



ROSS HOUSE
ASSOCIATION

**2020 RHA
COMMITTEE**

CHAIRPERSON

Christine McAuslan
(COSHG)

SECRETARY

Scot Muirden
(CBSF)

TREASURER

Keith Bettles
(U3A City of Melbourne)

Valerie Elliot
(Handknit & Crochet Guild)

De Grebner
(Ex TreeProject, Appointed
Member)

Cynthia Pili
(STAR Victoria Inc)

Mohamed Nabe
(Southern Rivers
Community Services)

Vanessa Petrie
(Appointed Member)

Heidi Nicholl
(Emerge)

Maggie Maguire
(Appointed Member)

Richard Caven
(Appointed Member)

Nazzareno Marchionda
(Appointed Member RHA
staff)

Michael Griffiths
(Ex-officio, RHA General
Manager)

IN THE HOUSE

JULY 2020

RHA Policy for Reopening to Public During COVID-19

On 17th June, the policy document for safely reopening to the public during COVID-19 was sent around to Ross House Members and Tenants. The policy outlines a number of changes that are being implemented around Ross House such as increased cleaning, installation of hand sanitizers and placement of signage around appropriate social distancing. There are also changes to the number of people who can use the meeting rooms and building works are underway on a new safer reception area. If you don't have a copy of the full policy document and would like one or if you have questions around specific policies, please email the General Manager at michael.griffiths@rosshouse.org.au.

There have been a number of questions on an exact date that Ross House will reopen to the public, we are currently following the Victorian Government's direction "If you can work from home, you must work from home" as a guide for when Ross House should start to resume onsite operations. See <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/work-and-study-restrictions-covid-19>.

The Premier has stated that this policy will remain in place until at least July 31st and given recent events, it may be longer. We will of course let everyone know, when a date is known.

Melbourne Metro Rail Update

Please see the latest updates for the Melbourne Metro Rail Project:

- ⚙ There has been a tunnel break through from City Square to the Flinders Quarter site.
- ⚙ A 200 cubic metre concrete pour has been completed at Flinders Quarter.
- ⚙ Recent noise muffling of the crane considered to be a success.
- ⚙ Flinders Pedestrian Link excavations to be completed by mid-August.
- ⚙ The Flinders Street left hand turn from St Kilda Rd is now closed for 2 years.
- ⚙ Works are on track despite COVID-19, some work has been easier due to reduced traffic and pedestrians flows.
- ⚙ Construction of the Oversight Development (OSD) will commence once a concrete slab has been installed at the Flinders Quarter site, expected in 2022.

For more information, please visit
www.metrotunnel.vic.gov.au.



Building & Maintenance

There's always a lot going on in this big old building of ours, so please make sure you keep an eye out for the building maintenance emails that circulate regularly.



Current and completed works

- ⚙ Ross House staff have been busy behind the scenes working on a policy to safely return to Ross House. Social distancing signs and decals have been placed around the building and hand sanitizers will shortly be installed. There is also a one-person maximum capacity rule in the Ross House lift. Please contact Michael for a copy of the policy > michael.griffiths@rosshouse.org.au.
- ⚙ A friendly reminder that the aircon throughout the building is currently switched off. If you would like to use the air-con during the day/evening, please press the after-hours button which is located at the back of each floor. This operates for two hours.

