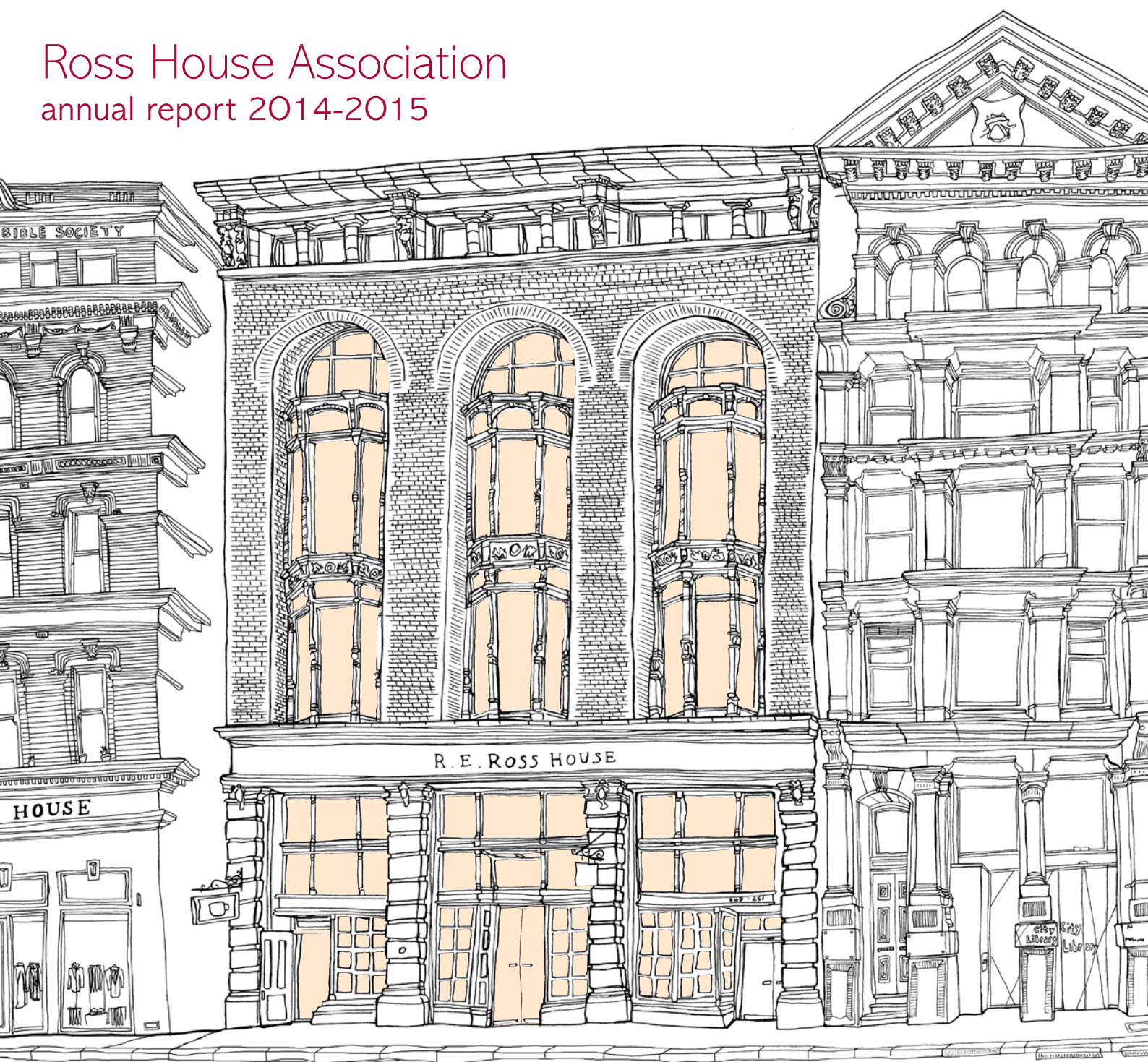


Ross House Association annual report 2014-2015





CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

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Reviewing the year, and reflecting on earlier years, it is little short of amazing - the growth of Ross House Association. Not so much in the size of the organisation, as in its business. Yes, we are a business. If we are not business-like we cannot provide for the needs of the Association or act professionally. The Association's aim of a just and sustainable society is always at the forefront of everything we do, while we offer care for each member. Care for members not only comes from the Association, it also flows between members. Ours is such a special association that we may not always stop to think about what makes it so special and acknowledge the part we all play in it. Sometimes we give and sometimes we need to take. Some of us may have more to give than others. We all, however, remain the Association.

