



Individuals with a disability leading everyday lives

INCORPORATING IMPACT SUPPORT SERVICES

2015 Annual Report

OUR VISION

A society that values the individuality and rights of all people

OUR MISSION

Individuals with a disability leading everyday lives

We achieve this through our commitment to:

- Respecting and safeguarding the human rights of all people including their right to be safe, well and free from abuse and neglect;
- Valuing and respecting the individuals who access our services;
- Individuals developing the skills and/or networks to advocate for themselves;
- Individuals developing and/or maintaining family relationships, friendships and intimate relationships;
- Individuals identifying and pursuing a broad range of social, educational, vocational and recreational opportunities that bring meaning and value to their lives;
- Individuals being recognized and accepted as valued and contributing members of their community;
- Listening to and focusing on each individual and the choices they make;
- Leading and managing staff (in ways that respect and enhance the skills and experience they have to offer) in assisting individuals to achieve the outcomes they desire in life;
- Improving the quality of our services in line with ongoing feedback from the individuals who use our services and externally recognized benchmarks;
- Working in partnership with local communities;
- The effective use of resources to maximise outcomes for the individuals who use our services.

2015 Annual Report

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PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Dr John Annison, President

What really matters? It's an important question that we ask continually at Melba Support Services. Only when we truly understand what really matters to each person we support, can Melba provide the best possible services aimed at assisting individuals to achieve their desired outcomes. In detailing the successes and achievements of 2014-15, we

have made 'what really matters' a theme that you will see reflected in each contribution comprising our Annual Report.

One thing that definitely matters to everyone is having a home of one's own. It is, after all, the 'Great Australian Dream'! Disability or not, we all want a place to call our own. During 2014-15 we have continued to advance our aim of increasing housing choices for people with disabilities. As you may already know, in June 2014 we purchased a great site in Anderson St Lilydale from the Uniting Church. The church remains a place of worship, but we are planning to develop 15 units on the surrounding land. We have entered a formal Memorandum of Understanding with Community Housing Victoria Limited (a not-for-profit housing association) and we are working to acquire the necessary funding to underpin the development. We hope we can bring good news to you in the near future.

We have also been working closely with Community Lifestyle Accommodation Ltd (CLA) to develop four apartments for people with disabilities on another great site on the Mornington Peninsula. CLA, a group of carers supporting their adult sons and daughters at home, have garnered enormous community support for their 'Cloverleaf' project and we are pleased to be providing assistance to them.

Early in 2015, Melba prepared a submission to members of the Senate Community Affairs Committee who were inquiring into the accommodation needs of people with disabilities. We highlighted the level of unmet demand and the need for urgent action, drawing on the life experiences of one of our Board members, Mr Colin Rose. We were invited to provide further evidence at a public hearing and Colin's story was a powerful account of how much housing really does matter. Our submission, including Colin's story, is on our website for those interested in reading more.

This last year we have seen the benefits affordable, accessible and appropriate housing can bring to people we are supporting to live in units built by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). In December 2014, we commenced providing services to five individuals living in their own home in Lilydale. We have been extremely pleased to see the positive outcomes these individuals are achieving as their independence increases. Again, the data we have been collecting and providing to the TAC highlights the importance of real housing choices. We will commence work at another TAC development in Frankston in the coming year, after a second successful tender outcome.

We were also very pleased to have won another tender conducted by the (then) Department of Human Services to provide support services to individuals currently living at the department's Sandhurst institution in Bendigo on its closure in 2016. We proposed to deliver these services in partnership with Karden Disability Support Foundation – like Melba, a progressive and highly regarded support

provider – based in Central Victoria. Following a change in state government policy after the 2015 election, however, these services will continue to be provided by the department.

To assist refine Melba's thinking about what really matters, the President lead a strategic planning process during the second half of 2014. Board members, along with the senior management team, developed a five-year plan that sets out our priorities in what is a changing environment. One of the principal priorities was to establish a new site that would provide opportunities to the people we support for even greater social integration, improved access to community facilities, employment possibilities and increased safety from bushfire risk. And after more than two years work we were thrilled to move to the former Swinburne University campus and celebrate at an open day in March 2015. Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, James Merlino, officially opened Melba's new site at a function that attracted some 250 guests. Everyone who has visited our new site has been impressed. We welcome visitors anytime!

