

2025 AGM Recap

FROM THE ROSS HOUSE TEAM

This year's RHA AGM was held on Tuesday 25th November 2025, online via Zoom and in the Hayden Raysmith Room 4.1, followed by our end of year gathering. The meeting opened with the usual formalities, followed by the Chairperson's Report and the presentation of financial reports. The 2026–2027 membership fee will remain at \$95 + GST, and the Postal Address Fee will remain at \$160 + GST, with the due date for payment set for 31st July 2026. Committee elections followed.

Ally Scott (DRC) was re-elected as an Ordinary Committee Member for a 1-year term, entering her third year with the committee. Pia Cameron (Woor-Dungin) was elected as Secretary for a 2-year term, and Sally Davis was elected as an Appointed Member for a 1-year term.

Two current committee members continue in their existing roles. Colin Neave AM (ABC Friends Victoria) remains as Chairperson, and Alba Chliakhtine (ABRISA) continues as Treasurer, both with one year remaining on their current terms.

The AGM also saw Maggie Maguire step down after five years of service across multiple tenures as an Appointed Committee Member. Maggie was thanked for her commitment to the Ross House community and presented with a recognition plaque and a bunch of flowers from local florist Pollen.

The meeting closed with a first viewing of a draft video recap from the Ross House Open Day held in July as part of Open House Melbourne. The footage was captured and edited by tenant Mixed Nuts Media. A final version of the video will be published on the Ross House website in early 2026.

Following the AGM, we held our end of year party, with this year's theme set as "Summer Picnic". Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the day a success. Please see page 11 of this newsletter for photos from the event.

Included In This Issue

Building and Maintenance

Melbourne Rail updates

Colin's Corner

RHA AGM Recap Photos

Grants and Assistance

Update from DBV

Tenant Feature: Alex Makes Meals

Update from NCWV

Community Calendar

RHA Closure Period



Ross House Association acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where
we live, learn and work. We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri
people of the Kulin Nation and the traditional owners of the land on
which Ross House is located. We pay our respects to their Elders, past,
present and emerging.







Colin's Corner

Welcome to Colin's Corner!

Colin Neave AM, Chairperson of the Ross House Association, shares some thoughts and highlights from the last couple of months.

Thank you to everyone who came along to the AGM on Tuesday 25th November. During the meeting I found myself thinking back to my days as a young lawyer. I worked closely with the Managing Director of Toyota at the time, who lived here for about five years. He taught me to be committed to quality in everything we did. But he also said that the best meetings were the ones where people laughed and genuinely connected with each other.

That was exactly the feeling at the AGM. There was plenty of good humour and real engagement among everyone in the room. And what I love about Ross House is that this spirit is not limited to events. I get so much pleasure from wandering the halls and hearing people laughing and chatting enthusiastically about their work and the marvellous things they have achieved for the causes they serve.



[ID: photo of Colin Neave wearing a checkered shirt, standing in front of green foliage smiling at the camera].

These conversations might seem small, but to me they are signs of a healthy thriving community. Ross House is here to support and encourage our members to connect and flourish.

Thank you for bringing that energy into the AGM. The warmth and camaraderie in the room set a positive tone for the year ahead. So please keep the conversation and laughter going. Celebrate your wins together, big or small. And if you see me in the hallways, say hello and tell me what you're working on. I always enjoy hearing it.

Ollere.

Colin Neave AM, Chairperson Ross House Association

RHA COMMITTEE 2025/26

Chairperson Colin Neave AM (ABC Friends)

TreasurerAlba Chliakhtine
(ABRISA)

Ally Scott (Ordinary Member DRC)

Sally Davis (Appointed Member)

SecretaryPia Cameron
Woor-Dungin

Nazzareno Marchionda (Appointed Member RHA Staff)

Michael Griffiths (Ex-Officio, RHA CEO)