Funnily enough, when thinking of our purpose, we may not always consider the effort of owning and maintaining a building. Over the last few years we have upgraded the

lighting to be more environmentally viable and cheaper to run, the air-conditioning has been upgraded to tenants' delight during winter as well as summer and there have been numerous smaller projects which all contribute to a larger impact. The 'Ross House' window features one of these and invites others to join in.

We approach change cautiously. Some might be fearful. Managed change is aimed to be of benefit to everyone. If Ross House is to survive, some of the things we are used to may go and something different may take its place. Be assured though, that our purpose and the needs of our members and tenants are what drive us. Sometimes change may be forced upon us by outside factors. Whatever happens, Ross House will move forward – it's just that the pace may vary, as it has in the past.

Valerie Elliott





GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

What a rewarding and full year it has been. We saw the realisation of a number of long-term goals for the Association; we now have an established, highly capable and dedicated staff team, following on from significant changes in staff personnel during the 2012-2014 period; the final report, for funding towards our air-conditioning upgrade (the largest grant RHA has ever received), has been successfully completed; and the completion of energy efficiency projects has resulted in a number of awards and recognition, as well as the achievement of RHA's long-term sustainability goal.

In May this year, Ross House exceeded all expectations and received an official NABERS rating of 4 stars. This is an increase of 1.5 stars from 2012, where the simulated rating was assessed at 2.5 stars. This measurable increase in building efficiency is directly related to improvements to lighting, air-conditioning and the switch off attitude of our members and tenants over the last few years.

Our achievements also saw RHA awarded the 2014 CitySwitch New Signatory of the Year (VIC) award from over 40 entrants into the category. Each year CitySwitch run a National Awards program, which showcases signatories that have demonstrated outstanding environmental leadership.

"Ross House has undergone a transformation with lighting, controls and HVAC upgrades resulting in impressive savings. The building's 53 tenants have been a focal point – with a new guide to help make the most of the investment."

Victoria CitySwitch judging panel

Ross House was also featured as a 'CitySwitch Hero' as part of the 2015 Sustainable Living Festival in Melbourne. Billboards featuring our

environmental achievements were placed around the CBD to promote the many benefits of undertaking sustainability projects, highlighting the Association's leadership in this sector.

This year RHA was able to submit our final report for the Community Energy Efficiency Program (CEEP) grant. This \$395,500 Australian Government grant has been hugely successful and I would like to thank Amber for her dedication to this project over the last three years.

Nazzareno Marchionda started with the Association as our new Facility Manager in September 2014. Nazz brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the role and no doubt you have seen him around Ross House, keeping everything running smoothly. We also welcomed back Katie Stoll to her role as Information and Administration Officer, but now on a full time basis. I'm sure you'll agree that Katie does a wonderful job on reception and we are proud to have her as the face of Ross House.

We also have two new casual staff members who have joined Ross House this year, Gabrielle Parton and Stephanie East. Both are a very welcome addition to the staff team and are available to help out whenever we need some extra hands on deck.

As you can see, 2014-2015 has been another very successful year for the Association. I would like to thank all the staff and committee members for their efforts and support throughout the year. Also a big thank you goes to all our tenants and members who make Ross House the vibrant and unique community that it is.

Michael Griffiths





HISTORY

A collective of self-help groups: how it all began and where we are now.

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 1977, the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) held a seminar to bring together groups that formed the evolving self-help group movement in Victoria. As a result a Committee of Self Help Groups was formed which went on to become the Collective of Self Help Groups (COSHG).

In July 1980, COSHG held a seminar, "Self Help in the '80's – Grass Roots in the Garden State", which drew attention to the need for shared physical resources and secure, reasonably priced accommodation for small groups. It was around this time that 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; 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, and 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 five-storey 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 was the building's head tenant), then in its own right. With ownership transferred to the Ross House Association in 2011, the Association achieved full independence and became a community asset in every possible sense.

The Ross House building has housed more than three hundred groups since 1987 and is currently home to over 50 tenant groups and over 20 non-tenant members, ranging from one or two persons, 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 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 Association exists to support independent organisations by providing a place for diverse groups to connect and grow. Together, the Ross House community strives to build a better future for people and the planet.



TreeProject gets urban and rural communities working together to put trees back on the land. Their network of trained volunteers grow indigenous seedlings for rural landholders and Landcare groups who need help with revegetation. Photo: TreeProject



MORE THAN A BUILDING

Ross House was borne from a specific need: shared physical resources and low cost office space. And what a mammoth achievement it is to have fulfilled this need on such a grand scale: the acquirement of a heritage building in one of the most accessible parts of Melbourne right in the heart of the city; the conversion of the building from storehouse to a hive of community activity; and not in the least, the successful self-management of this resource with participation open to all.