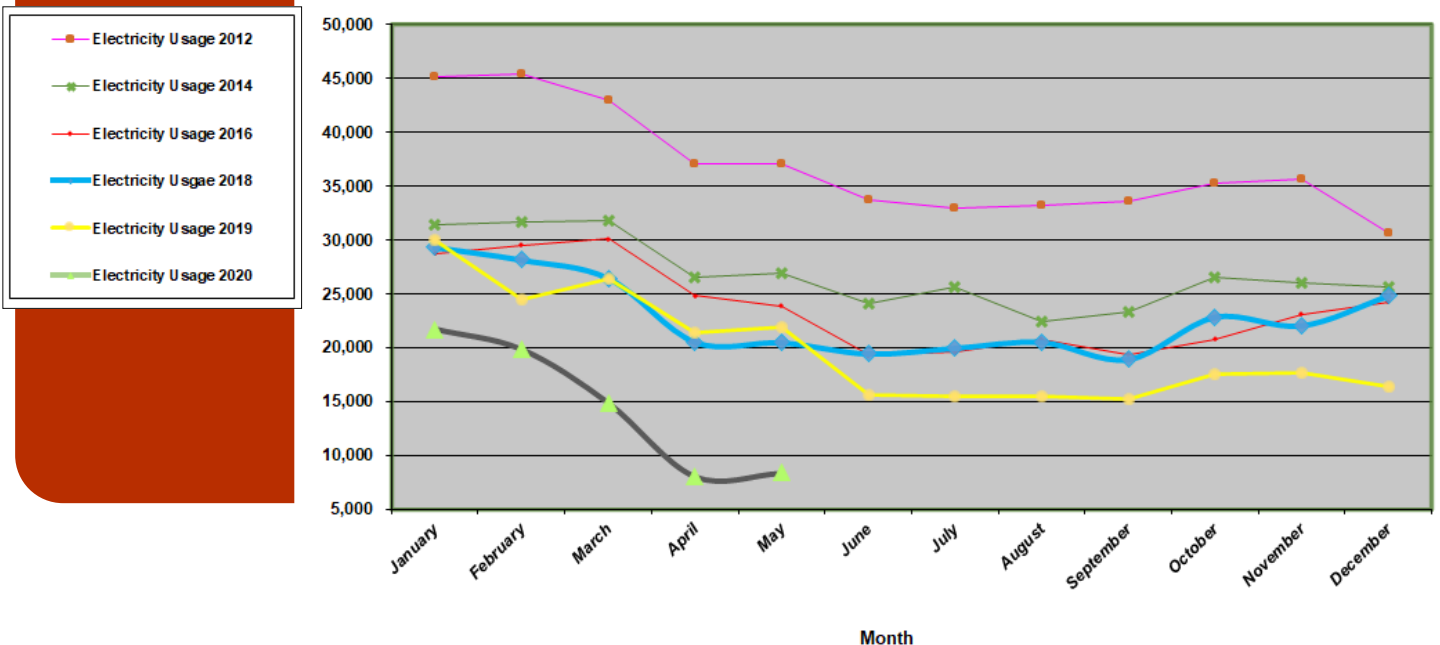
Upcoming works / happenings

- ⚙ Hard Rubbish - RHA will be doing a hard rubbish in the upcoming weeks and is interested to know if tenants need to dispose of any items from their office. Please contact rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au with any queries.
- ⚙ The Front Desk is being upgraded - an accessible desk with a safety screen is being installed.
- ⚙ There will be a new intercom system available to allow high-volume tenant visitors to safely enter Ross House. An email has been sent out regarding these works.



Ross House Association continues to make incredible energy savings as a result of sustainability works to the building, behaviour change and continued commitment from the entire Ross House community.

Electricity Comparison 2012 - 2020
 Ross House
 247-251 Flinders Lane Melbourne VIC 3000



Reflections by the RHA Chairperson - Christine McAuslan

"As I sit writing this, listening to the news on the radio after the June Zoom meeting of the Ross House Committee, I find there is much to reflect on.

This virus has not only invaded physical health but also our general and mental health wellbeing, causing a heightened level of anxiety for many.

To help allay any fears and anxiety you may have about returning to Ross House the 'Policies for Operating Ross House During COVID-19' was sent out recently to the membership. Hopefully, everyone has had the opportunity to read and digest this policy.

When we do return, will all have a part to play in ensuring Ross House remains a safe place for all users. Every effort is being made to address any issues prior to opening so we are well aware of what will be required. You will see some changes as you enter Ross House that have been made as outlined in the policy.

Of course, we have no advance knowledge of when government advice will alert us to the fact that we are able to return to work. Meanwhile, working from home where possible continues to be the advice. Obviously, this is not always achievable for everyone or the organisations they work for.

I know that some groups in Ross House will be receiving additional government funding that will enhance their ability to continue their work. Unfortunately, this is not the case for everyone as we are losing a few smaller organisations that have had, for various reasons, to rethink their ability to stay in the House. We will be sorry to see those groups go and thank them for their time and contribution as Ross House tenants.

We thank everyone for continuing to support Ross House during this difficult time and look forward to returning to Ross House as soon as we are able".



