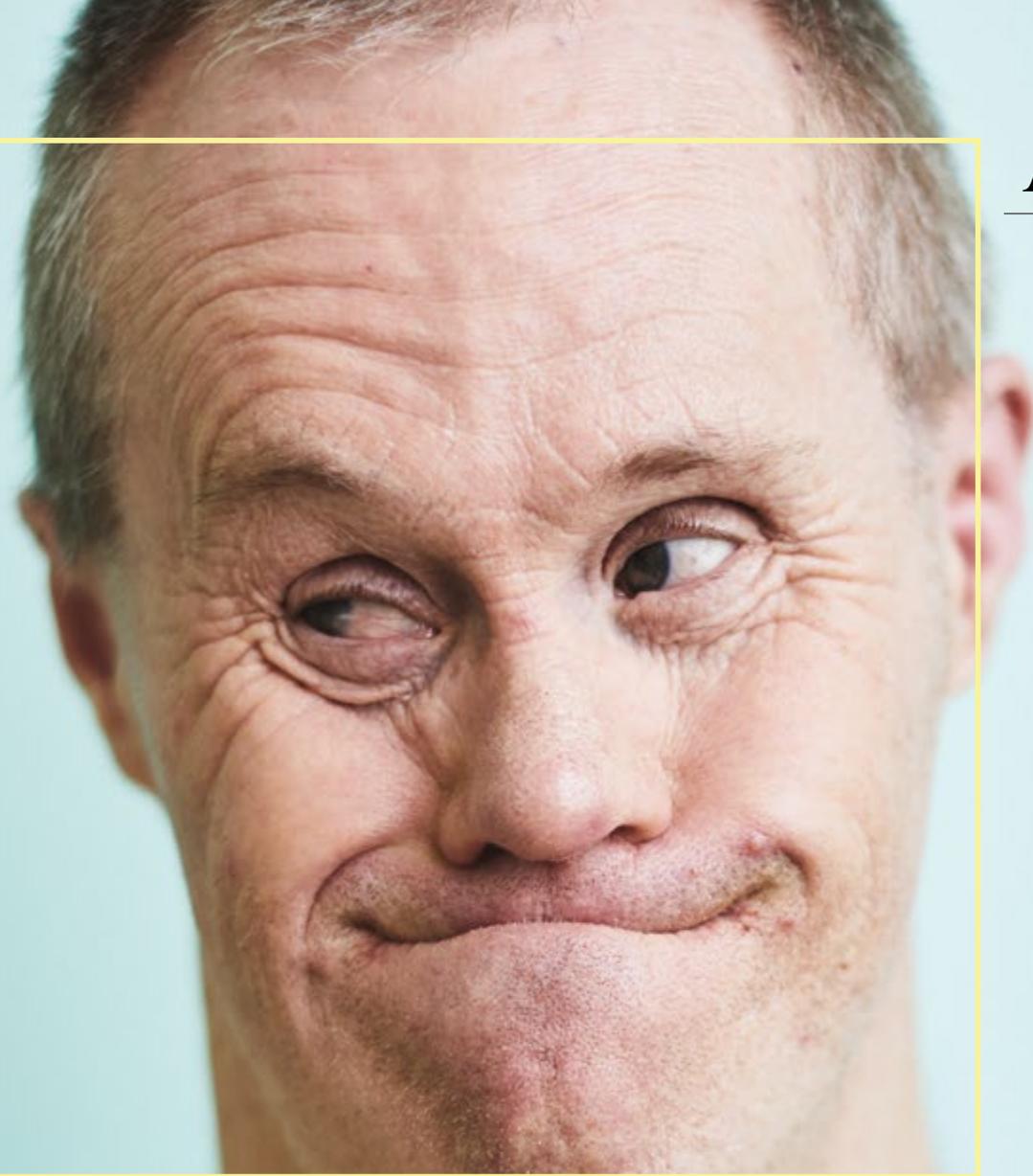


A R A L U E N

Annual Report

2020



WELCOME

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THANK YOU



To everyone who's kept going in 2020 and kept Araluen going



FROM BRUCE OUR CHAIR

What an incredible year we have had! Who would have predicted 2020 turning out like it did?