When we tell people that Ross House is the only self-managed and owned not-for-profit building in Australia, it often causes surprise, quickly followed by an enquiry into what self-

managed actually means. Well, while there are many other fantastic community spaces around the country, Ross House is unique as the only one that is completely managed by its own tenants and members. In practical terms, this means that it is the people who use the building who make the decisions about the building - from policies guiding how we work together within its walls, to the most appropriate governance structure to ensure strategic management.

When you consider that the tenants and members of Ross House (that is, the ones running the show) are all small, independent community groups working towards environmental sustainability and social justice, the significance



of Ross House becomes apparent. Here is an example of groups who represent some of the community's most marginalised people, in control of an incredible resource that continues to flourish and grow 28 years after its inception.

As each member of Ross House is a small group with incredibly large ambition, it is no wonder we spend most of our time heads down in the daily work of advocating for change. To ensure that each group is as effective as possible, the daily work of the Ross House Association is making sure that we provide the most appropriate resources in the least costly and most efficient way we can. Working within a social justice model, this includes ensuring everyone's ideas are heard, favouring consensus decision making and employing a sliding scale of pricing that puts our values into practice.

But the impact of Ross House reaches far beyond the walls of the building and its day to day operations. Each year, members of the Ross House staff meet with individuals from newly formed community and volunteer centres, government departments and not for profit buildings, individuals from Victoria and interstate, to provide support and information about managing community resources. Not only is Ross

House a model of community, it is a rare long term success story of the management of a not-for-profit building that aims to fulfil the different needs of a very diverse collection of people and organisational purposes.

With so much conflict in the world based on superficial difference, it's affirming to see the strong sense of community that holds Ross House together and translates into acts of welcoming and kindness that gives the building an atmosphere people comment on every day.

In addition to the practical difference the members of Ross House make to individual lives (from providing emotional support to a roof over your head), they are also working towards far off and sometimes seemingly improbable goals, such as equality and understanding for people with vastly different ways of being in the world; fair treatment for refugees; an end to conflict and poverty; and the long term health of our environment. When the obstacles in the way of carrying out this work feel insurmountable, it is heartening to be surrounded by so many people working towards a better world. The rest of the time ...it is simply inspiring.



ROSS HOUSE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE AND STAFF 2014-2015

COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Valerie Elliott
Handknitters Guild

Vice Chairperson

Christine McAuslan
COSHG

Treasurer

Keith Bettles
U3A Melbourne City

Members

Charles Brass
Futures Foundation
(from November)

De Grebner

Tree Project

Michael Griffiths

Ex-officio

Sue Healy

Appointed Member

Amber Moore

Staff Representative

Maree Norris

Housing for the
Aged Action Group
(from November)

STAFF

Michael Griffiths

General Manager

Amber Moore

Development Program
Manager

Nazzareno Marchionda

Facility Manager
(From September)

Katie Stoll

Information & Administration
Officer
(From October)

Samantha Thornton

Membership & Tenancy
Officer

Junxia Xu

Finance Officer

Casual Front Desk Staff

Stephanie East
Lucie McMahon
Sue McDonough
Gabrielle Parton





OUTER URBAN PROJECTS

Outer Urban Project's first foray into the Melbourne Writer's Festival, was with their outstanding 2014 cross-generational performance about the power and limitations of words, *Poetic Licence*.

A mash up of young and old, ancient and contemporary, classical and street, cajoling and combative, *Poetic Licence* took Aristophanes comic masterpiece, *The Frogs*, as its inspiration to ask and debate the timeless question – can the spoken word really move and inspire?

In an Aristophanes inspired salon, *Poetic Licence* was underscored by the harp of Natalia Mann, while lovers of the spoken word were offered an impressive vision featuring an ensemble of writer-performers brought together by Outer Urban Project's creative producer and director, Irine Vela.

Six decades separated two poets who featured in *Poetic Licence* – 63 year old Kominos Zervos railed against the march of time, while 13 year old Dante Soffra took centre stage with a youthfully exuberant prologue.

Other performers in *Poetic Licence* included alternative jazz singer-poet Ileini Kabalan; the confronting and moving Mahmoud "Babz" Samoun; virtuosic rapper and beat boxer Kevin "Y2K" Nugara and performance poet Koraly Dimitriadis.

Outer Urban Projects is a bold not-for-profit performing arts organisation that collaborates with young people and their communities in Melbourne's culturally diverse, artistically starved, 'hardcore' outer northern suburbs.

www.outerurbanprojects.org



Photo: Outer Urban Projects

PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS ASSOCIATION

The Public Transport Not Traffic (PTNT) campaign is a coalition of over 35 community groups from across Melbourne opposed to the East West Link, lead by the Public Transport Users Association (PTUA). It launched in November 2013 and worked with the strategy of targeting key marginal seats, campaigning in the communities most directly affected by the road, and incorporated legal and corporate campaigning.