RHA Chairperson
Christine McAuslan



Stay Connected @ Ross House

Weekly emails (Stay Connected)

- ⚙ Thank you for all of your fantastic contributions over the past few weeks - it has been great to see and hear what you have all been up to. If you have anything you would like to share, please send it through to rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

Promotion addition

- ⚙ Please make use of our member and tenant promotional opportunities such as Facebook, Instagram and our e-bulletin, which goes out to over 600 subscribers weekly. Find out more by visiting our website > www.rosshouse.org.au or contact Katie on rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

Zoom

- ⚙ Many groups are using Zoom to stay connected. Zoom is a great platform for video and audio conferencing, chat and webinars. RHA have also set up Zoom conferencing for both staff meetings and committee meetings. If you need assistance setting up Zoom for your



Ross House kitchens

RHA have been making some changes to the kitchens of Ross House for a safe return for members and tenants.

What have we done?

- ⚙ Added cleaning tubs - tenants must be vigilant about cleaning before and after use. Signage has also been placed around to ensure a safe working environment.
- ⚙ RHA have introduced a policy that only tenants are allowed to use the fridges (no external users) and food must be labelled, or it will be discarded. Labels have been provided on the fridge doors.
- ⚙ RHA have introduced a one-person rule (at all times) in each of the kitchens.
- ⚙ RHA have removed all crockery - RHA will store these items for 6-months. must always bring their own crockery and keep it in their offices.

Thank you for your understanding - kitchens are communal spaces and must be kept clean by each user, not RHA staff.



Ross House meeting rooms

RHA have updated a few things in the meeting rooms.

What have we done?

- ⚙ Added cleaning tubs - tenants and external users must be vigilant about cleaning before and after use. This includes the wiping down of tables, chairs, light switches, door handles and equipment.
- ⚙ We have updated the rooms to reflect the COVID-19 maximum capacity (with clear signage upon entry).

Find out more by visiting <https://rosshouse.org.au/facilities/meeting-room-hire-melbourne/>.

Star Victoria - join us on Facebook

STAR Victoria have launched the STAR Victoria Facebook Page. It's a place to keep up to date with information and events for people (and their families) who have an intellectual disability.

From STAR:

- ⚙ If you have a Facebook account, we'd love you to like our page.
- ⚙ Find us here > <https://www.facebook.com/starvictoriainc/>.

If you have something you want us to promote or share, you can contact us through Messenger.

See you on Facebook!

Denise and the STAR Victoria team.



The East West Foundation

Did you know that the East West Foundation has been providing community development in disadvantaged communities in rural India for over 20 years?

During the COVID 19 pandemic they have managed to continue to deliver vital medical services and provide education on preventative measures to thousands of local villagers. Soon they will be issuing up to 4,000 free face masks to the community.

At their Children's Home, The East West Foundation continue to care for orphaned and abandoned children, as well as welcoming those former residents who have no other home during this crisis. They are also providing a reliable source of income to their many local employees, whether they are currently able to attend their job or not, as they would otherwise receive nothing.

If you are able to assist in any way, please donate > www.tewfa.org.au.



Disability Resource Centre campaign

Over the last few months, the Disability Resources Centre (DRC) have been working on a campaign to draw attention to the inaccessibility of the public transport system in Victoria and the huge impact that has on the lives of people with disabilities.

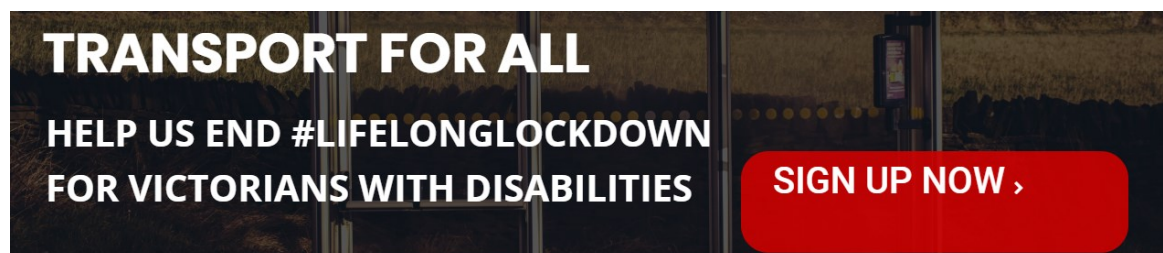
While the COVID-19 lockdown has given many a shared experience of physical and social isolation, this lockdown will end. But for many people with disabilities, lockdown life is normal life. Inaccessible public transport means that people with disabilities cannot fully participate in education, work, community and life. They are just not there.

