

ROSS HOUSE
ASSOCIATION



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Annual Report 2010–2011

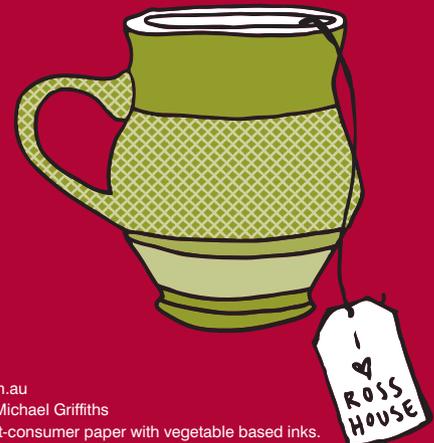


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Chairperson's Report

“Ross House is a place where ordinary people are doing extraordinary things.”

These words clearly define the community of members, tenants, and occasional users, of the heritage building which is Ross House. The work of the Ross House Association Committee, of which I am proud to be the Chairperson, is made easier because of this fact and because everyone works together in our unique community to help each other.

On Tuesday 17 May 2011, I was very pleased to welcome many past and present members, tenants and friends of Ross House to a ceremony to celebrate the fact that after years of working towards developing Ross House into a community managed and owned building, the Ross House Association had become the sole trustee of this magnificent place. At the conclusion of the ceremony I was able to hand the Trust Deed and Certificate of Title of Land to our Community Manager, Sarah Day, for safe keeping. This was a particularly auspicious occasion, not only because with this ownership, Ross House became the only community owned and managed building in Australia, but because so many of our members had contributed to the process which culminated in this significant event.

Some individuals who have given freely of their time over the past twenty-five years to make Ross House the establishment it is today, and without whom we would not have reached this milestone, include, but are not limited to: Hayden Raysmith, Jenny Florence, Sue Healy, Maria Grigg (formerly Bennett), Yoland Wadsworth, Katy Kyne, Geoff Musgrove and Kien Nguyen. I would like to take this opportunity to honour their contributions and to state that without their selfless assistance, Ross House would not be the vibrant community it is today. I would also like to thank most sincerely the team at Maddocks who have assisted us pro bono over the previous years with all of the legal processes behind our successful application for ownership in the Supreme Court of Victoria.

During the previous twelve months, the Committee has been looking closely at governance, policies and procedures. As well, due to our new role as trustee of the building, we have established a more comprehensive three-year strategic plan along with its interrelated business plan and budget documents. We have also undertaken a tenancy review and established some protocols to underpin grant applications. All in all, a very solid year of work for all concerned.

These aforementioned endeavours were supported by the staff of Ross House, so capably led by Sarah Day, who continue to give freely of their time, over and above the roles and responsibilities set down within their position descriptions. I would like to thank them most sincerely for their input throughout the previous twelve months. I would also like to genuinely thank the current Committee and sub-committee members, as well as our many volunteers, who have continued to give freely of their time in order to help make the Ross House community come alive once more. Everyone's support and involvement is much appreciated.

The Ross House Association focus is on building respectful relationships with all members, tenants and casual users of our resources. Going forward, we need to continue to build our capability with successful grant applications and to draw donations for our heritage building appeal so that we can maintain and further restore Ross House to its former glory. Overall, together, we need to continue to improve our collective sense of community and ensure that each and every workspace within the building reflects this. I look forward to watching this amazing project, which is Ross House, continue well into the future.

I urge you all to continue to support the work of the Ross House Association. It is important that we remain strong and work together in our exceptional community for the benefit of each other and those to come in the future. 🌱

Rosemary Boyd, Chairperson

Community Manager's Report

It feels like Melbourne has come alive recently with so many people hitting the streets, standing up and speaking out. We've seen rallies for action on climate change, an end to live exports and logging of old growth forests, a national disability insurance scheme, equal marriage rights, equal pay, and an end to the deplorable treatment of refugees.

As a vital part of the social change community, Ross House has been going all out to support the groups behind environmental and social justice campaigns; the building is bursting with life and activity.

And what a way to mark the year, with the transfer of ownership of the Ross House building to the Ross House community. This momentous achievement—the manifestation of a twenty five year endeavour— means that groups representing some of the communities most marginalised voices are now in complete control of a five storey heritage building right in the heart of the action.

With acute awareness of the responsibility that comes with ownership, this year saw a focus on planning for the future. Thanks to the financial assistance of the R.E. Ross Trust and Arup, we now have an Environmental Management Plan to ensure the building's infrastructure is upgraded in a way that reduces our environmental impact. A grant from the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund helped us to secure a Conservation Management Plan that will allow us to apply for major funding for much needed heritage works to the building.

Not that all this looking ahead slowed down our immediate ambitions to help catalyse much needed social change. Highlights this year included: the upgrade of our website to make it a stronger tool for promoting members' activities; the launch of a regular e-bulletin packed with community activities; computer and furniture donations to our tenants through local businesses and the ongoing generosity of the Myer Foundation; free Auslan classes; a host of environmental initiatives (see Greening Ross House on p6 for details); and to top it all off, lunchtime yoga by donation.

