessions is by advance booking only. Head to our website for details.

"I love trying new things on the Rec program like getting my face dirty at paintball"

- David

Booking Deadline:  
16th December

[www.araluen.org/recreation](http://www.araluen.org/recreation)



### What's On

## Holiday hours Chancez Cafes

"Learning about growing veggies at Melbourne Polytechnic Horticulture is my favourite thing at Araluen. It's rewarding when fresh healthy food I grow is used in Chancez Cafes menu items"

- Stuart



All Chancez Cafes will be closed from 19th December. Opening hours will vary during our Day Supports closure period. All cafes will remain closed until Monday 13th January when some venues will reopen.

If you'd like to visit us for great coffee and friendly service during the holidays, please see our website first for up to date information.

[www.araluen.org/chancez-cafe](http://www.araluen.org/chancez-cafe)

## Art Market All that glitters....

Stuck for gift ideas for the person who has everything? Araluen can help. Our annual Art Market will take place with the Diamond Creek/Hurstbridge Drama Group's end of year performance. Come sing along with an Araluen original production and check out a huge range of beautiful one-off handcrafted ceramics, jewellery and small artworks, all made by artists who are based in our DC studio.

Drama Production:  
[www.trybooking.com/BFNNI](http://www.trybooking.com/BFNNI)

Art Market:  
**Thursday 12th December**  
**12pm - 9.00pm**  
Eltham Little Theatre  
1603 Main Road  
Research 3095





## Pots of talent!

Kate Steart has had an amazing year! As Kate worked hard to hone her skills in the ceramics studio, she's forged a unique artistic style that's her very own. Success via recognition and sales has followed. Kate exhibited her hand-crafted and painted works in several exhibitions including 'The Women of Araluen', and 'Ceramica' at the Stonehouse Gallery. She also completed two commission pieces - one for the recent Andy Griffiths book launch and the second, worth \$500, from Nillumbik Shire Council for a sculpture in celebration of International Day of People with a Disability.

 9438 2944

 [artconnects@araluen.org](mailto:artconnects@araluen.org)



Above: Kate (right) with specialist Ceramics Instructor, Kim



We value your feedback about anything to do with Araluen and like hearing your opinions. If you have any comments about this newsletter, have an idea to include, or require information, please contact us.



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Araluen acknowledges the traditional owners of the land upon which we work and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging



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