Our office at Ross House provided the ideal headquarters for our campaign; with two paid campaign organisers located at Ross House, we accommodated countless hours of direct calling to marginal seat voters, facilitated many volunteer training evenings, and convened several planning sessions by the PTNT and PTUA committees throughout the life of the campaign. We utilised online technology such as direct emails, online surveys and petitions, as well as targeted

campaigning efforts in key marginal seats, including door knocking, stalls and direct calling voters - all undertaken by our army of amazing volunteers.

Needless to say, the Napthine government signed the contracts for the East West Link in the dying days before the election and we believe a last minute pledge to scrap the project, by the then Andrews opposition, is what played a big part in them winning the election.

We are grateful for a great community resource like Ross House to allow organisations like ours to have an office space and be able to scale-up our campaign, like we did, in the lead up to the election.

www.ptua.org.au



Some of the Public Transport Not Traffic campaign team at PTUA HQ. Photo: Public Transport Users Association



HAAG bi-lingual workers displaying their certificates of achievement after taking part in 2 days of training.
Photo: Housing for the Aged Action Group

HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP

This year, the Preventing Homelessness in Older Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities Project was launched; a joint initiative of Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) and the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV).

The project includes a roll out of 80 community education sessions by bi-lingual workers, as well as the production of resources, such as brochures in Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Bosnia and Herzegovinian, Serbian and Croatian. These resources were created through close consultation with community reference groups, which occurred over a six-month period.

The key aims of the project include:

- More people using Home at Last services from the target communities
- More people from targeted communities understanding what Home at Last does-through community education
- A better response from Home at Last, to people who contact us from the key communities
- More people from targeted communities finding secure, affordable housing through Home at Last

The project has already increased the number of older people from culturally diverse backgrounds accessing housing assistance. The number of culturally diverse clients contacting Home at Last has increased from a stable 34% of Home at Last's client base over 3 years, to 51% within the first 3 months of the project's operation. This number is anticipated to rise again with the roll out of ethno-specific community education sessions across the state from August 2015.

www.older tenants.org.au





SUSTAINABLE LIVING FOUNDATION

Every February, Melbourne and Victoria comes to life with the Sustainable Living Foundation's (SLF) annual three-week Sustainable Living Festival.

The Sustainable Living Festival aims to accelerate the uptake of sustainable living and seeks solutions to global warming that will return the planet to a safe climate as fast as humanly possible. The Festival raises awareness and provides tools for change by showcasing leading solutions to the ecological and social challenges we face.

Attracting over 150,000 visits annually, the Festival engages with hundreds of organisations and individuals to stage Australia's largest sustainability festival.

This year, the 'Grow It Local' campaign was a major feature of the Festival's 2015 program. Having previously run in Sydney, the SLF crew worked in collaboration with the original Sydney founder and coordinated the Melbourne 'Grow It Local' campaign exclusively for the 2015 Festival.

The campaign was designed to encourage Melbournians to register their patch – no matter how large or small – and experiment with self-sufficiency by growing their own food. Growers were encouraged to share their good and bad experiences of urban farming with the wider community. A lucky 50 were selected to contribute their own produce to be used in the menu for the Local Growers Feast, the closing event of the Festival.

Top Melbourne chef, Vanessa Mateus from Pope Joan, was given the challenge to create a feast for 150 people with an unknown variety and quantity of produce. What an amazing woman! Vanessa saw the challenge and then raised the bar, just a little bit! The result was a delicious three-course meal that all growers, partners and volunteers enjoyed well into the night.

www.slf.org.au

DIASPORA ACTION AUSTRALIA

This year, Diaspora Action Australia (DAA) facilitated Victoria's first-ever South Sudanese Leadership Retreat, which brought together community leaders from across regional and metropolitan Victoria. DAA organised the 3-day retreat in partnership with the South Sudanese Unification Committee (SSUC), with the aim of unifying the South Sudanese communities in Victoria and promoting peace in South Sudan.

The resurgence of conflict in South Sudan in late 2013 brought to the surface deep-seated tensions among communities in Victoria. The church and ethnic/tribal leaders of the SSUC saw the need to heal divisions for the sake of harmony in Australia and for the potential of a unified diaspora to influence peace in South Sudan. The SSUC worked tirelessly for 18 months in the lead up to the Retreat to encourage leaders from all tribal groups to come together.

Over three days in December 2014, 62 representatives from South Sudanese sub-communities – representing a wide range of tribal backgrounds – took active part in the discussion of important issues such as ethical leadership, peace-building, the role of women in leadership, harmonious relationships between sub-communities and the importance of maintaining unity in times of conflict.