Building and Maintenance

FROM THE ROSS HOUSE TEAM

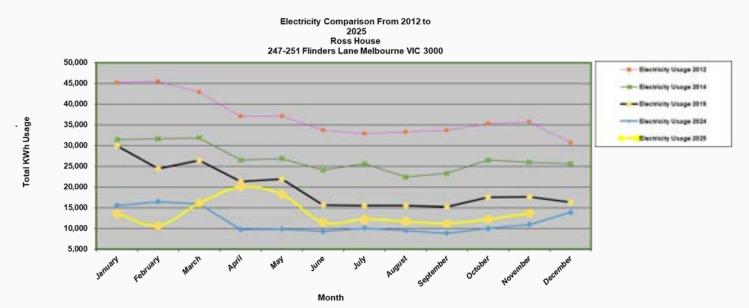
There is always a lot going on in this big old building of ours, so please make sure you keep an eye out for the building maintenance emails that circulate regularly.

Current and completed works:

- Ceiling fans have been installed in both the Jenny Florence and Hayden Raysmith Room. Switches are located on the walls as you enter each space. Please be reminded to turn them off after use.
- Cremone Stoneworks have completed External Sprinkler Repairs to the Eastern Façade of Ross House.
- We are upgrading furniture in both the Jenny Florence and Hayden Raysmith Room. The second-hand furniture will be delivered on Monday 15th December 2025. A notification regarding Lift Access Disruption has been emailed to you.
- To improve security, eight cameras have been installed in the front and rear stairwells.

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.





IN THE HOUSE: DECEMBER 2025

Building & Maintenance Continued...

Over the closure period, vinyl flooring repairs and replacements, as well as some painting, will take place throughout the building. We recommend working from home during this period if possible.

Vinyl Replacement works Friday 27 - Monday 30 December 2025

Parts of the building will be inaccessible during this period.



No access via stairs between Lower Ground and Level 1. The vinyl flooring on the Ground Floor landing outside the lift doors is being replaced.

Monday 29th - Tuesday 30th: No access to Level 4.

The vinyl flooring is being replaced in the Foyer and Kitchenette on level 4.

Painting of Lift Entrances 27 December - 2 January

Julio will be painting all the lift entrances over this period. Please be advised that he will be using an oil-based enamel paint, which will give off a strong odour.



[ID: Blue graphics a Wi-Fi logo sits on a light-grey background].

Steam Cleaning

Carpets to be steam cleaned over the Xmas/New Year close down period.

Building Wi-Fi Upgrade

Over the past few months, all tenant and meeting room Wi-Fi networks have been migrated to a single universal network called RH-Wi-Fi. This has been a major project, and we want to give a big shout-out to Nazz, our Facility Manager, for his hard work in making this happen. Thank you also to all tenants and building users for your patience throughout the process.

Nazz has already contacted most tenants about the changeover, but if he hasn't reached you yet, or if you are still experiencing any Wi-Fi issues, please email the front desk rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au so we can assist.

IN THE HOUSE: DECEMBER 2025



Metro Rail Update

FROM THE ROSS HOUSE TEAM

These are the planned and current works for the Melbourne Metro Rail Project.

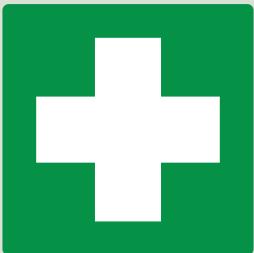
Works within the Town Hall Station precinct during December 2025 and January 2026 include:

- Station entrance construction and underground build-out works at the Flinders Quarter and Federation Square sites.
- Awning reinstatement preparatory works at 244 Flinders Street.
- Reinstatement works to Flinders Street eastbound.

For more information on these works, see the <u>December 2025 to January 2026 Town Hall construction update (PDF, 2.3 MB)</u>.

If you have any questions regarding these works or would like more information on the project, please visit www.metrotunnel.vic.gov.au or phone 1800 551 927.

If you have something you would like to contribute to the next RHA Newsletter, please email Katie or Carol at rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au



First Aid Course: General & CPR

We are organising a First Aid course on Thursday 18th March 2026 for members and tenants.

There will be two parts to the day, General First Aid and a CPR component.