At last year's AGM we celebrated the changed leadership model for Araluen with Tamara Cattach taking over as interim CEO in December 2019. All was calm at that time but that soon changed. Fire emergencies in the early part of 2020, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, let alone all of the many other things that occurred during that time! What an incredible effort Tamara has made in keeping Araluen COVID-safe and being able to galvanise the organisation to keep it running. When many organisations just shut their doors, Araluen kept going. Yes, we have fantastic leaders that have the ability to 'Imagine Better'. But it's also about our frontline and administration staff who have worked passionately and tirelessly to offer supports to participants, families and colleagues during this difficult and unsettling time. We truly thank you for your outstanding efforts throughout this difficult year.

Foremost in our minds was keeping staff and participants safe. An unbelievable amount of work went into setting up protocols and processes. Thanks to the dedication and incredible organisation undertaken throughout the lockdowns and also for the commitment of all staff to adhere to the protocols. This meant that our residences, participants and staff were kept safe.

While some will look back at how difficult 2020 has been, the year has actually taught us a great deal about how we faced uncertainty. We showed resilience, strength, determination, character, innovation and a real can-do attitude. Out of the adversity, there have been many successes at Araluen that we can look back on with admiration and pride.

COVID-19 necessitated the introduction of novel ways of engaging with our community. The range of creative programs that staff thought through and implemented was remarkable. These included virtual dinners, art programs, cooking or exercise classes, online chats or the telephone calls to check on how participants and families were going and what help we might have been able to provide. This was inspirational.

OUR CHAIR

The restrictions surrounding COVID-19 however did test our financial capacity. JobKeeper also provided us with support to keep going. Having a strong balance sheet combined with strict cash controls certainly helped us through.

In the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown Araluen had an Accreditation Audit conducted by the NDIA. This was the first audit of our operations against the NDIS standards. Doing this via remote means was difficult enough, but importantly we successfully achieved accreditation. Again, the effort by staff in preparing for the audit and your commitment to achieving a great outcome, during a particularly tough lockdown in Melbourne, was a great accomplishment.

A new NDIA pricing schedule was received in mid-June for implementation by 1 July 2020. Primarily this related to reduced financial support for group activities. Not only was the communication poorly executed by the NDIA, the lack of consultation was particularly worrying and caused considerable angst for most service providers. While there has been a delay of the implementation date, the NDIA again quietly introduced new pricing arrangement for residential participants. It does indicate a worrying trend by NDIA where pricing can quickly change, and of course such changes may affect the way we deliver our services.

The NDIA pricing decision bought forward our planned Services Review. This is helping us understand the ever-changing operating environment we are part of. This will inform us how we can best continue to provide a range of quality services that help participants achieve their long-term goals.

There is much to do as we 'restart' in 2021. The five pillars of our Strategic Direction will still guide us through the complexities of a post-COVID way of life. Our goals to provide quality supports, maximise our reach and impact, provide diverse housing options, strengthen our position as an employer of choice and build a sustainable and thriving organisation are as relevant today as they were when they were developed in 2019. This gives us much to build upon as we confidently look to the future.

I am looking forward to 2021 with the hope that the year ahead is more settled than this year. And there is no reason that this shouldn't occur. We have a very dedicated Board that is highly committed to seeing Araluen thrive well into the future. Of course, the Board could not be prouder of the incredible staff that have worked so tirelessly over

the year. The support of the Senior Leadership Team, with fantastic guidance by Tamara, in making this all happen has been outstanding.

This is my last year as Chairperson to the Board. I have decided not to seek re-election, however, I have offered my services to the Board to contribute in whatever way the Directors see fit. Taking over from me will be Larissa Roeske. While new to Araluen, Larissa has a wealth of experience in governance and strategic thinking (as a Board member for Royal Australian College of General Practitioners), a GP, vast experience in the disability field as well as a very dynamic attitude. I am sure your support for Larissa will be as strong for her as it has been for me.

To all of the Araluen community, thank you for your ongoing support over the past year. There is still much to do in the coming years as we look forward to the resumption of 'normal' services.

