

IMAGINING

# BETTER

Imagining  
and achieving  
better lives



ARALUEN

Community News Summer 2020

# THANK YOU

---

*Your support, patience, feedback, encouragement, help, ideas, kindness, care, dedication, imagination, endurance, creativity and cooperation has meant the world to us as we've come through a hard year together. Safely. Thank you!*



WELCOME

---



CONTENTS

---

# MOVING ON



## KEY DATES



### Day Supports Holiday

Our Day Supports will close for annual leave at midday on:

**Wednesday 23rd December 2020**

Our Day Supports are subject to a capped number of people onsite as per DHHS Guidelines. Day Supports will resume with modified supports on:

**Wednesday 27 January 2020**

# FROM TAM OUR CEO



## OUR YEAR

*The end of the year is a great time to look back and celebrate what we've achieved. We've come through a year that filled with both challenges and victories. However, the dedication, loyalty, imagination and commitment that our staff demonstrated resulted in the provision of essential support to Araluen's community in very stressful times.*

It's nearly Christmas, and we've got a lot to be grateful for. We're here, we have fantastic staff teams, and we're still providing support to the Araluen community.

2020 saw Araluen quickly modify and create supports that we delivered to participants in a COVID-safe way. We welcomed online supports, community-based individual support, in-home support and essential support for those in need. Day Services operated to the capacity allowed within Government guidelines. Our Residential, Support Coordination and Administration teams also adapted to much change with professionalism and dedication to their roles. Araluen accomplished significant achievements across the breadth of the organisation.

In July the NDIA released news of changes to the NDIS Price Guide that will dramatically affect how we can deliver some supports as of July 2021. Subsequently, we began a community-wide Service Review to help us respond to the changing landscape. We're preparing for a thriving future where we can meet participant needs and expectations within NDIS funding limits.

2020 marked a change of governance at Araluen. I thank Bruce Martyn, our outgoing Board Chair. After 15 amazing years at Araluen, Bruce has decided to resign this position. We will miss his steady and wise guidance and leadership. Bruce - your legacy will stay on for many years to come.

I welcome our new Chair, Larissa Roeske. Larissa comes to us with a wealth of experience in governance and strategic thinking (as a Board member for Royal Australian College of General Practitioners), and a GP. She has vast experience in the disability field.

It's been a tough year, but I'm proud of what we have accomplished together. Some organisations haven't been able to do what we have done. Thanks to everyone at Araluen - we'll be going into the new year with strength and a solid base on which to build further accomplishments and support people in the best ways we can. Let's celebrate that - our favourable position and the safety of everyone at Araluen is a gift that I'm grateful for.

On behalf of Araluen, I hope you all have a well-deserved break. I recognise that holiday times can be periods of anxiety and sadness for some people. Please reach out if you need to talk to someone or if you need support.

*I wish you all peace, health, happiness and prosperity - see you in 2021.*

Tam Cattach  
CEO, Araluen



Robbie is loving his new front-of-house role and meeting "friendly people"

*All aboard! An exciting community-driven project headed by Diamond Creek Rotary Club has resulted in a new cafe in Diamond Creek Reserve. Chancez participants will be "behind the wheel", operating the cafe in a converted W Class tram three days a week.*

The popular new Diamond Creek Tram Car Cafe is located amidst many sporting and leisure facilities, including the Diamond Creek Regional Playspace. Members of the Diamond Creek Rotary Tram Project, volunteers and many sponsors and supporters have spent almost two years restoring the tram to its former glory.

The cafe is run at different times by Rotary Volunteers, local community groups and staff Baristas with any profits being returned to the groups involved. Chancez participants now have the opportunity to learn hospitality skills and gain experience in the heart of the DC community.

## ARALUEN AT DC ROTARY TRAM CAR

Araluen will run the cafe between **Tuesdays and Thursdays from the 19th January 2021**. The cafe will be closed over the Christmas/New Year period.

Note: outdoor seating and no cash payments for now.



LEARN MORE ON OUR WEBSITE

## FROM HELEN



*In 2020, we reimagined supports in our Day Services. Our staff quickly adapted to pandemic restrictions to develop 15 new Virtual Support subjects ranging from cooking, education, fitness, art, Auslan and much more. We supported people on a one-to-one basis in the community and in their homes. Araluen has delivered over 16,500 hours of COVID-safe support since April 2020. Here are some examples.*

- Helen Ryan - General Manager Community Participation



## CASE STUDIES

### 1 S.T.E.M learning at Araluen Lower Plenty

Josh Wood and Brendan Slee have shown a keen interest in creating 3D cardboard models while accessing modified Day Supports this year.