Where? Hayden Raysmith Room

When? Thursday 18th March 2025

Cost? \$135 per person for General First Aid and CPR, 9:30am - 4pm

\$65 per person for CPR only, 9:30am - 11:30am

This is just a Save the Date; more information and RSVP info will be emailed to you in the New Year.

If you or anyone from your organisation would be interested in participating, please get in touch with Katie or Nazz at rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au.

Tenant Feature:

Alex Makes Meals

In the heart of Melbourne, during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Alex Dekker initiated a mission to help feed Melbourne's vulnerable. With the challenges of the pandemic preventing him from visiting his immunocompromised family, Alex channeled his energy into supporting his sister, a frontliner, and her colleagues by preparing hearty meals. Starting with a single lasagna that was an instant hit, the idea blossomed, and Alex Makes Meals emerged.

From its humble beginnings, Alex Makes Meals has evolved from a one-man mission to a thriving food charity in Melbourne. With a strong team of over 80 passionate volunteers and sustained by generous donations, we're dedicated to ensuring that no human goes hungry.

Recognised as a leading food charity in Melbourne, Alex Makes Meals has a crucial mission: to deliver warm, nutritious meals to the city's homeless and those facing disadvantage. The urgency of our cause is underscored by the 2016 Australian Census. which recorded a significant number of individuals experiencing homelessness.

No individual, especially in a city as vibrant as Melbourne, should face the uncertainty of their next meal. Hunger affects one's ability to function both in daily tasks and socially. With your support, you can donate meals, providing sustenance and hope to those in need.



[ID: Two people wearing catering attire, pack food and equipment outside a retail shop setting].

Donate Now

They are firm believers that community starts at home. By donating to Alex Makes Meals, you're supporting a local cause with a direct, measurable impact: every dollar you contribute ensures that someone hungry in Melbourne goes to bed fed.

Alex Makes Meals currently make and donate 3,000 meals a week to Melbournians in need, but our work is far from done. Local charities have requested an additional 10,000 meals a week from us, and we can't yet provide for them. Can you help us clear this waitlist?

To find out more information about Alex Makes Meals, please visit www.alexmakesmeals.com.

[ID below: Three people put food in takeaway containers in an industrial kitchen].



IN THE HOUSE: DECEMBER 2025 PAGE 8

Grants and Assistance Programs

BY RHA

These are some of the grants and assistance programs currently available that we think might interest you.

Agency Collaborates GoldenWeb website annual grant

GoldenWeb

Are you a small non profit organisation in need of a new website? Each year, GoldenWeb builds one WordPress website for free for a NFP or charity.

You:

- Must be a SMALL organisation, who otherwise would be struggling to fund your website project
- Must be based in Australia
- Must be 100% onboard with the project; willing to provide content and feedback in a timely manner
- Able to cover the cost of web hosting and domain registration, generally less than \$300 for the year.

Eligibility: Not-for-profits

Round: Open Now

Closes: 31st December 2025

Apply:

https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/S how?GoUuid=af51f2f8-e3e3-4628-9a9d-ab0607ca11e8



Disability Self Help Grants program

Department of Families,
Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
(VIC)

Provides grants to Victorian disability self-help groups in need of financial assistance to meet some of their costs.

Assisting with those costs helps self-help groups to provide social, emotional and practical support to their members.

Eligibility: Not-for-Profits

Round: open now, Closes 27th - January 2026 4pm

Funding: Grants of up to \$7,000 per year for 1 or 2 years

Apply:

https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au /disability-self-help-grantsprogram

SEE First Nations grants – Delivery Grants

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

The program will fund placebased whole of community projects designed to meet the community's English language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy training needs.

Will fund First Nations organisations to work with communities to design appropriate training who demonstrate that they have experience delivering this kind of training to First Nations Australians and they have true community support.

Eligibility: Not-for-Profits, Businesses

Round: open now, Closes 9th February 2026 3pm (AEST)

Funding:

\$350,000 to \$3,000,000

Apply:

https://dewr.smartygrants.com. au/SEEFNDG_R03

IN THE HOUSE: DECEMBER 2025

Congratulations DBV!

BY DEAFBLIND VICTORIA

Deafblind Victoria turned 18 this year and we had a massive party to mark the occasion!