Under the *National Disability Standards for Accessible Transport*, the Victorian government is required to make public transport fully accessible by 2032 and 90% accessible by 2022. However, despite decades of promises, there is no commitment to these dates, no sense of urgency and, without a renewed focus, there is no hope of meeting these deadlines. The Melbourne Tram network for instance is currently only 30% accessible.

In May DRC conducted its first digital action in partnership with Friends of the Earth. They asked those impacted by inaccessible transport (and people who understand that public transport needs to work for everyone) to post a picture of themselves with the hashtag **#LifelongLockdown**, tagging the minister for public transport. You can see some of the responses on their website.

If you are someone with a disability; if you have a friend or family member with a disability; if you push a child in a pram or buggy; if you are an older resident; if you know in your heart that every single one of us deserves equal access to life's opportunities, please sign the and join the campaign.

Visit the DRC 'Transport For All' campaign here > <http://drc.org.au/join-transport-for-all/>.




**BIM Virtual
Coffee Morning**

Monday 18th May
11am

COME PREPARED TO SHARE:
"WHAT'S THE MOST EMBARRASSING
ALBUM YOU'VE EVER OWNED?"



Brain Injury matters on Zoom

Ross House tenant, Brain Injury Matters (BIM), has been running a weekly Virtual Coffee Morning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Every Monday, for the past two months, BIM members have been getting together via Zoom to chat, check-in with each other and have a little bit of fun! Topics of discussion (to name a few) have been 'What is your favourite movie?', 'The record album you are embarrassed to own' or 'Your best travel destination'.

If you want to find about more about their coffee mornings (or BIM in general), please email office@braininjurymatters.org.



Brain Injury Matters

Gender Equity in Workplaces - NCWV

The National Council of Women of Victoria's (NCWV) May forum was cancelled due to COVID-19, however, the focus 'Gender Equity in Workplaces' became the topic for their May Zoom council meeting.

One of the proposed forum panel members, Professor Beth Gaze, was a key speaker at the meeting. Beth teaches Equality and Discrimination Law and Administrative Law at Melbourne Uni Law School and her research interests are in anti-discrimination and equality law, feminist legal thought, administrative law and socio-legal research. She has conducted research into the enforcement process under Australian anti-discrimination law, experiences of applicants in the social security appeal tribunals and the operation of adverse action provisions of the *Fair Work Act*. Beth spoke about the new *Victorian Government Gender Equality Act 2020* which seeks to promote and improve gender equality across the Victorian public sector, local councils and universities.



Victorian Government Gender Equality Act 2020 (about the Act)

It involves innovative powers and processes that have not previously been used in Australian law. It will commence on 31st March 2021. The government is working on developing the framework for its implementation, driven by the Minister for Women, the Hon Gabrielle Williams, with input from the public including a Citizen's Jury. It aims to take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality in policies and programs and delivering public services. Organisations need to undertake *workplace gender audits*, to assess gender equality and inequality in the workplace. These must be based on gender-disaggregated data and, if available, data about Aboriginality, age, disability, race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion and sexual orientation. They need to develop and implement *Gender Equality Action Plans* in 2021, updated every four years, with progress shown every two years against gender equality indicators. The Minister is also required to develop a *State Gender Equality Action Plan* every four years that will set a framework for taking coordinated action in Victoria to build behavioural, attitudinal, structural and normative change to improve gender equality, including a framework for progress on workplace gender equality, programs and services. The Office for Women is developing guidance documents to support organisations in doing the audit, action plan, assessment and progress reporting. The Act also provides for creating *gender targets or quotas* requiring these to be taken into account in gender audits with 'reasonable and material progress' to be made towards targets and quotas, a first in Australian equality law. <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/gender-equality-act-2020>.