The pair worked on individual construction projects inspired by their personal interests and popular culture, designing and building a range of increasingly complex cardboard structures. Each project has taken between 5 and 10 sessions to complete.

Some creations include a "Caterpillar" excavator that can swivel and arm raise, The "Queen Anne's Revenge" Pirate Ship from the film, "Pirates of the Caribbean", a scale model of "The Simpson's" house and the motorcycle from "The Terminator".



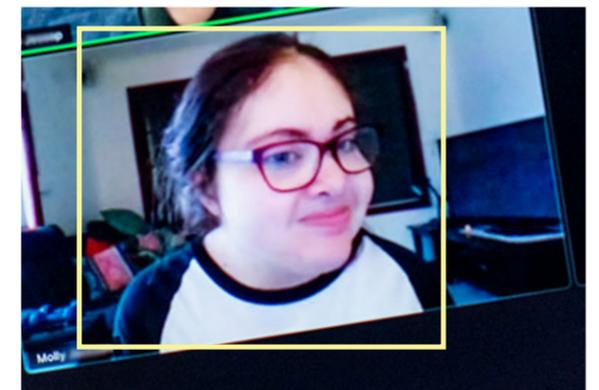
### 2 Molly - Virtual Supports

*Hi, I'm Molly. I'm still a bit worried about COVID-19. I miss going to Primed and learning in Chancez Cafes. Having new supports has really helped me. Some weeks I do 7 or 8 sessions online. I do Education, Well-being and Friendship Club. I love going for walk in my local area with Heidi and I get to come to Araluen one day a week. I enjoy everything.*

*I like my supports because:*

- they are entertaining
- I get to see my friends
- I get to see Araluen staff
- they keep me busy
- I learn things
- I don't worry so much

*I'm really missing everyone at Araluen and can't wait to come back more.*



# OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY LIVING



## FROM PENNY



*COVID-19 has brought many challenges to our communities, especially the vulnerable people we support in our group homes and through the provision of Supported Independent Living (SIL) Services. I'd like to thank all Residential staff for their continued high-quality support throughout the pandemic. This has ensured that 'home' for residents has remained the safe, comfortable, personalised haven it should be.*

Residential staff have continued their work day in, day out, with residents ensuring they remain safe, secure, occupied and calm in their home. Much care went into keeping people connected with loved ones as much as possible when lockdown meant everyone had to stay apart.

Staff have been wearing a mask for the entirety of their shift and quickly adapted to many safety protocols. They continue to be diligent in sharing the additional cleaning duties several times a day and ensuring the highest levels of hygiene practices are maintained. The camaraderie and spirit shown while meeting residents needs, by all staff are to be commended and celebrated.

Staff have been wearing a mask for the entirety

- Penny Kendall - General Manager Options for Community Living



## SOUGHT AFTER FOR SIL

Araluen is now providing Supported Independent Living (SIL) services for a household of five people who share a group home in Epping. Family members representing these residents approached Araluen at the end of 2019 due to dissatisfaction with the existing SIL arrangements – fortunately, the NDIS affords people the flexibility to seek better options elsewhere.

planning, the transfer of services was completed in October to the satisfaction of everyone concerned and the NDIA.

After ten months getting to know and understand the residents and a considerable amount of

I'm also pleased that nine house staff were employed by Araluen to provide continuity of support for the residents. Welcome aboard! Chris Reay will act as Practice Leader at the home for four months to ensure stability and positive leadership to the team.

Our OFCL team followed this successful transfer up by accepting provision of SIL services for three independent living units in Pascoe Vale. OFCL submitted a proposal to provide SIL support and the decision for Araluen to be the preferred provider was unanimous amongst the selection panel.

A big thankyou to Sharen and the OFCL team for their hard work in making these a complex transitions of service smooth and positive.



## OFCL SUPPORT COORDINATION- THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



# ART CONNECTS

*Like all services, Art Connects was greatly affected by COVID-19. Planned exhibitions had to be cancelled and rescheduled, while art making moved online through virtual art sessions.*

Before the pandemic took hold, we were fortunate to have an important exhibition installed at Manningham Gallery. The exhibition, 'See me' was only open for a few days but showcased the work of Tony Allan, Brady Freeman, Jason Horton, Melissa Kent, Tim McCall, Kate Steart and Shane Williams. Featuring a selection of paintings, drawings, mixed-media and ceramic works alongside photographic portraits of the artists by Peter Tarasiuk, the exhibition asked viewers to really 'see' the identity and story of the person behind the artwork.

