



## Geelong West Neighbourhood House

*Celebrating Diversity, Building Community*

### **2022 Coordinators Annual Report**

It has been so good to see the lifting of restrictions due to Covid this year and see so many people return to Neighbourhood House activities and once again be out and about connecting with community. Many of our classes have been full to capacity and we have managed to run a few successful workshops this year such as cheesemaking.

We have also had several new room hirers including belly dancing, Zumba, karate for kids, sisters of twilight, sing out Geelong and of course the chess club, which we had a success in gaining funding to provide free chess lessons for children this year. It is so important that we provide space for other community groups to meet and connect around their own interest groups.

We also welcomed Geelong Rainbow at the end of last year. They have an office to work from, meeting rooms to use and the hall for activities and events. They held an amazing festival in West Park and the hall in April after a march through Geelong.

We introduced our Artist in Residence Program this year and she has worked on several Community Arts Projects with amazing results in some beautiful art works by some very talented artists and has even had an exhibition at the Geelong West Library and produced some quality greeting cards.

We have also launched a new up to date website this year, which is much more dynamic and responsive to our needs and uses some data analytics to get so much more useful and usable data. We also conducted our second annual survey this year and gained some further insight into what works and doesn't work for our community.

Our Café Care Connect program came to an end at the end of June after 6 years. It was a sad and difficult time for everyone but lovely to see connections have remained between participants and the facilitators.

Also in June we once again, after a 2 year break, enjoyed the Winter Solstice. It was a fantastic evening with dancing, music, fire twirling, drumming and of course a lantern parade. We finished the night with a bush dance in the hall, which delighted

all those who stayed to dance the evening away. It was wonderful to see families picnic in the park, even if it was cold and delight in the festivities.

I also joined the Barwon Network executive committee this year and sat on the stakeholder working party. This was a great experience to really get to know the sector on a bigger level and help shape the future of the network.

We were successful in gaining some grants, in particular from City of Greater Geelong. For the first time this month we will be participating in Children's week by putting on a performance with Granny Lee. We hope this is the start of including more young people and families into the Neighbourhood House. We will also be running some groups for elderly members of the community, who experience social isolation. We will also be putting on an event in early December for positive ageing with Colin Mockett, Strength and Grace – women who shaped Geelong.

We also took on a role as administrators for State Governments Power Saving Bonus. This has helped quite a number of people in the community who don't have access to a computer or email to apply for this grant.

I would like to thank the Committee for their commitment and hard work to ensure the house is meeting all of its Governance requirements. This year they were able to pass a significant number of policies and procedures to ensure the house runs consistently with purpose.

I would like to thank the tutors and facilitators for being so flexible and responsive to the communities needs throughout the year.

I'd like to thank Deb Wilson and Corneil Du Plessus, our bookkeepers for their amazing work throughout the year.

Thanks to CoGG and DFFH for ongoing support and funding opportunities.

Thanks to NHVic and Barwon Network for their guidance and knowledge to ensure we are at the cutting edge of good Governance and Community Development.

Finally, thanks to all of our participants, friends and supporters, the true backbone of any Neighbourhood House and without such support, we would not exist.

**Lisa Young**

Coordinator