The Deputy Premier reiterated the State Government's pledge to ensure Melba has a long-term home at the campus committing \$1 million to make it happen. We thank the Government sincerely for this support. We are looking forward to having neighbours on the site when the Government announces who will recommence higher education services from the campus. We are confident of being able to partner with the new provider, creating all manner of exciting possibilities for the people we support.

Anyone that knows anything about Melba understands the importance we place on self-advocacy, along with people's human rights. During 2014-15 we continued to support self-advocates at Melba and Impact who, following our successful merger, have come together under the new name of ARROW – Advocacy, Rights, Representation, Outcomes and Worth. This impressive group, with an impressive name, has gone from strength to strength this past year delivering a human rights roadshow that takes their message to the broader community. The group also presents their ideas to the Board and the CEO on a regular basis. We thank them for their commitment, advocacy and feedback.

Melba welcomes ideas, suggestions and feedback in all its forms and again this year held a family forum in June to provide information and hear the views of family members. Like 2014, our 2015 survey produced great results with all 100% of survey respondents agreeing that their family member was happy with the service they are currently receiving. This is undoubtedly due to the excellent work of our staff and we thank them for their dedication and exemplary efforts.

Each year we recognise truly outstanding work carried out by an individual staff member and a staff team through Melba's Stevenson's Award. It is always a hugely difficult task to judge who, among all our worthy staff, might receive the annual award. Last year the individual award winner was Olivia Bailey. Olivia has shown incredible commitment to the people who are supported by Melba, in particular those who live at Pisces Court. In her own time she organised fund raisers to help purchase a bus, raising in excess of \$8,000 in less than one year. Olivia also designed a sensory room at Pisces Court, inspiring her colleagues to go the extra mile for the people we support.

The team award was won by Margaret Miller and Marion Graham, Individualised Support Arrangements (ISA) staff members who support Brendan who lives at Larbert Road. Although they provide



Glenn Foard, Chief Executive Officer

individualised support, Margaret and Marion work as a team to ensure Brendan is out and about in his community, connecting with family and enjoying life, notwithstanding some significant health challenges he confronts.

We also believe it is just as important to recognise the contributions people we support make to our community via the Rebecca Brit Award (named in

honour of a much loved individual supported at Melba). The 2014 award winner was Tony Agostinelli. Tony contributes in a myriad of ways including playing a lead role in the Yarra Ranges in a Box team, collecting and delivering the mail for Mt Evelyn Primary School and St Mary's Primary School, and mowing the lawn for an elderly couple who previously volunteered at Melba for many years. Tony takes great pride in the fact that he is helping others and was a very worthy winner of the award, demonstrating qualities of kindness, generosity, resourcefulness, humility and good humour.

No-one at Melba requires any convincing that quality really matters. Delivering high quality support services is the most important thing we do. Our work with the U.S.-based Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) over more than a decade now has assisted us to develop a rigorous quality assurance and improvement framework that not only keeps people safe, but focuses on the achievement of personal outcomes. We are proud to be the first organisation in Australia recognised by CQL for person-centred excellence.

During the last 12 months, following the successful merger with Impact Support Services, we have been rolling out our quality framework to services managed by Impact. The merger has allowed us to share the very best from both organisations, which can only benefit people we support. As of 1 July 2015, all Impact's activities have been legally incorporated under the Melba entity, but Impact Support Services continues as a division of Melba. Readers of this report may have noticed our changed logo, reflecting this fact, which also includes the vibrant colours from Impact's logo. We are very pleased to have Impact staff and Melba staff working together, including the former CEO of Impact, Dave Glazebrook. Dave is working as part of the senior management team in the role of Manager, Development and Innovation.

One of the 21 outcomes we measure, as part of our quality framework, relates to the friendship networks of individuals we support. Of course, having friends is something else that really matters to everyone. Providing professional development opportunities to our staff to assist them support individuals to develop friends was a particular focus last year, including at our annual staff forum. The Social Impact program, developed by Impact Support Services several years ago, is being provided to a growing number of people. Thirty-two people undertook the program in the 2014 calendar year and, in the first half of 2015 alone, 60 people enrolled in the program. This important initiative is aimed at increasing the skills and knowledge of individuals with disabilities to assist them in developing friendships and forming relationships. We are confident it will continue to grow in the coming years, especially given it is now part of an accredited training course.