When COVID hit, art services moved online, forging a new way forward and offering people an opportunity to stay engaged with their art practice. Over the course of the year the art team delivered over 200 hours of ZOOM sessions to numerous participants. It was challenging and new, but together creativity flourished.

To celebrate International Day of People with a Disability, Art Connects coordinated a partnership with artist James Barden, Araluen and the Pat Cronin Foundation to release a limited-edition t-shirt featuring original artwork created by James as a personal tribute to a tragically lost friend. The project also raised greater awareness for two important causes - the dangers of the 'coward punch' and the value of inclusion and acceptance of people with disability.

Throughout the year 'Art Connects' continued to sell work from our stockroom. Most recently, Federal Member for Jagajaga, Kate Thwaites, purchased a suite of artwork to display in her new offices in Heidelberg.

**Jonathan Crowther**  
Coordinator, Art Connects



VIEW OUR ART CONNECTS  
ONLINE GALLERY



"Tribal Lines" by Jason Horton





## FROM BELINDA



*What a year it has been for Araluen's 200+ workforce. As staff across the organisation continue to work differently to fulfil the requirements of their roles and support our participants, new needs within our workforce response continue to emerge.*

The priority of our People & Culture team became keeping people connected to Araluen. Providing training so staff can maintain a safe environment and preserve their physical and mental well-being was also crucial.

There have been great advances in Araluen's approach to Workforce Culture and communication. We engaged differently with our scattered workforce by introducing new mechanisms to check on everyone's well-being. It was also vital to ensure that staff had the means to share their valuable knowledge about how operational changes important to our COVID-19 response should occur.

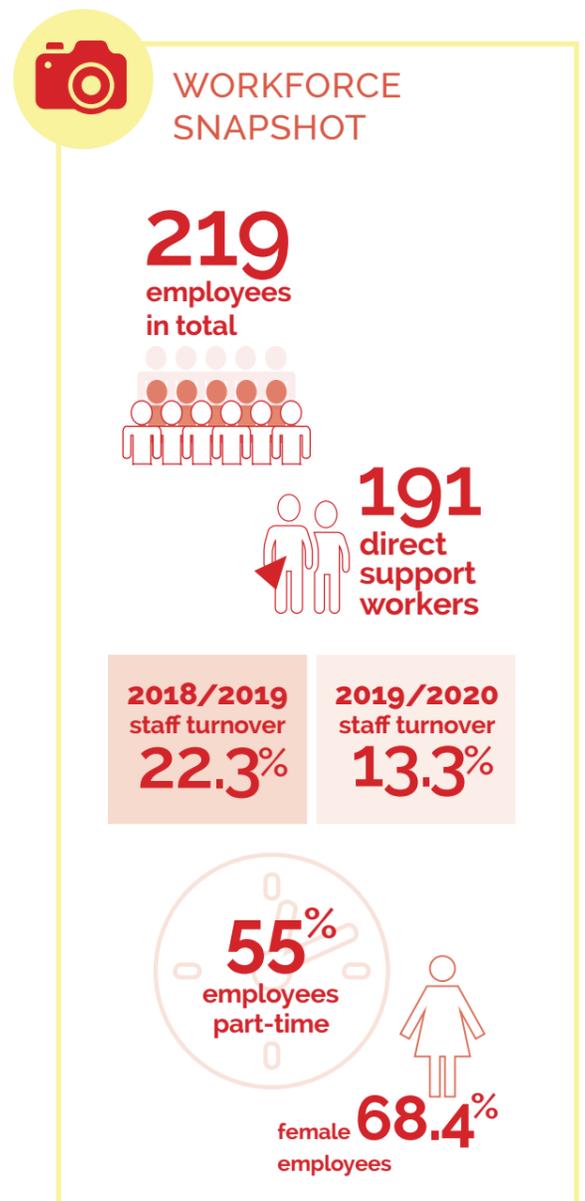
In striving to become an Employer of Choice, we have partially implemented our 'Belong, Thrive and Shine' Employee Value Proposition framework. This program will create a stronger culture of belonging, trust and loyalty throughout the organisation and across different tiers of authority.

We have seen the delivery of an increased amount of targeted training this year, much of it delivered via online platforms. While some of this was driven by the need to adapt to pandemic conditions, such as correct use of PPE, staff and management from across the organisation benefitted from role-relevant learning. Focus areas included improving knowledge and skills that will lead to better support for participants, OH&S and management modules and improved workplace interaction skills.