Dr Deborah Towns OAM also spoke on other Gender Equity issues. The private sector is covered nationally by the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* and the Commonwealth Government (in 1984) introduced the *Sex Discrimination Act*. Other legislation at State and Federal level have passed, with Human Rights Commissioner and officer appointments. Progress towards equal pay has a longer history. In 1903 equal pay for equal work was on the agenda at NCWV's Congress. The industrial relations system endorsed this in 1969. However, there is still a gender wage gap today, with overall gender pay gap of 13.9% in Australia for full-time workers. When broken down into sectors it gets interesting, e.g., in finance and insurance where 1000s of women work, the pay gap is 22% (also in professional, scientific and technical work) and 22.3% in health care and social services. In education and public administration (70% are women) the pay gap is 12%. Many women work in caring, cleaning, catering and retail, often not full-time, poorly paid, with little opportunity to adequately support themselves (or their families if they are sole parents) and have to save for their retirement through superannuation and in other ways. The Male Champions of Change was established in 2010 to lead action on gender equality in workplaces, now with over 200 leaders of business, government, universities and military representing many different workplaces across Australia. They publish annual reports on progress and guidelines on how workplaces can change gender pay gap. Despite this, there has been little to no change.

Deborah and Elisabeth Newman, President of NCWV, have produced a briefing on some of these issues, sent to State and Federal politicians, the media and others.

www.ncwv.org.au.



Non Profit Training

Ross House member, Non Profit Training provides training for organisations all around Australia. Their sessions include topics on grant writing, finance, governance, board training, volunteer management, marketing and event promotion.



They currently deliver their training programs online via Zoom.

To find out more information (and to view their upcoming online training schedule) please visit: <https://nonprofittraining.com.au/>

Lotus Group Projects

Lotus Group Projects have been working hard behind the scenes on a Wisdom Sharing book. The book includes information about Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), causes and symptoms, personal stories, interviews with carers and other information gathered over the years to help people better understand ABI.



Lotus Group continues to be a group of people (and friends) with a disability who organise sessions and events for people of all abilities.

For further information (including partnership opportunities) please contact Lyn Macdonald on lotusgroupabi@gmail.com or 0413239236.

Reinforce Catch-ups

Reinforce have been having Coffee Morning catch ups on Zoom.



This week Reinforce had a fun "Creative Catch-up" with the gang and said farewell to Ellie, who's contract has sadly come to an end.

The coffee mornings are a chance for everyone to get together, have a chat and touch-base.

If you would like to find out more information, please visit their Facebook page here > [facebook.com/groups/137614290206750/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/137614290206750/).

Accessible Online Meetings

Practicing social distancing has changed the way we communicate, particularly with the rapid move to video conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Skype.

Being online can represent lots of challenges for people with disability, but it also provides opportunities that can lead to increased accessibility which enables people with disability to participate in a more equal and inclusive way.

This short resource has been created to help you make your online meetings more inclusive. Find out more by visiting <http://www.daru.org.au/lesson/accessible-online-meetings>.

Grantville Online recap - Community Music Victoria

"We did it! And it was SO. MUCH. FUN!"



"Thank you to everyone who tuned in and spent part (or all of) their Friday evening and Saturday with members of the Community Music Victoria (CMVic) team and workshop leaders from across Victoria, for the screen debut of Grantville Online CMVic Music Camp 2020!

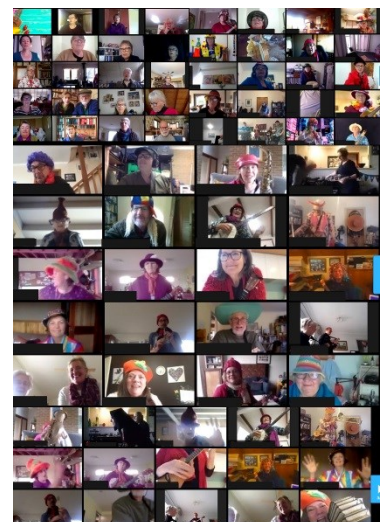
It was a huge success and heaps of fun - it felt so good to have an opportunity to strum, sing, honk, squeeze, bang, improvise and dance around the lounge room singing and playing whilst dressed in our finest wigs, spangles, feathers and garlands. We loved seeing all the smiles beaming back at us and even had participants who tuned in from Germany and the UK!

Thank you to all of the wonderful workshop leaders, volunteers, donors, everyone who contributed so generously to the leadership discussion and to each of the buddies, who gave their time so generously to help along a beginner with their appreciation and understanding of a new instrument.

If you took part, we'd LOVE to hear your feedback, if you haven't done so already.

