

Excerpts from AGM Manager's Report

Manager's Report by Graham Evans

It is always hard, doing an annual report, to comment on the events of the previous financial year almost 6 months after they are over. So much has happened between July 1 2020 and now! Many of our more significant projects overlapped the end of the financial year. So I'll cover some of these more recent events as well as 2019/20 events.

In the 2019/20 financial year our trainee Catrin graduated and was named student of the year by the South Regional TAFE for her traineeship. While we could offer Catrin our congratulations, we eventually were able to offer her even better: we have appointed Catrin in the part time staff position of Customer Service Worker.

In October 2020 we said goodbye to the extremely talented staff member Gaye O'Donnell. Myself and the committee have often had cause to pay tribute to Gaye's skills and dedication over the past 4 years. She was an amazingly energetic worker who was the driving force behind some of our most successful events and initiatives. Gaye started as our trainee, then senior trainee, and more recently was a Customer Service Worker for the CRC. In her new job outside the centre, Gaye is a training supervisor for our own newest trainee, Tony. She is also a regular volunteer for the Northcliffe Karri Pigeon and a regular CRC visitor. Once again - our thanks to Gaye.

Our new trainee, Tony, has to work hard to follow in the footsteps of such talented trainees. His computer skills have set him up well and he was responsible for a lot of the work on the Windows 10 rollout the NCRC undertook in 2019/20.

All the incoming and existing staff, including myself, accepted reduced conditions under a staff restructure which we have been planning throughout 2020 and which has now taken effect. The aim of the restructure is to ensure the sustainability and resilience of the Northcliffe CRC into the future and we appreciate the cooperation of staff in this process. It should pay off for all of Northcliffe over time.

Throughout 2020 we had significant disruption to services, practices, projects and events, and employment arrangements, due to Covid-19. We are extremely proud we stayed open throughout the WA lockdown, with lots of extra precautions. For instance **JPR Plumbing and Gas** covered half to cost for us of installing a hygiene basin outside the front door. **JPR Plumbing and Gas** went above and beyond to make this quick response possible for us.

One reason for our pride in staying open during Covid was that there was a surge in social isolation and in Centrelink needs during Covid lockdown. Through direct services and through working on social media, the CRC were able to contribute to our community during this period.

Our events, even going into 2021, are still being affected by

Covid, with number restrictions due to the 2 square meter rule, still applying.

Instead of group events, the CRC provided a lot of individual support for people in 2020 including processing over 100 applications for financial support from the Shire of Manjimup's Covid Emergency Relief Fund. We also embarked on a major project to ensure our continued relevance in the future with the fitting out of The Meeting Space with top quality roll-away tables and chairs, the creation of the Northcliffe bean-bag cinema, the creation of The Common Room for volunteers and CRC, Visitors Centre and Gallery visitors, to hang out and drink coffee, and a still-to-be-finished podcasting and video-conferencing facility.

Honestly the hardest part of Covid, for me, was the bureaucracy. Providing recommendations to the committee on the best course of action, accessing all the available financial support to ensure the NCRC is set up as well as possible for an uncertain future, developing revised budgets and analyzing very strange looking financial results, all the while setting us up for the major restructure which we have now completed.

While it seems a distant memory now, our hugely successful **Blooming Science** event in October 2019, was part of the financial year we are reporting on. This event filled up the whole NIVC building and balcony with microscopes, scientists, talks and bushwalks, craft activities, food catering, fun and learning. See above, we have Gaye to thank for conceiving and driving this event forward, and also using it to launch a third edition of the George Gardner classic, *Wildflowers of Northcliffe*.

In July and August 2019 we gave our many talented local photographers some love with *The Strange* competition and interactive exhibition.

Here's competition winner Lyn Neal with her *Praying Mantis*.

The interactive 'Strange loungeroom' in the exhibition (pictured with a creative tourist, right) was tricky to pull off and, like our previous interactive photo exhibition pieces, a big hit. Catrin Iversen, who was our trainee at the time, was a key person in getting *Strange* to work as well as it did.



Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10am to 5pm • Thursday, Friday 10 am to 6pm