On Friday 19 September, staff, members and friends of DBV gathered at the Victoria Hotel Ballroom to celebrate this huge milestone, and to reflect on just how far we've come.

Thirty Deafblind people joined the celebration, along with many Auslan interpreters, commguides, volunteers, and our friends from Expression Australia, Able Australia, Travellers Aid, and beyond. The room was filled with energy, laughter, and plenty of memories.

Highlights included:

DBV co-founders Michelle Stevens and Heather Lawson being honoured with Lifetime Achievement Awards for their incredible service and leadership.

DBV President Alex Sar reminding us of our proudest achievement – that most of DBV's staff are Deafblind. All these years later DBV continues its groundbreaking work, building new generations of strong Deafblind leaders.

Looking around the room, it was clear how much DBV has grown. This may have been the biggest Deafblind event yet (outside of camp)!

A huge thank you to everyone who came along, especially friends who travelled from across Victoria and interstate to be with us, and to all the interpreters, commguides, volunteers and service providers who made the event possible. And a special thank you to Expression Australia for supporting this amazing celebration.

IN THE HOUSE: DECEMBER 2025



[ID: Michelle Stevens & Heather Lawson are holding up their Lifetime Achievement Awards, smiling at the camera].

Eighteen years on, and we're still going strong. Here's cheers to the future of Deafblind Victoria!

www.deafblindvictoria.com

[ID below: DBV members gather in a function room setting, smiling at the camera].









You are invited to the SARU VSAN Christmas party





Come have fun and catch up with friends!



When: Tuesday 16 December



Where: Level 4 Hayden Raysmith Room Ross House



Time: 11am - 2pm



There will be lunch and music!



If you want to come email jessica@saru.org.au Or call (03) 9639 6856



If you have any dietary requirements please let us know



Let's Add Some Pink in Aviation

BY NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN VICTORIA (NCWV)

Let's Add Some Pink in Aviation. We will celebrate the achievements of the Australian women who have contributed to the development of the industry over the past century.

Women have played an important role in the founding of Australia's aviation industry.

Young women in Australia saw accomplishments elsewhere and dreamt big. One was Nancy Bird-Walton. Known as the 'Angel of the Outback', Nancy always aspired to a career of flying. During a time where aviation was a curiosity for women, other women such as Jean Burns, Millicent Bryant and Mary Bell also had ambitions to make a living out of flying and being a pilot.

Under the tutelage of Charles Kingsford Smith, at the age of 19, Nancy became Australia's youngest woman to gain a pilot licence.



[ID: photo of the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden; a rectangle pave-stoned landscape sits on a flat green garden with trees and a pond].

Speakers at NCWV's celebration will include Adrianne Fleming OAM, Pilot and Head of Operations and CASA Flight Examiner for Tristar Aviation, has held various state and national positions in the Australian Women Pilots' Association, encouraging women to pursue their aviation dreams. She received the Nancy Bird Walton award 2012 for the most noteworthy contribution to aviation in Australasia, and the Order of Australia Medal for services to the Aviation industry in 2016.

Join the National Council of Women of Victoria, bring a picnic and enjoy this beautiful location.

Where? Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, King's Domain, Melbourne

When? Sunday 1st February 2026 at 11am

For more information about NCWV, please visit:

www.ncwv.org.au



The First Statewide Treaty is Now Law in Victoria

BY ANTAR VICTORIA

It was a wonderful month to have the window display at Ross House as seen in the pictures on page 17 of this newsletter.

Treaty was enshrined into law across two events on the banks of the Birrarung and at Government House. You can read more on the First Peoples' Assembly website here:

https://firstpeoplesvic.org/news/australiasfirst-treaty-signed-in-victoria/? utm_campaign=Treaty+Signed+into+Law+-+Enrolees

This marks the beginning of a new Treaty era and a powerful new chapter in our shared history.

The Treaty signing ensures that the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria will now be a permanent representative and decision-making body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here in Victoria.



[[ID: ANTaR logo - red, yellow and black hands make a circle to the left of black text saying 'Together, we are ANTaR Victoria].