Many thanks to you all and very best wishes,



Bruce Martyn - Chair, Araluen

OUR MESSAGE TO BRUCE

Upon your resignation from our Board, we sincerely thank you for nine years of invaluable service to Araluen. Your wisdom and compassion have shaped Araluen's character - your legacy will benefit many people for many years. Our gratitude and best wishes are with you.

OUR YEAR



FROM TAM OUR CEO



What a year 2020 has been. Bushfires and a pandemic tested us in many ways. I am proud to say while standing here today that Araluen is not only still operating, but we are more resilient, we are stronger, and we are even more committed to our vision to 'imagine better'.

The last six months have seen constant surprises. We know that the restrictions necessary to limit the spread of COVID-19 are especially difficult for people with disability and their families. There have been so many new challenges and demands that have required us to quickly rethink our operations to keep our participants, families, carers and staff connected. Our focus is on keeping everyone safe. We had to innovate and support people in new ways.

Our management and staff from across the entire organisation were our driving force this year. Our passionate and committed teams worked together so we could offer modified and essential supports during Melbourne's long lockdown period. Our new range of online Virtual Supports are very popular and have engaged people in ways that many had not considered before. We provided 1:1 support for people who needed. Our staff worked in people's homes, provided individual support for exercise in the community and created safe spaces for friends to meet online and keep their networks alive.

Our group homes remained safe places - we worked hard to make this happen. Lockdown was hard for our residents who have had limited contact with families and friends. Our staff worked tirelessly to keep people supported and engaged. Behind the scenes, our administration teams adjusted to working from home so that we continued to function smoothly. I thank all our staff for striving to enhance the lives of Araluen's participants and each other while dealing with the significant impact that COVID-19 has had on your own life.

More recently, the NDIA released a new Price Guide that includes some significant changes to how NDIS Providers manage and deliver some supports. Araluen will feel the effects of these changes in our Day Services, and we will need to operate them differently for this option to remain financially viable and an

available choice for people. After much lobbying from within the disability sector, the NDIA delayed the changes until July 2021. Therefore, we've begun a wide-ranging Service Review so that our community members have as much opportunity as possible to shape the on-going services that Araluen will provide. We will look at all existing supports and review new possibilities, so we meet the expectations and needs of our participants well into the future.

We cannot wait to see everyone face-to-face again. We don't yet know what "COVID-normal" will look like for Araluen. As the next phases unfold, we'll endeavour to support people in the safest ways possible as we plan for a careful, sustainable and positive return to a fuller range of services. This year reinforced the lesson that Araluen needs to continue to embrace change and innovation to evolve as a modern, relevant and thriving organisation, meet new challenges, drive transformation in our industry and deliver a high standard of service for our community.

This year will go down as a very memorable one for me. What a year to accept the role of interim CEO! I still don't know how I got so lucky. What I do know is that I am proud to lead Araluen through one of the toughest periods we've ever known and to have the pleasure of working with people who have such passion, creativity, innovation, compassion and commitment.

We became One. One organisation - working towards the same goals and working together. And with this in mind, we have much to look forward to in 2021.

Tamara Cattach - CEO, Araluen

IMAGINING AND ACHIEVING BETTER

OUR PROUDEST MOMENTS!

Araluen started the financial year in July 2019 with much confidence and energy, under the guidance of our new **Strategic Direction 2019 - 2022** and a new-look senior leadership team. Already, work has started or been completed on 43 of 46 action points in the plan.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an immediate reassessment of Araluen's operations, in wide consultation with our community. We redeployed our focus and resources to safely provide essential supports while managing the risks and challenges associated with service delivery during a public health emergency.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2019 - 2022



lead best practice in imagining and achieving great lives



maximise our reach and impact



continue to be a leader in the evolution of diverse housing options



strengthen our position as an employee of choice



maintain a sustainable & thriving organisation

ACHIEVEMENTS



15 new virtual support subjects developed

we worked together and kept our community safe!



stayed connected with



of our pre-COVID workforce



600%

increase in the number of participants wishing to enjoy our RecScape leisure support (pre-COVID)



we reimaged **16,500** hours of COVID-safe support since late April

new Employee Value Proposition



our success rate for NDIS Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) package applications