To spread the word in the wider community, this year saw Ross House posters plastered around Melbourne thanks to Plakkit, a post card featured at the Sustainable Living Festival, interviews on Triple R and ABC Radio National, Karen Young's short documentary about us on YouTube, a 1200 Buildings Program promotional video, stalls at community markets and our inclusion in the 2011 People and Planet diary.

Thanks to sound financial management, we were especially happy to be able to take on the Development Officer position that drives fundraising and promotion, in our own stead (originally funded by the Sidney Myer Fund). In addition to this, we were able to dedicate increased resources to much needed works to the building and still maintain a comfortable surplus. Increased retained earnings lifted our equity, and with the transfer of ownership of the building to the Association, total equity shot up from \$497,000 to over \$11 million.

I feel very lucky to work in Ross House surrounded by so many passionate people, and especially in the RHA office itself. The atmosphere I'm trying to describe includes images of staff rolling in with their bikes in the morning, enthusing about a tenant's latest benefit gig they've attended, the community group they've just met who've agreed to hold workshops, or the latest green tips they've heard that will help us work sustainably. And that's Monday morning! This enthusiasm translates into outspoken advocacy on behalf of our members and tenants, a vibrant calendar of community events, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

I would like to thank the Committee for steering us through another jam packed year and for the many extra hours dedicated during the transfer of ownership. I would especially like to thank our Chairperson, Rosemary Boyd for the countless hours spent throughout this process in addition to the steadfast guidance she provides; Esther Harris our Vice Chairperson for her unequalled diplomacy; and Cameron Neil our Finance subcommittee convenor for his insight and support. 🌱

Sarah Day, Community Manager

On Tuesday 17 May 2011, members, tenants, volunteers, advocates, staff, Committee members and donors past and present celebrated the transfer of ownership of the heritage Ross House building from ANZ Trustees to the Ross House Association.



About Ross House

Throughout the years, independent community and advocacy groups have often found it hard to survive and thrive on their own without access to vital resources such as affordable rental space and reliable office equipment. In order to address this issue, a seminar for self help groups was held in 1980, which led to the formation of the Collective of Self Help Groups.

This seminar drew attention to the need for shared physical resources and secure, reasonably priced accommodation for small groups. Around the same time, the R. E. Ross Trust approached the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) with a major donation for a project to assist small community organisations and the Victorian Community Foundation (VCF) was set up as a vehicle for these funds. These two ideas were brought together to form the Ross House project; to purchase a building to provide the resources needed by these groups.

What followed was a lengthy process to find a suitable building and determine how it would operate. This led to a great deal of consultation, anger, angst and joy for the various parties and individuals involved, but in April 1985, the historic Royston House in Flinders Lane was purchased and renamed Ross House. After extensive renovations (funded by the State Government, grants from philanthropic trusts and corporate donations), the building was opened in 1987 and immediately began serving the needs of a multitude of community organisations.

Initially Ross House was managed by the ANZ Trustees (who also owned the building through the VCF). But once fully established, the Ross House Association took over this responsibility, first in partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence (who were the building's Head Tenant), then in its own right. Now, as the Association continues to grow and mature, it is in the final stages of preparing for building ownership—a move which will place it on good stead for ensuring a viable future for the many groups who call Ross House home.

The building has housed more than 300 groups since 1987. We currently have approximately 50 tenant groups, and approximately 25 non-tenant members, ranging from one or two person, all volunteer operations, to those with numerous paid staff and thousands of members. These include self help groups, advocacy organisations, environment and conservation groups, cultural associations, umbrella groups and many others working for social change.

Ross House provides much more than accommodation. The Association and its members are joined through a shared commitment to social justice and working towards an environmentally sustainable society. The Ross House Association exists to support independent organisations by providing a place for diverse groups to grow, connect and work together. Together, we strive to build a better future for the community. 🌱



Greening Ross House

In 2009 Ross House signed up to the City of Melbourne's 1200 Buildings Program and officially committed to reducing our environmental impact. This year, thanks to Arup and a generous grant from the R.E. Ross Trust, we now have a comprehensive Environmental Management Plan. This plan provides the blue print for us to develop Ross House into a sustainable building.

Changes to the building's infrastructure, including upgrading our heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system as well as lighting, are just one part of a bigger picture. Reducing our impact will involve every member, tenant and staff member of Ross House. We gained momentum this year with the following initiatives:

- RHA signed the Ethical Paper Pledge, joining more than 800 organisations in refusing to use Australian copy paper made from woodchips sourced from our native forests.
- RHA formerly adopted a Procurement Policy committing to the purchase of: only 100% post-consumer recycled paper; rechargeable batteries; bio-degradable chemical free cleaning products; energy rated equipment; printing services that use 100% post-consumer recycled copy paper and vegetable based inks; and Fair Trade and/or certified organic tea and coffee.
- RHA ceased mailing out high volume documents (such as invoices and Committee reports), switching to e-mail unless otherwise requested.