One of the main aims was to agree to the formation of a new peak body to represent all South Sudanese communities in Victoria. The leaders from the two existing associations – South Sudanese Council of Australia and the South Sudanese Community in Australia – agreed to disband their organisations in favour of establishing one South Sudanese “voice” in Victoria and formed the South Sudanese Community Association of Victoria (SSCAV).

Although some of the participants were initially skeptical about the possibility of dialogue, by the end of the Retreat those doubts had been replaced with optimism. One Retreat member reflected that the experience “gave me a renewed sense of hope and trust for our community... I felt proud”.

Steps taken towards unity at the Retreat are the beginning of a long journey. DAA looks forward to working with the SSCAV to foster harmony among South Sudanese communities in Victoria, and for their potential to influence peace in South Sudan.



COLLECTIVE OF SELF HELP GROUPS

Collective of Self Help Groups (COSHG) has a long history of Community Development (CD) practice dating back to our origins in 1977; in fact Ross House itself came about as a result of community development in practice (see page 5 of this report). COSHG has continued to operate on CD principles (collaboration, inclusion, consensus decision making) throughout our nearly 40 years of experience working with groups.

In October 2014, COSHG held a forum, *CD in the CBD: Exploring Community Development in the Heart of Melbourne*, which included two workshops: *Community Development Today* and *How to Survive and Thrive* and featured three speakers, all closely connected to the Ross House community:

- Denise Cauchi, Diaspora Action Australia - 'CD in practice'
- Pauline Williams, Action for More Independence & Dignity in Accommodation (AMIDA) - 'CD past and present'
- Andrew Herington, East West Link Community Action - 'Campaigning Today'

The concept for this forum arose from a networking and discussion session 'Is Community Development still alive and kicking?', which COSHG held as part of Self Help Groups Awareness Week in 2012. That workshop session clearly identified the answer was very much a 'yes' and created interest in further exploring the philosophy, experience and practise of community development and what it means for those who work within this framework. This forum was deemed a success with a healthy exchange of ideas, information and networking between participants.

Community development provides an alternative to hierarchical frameworks and structures. The CD model gives members a voice in decision making as opposed to more formal structures, which tend to operate within a more directive approach.

www.coshg.org.au

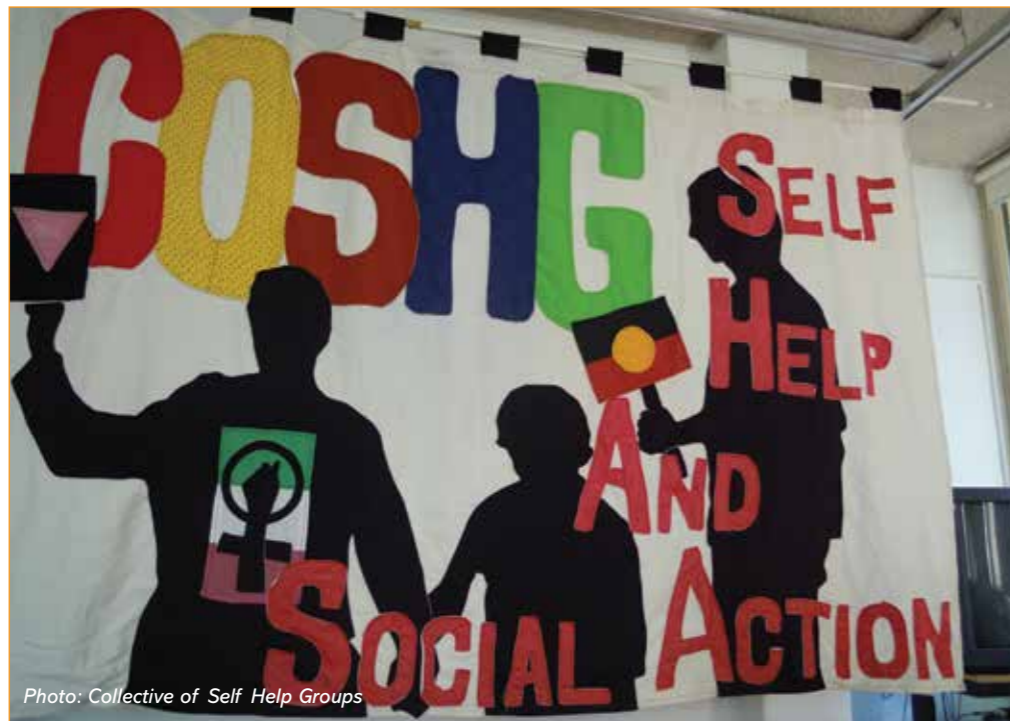


Photo: Collective of Self Help Groups

BRAIN INJURY MATTERS

In April this year, Brain Injury Matters (BIM) developed a unique art project, which involved the projection of art work onto the building next door to Ross House in Flinders Lane. Members of BIM created art works at ground level, which were projected onto the building, creating a huge amount of interest for people passing by. Members of BIM were also on hand to answer questions about acquired brain injury (ABI), thus raising awareness of the issues surrounding ABI.

www.braininjurymatters.org



Photo: Brain Injury Matters



Photo: U3A Melbourne City

U3A MELBOURNE CITY

For U3A Melbourne City, 2015 was a significant year – our 30th anniversary!