Melba, as an organisation, is fortunate to have friends and partners. A significant number of individuals contribute financially and we benefit from the support of many organisations. While it is impossible to thank everyone here, we particularly wanted to acknowledge our

partnerships with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Transport Accident Commission, the Yarra Ranges Council, the Mt Evelyn and Districts Community Bank, Karden Disability Support Foundation, Community Housing Limited, Pathways to Care, Community Lifestyle Accommodation, Mt Evelyn Primary School, St Mary's Primary School, Oxley College, and the Quest Trust. Another significant event during the year was the official opening of Glen Alvie House, built with the generous support of the Quest Trust. Glen Alvie House is a magnificent beach-side home that has already been the holiday destination for a significant number of people supported at Melba. On behalf of everyone who has spent - and will spend - many joyful days at Glen Alvie House, we thank the Graham family.

And among the individuals who volunteer their time to advance our work we want to acknowledge:

our Ambassador, Brett Ratten and again communicate our sincere condolences for the recent loss of his son, Cooper;
our Board who work tirelessly (listed elsewhere in this report);
members of our Finance Sub-Committee;
the Human Rights and Quality Advisory Committee, who play a vital quality assurance role;
members of Melba's Marketing and Development Advisory Council (also listed elsewhere in this report).

We would also like to acknowledge the support we receive from our local Members of Parliament: Christine Fyffe, the State Member for Evelyn and James Merlino, the State Member for Monbulk. Yarra Ranges Mayor, Maria McCarthy, and the other Councillors have also been great friends of Melba.

Recently the CEO had the opportunity of addressing a Yarra Ranges Council meeting to present the outcomes of our 'One Community' project conducted jointly with Mt Evelyn Primary School. The project aimed to increase community awareness of disability – something that matters greatly! It was a huge success. One of the legacies of the project was artwork created jointly by students and people supported by Melba. Three large canvasses now hang proudly at the Mt Evelyn Community Hall, the primary school and at Melba's new site in Lilydale. We encourage you to visit Melba's website and watch the short video that documents the project.

In this report, we have been reflecting on the year past. But the future also matters – and the future will be shaped by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The commencement, more than two years ago now, of the NDIS in the Barwon region and other locations around the country was a huge step forward in the development of a support system that meets the needs of people with disabilities. The core principles of choice and control that underpin the NDIS, along with the entitlement to receive reasonable and necessary supports will, we believe, assist greatly in improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Australia. Melba recently completed its registration with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and we are looking forward to working with NDIA as the roll-out of the scheme progresses. Having campaigned strongly for the NDIS, we want to play a constructive role in its evolution, drawing on Melba's unique culture that focuses on personal outcomes and human rights. The past undoubtedly does matter; but the future matters even more.

Dr John Annison
President

Glenn Foard
Chief Executive Officer

COMMUNITY LIVING SUPPORT SERVICES

What really matters to you and what really matters to me are as unique to each person as their finger print. What is not different is the acknowledgement that all the important things in life will come if we exercise our rights and beliefs to achieve self-reliance and fulfilment. What makes people resilient? What is the force that propels them to achieve their goals and dreams in the face of adversity? Why is it that people with ongoing barriers tend to have so much more resilience and have to try harder than everyone else to accomplish their achievements? This year I have been privileged to witness people exercising their rights to achieve what really matters.

What really mattered to people who had been involved in a road traffic accident and received catastrophic injuries was finding somewhere to live. The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) provided the funding for staff supports but while that afforded people the ability to get up and about for the day, it did not provide the security and the sanctuary that a home of your own would bring. The Residential Independence Pty Ltd (RIPL) is wholly owned by TAC and is working to facilitate independent living through purpose built and accessible housing which integrates assistive technology to ensure people have choice and control in their lives. In December 2014 Community Living Support Services (CLSS) commenced supporting five people who had moved to the RIPL Lilydale units. What really matters to people living at RIPL is a permanent home of their own, a place to feel safe, to have choice and control, to reach goals and fulfil dreams and to be as independent as possible. All people at Castella are achieving their personal outcomes at different stages, and when one person was asked what they like most about living at Castella St she replied "doing things for myself".