- To celebrate World Environment Day on Sunday 6 June, one week's income from facilities bookings was dedicated to making the building more sustainable.
- Throughout the year, the Ross House Bulletin provided members and tenants with environmental news and events and a multitude of information on sustainable work practices and ethical consumer choices.
- Ross House became a pick up point for the CERES Fair Food program, with organic fruit and veggies delivered weekly to the building.
- Ross House worked with the City of Melbourne to investigate the viability of composting waste on the premises and providing this service to surrounding businesses.
- As part of ownership celebrations, RHA gave away 150 River Bottlebrush seedlings indigenous to Melbourne for people to plant in their gardens to create habitat for local wildlife.
- RHA promoted the environmental campaigns of members and tenants within the building and through Melbourne's environmental and social justice networks.

In the coming year, we look forward to creating a formal sustainable work practices program with tenants and working together to create a place that truly represents our community: one that is committed to preserving our environment, not only in our work and our ethos, but in our everyday actions.

In 2010 the tenants of Ross House took part in an environmental survey. We rated pretty well but there is some room for improvement!

- > 50% of us use recycled paper
- > 77% of us use public transport to get to work;
8% walk or ride

- > 100% of us recycle at work
- > 84% of us get food or drink in a disposable
takeaway container, 1 to 5 times a week

Ownership

On Tuesday 17 May 2011, Ross House members, tenants, volunteers, advocates, staff, Committee members and donors past and present celebrated the transfer of ownership of the heritage Ross House building from ANZ Trustees to the Ross House Association.

This special day—25 years in the making—was celebrated with a Welcome to Country and sacred smoke ceremony performed by Uncle Ringo from the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council; and words from three important people who are a part of the Ross House story: Rosemary Boyd, our Chairperson; Hayden Raysmith AM, a founding member and lifelong supporter; and Natalie Durkovic who is part of Disability Discrimination Legal Service, a tenant of Ross House.

Hayden Raysmith AM

“Ringo’s welcome to country is a poignant reminder of the importance of Ross House. Though Ross House’s history is more recent it is the connection to place, to community and to our past that gives us meaning. Ross House is a symbol of shared aspirations, of struggle for recognition and shaping the future. Aboriginal culture has taught us to respect the narrative and make our story part of a larger, more inclusive view of what we do.”

Natalie Durkovic

“I came to Ross House over three years ago to find help for my son Lewis, who has Autism. Lewis was 14 years old at the time with no real access to education. With assistance from the Disability Discrimination Legal Service, he was able to successfully complete his VCE and is now a confident university student.”

“Lewis is now volunteering with two tenants at Ross House, Brain Injury Matters and Lotus, which is supporting him to become familiar with the working world... Thank you Ross House for being a sanctuary for my son and many others.”

Rosemary Boyd

“Each and every one of you in this room has contributed in some way to the process that has culminated in this ownership launch, an event which signifies the fact that we are unique. Ross House effectively becomes the only community owned and managed building in Australia and I would like to thank you very much for the part you have played in our history. We would not be here without you.

“To commemorate this special occasion, we ask that you take away one of the River Bottlebrush pots and plant it in your own garden. We hope that as these small trees flourish and begin to grow in many different neighbourhoods, with their new owners, so will Ross House continue to flourish and grow and that our community will be recognised for its uniqueness far and wide.”



RHA Committee Member and long-time volunteer Sue Healy and RHA Chairperson Rosemary Boyd sign the Deed of Trust.

Molly Hadfield taking part in the sacred smoke ceremony with Uncle Ringo from the Wurundjeri Tribe Land & Compensation Cultural Heritage Council during the Ross House ownership launch.



Ross House staff member Nikki-Fay Baxter dishing out the mulled wine to Jessica Zammit from Blind Citizens Australia at the Ross House mid year lunch.



Ross House Association Committee and Staff 2010–2011

RHA Committee

Chairperson

Rosemary Boyd, Retina Australia (Vic)

Vice Chairperson

Esther Harris, Star

Treasurer

Cameron Neil, Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand (until January)

Ordinary Members

Valerie Elliott, Handknitters Guild

Ramesh Fernandez, RISE

De Grebner, Tree Project

Alex Rowsell, Reinforce

Sue Smith, AMIDA SARU

Jenny Stewart, Union of Australian Women

Appointed Members

Richard Foster

Peter Green

Sue Healy

Cameron Neil (from February)

Yoland Wadsworth

Staff Representative

Stéph Donse (until February)

Nikki-Fay Baxter (from March)

Sarah Day (ex-officio)

Staff

Nikki-Fay Baxter

Information Resources and Administration Officer (from March)

Sarah Day

Community Manager

Stéph Donse

Development Officer

Natalie Durkovic

Information Resources and Administration Officer (until February)

Kristin Godby

Information Resources and Administration Officer (from August)

Nick Bradley

Building and Facilities Officer (until July)

Michael Griffiths

Building Facilities and Sustainability Officer (from December)

Anna Leyden

Information Resources and Administration Officer (until November)

Ani Loriente

Finance Officer

Nathalie Michel

Membership and Tenancy Officer

Casual Information Resources and Administration Officers

Nawal Ali

Luis De Quadros Soares

France Pitt

Miaomiao Xing (Kristen)

Members' Stories

TreeProject

TreeProject is a not for profit community organisation dedicated to providing opportunities for the community to participate in projects to revegetate the Victorian landscape with indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses. TreeProject has been a tenant in Ross House since the organisation's conception in 1989.