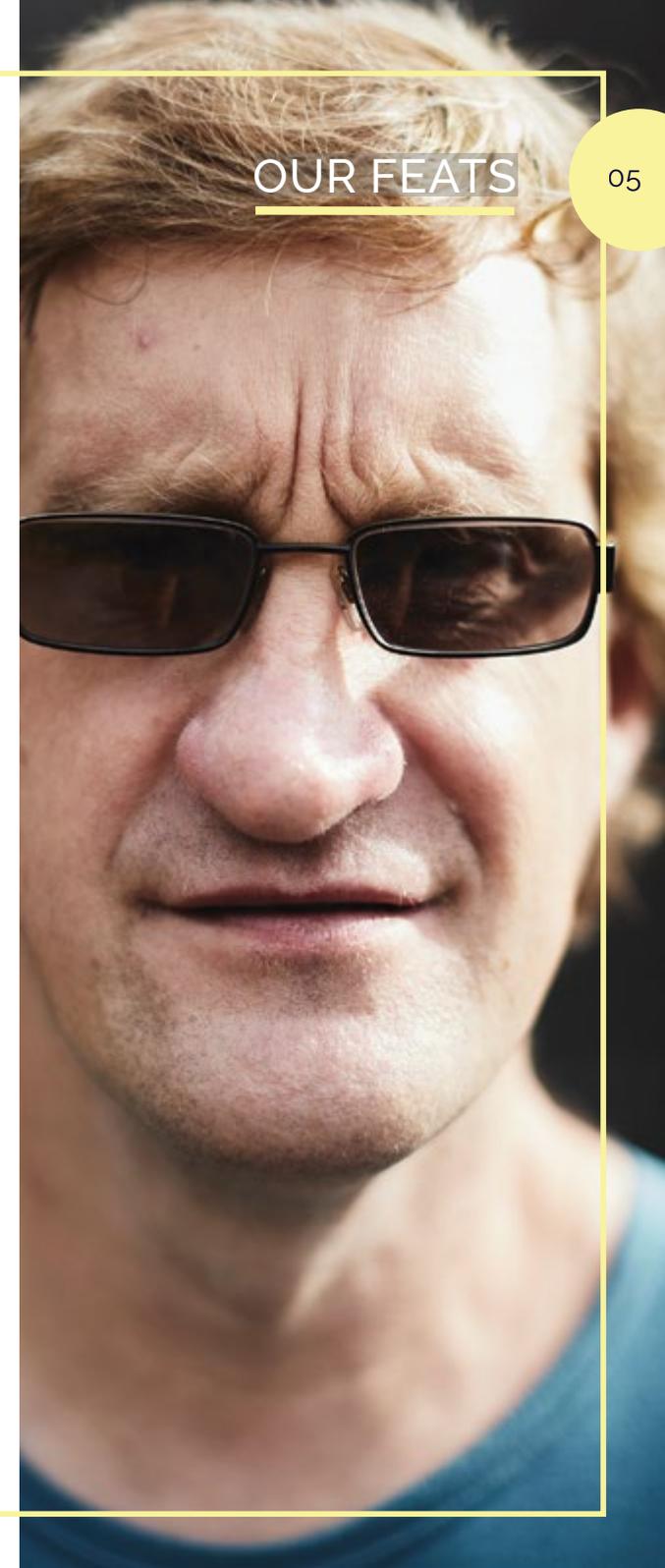


more people are working with us to find a better home

Supported Independent Living (SIL) provider for a group home in Epping



virtual support places are now filled per week



ABOUT US

DIGNITY
PASSION
INTEGRITY



IMAGINING BETTER



WHAT WE DO

ASPIRE, IMAGINE & EVOLVE

Araluen provides effective supports that enable adults with intellectual disability to achieve a great life. These supports are imaginative, caring and directly inspired by participants. We know that positive, on-going change is possible for people when their strengths and dreams are the motivation behind it, and when we create the right opportunities.

Participants benefit from Araluen's robust partnerships and passionate, values-driven staff. We work with individuals to develop tailored pathways to greater independence, inclusion, and fulfilment.