CLSS can be proud of the achievements of Castella St and will expand its work with TAC with RIPL Frankston providing supports to eight people in their own unit from December 2015. Many thanks to Sharen Robinson and Sarina Bunnnett for walking the unfamiliar path with me side by side. To Aaron Murnane at TAC, who is always there to support us and provide positive proactive encouragement.

It has been a year of amazing achievements. We can be proud of our success with the tender process for TAC/RIPL Frankston and the Sandhurst Redevelopment.

It is our belief that we can support people to live a life where they are in control, where they have choices and where they are in charge. We also

believe that people need these things when life is nearing the end. It is with deep sadness that we said goodbye to the gentle and loving man Matthew Emonson at Eucalypt. After a short illness Matthew passed away with his family and staff by his side on 30/10/14. Guy Dale loved heavy metal rock music and the wind on his face. Sadly his health quickly deteriorated and he passed away in hospital on 10/06/15. David Leaver, the lovable, resilient and most community connected person I know passed away on 27/06/15. David battled until the very end with his family and staff beside him. Louise Sinclair had a difficult year in and out of hospital, but we will forever remember her squeal of laughter and her absolute love of the water. Louise passed away on the morning of 06/09/15 with mum and dad and her Blue Ridge family by her side. Melba staff provide a wide range of supports to people, however to support someone at the end of their life is extremely difficult and powerfully unconditional and we are indebted to our wonderful staff.

Welcome to Amanda James at Lara Court and Sam Wannet at Eucalypt Drive and their families. We look forward to getting to know you better and being part of your life. In addition, since the opening of Glen Alvie house in March 2015 we have been pleased to provide holidays to many individuals at this fantastic venue in Queenscliff. It has also been exciting that families have been able to join their loved ones to have a family holiday in a beautiful setting, and we are looking forward to our continued use of Glen Alvie House as a truly wonderful experience.

CLSS looks to 2016 with a clear direction that we are here to support and provide services that really matter to people. We do this in the knowledge that for every person we support, that will look very different, but we will be flexible and responsive to the choices and aspirations that people make about how they want to live their life.

Thank you to all the CLSS staff for their dedication, commitment and passion in delivering responsive services. To the Personal Outcome Support Managers for caring about what really matters to people by demonstrating exemplary practice in leadership and service delivery in ways that the rest of the disability sector aspires too. To Kay as always, for keeping a "check" on me, and goodness knows I need it sometimes. To my colleagues the senior management team thanks for your support and encouragement.

"Efforts and Courage are not enough without Purpose and Direction" JFK
Penny Kendall
CLSS Manager



INDIVIDUALISED SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

It's the start of spring and I love watching the gardens waking from the winter cold, flowers starting to bloom and the weather starting to warm. More importantly spring is the time of year that the Snapper move back into our bays to begin their breeding cycle. I'm sure you are wondering what that has got to do with Melba's annual report? And, to be honest, it has nothing to do with it really; other than to demonstrate something that 'really matters' to me.

Anyone who has read a previous report of mine or who knows me would know about my love of fishing and Snapper season is one of my favourite times to fish in Victoria! There are not too many things more beautiful than a sunrise over the bay, except possibly that big red fish on the end of my line.

The question of 'what really matters' is a significant one. Especially when it's asked in relation to a person's life. Most people have the ability to pursue the things that really matter to them and there is a satisfaction to be had when doing the things that matter the most; did I mention fishing?

But what happens if you can't use words to communicate like other people do or you need support to leave your home or to get out of bed in the morning? What if you need assistance to articulate what really matters the most to you? And what if you were never asked that simple question? What if no one took the time to listen to or understand your answer? How would people know if you too wanted to catch one of those big red fish or watch the sunrise over the bay? Fortunately, Melba takes this simple question very seriously and I hear it asked very often. We ask whether the person can use words or not and we have many different ways of finding the answer. Sometimes though, to find the answer, we need to ask more than just the person as it's often those who know the person best whom hold the pieces to that puzzle.

As you may be aware in June this year Melba finalised our merger with Impact Support Services. This has meant that approximately 40 more people are now supported under Melba's Individualised Support Arrangements (ISA), significantly growing the number of people who are asked that simple question of 'what really matters to you?'

At Melba we are lucky to have staff who really listen to what people say matters to them and who come to work each day to ensure that people get the things they are asking for. Without staff who really care about this simple question we would not have been able to achieve the positive reputation that we have. Without a team who take this question seriously I would not be able to share their stories.