Araluen's staff from all areas of the organisation continued to work with commitment throughout the year, wherever they were and whatever their role, no matter how hard things got. This is a credit to everyone. I'd like to send a specific message of thanks to my P&C team for working through many challenging situations and getting everything needed to support our workforce delivered to a high standard.

Thank you!

**Belinda Papa**  
General Manager People and Culture



## SENIOR LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

Twelve months ago, Araluen introduced changes to the top tiers of management to better align the skills and experience of our senior leaders with the objectives of our Strategic Direction 2019 - 2022. Araluen's Board has recently confirmed the following appointments. We congratulate:

**Tamara Cattach** has been appointed for a further fixed term of 14 months as Chief Executive Officer

**Helen Ryan** has been appointed General Manager – Community Participation on a permanent basis

**Joshua Brouwer** has been appointed General Manager – Quality & Service Development on a permanent basis

## PEOPLE & CULTURE

# RECOGNISING COMMITMENT LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2020



*The Araluen community benefits from our skilled and experienced workforce and we are proud of them. In a year when the efforts of every staff member made a positive difference, we recognise the following people for reaching these significant milestones. Congratulations and thank you for your service to Araluen.*

### David Aerlic - 20 years

David has worked for 20 years in Araluen's Residential Services, 18 of those years at Carwarp. He's a committed and compassionate support worker always ensuring a positive and proactive relationship with residents and their families. His focus is always on what is the best outcome for each and every person and achieving it.

### Allison Scott - 20 years

Ali is known by all participants, her focus and work ethic epitomises Araluen's values. She is a genuine person who is very creative in how she supports people.

### Trudy Frost - 20 years

Effervescent and always positive, Trudi has worked across many areas at Araluen. She is flexible and very versatile and leaves everyone smiling.

### Wayne Jessop - 10 years

Wayne is an exceptional staff member who always gives 110%. His work is outstanding as is his commitment to providing quality services to each and every participant he supports.

### Kate Scanlan - 15 years

Kate always arrives with a smile. Kate has worked over a variety of settings within Araluen, from Rosanna and Lower Plenty sites to residences and has endeared herself to participants and staff.

### Andrew Maes - 15 years

Andrew has an acute talent radar and can spot a future artist before the person knows they are one. He's guided and encouraged many participants to reach their artistic potential, from our studios into mainstream art galleries. He's passionate and dedicated to keeping participants connected to art.

### Pamela Young - 10 years

It's been a busy 10 years for Pam. Pam started at Hurstbridge as a Bus Driver, has worked at different Day sites and is currently an important member of the Chancez Café team. Pam has a passion and talent for supporting participants to gain equality in employment. She is respectful, dedicated and loyal.

### Penelope Gunn - 10 years

Penny is a highly regarded staff member who has worked in at both Hurstbridge & Diamond Creek Day Supports and as an Araluen driver. Penny is always bright and bubbly, exudes enthusiasm, and is much loved by the participants she supports.



# TELL US WHAT YOU WANT

CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE  
OUR PARTICIPANT AND CARER  
SURVEY SO WE CAN SUPPORT  
YOU BETTER IN THE FUTURE



## PARTNERSHIPS & INNOVATION

### FROM ROSS



*It was Winston Churchill who said "never waste a crisis". Certainly 2020 has been a crisis that we'll be telling our grandchildren about.*

COVID initially closed down many of the supports that Araluen would usually provide but it is a new and tougher NDIS Price Guide that is going to impact how and what supports we provide in 2021.

The impending changes will come into effect in mid-2021. These changes have instigated a Service Review. We've spent the past few months reviewing what we currently offer and investigating new options to enhance people's lives that we could deliver within the NDIS Price Guide. Participants, families, carers and staff are asked to inform us about the services and supports they'd like and need in the future. We will continue this process of broad consultation. **If you have not completed our online Service Planning Survey, you still can by clicking the link above or phoning our Support and Information Line on (03) 9438 2944.**

The good news is that we are not short of options.

We have been able to recruit a diverse team of seven people on six-month contracts through State Government "Working for Victoria" funding to research, consult and document a range of possibilities to be considered.

This team are now at an advanced stage and will be delivering their findings to Araluen's leadership early in the new year. Some things are clear. Araluen will need to adapt and innovate to remain financially viable and deliver quality supports that people want and need. We will continue to keep you informed of our progress with our Service Plan.