TreeProject focuses on building community capacity by recruiting and training volunteers in towns and cities to grow and plant native seedlings for rural Victorian landholders.

TreeProject has a large and geographically diverse membership; participation is available to all landholders and Landcare groups across Victoria and urban dwellers who want to assist with regeneration projects. Volunteers include school children, youth clubs, families, churches, business people, retirees and people in aged care facilities. Strong community links are forged through the interaction between volunteer growers, planters and rural landholders.

Due to the commitment of TreeProject's volunteers many landholders who would not otherwise be able to revegetate their properties are able to do so because of the low cost of the seedlings.

TreeProject is entering a new, dynamic and challenging growth phase with the development of an Indigenous Seedling Propagation interactive web site which will diminish

geographical restrictions that may inhibit individuals accessing information and support in growing indigenous seedlings. Online training videos, training manual and social networking channels will make the training information immediately available to all seedling growers all the time.

The below market rate rental of office space provided by Ross House has enabled TreeProject to direct our financial resources into capacity building activities and support for our volunteer seedling growers. The CBD location and proximity to public transport has enabled people who are disabled or come from diverse areas in Melbourne to easily access our offices and has increased the number of volunteers assisting us to carry out our vital work.

Ross House provides equipment and facilities at minimal cost ensuring effective functioning for under resourced organisations and groups that are doing important social and environmental work. Ross House offers a friendly and supportive work environment, tenants are consulted and given the opportunity to be involved in issues and decisions relating to the running of the Association and the building.

It is a pleasure to be a part of this unique and dynamic collaborative environment that provides crucial support to community organisations that are working towards a just and environmentally sustainable society.

www.treeproject.asn.au

Social justice
Environment
Advocacy

Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria

The Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria is an independently funded and dynamic not for profit organisation dedicated to helping people living with spina bifida. It was founded in the mid 1990s by a group of parents, physiotherapists and doctors.

People with spina bifida have varying levels of permanent physical and/or intellectual disability. However, many are able to lead full, active and independent lives. Today, people with spina bifida are living longer and succeeding in a diverse range of areas.

The Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria provides a number of programs, services and information for members and the community. Programs include the Independent Living Skills program, Healthy Futures journals (where members can record visits to health practitioners to assist in proactive management of their condition), weekend camps such as Winter snow skiing camps and Summer family camps.

The annual Summer camps, most recently held at Phillip Island Adventure Resort, have been a great success in providing parents with a chance to share their stories and experiences of raising children with spina bifida and children and their siblings are given a chance to mingle

with those from other families. The Winter ski camp helps children develop confidence and independence and has many positive health outcomes.

Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria volunteers organise many other social events to help members to overcome isolation. These events are coordinated by the organisation's Advisory Committee which consists of people with spina bifida representing the views of the wider membership.

Information is also provided regularly to health practitioners particularly in relation to folate which has been proven to reduce the incidence of this condition.

Ross House provides an accessible and centrally-located base for the Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria. The camaraderie and support from other community groups is invaluable and, this year, we've commenced sharing office space with Disabled WinterSport Australia.

The Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria looks forward to many more years as a tenant of Ross House and to enjoying the benefits of on-site meeting rooms and other useful facilities.

www.sbfv.org.au



“The camaraderie and support from other community groups within Ross House is invaluable.”

Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria

Ablelink

Ablelink is a place for people with deafblindness to come and access adaptive communication technologies. Adapted computers and other equipment such as Braille readers, iPads, iPhones and TTY phones allow people to access the internet, email, online networks and software.

Living with both a vision and hearing impairment is isolating, particularly if you cannot find other ways to connect with people. Ablelink gives its visitors the ability to communicate with friends, shop online and access information locally, nationally and globally.

Ablelink made Ross House its home in 1998 and its many users enjoy its close proximity to public transport and central Melbourne location. During 2011 Able Australia's in-house interpreter provided Auslan (sign language) classes at Ross House so that people who work in the building could learn basic communication skills. These classes give other tenants an insight into deafblindness and teach Auslan basics so that if they encounter deaf or deafblind visitors, they can communicate more easily with them. The first two classes were received with enthusiasm and the participants really enjoyed themselves.

Ablelink is staffed two days a week by Claire Tellefson, who uses her Auslan and Braille skills along with her information technology know-how to provide one-on-one support to visitors.

Claire is also involved in researching access to telecommunications devices for the deafblind. Claire's research report, *Telecommunications and Deafblind Australians*, highlighted the many difficulties that deafblind people have to overcome to access and use technology to communicate. The findings of this report reiterate the importance of Ablelink as a place for deafblind people to come and learn how to use telecommunications devices.

www.ableaustralia.org.au

Multicultural Media Exchange

Despite the multicultural makeup of Australian society, culturally diverse communities are often represented in stereotypical ways, or very little at all in the mainstream media, leaving these communities and the wider society the poorer for it.