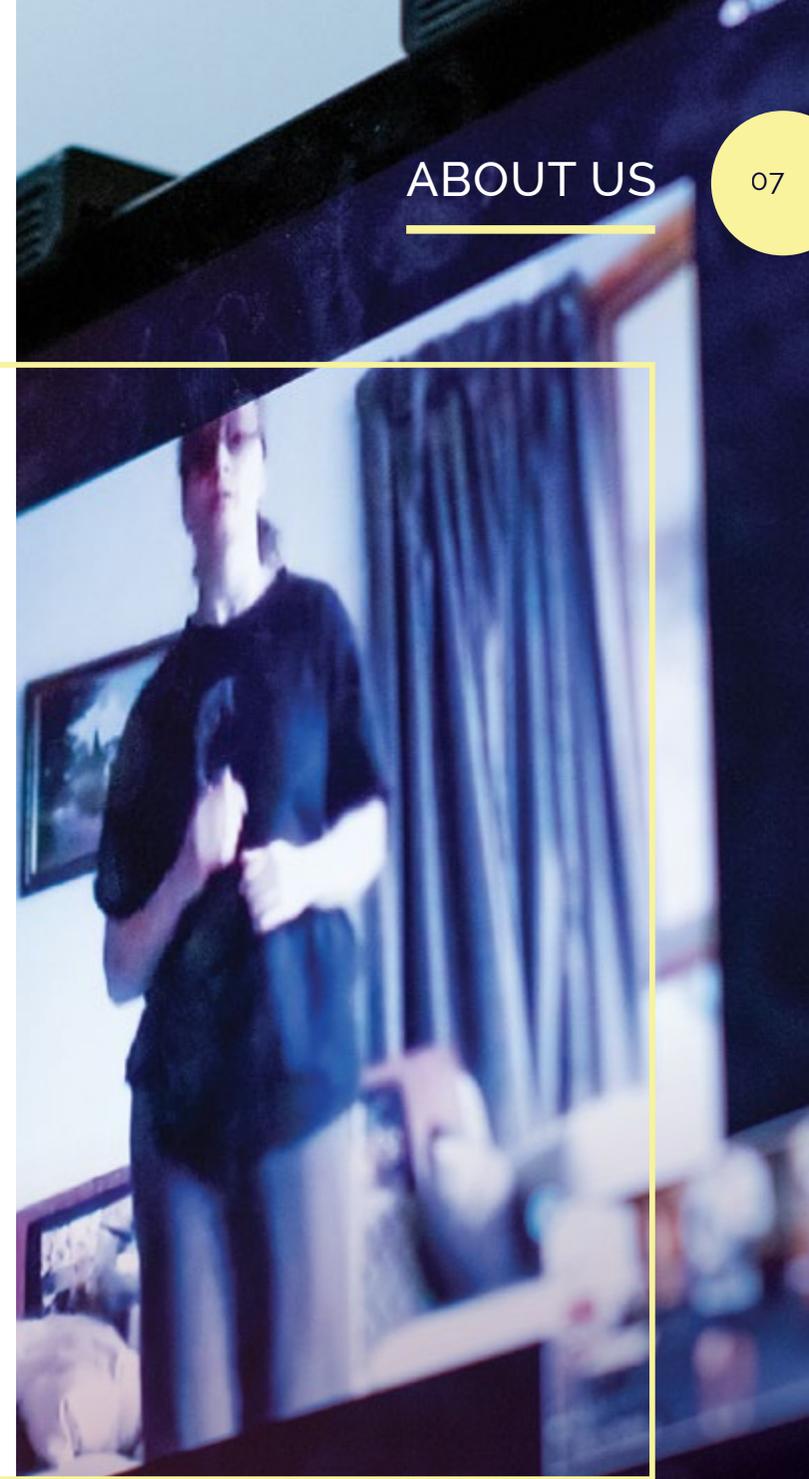
OUR VISION

IMAGINING & ACHIEVING BETTER LIVES



OUR MISSION

INSPIRING, SUPPORTING & EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO HAVE GREAT LIVES



OUR PEOPLE

Araluen's volunteer Board and Committee members generously contribute invaluable expertise, passion and experience in their leadership roles.