See you all again, on screen or in real life soon!"

The CMVic team.



Grants and other support during the COVID-19 crisis

Please find information below on grants and other support that is available during the COVID-19 crisis.

Connected Communities Grants

The City of Melbourne is committed to supporting connected and inclusive communities. Connected Communities grants provide funding for projects that support our diverse communities by increasing community connection, social inclusion and access.

Grants are available to schools, not-for-profit community organisations and community groups to support projects in partnership:

- ⚙ Small Grants - funding up to \$1550 are available. This level of funding is aimed at supporting small not-for-profit organisations to support community connection, social inclusion, access and participation for City of Melbourne residents.
- ⚙ Impact Grants - funding between \$1551 and \$20,000 are available. This level of funding is aimed at supporting not-for-profit organisations to support community connection, social inclusion, access and participation for City of Melbourne residents.

Eligibility criteria:

- ⚙ Applicants must be a not-for-profit constituted body or a school. Applications to the Impact Grants stream may be auspiced (meaning an organisation agrees to take legal and financial responsibility for administering the grant on your behalf, if you're not eligible or unable to apply for funding).
- ⚙ Organisations must be located within (or offer a project within) the City of Melbourne municipality.
- ⚙ Applications must have a focus on local and / or vulnerable communities.
- ⚙ Applicants must have fully acquitted previous completed grants and have no outstanding debts to the City of Melbourne.
- ⚙ A single project, event or activity will only be considered for one City of Melbourne grant program at a time.

Applications for projects taking place in 2021 open at 9am Monday 22nd June and close at 5pm Monday 20th July 2020.

Find out more information by visiting <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/strong-communities/funding-grants/pages/community-grants.aspx>.



Grants continued.....

Kenneth Myer Innovation Fellowships

The Kenneth Myer Innovation Fellowships aim to support breakthrough solutions to Australia’s most pressing social and environmental challenges and bring new talent to the social sector.

Fellows are offered the unique opportunity to take twelve months away from their current role to pursue a big idea that has the potential to achieve positive outcomes in the areas of:

- ⚙ Poverty and Disadvantage
- ⚙ Sustainability and Environment
- ⚙ Human, Civil and Legal Rights

Fellows will each receive \$120,000 for their 12-month commitment to the program and an additional \$30,000 will be available to each Fellow for approved expenses such as work space, rent, travel and contracting of external expertise.

The closing Date is 10th January 2021. Find out more information by visiting

<https://myerfoundation.org.au/grants/other-programs/mif/>.



2020-2021 Leases

Thank you so much to all the Tenants who took the time and made the effort to sign the electronic version of the Lease agreement for 2020-2021. We made the decision to try this new system, due to the COVID-19 restrictions and it was a huge success. The majority of Leases were returned promptly and without any issues. The general feedback was that it was a straightforward process and many tenants were happy with this more environmentally friendly version. However, we are still waiting on a few to be returned.

Please sign them as soon as possible, and if you are having any issues, please contact Katie to guide you through, or Rebecca, if you have any questions regarding the lease itself.

Thank you!



DBV celebrates DeafBlind Awareness Week

Ross House tenant, Deafblind Victoria (DBV) celebrated Deafblind Awareness Week (21st - 27th June 2020) by selling slogan ‘*Hear by Touch, Speak by Sign*’ t-shirts.

Not only will these t-shirts raise vital funds to advocate for the Deafblind community, but it will also improve awareness of deafblindness as a whole.

It is not too late to have one of your own - you can purchase one by visiting www.deafblindvictoria.com. You can also watch the Auslan video by visiting their [Facebook page](#).



RHA monthly invoices

Ross House Association would like to thank the members and tenants for paying their June 2020 invoices.



to the SARU weekly newsletter

Stuck At Home

Don't forget to tune into SARU's weekly 'Stuck At Home' newsletter. Contact Sue on saru@rosshouse.org.au for more information.



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Email: rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au

www.rosshouse.org.au

in the house is a Ross House Association internal publication, produced six times a year.

If you would like to contribute an article, promote an event or share some exciting news about your organisation, keep your eye out for an email from Katie, advising of submission deadlines.

Please send all submissions to:
rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au

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You are receiving this newsletter because you are a member of Ross House Association. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send an email to rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

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