The Multicultural Media Exchange (MME) is about changing this disconnect through training workshops, which are conducted by the Centre for Multicultural Youth—an organisation that works with young people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

MME's training workshops are about supporting young people, who care deeply about the lack of representation or lack of visibility of their communities in the media, to tackle the issues hands on. We teach them to write stories, shoot video, record audio, as well as give interviews, manage media attention, respond to media coverage and find an audience for their point of view. After the training they can choose to be matched one-on-one with a highly experienced journalist volunteer who will support them with a specific project with the aim of getting it published in the mainstream media.

We expect that the benefits of this training and the youth reporter – journalist links will be far-reaching. They will empower young people from multicultural communities to have greater confidence and skill in expressing themselves about the issues that affect them and their communities and, at the same time, increase journalists' exposure to the rich diversity of groups among us, promoting more accurate and fair reporting.

It's our hope that the addition of diverse voices to the general mix of discussions and debates in broader society will enable young Australians from culturally varied communities to engage in the democratic processes that we all hold so dear, and also grow greater understanding, respect and tolerance for them in the general community, which will ultimately enrich us all.

We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to call Ross House home. Its central location is the ideal base for young reporters and volunteers to meet and work together on stories about multicultural Australia for use in a wide range of publications. Furthermore, Ross House's many innovative and inspiring community organisations provide a nurturing and welcoming environment that is an absolute joy to work in.

www.mme.org.au



TreeProject volunteer Liz Cole

The Self Advocacy Resource Unit

The Self Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU) is a proud member of the Ross House family. SARU is a joint project of three of Ross House based organisations AMIDA, Reinforce and Brain Injury Matters. SARU resources and supports Victorian self advocacy groups for people with an intellectual disability, people with complex communication support needs, and people with an acquired brain injury. Self advocacy groups are run by and for people with disabilities who have joined together to have their voices heard and support each other. They work together to make sure they have the same rights, choices, and opportunities as anyone else.

Self advocacy groups emerged in the 70s as a part of the broader civil rights movement. There is a strong international self advocacy movement with groups throughout the UK, Canada, the U.S, Malaysia, New Zealand and many other countries. The self advocacy movement in Australia was at its height during the 1980s, however over the past couple of decades funding cuts have led to a decline in the number of groups. The sentiment of many self advocacy groups is “nothing about us without us”. Over the years self advocates have successfully campaigned for change including closing institutions and the development of good housing options, use of accessible communication and plain English, and inclusion in government decision making.

When SARU first began in 2008 we provided services to 13 self advocacy groups. Today we are engaged with 23 groups throughout Victoria. The majority of self advocacy groups do not receive funding and are run entirely by volunteer members. It is the role of SARU to resource and assist existing self advocacy groups and to support the development of new groups. The support requested by the different groups is varied including production of resources such as DVDs, pamphlets, posters, assistance with strategic planning, governance advice, networking support, access to equipment, funding opportunities, holding forums, training and much more.

Key projects that SARU is undertaking include supporting the development of a Victorian Self Advocacy Network, a project for women self advocates around technology issues and the digital divide, and producing an accessible training package about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The package will also show how the Convention can be used as a lobbying tool by self advocacy groups. We have had success in supporting a number of self advocacy groups to meet with Arthur Rogers the Executive Director of the Disability Services Division of DHS on a regular basis to discuss issues of concern. The first of these meetings was held in May and was attended by 43 representatives from different self advocacy groups

Having an office in Ross House is ideal for SARU as the majority of members of self advocacy groups use public transport and many travel from the country. The SARU office is easy to get to and the fact that it is located in an accessible and inclusive environment is also of importance and enables us to run training sessions and forums for members of self advocacy groups with a minimum of fuss.

The SARU has built strong and important relationships with other tenants in the building and the supportive Ross House environment enriches much of our work. We also value the support and services provided by the Ross House staff. We hope to continue our association with Ross House for many more years to come and share the growth of the self advocacy movement in Victoria.

www.saru.net.au





Pearl Dalton braving the cold at the Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria children's ski camp.

Tenants, Members and Supporters 2010–2011

Tenant Members

AbleLink

Provides computer access and internet training for people with deaf blindness.

Aboriginal Literacy Foundation

Aims to improve Aboriginal literacy through tuition, research and lobbying governments.

ABRISA Brazilian Association

Promotes Brazilian culture and provides information about Australia for immigrants.

AMIDA

Action for more independence and dignity in housing for people with disabilities.

Asbestos Information and Support Service

Provides information and support services to asbestos victims and the wider community.

Assisi Aid Projects

Supports sustainable development work in southern India.

Aussie Hands Foundation

Offers information and support to children and adults with a hand difference.

Australia China Friendship Society

Fosters friendship between Australian and Chinese people.

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

Champions the rights of people with a disability in Australia.

Australian Federation of International Students

Aims to bridge the gap between international students and members of the Australian community.

Blind Citizens Australia

Achieving equity and equality through empowerment, promoting positive community attitudes and striving for high quality and accessible services which meet our needs.

Brain Injury Matters

Self advocacy for people with acquired brain injury.

Casal Catala

Promotes the customs and language of Catalonia.