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



## FROM DAN OUR COO

*At Araluen this year we have tried many things in Communications, Finance, Property and ICT and I reckon have made great advances in all.*

Dan Gleeson  
Chief Operating Officer



### COMMUNICATIONS

This year we created our first on line/digital Annual Report with video presentations from Bruce, Tam and Trevor. The Annual Report also highlighted how valued our COVID-19 communications were by participants and staff. Communications Manager, Lara Hynes, will further work on how we improve digital communications early in 2021.



### FINANCE

As COVID-19 kept people at home, Araluen's finances, like most of the economy, took a massive blow. A great effort by the Finance Team led, by Julie Morgan, provided Araluen with the information we needed to understand the pandemic's impact and manage our way through it. We have also worked hard to more clearly understand the cost of providing our business which will allow us to make sound financial decisions in the future.



### ICT

Araluen will end 2020 with an almost complete rebuild of its ICT systems infrastructure. Supported by a Board investment to get ICT right, expertise and resources from our new ICT provider CT and great patience and enthusiasm of our staff, we hope to have finally broken the back of underperforming ICT. With a new Client Management System on the way mid-year, 2021 should deliver fast modern and reliable ICT to all Araluen staff.



### PROPERTY

Work on a long term Property Strategy began in 2020 and will provide important information for the Service Review and how we can make our strong balance sheet work to imagine better supports in the future.



## QUALITY SUPPORTS & SERVICES

*The Quality Team have been busy working with our frontline staff, Managers and senior leaders to successfully gain certification against the NDIS Practice Standards.*

The Practice Standards ensure that high quality support is provided to participants, and that organisations have the infrastructure and systems to deliver safe, sustainable services.

Simultaneously, the Quality Team have been busy revising the 'way things are done' at Araluen, from the systems and processes we use to achieve our tasks and goals, to the way we support participants. This work, done in collaboration with the people performing the tasks explored, has yielded a raft of improvement projects. The team have been able to create contemporary, innovative solutions based on the lived experience of participants and the staff who support them.

Empowering colleagues with knowledge to create cultures of improvement, safety and person-centred supports has been another important pursuit the Quality Team have leaned into over the past 12 months. Specifically, knowledge about preventing and responding to abuse and neglect and positive behaviour support have been major focus areas.

This approach, along with ensuring Occupational Health and Safety is strengthened across all service areas through consistent inspections and a comprehensive Emergency Safety Management Audit, have put Araluen in good stead leading into 2021.

Whilst the last 12 months have been extremely busy, the next 12 months are likely to be more so as we continue to push ourselves and Araluen to greater heights of innovation and creativity, all of which will be focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for the people we support.

Josh Brouwer - General Manager Quality and Service Development



## FROM JOSH

# LEADERSHIP



## FAREWELL BRUCE



Bruce & Adam as portrayed by Kylie Gentle

*Bruce Martyn has been on Araluen's Board for since 2006, serving as our Chair for the past nine years. It is with a heavy heart that we announce that Bruce has resigned from our Board.*

Bruce has shared his knowledge and experience in so many ways throughout his time at Araluen and we are thankful for his wise, compassionate and steady leadership.

While no longer taking a permanent role, Bruce has offered his services from time to time - we do intend to accept this offer! We wish Bruce all the best for his future travels.

## WELCOME LARISSA



*Bruce will be succeeded as Board Chair by Larissa Roeske. Welcome!*

Larissa has been a General Practitioner for over 20 years. She is also a current Board Director of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and a long-standing member of the Burwood East Special Developmental School Council and its Vice-President.

Advisory and representative roles include state and commonwealth committees, senate inquiries, steering committees and expert groups on issues relating to the health of Australians, and General Practice.

Larissa has three children, and care for Nicholas, her eldest son living with severe ID. This journey continues to challenge and inspire, and informs Larissa's passion and commitment to Araluen's vision and purpose - to imagine and support great lives for people living with disability.

## Araluen AGM & Annual Report

Our COVID-safe AGM was held online on 24th November via ZOOM. Members voted for the following appointments to Araluen's Board.

- Larissa Roeske Elected to Board as Chair
- Andrew Newland Elected to Board
- Linda Peterson Vice Chair. Re-elected to Board
- Ian McMenamin Re-elected to Board

# 2020



VIEW OUR  
ANNUAL REPORT



# Peace, Health, Happiness Prosperity in 2021



(03) 9439 2805



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



[admin@araluen.org](mailto: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

A R A L U E N

Imagining and achieving better lives