Stories such as how a person is being supported to ensure they can continue to give their young son as many fun and exciting 'father and son' experiences as possible. Or one about how a woman is supported to ensure she can continue to live at home and be a mother to her teenage daughter (despite her own physical and health limitations), and how that simple question of 'what really matters' (and the generosity of another) resulted in this lady being able to give her daughter the bike that she could never afford to buy her. Or the story of an inspirational man, who despite being blind, wanted to learn archery and how to shoot an arrow. That same man recently won a gold medal at the national blind archery championships and is now advocating for blind archery to become a part of the Disabled Olympics.

Or the story of a man who struggled to manage his emotions when upset or around larger groups of people, who now spends part of his week volunteering his time with a local sailing club. He is passionate about ensuring that other people with a disability (and other community members) have a chance to learn to sail and have the best possible experience when doing so.

If we did not ask that simple yet fundamental question of 'what really matters', if we did not have a dedicated team of support staff and ISA coordinators - we would not have those stories to share. So I would like to thank my team for their tireless work throughout the year. I would like to thank them for the dedication they all bring to their work and I would also like to welcome all the people from Impact to Melba. I look forward to what the future brings for all the people we support.

Aaron Fry
Manager ISA



OUTCOMES DEVELOPMENT

What Really Matters to people is a journey of discovery, where we acknowledge people's life stories and learn more about the person's passion, priorities and desires. We support people with the opportunity to focus on their interests, concerns and dreams. Melba supported over 110 people to develop a yearly plan based on their uniqueness, skills, gifts, strengths and capacity while discovering in greater depth - what is important to and for the person and discovering 'what really matters' to them.

Melba's person centered planning process incorporates Personal Outcome Measures which promote respect and dignity. We achieve this through listening and engaging with the person and people in their lives, this collaborative approach assists the development of strategies and resources the person can use to gain the outcomes and life they would choose to live.

The data collected from people's Personal Outcome Measures interviews and planning meetings helps Melba better understand what people need and want – "what really matters" to them. The stories below show areas where people would like further help and support. Having friends matters – having people in their lives to enjoy activities who are not paid to be in their life, but who truly enjoys their company and choose to spend time with them.

Choosing where and with whom I live – it is no secret people typically have no choice, more frightening is people have no choice about who they share their home with. Some people get on well with their housemates while others live in fractured often volatile environments, with an ever changing workforce (staff) to support them.

Participating in the community – having the opportunity to discover what, where, how and with whom you would like to spend your time. Currently people living in group housing often don't know what there is to do,

what opportunities there are and rarely decide where and with whom they go and what they try. Typically people are supported in the community in groups. Being in a group rarely offers support to discover what the person uniquely would like to achieve / do.

Supporting people to have the opportunity of friendship, choosing where and with whom they would like to live and participating in the life of the community depends largely on people having the communication supports / help they need. Melba's commitment in providing appropriate communication supports continues.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Melba's Personal Outcome Measures interviewers and Planning facilitators for their dedication in supporting people with their RIGHT to plan a life of their choosing – thank you for your hard work throughout the year!