Christina Noble Children's Foundation

Assisting children in need with education, medical care, social opportunities and job placement in Vietnam and Mongolia.

Collective of Self Help Groups (COSHG)

A network of self help and social action groups, made up of and controlled by people who are directly affected by a particular issue.

Community Music Victoria

Develops, facilitates and services music making among Victorian communities.

Dahl Trust

A charitable trust that supports environmental projects focused on Eucalyptus.

Darfur Australia Network

Aims to raise awareness about the continuing tragedy in Darfur, Sudan, assist in the resettlement of refugees and build solidarity between Australian people and the people of Darfur.

Disability Discrimination Legal Service

Works to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities and assists to empower them.

Disabled WinterSport Australia

Provides opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy Winter sports and to enjoy the magnificent environment that is Australia's Snowy Mountains with fellow skiers.

Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand

Raising awareness about fair trade and providing support to the participants of the fair trade labelling system.

Federation of Spanish Speaking Seniors

Offers friendship and support to members who represent twenty-one Spanish speaking countries.

Financial and Consumer Rights Council

Ensures that all people have access to fair treatment as consumers in the marketplace.

First Nations Foundation

Works collaboratively with Indigenous consumers to alleviate poverty derived from cultural, financial and economic literacy.

Handknitters Guild

Utilising the art and craft of hand knitting to promote community involvement, advocacy and self help.

Housing for the Aged Action Group

Working towards the alleviation of housing related poverty for older Australians.

Humanitarian Crisis Hub

Supports community action on war and conflict and works with community groups that carry out campaigns and other initiatives on these issues.

Indo China Ethnic Chinese Association

Assists members with advice and referral for a range of issues associated with settlement in Australia.

Industrial Deaths Support & Advocacy

Provides practical and emotional support to families who have lost a family member in a workplace incident.

LICAU-SED (Vic)

Promotes and builds a cohesive Liberian community by reducing the cultural and social isolation of its members.

Live and Learn Environmental Education

Aims to reduce poverty and foster greater understanding and action towards a sustainable future through education and community mobilisation.

Lotus Performance Group (formerly OMABI)

A self help group for people with acquired brain injuries and their carers and supporters.

Multicultural Media Exchange

Gives a voice to those in our community who are missing, and sometimes misrepresented, in the mainstream media, making the mainstream media more multicultural and the multicultural media more mainstream.

Nutrition Australia (Vic)

Works to advise and educate the public, food producers, regulators and policy developers about healthy eating.

Public Transport Users Association

Represents passengers on all forms of public transport.

Reinforce

A self help group educating people about the rights and needs of people with an intellectual disability.

Retina Australia (Vic)

Assistance for people who need to come to terms with the personal and social impact of gradually becoming blind.

RISE (Refugees Survivors and Ex-detainees)

Run by refugees, RISE provides mutual aid, support and training and advocates for better government policy for refugees.

SARU (Self Advocacy Resource Unit)

The SARU drop in centre provides resources and self-advocacy support for people with a disability.

Spina Bifida Foundation of Victoria

Aims to improve the life chances of people with spina bifida through practical programs and activities.

Star – Victorian Action on Intellectual Disability

Advocates for the rights of people with an intellectual disability and their families.

Stroke Association of Victoria

Provides services, encouragement and support for people to self-manage their lives after stroke and promotes community awareness of stroke and its effects.

Thai Information and Welfare Association

Provides culturally appropriate information, welfare and referral services to the Thai community in Victoria.

The East West Overseas Aid Foundation

Aims to provide health, education and social justice for people of the Kaddapakkam and surrounding regions in Tamil Nadu, India.

The Victorian Drama League

Helps its members, comprising community theatre groups, play reading groups, theatre societies and amateur actors.

Timorese Association

Preserves Timorese cultural identity and promotes and develops social and cultural activities in Australia.

Traditional Healthcare

Creating sustainable healthcare facilities in Australia and around the world.

TreeProject

Growing, planting and caring for trees in the city, bush-land and on farms.

Union of Australian Women

Networks with women's groups, community and union organisations on issues concerning women.

University of the Third Age (U3A) City of Melbourne

Brings together a community of older people who create and participate in learning activities utilising the principles of self-determination and self help.

Victorian Multi-Ethnic Slavic Welfare Association

Supports refugees, migrants and other Slavic associations in their settlement process in Australia.

Tenant Associate Members

Mac Advice

Provides consultancy advice, information and training on computer systems and programs.

Economic Indicator Service

Advocates and campaigns for a shift in taxation away from the disadvantaged to those who can most afford it.

Viola Design

Communication design + sustainability.

Moves In

Christina Noble Children's Foundation

Collective of Self Help Groups

Disabled WinterSport Australia

Lotus Performance Group (formerly OMABI)

Multicultural Media Exchange

Moves Out

Apple Users Society of Melbourne

Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers

OMABI

United Women's Group of Liberia



Occasional Tenants

Apple Users Society of Melbourne

Provides help for Apple computer users.

Co Design Studio

Works with communities to plan and design sustainable built environments through projects and design education.