Our 30th anniversary year was commemorated with an engaging series of events, which celebrated the many ways in which U3A makes life so much more interesting after work: a fashion show in March followed by a film festival, anniversary lunch, ANZAC choir concert, photograph and botanical art exhibition and a series of signature seminars.

U3A Melbourne City is a not-for-profit organisation, run entirely by volunteers. With a strong membership of 1450 members, comprised of people 50+ years and retired or no longer working full-time. U3A Melbourne City espouses learning and volunteer tutoring ideals, and maintains a keen interest in being connected with its broader community.

The organisation embodies the principles of life-long education and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, in an atmosphere of mutual learning and teaching - just the job once you give up work. Tutored by volunteer experts in their fields, classes are relaxed and friendly, and no exams!

U3A Melbourne City is part of the international network of U3As.

www.u3amelbcity.org.au



COMMUNITY MUSIC VICTORIA

Community Music Victoria (CMVic) enjoyed another excellent year supporting and facilitating community music making in and around Victoria!

It doesn't matter what you play, or how well you play it; true to CMVic's underlying philosophy, what's important is getting out there and giving it a go!

October last year, saw us hold a residential weekend of singing to support, sustain, refresh and revive not only singing leaders but anyone who loves to sing. The weekend long event, held in Mt Evelyn, was a true celebration of all things song based.

Our StreetSounds project got off to a great start in November 2014, focussing on the creation of new opportunities for Victorians, of all abilities and ages, to play music with others. StreetSounds is the second major project in CMVic's instrumental music making program, Victoria Makes Music, and has been made possible with grants from The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the RE Ross Trust. Groups are up and running in Prahran, Sunshine, and Kyneton as well as Macleod and Inverloch and players of all skill levels are welcome. Keep an eye open to see where StreetSounds heads next.

The 2nd annual Treetops Music Camp was held in April this year, which once again, proved to be a fun weekend for all involved. Treetops 2015 created a new record for attendance at a CMVic event and offered a fabulous and varied program comprising of participatory singing, instrumental workshops, jam sessions, and a Saturday night dance party led by The Scrimshaw Four.

Some of the workshops included, Indian singing led by Parvyn Kaur Singh from The Bombay Royale, a peace songs workshop, the opportunity to build a marching marimba to take home and play and the chance to learn an instrument from scratch in our inaugural 'Buddies for Beginners' program. There was also the option to just sit or sing and jam by the fire! We had other members of The Bombay Royale, Horns of Leroy and Community Music Victoria on hand, to facilitate workshops and join in the fun - not even heavy rain could dampen our spirits.

It's been an incredibly positive year for CMVic – it is amazing what can be done from a small office space in Ross House. We're proud to be part of such an inspiring community of organisations and like-minded people, as well as grateful for the opportunity to belong.

www.cmvic.org.au

**TENANT MEMBERS****AbleLink**

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

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.

AsbestosWise

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

Assisi Aid Projects

Supports sustainable development work in southern India.

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 Wildlife Protection Council

Dedicated to the protection and preservation of Australian Wildlife.

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.

Care Leavers Australia Network

A support, advocacy, research and training group for people who grew up in Australia's orphanages, Children's Homes and in foster care.

Care With Me

Supporting children and/or families who are dealing with foster care and whom come from a Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background.

Casal Catala de Victoria

Promotes the customs and language of Catalonia.

Charles Bonnet Syndrome Foundation

Assists people affected by Charles Bonnet Syndrome (including significant others) and raises awareness about the condition.

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

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

Developing, facilitating and servicing music making among Victorian communities.

Darfur Humanitarian Advocacy Australia

Raising awareness about the continuing tragedy in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Diaspora Action Australia

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

Disability Discrimination Legal Service

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

Disability Resources Centre

Provides individual advocacy for adults with a disability, free of charge, throughout greater metropolitan Melbourne.

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.

Exit Victoria

Engages in advocating for law reform and supporting end of life rights through political and direct action.

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.

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.

Indo China Ethnic Chinese Association

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

Liberians for Empowerment & Development

Empowers Liberians through education, training and development within Australia and Liberia.

Live and Learn Environmental Education

Promotes environmental and developmental education in schools and communities through training forums on computer systems and programs.