If you want to learn more or get involved:

There are monthly Treaty webinars! And it's a perfect place for interested people to learn about Treaty and ask any questions they may have!

Save the date! for a celebration event in Federation Square in the evening of Friday 12th December.

In the media...

As always, we encourage our ally organisations to read and share positive Treaty media; to educate yourselves and your audiences and ensure you can share factual Treaty information:

- Victorian Aboriginal News: Victorian Treaty a deep dive into the legislation and proposed Treaty with Rueben Berg
- Australia's first treaty with Aboriginal people signed in Victoria - ABC News
- Victoria treaty: Historic agreement signed with First Peoples – The Age

www.antarvictoria.org.au

Congratulations Aussie Hands!

A huge congratulations to Ross House member, Aussie Hands who celebrated 25 years on Saturday 18th October 2025 at the Royal Children's Hospital Foundation, what a great milestone.

You can read more about the media release from this joyous occasion by visiting:

www.keychangecommunications.com.au/port folio/he-never-saw-any-barriers-aussiehands-marks-25-years/



[ID: Michael Serpell and his mother, Aussie Hands founder Elizabeth Borg (with Teddy). Picture: Lesa Scholl].

For more information about Aussie Hands, please visit www.aussiehands.org.



DECEMBER 2025

Friday 12th December - RHA office closed from 11:30am for staff function.

Wednesday 18th December -International Migrants Day

Friday 19th December - RHA office closed for the holidays from 3pm

ID below: Crowds gather outside Flinders Street Station. A large Aboriginal flag encompasses the left-hand side of the image].

JANUARY 2026

Monday 5th January 2026 - RHA staff return to the office, 10am

1st - 31st January - Veganuary

Thursday 1st January - National Slavery & Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Thursday 4th **January** - World Braille Day

Monday 26th January - Invasion Day

Sunday 18th January - Thursday 8th February - Midsumma Festival



Sunday 1st February - Pioneer Women in Aviation, Celebrating Women in Aviation Week, NCWV event

Wednesday 4th February -Physical Disability Awareness Day

Friday 6th February -International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

Friday 20th February - World Day of Social Justice

Saturday 21st February -International Mother Language Day



If you would like to add your event to our Community Calendar, in our next In the House, please email rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au or phone (03) 9650 1599.

Give a Gift that Grows

BY TREEPROJECT

Are you searching for a gift that carries meaning far beyond the moment of unwrapping?

Give a gift that grows.

When you choose a TreeProject Special Occasions Card, you're helping plant indigenous seedlings that return life to the land supporting farmers, restoring Country, and creating healthier habitats for wildlife and future generations.

Each \$2 plant nurtures one native tree, caring for the soil, waterways, and ecosystems that have sustained us for thousands of years.

It's thoughtful. It's impactful.



[ID: a close-up photo of yellow golden wattle].

And instead of sitting on a shelf, your gift takes root in the earth and becomes part of a living landscape.

Shop Special Occasions Cards here: treeproject.org.au/special-occasion-gift-card/

For more information about TreeProject, please visit www.treeproject.org.au.

the e-bulletin



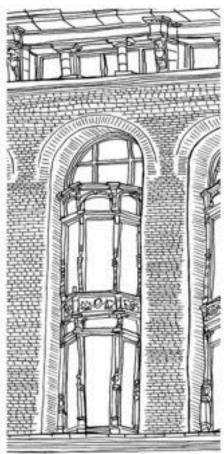
Weekly guide to environmental and social justice happenings in Melbourne

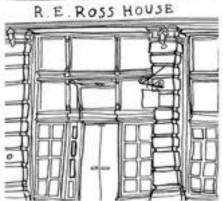
STAY CONNECTED AND SIGN UP TO THE WEEKLY E-BULLETIN

Ross House produces a weekly e-bulletin that highlights upcoming workshops and webinars for NFP organisations, and member and tenant events. The e-bulletin goes out every Thursday so please feel free to send us your exciting news to share!

Sign up on the homepage of our website at rosshouse.org.au (scroll to the bottom of the home page) or by clicking here.

View previous publications by visiting our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/rosshouseassociation/ and following the links!