Eco-shout

A catalyst to action for those campaigning for social and environmental justice and a sustainable way of life.

Melbourne Esperanto Association

Promotes and teaches the international language Esperanto.

Older Women's Network of Victoria

A self help organisation committed to the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women.

Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire

Supports activities that improve all aspects of care and education for children, promotes optimum conditions for health and raises awareness about harmful behaviours.

United Women's Group of Liberia

Supports Liberian women and their children through various community activities.

Victorian Homicide Victims Support Group

Support, information, referral and advocacy for loved ones who are victims of homicide.

Members (Non-Tenants)

Action Research Issues Association

Art in Bark Association of Australia, Vic Branch

Association of Neighbourhood Houses & Learning Centres

Association of Relinquishing Mothers (Vic)

Australia Japan Society of Victoria

Australian Electric Traction Association

Express Media

Genetic Support Network Victoria

International Detention Coalition

Macular Vision Loss Support Society of Australia

Mayibuye

Melbourne Osteoporosis Support Group

Narcolepsy and Overwhelming Daytime Sleep Society

National Council of Women of Victoria

Ovarian Cancer Australia

Peace Brigades International

Public Interest Library Foundation

Somaliland Relief

The Thai Language School of Victoria

Supporters

Ainsley Barden

Esther Anatolitis

Geoffrey Ginniff

Maria Grigg

Sheila Byard

Sue Healy

Understanding Literature

Village Well

Financial Reports

Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of Ross House Association Inc

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Ross House Association Inc which comprises the balance sheet as at 30th June 2011, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year then ended.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The management of Ross House Association Inc are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The managements responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditors judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report whether due to fraud or

error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report on order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Management's financial reporting requirement. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the relevant independence requirements.

Auditors Opinion

In our opinion the financial report of Ross House Association Inc (a) gives a true and fair view of Ross House Association Inc's financial position as at 30th June 2011 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with appropriate accounting policies; and (b) complies with appropriate Australian Accounting Standards.



Janet Collyer, J L Collyer & Partners
19 August 2011

Committee Report

The committee members submit the financial report of the Ross House Association—Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2011.

Committee Members

The names of the committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Rosemary Boyd	Nikki-Fay Baxter	Sarah Day
Valerie Elliott	Ramesh Fernandez	Richard Foster
De Grebner	Peter Green	Esther Harris
Sue Healy	Cameron Neil	Alex Rowsell
Sue Smith	Jenny Stewart	Yoland Wadsworth

Principal Activities

The principal activity of the association during the financial year was: to manage Ross House for small community organisations who are working towards a just and environmentally sustainable society.

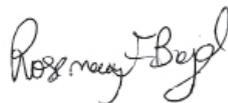
Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The net profit for the year amounted to \$78,428 (2010 \$118,539).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Committee to the Members



Rosemary Boyd,
Chairperson



Cameron Neil, Finance
Sub-Committee Convenor

Dated this 27 day of September, 2011

Balance Sheet

AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

	2011	2010
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash at bank & on hand	772,152	535,511
Trade debtors	17,473	38,255
Less provision for doubtful debts	10,000	10,000
	7,473	28,255
Sundry debtors	150	150
Prepayments	12,524	16,649
	792,300	580,565
Non-current assets		
Land & Building (at cost)	10,500,000	—
Furniture & equipment (at cost)	138,123	133,996
Less accumulated depreciation	110,462	102,217
	27,661	31,779
	10,527,661	31,779
Total assets	11,319,961	612,344
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Sundry creditors & accruals	35,785	44,453
Income in advance	22,210	26,544
Staff leave provisions	47,094	44,272
	105,089	115,269
Total liabilities	105,089	115,269
Net assets	11,214,872	497,075
Equity		
Capital Reserve	10,500,000	—
RHA Trust	139,369	—
Retained earnings	575,503	497,075
	11,214,872	497,075

Income statement

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	2011	2010		
Income				
Lease income	534,591	527,785	Building insurance	39,342 44,387
Car park	49,027	45,719	Doors	4,720 2,673
Facilities hire	104,408	104,971	Lifts	11,991 12,645
Equipment hire	17,369	16,885	Fire prevention service	7,159 6,129
Sales-equipment keys & stationery	5,711	3,301	Security	6,909 5,614
Interest received	22,572	23,265	Locksmiths & keys	3,072 2,657
Insurance & other reimbursements	(4,391)	1,895	Utilities & services	67,957 67,404
Membership subscription	2,805	2,982	Cleaning	64,790 63,164
Other income	223	10		132,748 130,568
Grants	18,333	60,645	Other property & equipment	
Rounding	17	1	Equipment repair	216 316
Donations in kind	13,571	—	Depreciation	8,245 10,397
Total income	764,234	787,460	Photocopy expenses	5,984 6,313
				14,444 17,026
Less expenditure			Total property & equipment costs	320,403 263,609
Operating expenses			Operating costs	
Salaries & wages	268,325	306,489	Amenities	647 614
Superannuation	23,362	27,069	Advertising & promotion	1,569 2,084
Workcover premiums	1,493	1,538	Audit fees	1,628 1,722
Provision for staff leave	2,822	8,272	Bad debts expenses	3,836 7,397
Staff training	3,294	1,113	Bank charges	722 735
Staff selection/appointments	641	1,306	Bookkeeping & accounting fees	480 330
	299,937	345,787	Computer & courier	9,173 8,716
			Conferences & seminars	231 601
Property and equipment costs			Consultants fees	1,100 7,075
Building expenses			Annual report & AGM	5,141 6,712
Air conditioning	15,262	15,834	Events	2,421 198
Building amenities	745	1,257	Fundraising cost	1,710 3,561
Building maintenance (refer to note)	14,481	9,633	Legal fees	13,857 41
Compliance	90	—	Telephone	7,042 7,301
Minor/internal works	62,159	3,098	Printing & design	1,836 2,997
Major/external works	7,281	12,089	Postage	631 671
			RHA admin support & COM exp	1,434 1,072
			Stationery & office supplies	6,153 4,629