BOARD MEMBERS

Bruce Martyn

Chairperson

- Executive (Chair)
- IT (Chair)
- Quality & Accreditation
- Finance
- Development

Linda Peterson

Deputy Chair

- Executive
- Development

Trevor Norman

Treasurer & Company Secretary

- Executive
- Finance (Chair)

Ian McMenamin

- Executive
- Development (Chair)
- Finance

Julie Watson

- Quality & Accreditation (Chair)

Liz Mildenhall

- Housing Network (Chair)

Jim Pasinis

- Development

Andrew Newland

(Board member from June 2020)

- Development

Alison Allen

(Resigned January 2020)

- Families & Carers Network (Chair)

Larissa Roeske

(from July 2020)

- Quality & Accreditation



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tamara Cattach

- Quality & Accreditation
- Development
- Finance
- Family & Carers Network
- Housing Network

Dan Gleeson

- IT
- Finance
- Development

Ross Coverdale

- Development
- Finance
- Family & Carers Network
- Housing Network

Helen Ryan

- Family & Carers Network
- Finance

Josh Brouwer

- IT
- Quality & Accreditation

Penny Kendall

- Housing Network

Peter Mildenhall

- Development

Edda Lyons

- Finance

Jenny Tomlin

- Housing Network

Julie Morgan

- Finance

Jade McEwan

- Quality & Accreditation

Alison Elliott

- Quality & Accreditation

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The outbreak of Covid-19 and the declaration of a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11 March 2020 has significantly affected the way Araluen delivers services. To reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission and comply with State Government restrictions, Araluen has replaced face-to-face group support with online and community-based supports.

Araluen qualified for and received financial relief in the form of various Government grants to lessen the operational impact of the pandemic, including \$1,563,000 from the Jobkeeper Scheme.

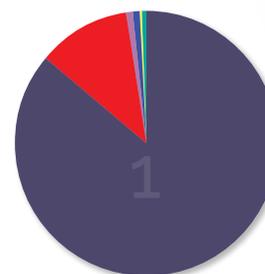
A net surplus of \$4,014 was recorded for the year ended 30th June 2020 (prior year loss \$114,986).

FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash and Financial Assets have increased by 22% compared to prior year. This is attributable to the receipt of various Government grants that have allowed us to continue operations.

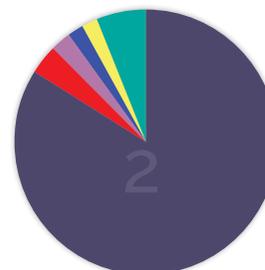
Trade and Other Receivables decreased by 23% with reduced billings due to the curtailing of operations in the last quarter of the financial year.

OUR FINANCES



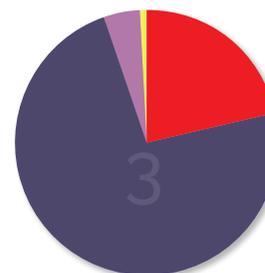
1/ Income 2019-20

Participant Fees	\$11,664,000
Jobkeeper Grant	\$1,563,000
Café Sales	\$107,000
Other Gov't Subsidies	\$100,000
Interest Received	\$41,000
Other	\$61,000



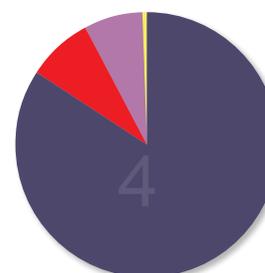
2/ Expenditure 2019-2020

Employee Benefit Expense	\$11,359,000
Depreciation	\$489,000
Client Services Expense	\$357,000
Transportation Expenses	\$268,000
Maintenance & Repairs	\$252,000
Other	\$807,000



3/ Assets as at 30 June 2020

Cash & Financial Assets	\$4,312,000
Non-Current Assets	\$14,583,000
Trade & Other Receivables	\$929,000
Other Current Assets	\$112,000



4/ Liabilities and Equity as at 30 June 2020

Equity	\$16,792,000
Trade & Other Payables	\$1,596,000
Employee Provisions	\$1,482,000
Other Liabilities	\$66,000

THANK YOU

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Throughout the past year, Araluen was again fortunate to receive the time, skills, enthusiasm and care of a dedicated and diverse volunteer contingent.