Friday 12th December

We are closing the office and locking the building early for our end-of-year staff event!

- Building and office closes: 11:30 am, Friday 12th December
- Building and office reopens: 10 am, Monday 15th December

Friday 19th December - Monday 5th January

Ross House office will be closed and the building doors locked for two weeks over the New Year.

- Building and office closes: 3:00 pm, Friday 19th December
- Building and office reopens: 10 am, Monday 5th January 2026
- During this holiday closure, new meeting room bookings can only be made through the front desk.
 Please email or visit Katie or Carol by 11:00 am on Thursday, 18th December, if you need to request a booking during this period.

See our FAQ's at www.rosshouse.org.au/about/faq/ for information regarding ACCESS during these closure periods.

If you have any questions, please contact reception on (03) 9650 1599.

For emergencies please contact Security on 1300 02 04 06

RHA Office & Building Closures



2025 Window Displays

The Ross House team would like to say a big "Thanks!" to our members who had wonderful window displays throughout that we all got to enjoy and learn from.

We know how much effort and planning goes into each display and it's always exciting to see how the space is cleverly utilised to best effect. Well done to everyone who put up their hand to put up a display!

In October the window featured Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) coinciding with the Victorian Seniors Festival.

In November the window proudly showcased a display by ANTaR Victoria, celebrating Australia's first treaty. During the month the treaty was passed through parliament and was then signed in officially by the Victorian First Nations People and the state government.

Please check out the photos of the great displays below.

Rounding off the year for December 2025 and into January 2026, the window houses an eye-catching display from Victorian Self Advocacy Network (VSAN) SARU promoting their "Disability Is Not a Target" campaign which saw a march to the steps of parliament on December 3rd, the International Day of People with Disability.



[ID: Antar Victoria promote a colourful display of the First Statewide Treaty becoming law].

2026 Window Display

We're very much looking forward to year's window displays in 2026! It's such a great way to showcase the different organisations who call Ross House home and I've witnessed myself the people who pause to look and learn as they pass by our front.

Thank you to everyone for their enthusiasm with filling our window. Many months are booked up with some great 2026 displays but there are still some months available. Let me know as soon as possible if you would like to find out more.

For any queries about our window displays, please get in touch with Carol at rosshouse.org.au.

[ID below: Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) display their 'Home at Last' project'. Left: VSAN & SARU display].



Happy Holidays from the RHA Team!

On behalf of the Ross House team, thank you for your continued support over the past year!

Please take note of the important office and building closure information below.

Friday 12 December, 2025

We are closing the office and locking the building doors early for our end-of-year staff event!

Building and office closes: 11:30 am, Friday 12th December

Building and office reopens: 10 am, Monday 15th December

Friday 19 December - Sunday 4 January, 2026

Ross House office will be closed and the building doors locked for two weeks over the New Year.

Building and office closes: 3:00 pm, Friday 19th December

Building and office reopens: 10 am, Monday 5th January 2026

Access: You will need your swipe fob or access code to enter the building. If you have booked a meeting room, you will need the 4-digit access code found in your booking confirmation email to gain access.

Please note: To help keep the building secure, during the two-week holiday closure, new meeting room bookings can only be made through the front desk. Please email or visit Katie or Carol by 11am on Thursday, 18th December, if you need to request a booking during this period.

We hope you have a wonderful break and will look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Important contact information:

Ross House office: (03) 9650 1599 / rosshouse@rosshouse.org.au / www.rosshouse.org.au

Security: 1300 02 04 06 Emergency Services: 000

Ross House Mail holding:



Ross House mail will be held at the post office during the holiday period from 3pm, Friday 19th December 2025 to Monday 5th January 2025. Deliveries will not be accepted at the Front Desk during this period so ensure parcels are re-directed or managed yourself for collection.



ROSS HOUSE
ASSOCIATION
STAFF THANK
YOU FOR
YOUR
CONTINUED
SUPPORT!



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Casual Staff: Patti Gerkens & Olivia Muscat

In The House is a Ross House Association internal publication, produced five 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 us, advising of submission deadlines.

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



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