



# Annual Report

## High Street Bells Choir Inc

**1 January – 31 December 2019**

### President's Report

A major development for the Choir in 2019 was the appointment at the beginning of term 3 of a second music director, Chris Falk, to share the position with Sarah Mandie. This job-sharing arrangement has been well received by singers and has both strengthened us and given us more flexibility. The fresh ideas that Chris brings dovetail with our existing practices and the musical culture that Sarah has fostered.

In this final year of our five-year strategic plan, some initial reflections are warranted. We have clearly made progress in each of four key goals. Establishing policy and procedures around the payment of membership fees has increased our income from this source; we have worked closely with individual case managers to ensure that choir membership costs are included where possible in NDIS Individual Service Plans.

Partnerships with service providers and community organisations continue to develop. A particular challenge is maintaining a flow of information that promotes engagement with the choir. In 2019 videographer Sam Osborn completed our video project, producing three short films focusing on different aspects of the choir, which complement the longer film he created in 2018. Our Facebook page has also become a major form of engagement with our members and the larger community due to the many and varied posts by our volunteer Robyn.

It becomes ever more apparent that the choir is a strong and caring community. Each week singers and volunteers listen to each other's news, both sad and happy, during a regular sharing segment at the beginning of each session. Many carers who accompany our singers also participate enthusiastically and have become very much part of the choir. Our dedicated volunteers have also developed even

more as an essential support to the choir - they also offer support and friendship to each other.

We have had more invitations to perform than we could accept in 2019, indicating that our public profile is growing. Fees for some of these performances have helped our bottom line but also validated us as a choir.

We remain extremely grateful to those organisations and individuals who have supported us financially in 2019.

Our music directors' dedication goes beyond their official duties. They put care and thought into the choir's repertoire and also participate in volunteer events, meetings etc. And words cannot express how much we appreciate our volunteer accompanist Jan Briggs, both for her piano playing and for her nurturing of several choir instrumentalists, whom she has named the 'Bells and Whistles'. Finally, I acknowledge the work of our administrative officer, Sally Green, in engaging with singers and keeping things ticking over, often 'behind the scenes'.

The choir would not exist without its wonderful team of volunteers, who assist with drop-off and pick-up, seating arrangements, equipment set-up, lunch preparation and many other tasks. I especially acknowledge the volunteers on our Committee of Management: Tom Russell, Jan Clare, and Ethel Fredericks (who is also a family carer). David Joy and Scott Macfie are the Committee's singer representatives, and both make an important contribution. My fellow office bearers – Katherine Wositzky (Vic-President), Judy Rassaby (Secretary) and Nettie Harper (Treasurer) are a powerhouse team and a pleasure to work with.

**Julie Contole**

## Music Directors' Report

2019 was a fun filled year of new songs, community performances and strengthening of the choir as a community of its own. The integrated nature of the choir and the genuine inclusivity that exists for all choir members, carers and volunteers continues to make the High Street Bells a unique phenomenon. Songs that were popular with the choir included 'Sing, Sing a Song', 'Straighten Up and Fly Right' (featuring our kazoo players) and the high energy of 'Iko Iko' with percussion accompaniment. We learnt some new 'old style' songs like 'Blue Skies' and the country song 'Blue Bayou'. We learnt more about using percussion to add to our musical growth and enjoyment and some simple harmony singing kept us all challenged.

As a choir we have experienced the joys of community exchange through performance. The year started with an uplifting and entertaining gig for the Volunteering Victoria forum at Box Hill Town Hall. The choir also performed for the Richmond Football Club's Diversity and Inclusion Policy Launch. This was a fabulous gig, especially enjoyed by our die hard Richmond fans, Andrew and Terry. Judy Rassaby stepped in and did a great job leading the choir as Sarah and Chris were unable to be there. Later in the year we received a great response when we appeared at the launch of the City of Darebin's new facility for people with disabilities, called a 'Changing Place'. Our concert at choir member Enzo's residence was also an amazing experience. The audience sang along and the joy in the room was evident, as was Enzo's pride.

The year ended with the choir's first appearance on the outdoor Federation Square stage featuring Christmas songs. It was something special for everyone. We also performed at St Vincent's Hospital for our annual end of year sing and party, and a smaller group of us sang outside the Preston Town Hall for the City of Darebin's Christmas street entertainment.

In 2020 we will continue to learn a diverse range of songs, sing our favourites and continue to teach and learn simple harmony singing.

### Sarah Mandie & Chris Falk



## Treasurer's Finance Report January to December 2019

During the 12-month period to 31 December 2019 there were cash receipts of \$14,702 and payments of \$18,308. Operating costs were lower than 2018 (see note 4) whilst fees paid to the Musical Director and the Administration Officer remained relatively stable.

There was a drop in income from both Grants and Donations. An effort was made to be more efficient in collecting annual Membership fees from participants. This was relatively successful, although the income stream from fees only contributes about 20% to the overall costs.

A microphone and speaker purchased in 2015 for \$112.80 has been written off as it is no longer working. This has no impact as the reports are prepared on a cash basis.

The bank balance at the end of December was \$13,614, which is less than 1 years operating costs. Sustainable funding remains a significant challenge for the Choir.



Lyn Harper

### HIGH STREET BELLS CHOIR INC SPECIAL PURPOSE STATEMENT for 12 months 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019

CASH RECEIPTS	<i>Notes (see over)</i>	<b>2019</b>		<b>2018</b>
Grants	1	8,200		14,502
Fees		3,225		2,686
Fundraising		2,011		2,323
Donations	2	1,265		9,575
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>			<b>14,702</b>	<b>29,086</b>
<b>CASH PAYMENTS</b>				
Grant acquittals				
Musical Directors fees		9,000		7,600
Administration Salary		5,955		7,860
Operational Costs	3	3,353		8,530
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>			<b>18,308</b>	<b>23,990</b>
<b>NET CASH</b>			<b>(3,606)</b>	

#### Movement of cash

	<i>Notes</i>	
Bank balance 1 January 2019		17,220.73
Net cash movement		(3,606.15)
Bank Balance 31 December 2019	4	13,614.12

**Notes:**

- |   |                               |   |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Grants                        | Darebin Council \$2,200, Bendigo Bank \$1,000; Health Department of Victoria \$5,000                                  |
| 2 | Donations                     | All donations except \$200 were received via Paypal and Givenow   |
| 3 | Operational costs             | Operational costs were lower in 2019 because 2018 included purchase of new equipment and percussion instruments       |
| 4 | Donations not yet transferred | The bank balance does not include \$94.90 Donations via Paypal not transferred to bank account as at 31 December 2019 |

**Assets held at 31 December 2019**

Item	Purchase price	Purchase date
Percussion instruments	462.60	2/9/18
Headset	456.50	4/7/18
Computer	1,582.08	1/06/15
Computer	2,449.00	30/10/15
Projector	449.00	30/10/15
Printer	270.00	Pre June 2013
Sound System	299.00	Pre June 2013

**Stock held at 31 December 2019**

Stock of t-shirts	110.16	23/6/13
Stock of CDs	1,063.14	15/11/13

**Our Vision**

**The High Street Bells Choir welcomes people of all abilities to experience the joy of singing and to participate in the wider community through performance.**

**Rehearsals:** 251 High Street Northcote 3070 **Mail:** 33 Willsmere Road Kew 3101 **Ph:** 0412 546 665

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**The High Street Bells Choir is proudly sponsored by the City of Darebin.  
Thanks to our other sponsors too!**