Araluen's volunteers enhance the learning experience for participants by contributing their knowledge within a wide range of supports each week.

Araluen would like to thank the following individuals for the much loved and meaningful support they offer so generously.

Anna Bunn
David Bunn
Garth Fragopoulos
John Handley
Marion Oakley
Carl Prowse
Jane Shore
Staffan Thuringer
Lesley Westerman



OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

AMP Solutions
 Autistic Citizens Residential & Resources
 Banyule City Council
 The Coote family
 David Caple & Associates
 Diamond Creek Men's Shed
 Diamond Creek Netball Association
 East Ivanhoe Grocers
 East Ivanhoe & Heidelberg Community Bank
 Eltham Rural Group
 Ernst & Young
 Greensborough R.A
 Heidelberg Golf Club
 Ivanhoe Grammar School
 John & Elaine Lane
 Lower Plenty Dance Group
 Miles Real Estate
 Nillumbik Shire Council
 David Radonich
 Rotary Club of Ivanhoe
 SNAP Heidelberg
 Training Now

OUR SUPPORTERS

Able Australia
 All Saints Anglican Church Greensborough
 Amaze (Autism Victoria)
 Banyule City Council
 Banyule Community Health Service
 Banyule Nillumbik LLEN
 Banyule Nillumbik Technical School
 Bendigo Bank
 Blue Lion
 Brotherhood of St Laurence
 Bulleen Special Development School
 CarerLinks North
 Career Education Association of Victoria
 Centorino Technology
 Change Coffee
 Clay Talk Montsalvat
 Community Sector Banking
 Concord School Bundoora
 Joseph Connellan
 Department of Health and Human Services
 Diamond Creek Men's Shed
 Diamond Creek Rotary
 Diamond Creek RSL
 Diamond Creek Tram Café
 Diamond Creek Traders Association
 Diamond Valley Special Development School
 Diamond Valley Sports and Fitness Centre
 Dodgy Paper
 DPV Health

Dr Kirsten Day
 Eltham Community Market
 Eltham Rural Group
 Epping Community Services Hub
 Format Framing
 Freehills
 Freya Pitt
 Rev. David Fuller
 First Choice Gourmet Catering
 Andy Griffiths
 Hurstbridge Bowling Club
 Hurstbridge Community Hub
 Hurstbridge Football Netball Club
 Hurtsbridge Cricket Club
 Illohra Housing Projects
 Jets Studio Bundoora
 Little Projector Company
 Lloyd Plumbing
 Lower Plenty Football Club
 Melbourne Polytechnic
 Melbourne Polytechnic Work
 Education Programs - Dept Human
 Services & Education
 Dr Andrew Martel
 Prof Keith McVilly
 Mirror Image Framing
 Montsalvat
 MS Readathon
 National Disability Insurance
 Agency (NDIA)

National Disability Services
 Natures Harvest Hurstbridge
 Nexus Primary Care
 Nillumbik Living and Learning
 Nillumbik Shire Council
 North East Primary Care Partnership
 Northlink
 Dr Kerrie Punshon
 Dr Kate Rayner
 SLAM
 Dr Ian Sharrock
 State Trustees
 Stonehouse Gallery
 The Hon Anthony Carbines MLA
 The Hon Danielle Green MLA
 The Hon Vicky Ward MLA
 The Hon Kate Thwaites
 University of Melbourne
 VALID
 Victorian Artists Supplies
 Watsonia Library-Book Club
 Whittlesea Community Connections
 Whittlesea Council
 Whittlesea YMCA
 Dr Ilan Wiesel
 Universal Improvement Company (UIC)
 Working for Victoria
 Workplace Legal
 Yarra Plenty Regional Library
 Yarra Plant Group

Photography:

Peter Tarasuik
 (covers, pages 5 & 6)

Simon Pickering
 (pages 7, 8 & 10)



THANK YOU

ARALUEN

imagining and achieving better lives



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admin@araluen.org



[vimeo](#)



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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