Lotus Group / Lotus Singers

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

Outer Urban Projects

A bold not for profit performing arts organisation that collaborates with young people and their communities in Melbourne's culturally diverse, artistically starved, 'hardcore' outer northern suburbs.

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

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

RISE

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

SARU

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

Shakti Migrant & Refugee Women's Support Group Melbourne

Provides culturally-competent domestic violence intervention and support services to women and children victims of domestic violence of Asian, African and Middle Eastern origins.

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

Supports 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.

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.

Woor-Dungin Inc

Aims to enable Indigenous organisations to achieve self-determination and access the resources and support needed to address issues affecting their communities.

TENANT ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Counsellors' & Psychotherapists Association Vic

Strengthens mental wellbeing of the Victorian public by providing affordable high quality accredited counselling and psychotherapy services.

Economic Indicator Service

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

Mac Advice

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

COMMERCIAL TENANTS

Dukes Coffee Roasters

A collaboration between like-minded individuals involved in the sourcing, roasting and brewing of high-end specialty coffee. Dukes believe in and support local producers and craftsmen.

OCCASIONAL TENANTS

Animal Active

An activist and advocacy group for all animals with a strong focus on the rights of urban Australian native animals and companion animals.

Animal Law Institute

Provides legal advice and acts in relation to animal protection matters and aims to remove the legal status of animals as property.

Apple Users Society of Melbourne

Provides help for Apple computer users.

Australian Federation of International Students

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

Basic Needs Australia

Assists African migrants and refugees by addressing the growing needs of access and equity at the local and national level.

Blueprint for Free Speech

Provides a free online library of research about freedom of expression laws around the globe.

Community Social Development International

Works with approved international organisations (initially in India), assisting disadvantaged communities in developing countries, bring about positive change in their lives.

Forget Me Not Foundation

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

Futures Foundation

Promotes greater interest in, and understanding of, the future.

Lawyers for Animals

Dedicated to improving the welfare of animals through education and law.

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.

Post Polio Victoria

Advocates for people who have had or continue to be affected by Polio.

Public Interest Library Foundation

Supports and promotes all the principles of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, through providing accessible, free repository of information of public interest.

MEMBERS (NON-TENANTS)

Action Research Issues Association Inc
Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres
Australia Japan Society of Victoria
Beyond Zero Emissions
Blind Sports Australia
CALXA Australia (*Associate Member*)
Climate and Health Alliance
Counsellors Victoria (*Associate Member*)
Emerge Australia
Homeless Persons of Victoria
Macular Vision Loss Support Society of Australia
Melbourne Campaigners' Network
Melbourne Osteoporosis Support Group
Narcolepsy and Overwhelming Daytime Sleep Society
National Council of Women of Victoria
Oromia Support Group Australia
Refuge of Hope
Slavery Links Australia
Society of Women Writers (*Associate Member*)
Sustainable Living Foundation
Thai Language School of Victoria
Understanding Literature Group (*Associate Member*)

MOVES IN

Assisi Aid Projects
Australian Wildlife Protection Council
Darfur Humanitarian Advocacy Australia
Exit Victoria
Liberians for Empowerment and Development

MOVES OUT

Aboriginal Literacy Foundation
Aussie Hands Foundation
Dahl Trust
Darfur Australia Network
Multicultural Media Exchange

FINANCIAL REPORT

During the year, the benefits of Ross House Association's cost-saving initiatives were being eroded due to rising costs which has put pressure on our ability to generate sufficient revenue to provide for the future maintenance and preservation of this Heritage listed building.

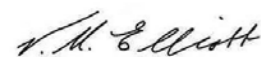
Demand for leased office space, however, remains strong as does the need for meeting rooms.

Due to a timing issue with the receipt of funds, \$140,000 of heritage grant income was received in the 2013/14 year but was actually expended in the 2014/15 year. Therefore the 2013/14 year surplus should be read as \$194,498 and the 2014/15 performance should be seen as a surplus of \$96,537.

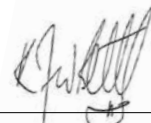
The committee members submit the financial report of RHA Inc for the financial year ended 30 June 2015. The principal activity of the Association during the financial year was to manage RHA for small community organisations who are working towards a just and environmentally sustainable society. No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year. The names of the committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Valerie Elliott
Christine McAuslan
Keith Bettles
Sue Healy
Maree Norris (from November 2014)
De Grebner
Amber Moore
Charles Brass (from November 2014)

Signed in accordance with a resolution
of the Committee:



Valerie Elliott
Chairperson



Keith Bettles
Treasurer

Balance sheet As at 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank & On Hand	719,457	615,912
Trade Debtors	17,913	23,857
Less Prov. for Doubtful Debts	5,000	5,000
	<u>12,913</u>	<u>18,857</u>
Sundry Debtors	-	150
Prepayments	15,924	-
Account Receivable	206	20,000
	<u>748,500</u>	<u>654,919</u>
Non-current Assets		
Land	5,550,000	5,550,000
Buildings	2,950,000	2,950,000
Less accumulated amortisation	(147,500)	(73,750)
Furniture & Equipment	145,036	145,036
Less accumulated depreciation	(138,145)	(136,095)
Capital Work	175,537	175,537
Less accumulated depreciation	(66,258)	(41,174)
Electronic Equipment	16,580	9,080
Less accumulated depreciation	(7,883)	(3,973)
HVAC	801,516	801,516
Less accumulated depreciation	(62,070)	(21,994)
	<u>9,216,814</u>	<u>9,354,184</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	9,965,314	10,009,103
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade Creditors	-	-
Sundry Creditors & Accruals	63,067	67,484
Income in Advance	7,298	14,730
Staff Leave Provisions	49,044	47,600
Superannuation Provision	3,923	-
	<u>123,332</u>	<u>129,814</u>
Non- Current Liabilities		
Staff Leave Provisions - L.S.L.	20,647	14,491
	<u>20,647</u>	<u>14,491</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	143,979	144,305
NET ASSETS	9,821,335	9,864,798

Balance sheet cont. As at 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
Equity		
Capital Reserve	8,500,000	8,500,000
Wind Up Costs Reserve	-	180,000
Emergency Reserve	400,000	317,075
Retained Earnings	921,335	867,722
	<u>9,821,335</u>	<u>9,864,797</u>
Income statement For the year ended 30 June 2015		
	2015	2014
Income		
Lease Income	632,424	577,072
Car Park	47,400	37,146
Facilities Hire	200,983	181,816
Equipment Hire	14,616	16,443
Sales-Equipment Keys & Stationery	3,061	4,413
Interest Received	6,437	28,464
Insurance & Other Reimbursements	1,985	801
Membership Subscription	4,483	3,210
Other Income	2,535	63
Grants	80,500	531,096
Rounding	5	19
Donations in Kind	49	3,200
	<u>994,479</u>	<u>1,383,741</u>
Less expenditure		
Operating Expenses		
Salaries & Wages	349,559	334,580
Superannuation	36,875	29,947
Workcover Premiums	1,446	1,107
Provision for Staff Leave	7,599	15,657
Staff Training	1,657	1,671
Staff Selection/Appointments	435	406
	<u>397,572</u>	<u>383,367</u>

Income statement cont. For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
Property and Equipment Costs		
Building Expenses	288,366	337,566
Utilities & Services	66,900	65,332
Cleaning	67,659	64,045
Other property & Equipment	169,618	156,137
	<u>592,544</u>	<u>623,080</u>
Operating Costs		
Amenities	423	706
Advertising and Promotion	228	1,872
Audit fees	2,374	1,756
Bad Debts Expenses	3,572	(5,000)
Bank Charges	447	1,273
Bookkeeping & Accounting fees	770	572
Computer & Courier	6,828	4,020
Consultants fees	10,780	12,450
Annual report & AGM	3,444	3,545
Events	1,347	590
Legal fees	212	6,893
Telephone	4,429	5,035
Printing & Design	-	245
Postage	461	240
RHA Admin Support & COM Exp	2,726	-
Stationery & Office Supplies	5,515	5,616
Sub. Membership & Library	927	1,265
Sundry Equipment Purchases	85	-
Sundry Expenses	2,097	1,701
Travelling	14	16
Petty Cash Balancing Adj	150	-
Website	996	-
	<u>47,825</u>	<u>42,796</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,037,941	1,049,243
PROFIT (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR	(43,463)	334,498

The above financial statements are an abridged version of the financial statements of Ross House Association Inc as audited by J L Collyer and Partners and deemed to a) give a true view of Ross House Association Inc's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with appropriate accounting policies; and b) comply with appropriate Australian Accounting Standards. The complete financial statements are available on request from Ross House Association and are published on www.rosshouse.org.au.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US GROW

Thank you to the Committee and to subcommittee members, the hours you give are deeply appreciated. A special thank you to our members - tenants, supporters and partners, including:

- Australian Government
- City of Melbourne, especially Michele Leembruggen from the 1200 Buildings Program, Rebecca Hughes and Paul Mitchelmore from Engineering Services and the whole Degraeves Street Recycling Facility team
- Hayden Raysmsith AM
- Maddocks
- National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Dukes Coffee Roasters, especially Peter Frangoulis
- Sue Healy
- City Switch, especially Paul Whelan and Jeff Elliott
- Peter Hooke
- YOKE Design

Ross House would not exist today without the establishment funding provided by the following 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
- Sidney Myer Fund
- The Oliver-Affleck 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