Sub. membership & library	2,554	2,106
Sundry equipment purchases	1,049	—
Sundry expenses	417	879
Petty cash balancing adj	37	75
Travel	—	10
Website	1,800	—
	65,467	59,524
Total expenditure	685,806	668,920
Profit (loss) for the year	78,428	118,539

Statement of changes in equity

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010

	2011	2010
Balance as at 1 July 2010	497,075	378,536
Profit (loss) attributable to members	78,428	118,539
Balance as at 30 June 2010	575,503	497,075

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

NOTE 1 Statement of significant accounting policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria). The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

This financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria) and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 112	Income Taxes
AASB 1031	Materiality
AASB 110	Events after the Balance Sheet Date

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues

Group Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by Ross House Association—Incorporated in the preparation of the financial report. These accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

Income Tax

No income tax is payable as all income is mutually exclusive.

Fixed Assets

Furniture & Equipment are carried at cost, less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date.

Statement of cash flows

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010

	2011	2010
Cash flow from operating activities		
Receipts from customers & other receipts	735,546	741,666
Payments to suppliers and employees	(673,094)	(608,799)
Interest, donations & memberships received	38,947	26,247
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (Note 2)	101,399	159,114
Cash flow from investing activities		
Proceeds from (payment for) property, plant and equipment	(4,127)	(2,834)
Proceeds from Ross Trust	139,369	—
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	135,242	(2,834)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	236,641	156,280
Cash at beginning of year	535,511	379,231
Cash at end of reporting period (Note 1)	772,152	535,511

Notes to the statement of cash flows

NOTE 1 Reconciliation of cash

For the purposes of the statement of the cash flows, cash included cash on hand and in at call deposits with banks or financial institutions, investments in money market instruments maturing within less than two months, net of bank overdrafts

a Reconciliation of Cash

Cash at the end of the reporting period as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the Balance Sheet as follows:

Cash on Hand	460	460
Cash at Bank	771,692	535,051
	772,152	535,511

NOTE 2 Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating profit

Operating result	78,428	118,539
Depreciation of Non-current Assets	8,245	10,397
Prior year adjustments	—	(151)
Changes in Net Assets and Liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	20,782	(9,902)
(Increase)/decrease in prepaid expenses	4,125	(2,635)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(2,480)	44,239
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	2,822	8,272
Increase/(decrease) in grants in advance	(10,523)	(9,645)
	101,399	159,114

Now is the best time to give to Ross House

Thanks to the support of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Ross House can now accept tax deductible donations. Help us stay alive! Donate online at www.rosshouse.org.au or contact us for more information.



Acknowledgements

The Ross House Association is thankful for the ongoing support of the following people and organisations:

ABC Radio National

ARUP, especially Shane Power, Pippa Connolly, Malin Lindbald and Christine Niu

ANZ Trustees, especially Jeff Sitters

City of Melbourne and the 1200 Buildings Program, especially Michele Leembruggen

Live and Learn Environmental Education

Lucid Computing, especially Phil Rayner

Hayden Raysmith AM

Karen Young

Maddocks, especially Geoff Musgrove and Kien Nguyen for pro bono legal advice and services

María Grigg

Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund, especially Marisa Marasco

Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund, especially Kirsty Allen

National Trust of Australia (Vic)

Plakkit

Patricia Lauria

R.E. Ross Trust

Triple R, especially Donna Morabito

The Age

Quantum Facility Management

Viola Design, thank you Anna for all your fantastic work

Village Well, especially Jacque Robinson

Thank you to the current Ross House staff, and to those that we have farewelled this year. Thank you to the Committee and subcommittee members, the hours you give are deeply appreciated. Especially thank you to our members, tenants, and supporters.

Ross House wouldn't exist today without the establishment funding provided by our original donors:

The R E Ross Trust

The Danks Trust

The E B Myer Charitable Fund

The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

The Ian Potter Foundation

The Lance Reichstein Foundation

The Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund

The Oliver–Afleck Fund

The Percy Baxter Charitable Trust

The Scobie and Claire MacKinnon Trust

The Stegley Foundation

The W.C.F. Thomas Charitable Trust

The William Buckland Foundation

The William Paxton Charitable Trust

The Victorian State Government