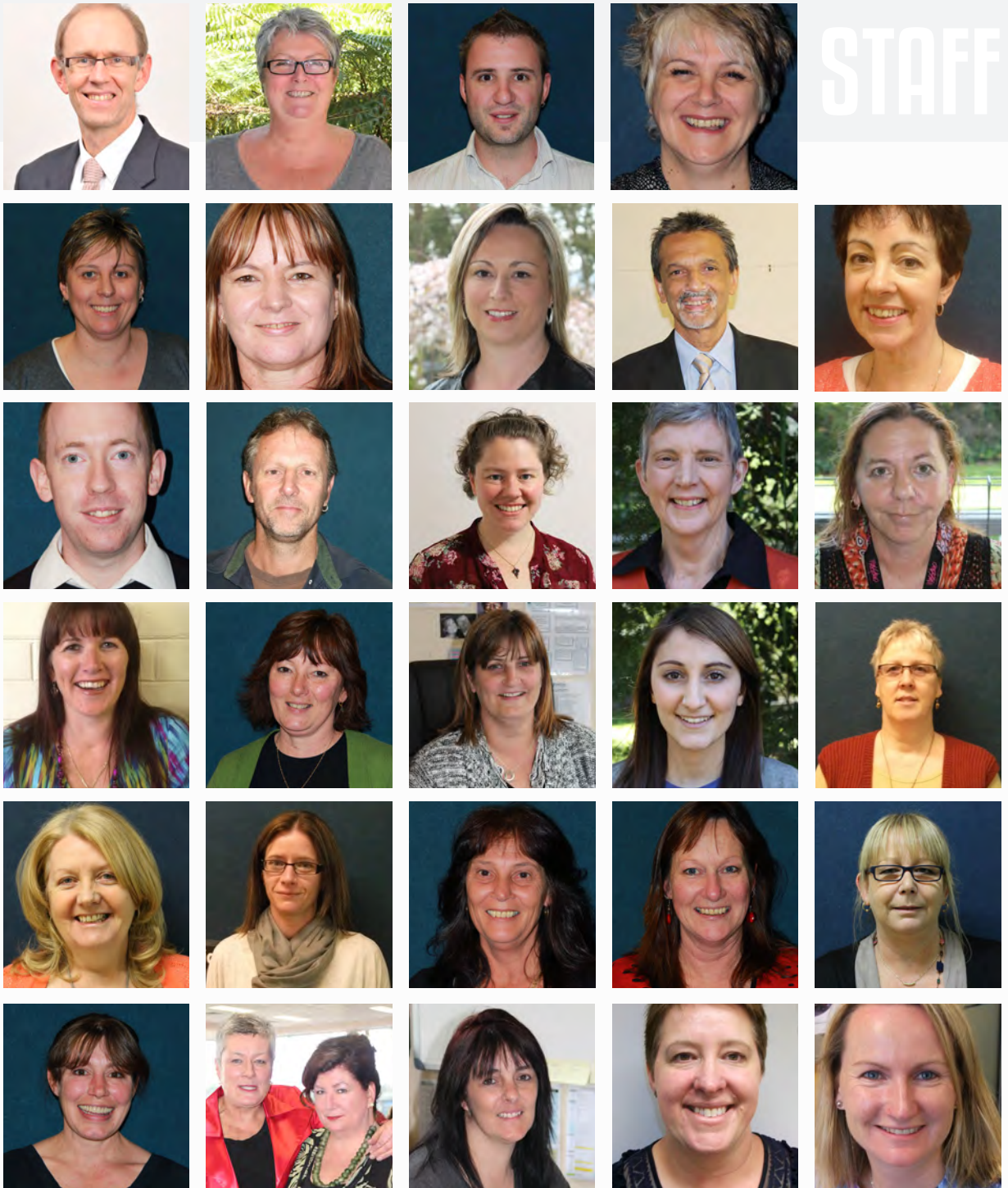
Thank you to Melba's Communication Peer Support for their positive / can do approach to communication supports and role modelling of their teams in Augmentative and Alternative Communication supports – great year – thank you!

Sarina Bunnett

Manager Outcomes Development



STAFF



Left to Right: Glenn Foard, Penny Kendall, Aaron Fry, Sarina Bunnett, Sally Nicol, Mandy Lister, Belinda Wilson, Lorenz Senn, Karen Gibson, Leigh McAlister, Craig Woods, Kirsten Filmer, Kay Barnett, Susie Rhys-Jones, Belinda Allwood, Kim Harvey, Nicole Stow, Maria Cianciaruso, Sibylle Ahlhaus, Kym Fraser, Adele Castles, Dawn Reynolds, Mara Robertson, Sharen Robinson, Kathy Hamilton, Sue Smith with Megan Jacobs, Joanne Renehan, Jean Kalns, Nicole Crawley.

IMPACT SUPPORT SERVICES

This year saw Impact Support Services and Melba Support Services effectively work together as one. While legally they remain distinct operations, albeit with Melba having legal and effective management of Impact, where it matters, and what really mattered was the people supported by Impact continued to receive their excellent levels of service. Operationally, the individual support and respite programs at Melba and Impact were combined and at the start of 2015 we launched Social Impact as an accredited course, Certificate 1.

Throughout the year we continued the merger combining and reviewing the back of house systems at both agencies to ensure we captured and retained the best we had. It was delightful to see both

agencies' reference groups, from Impact, the Participants Reference Group and from Melba, the Melba Advisory Group, engage with each other and look at how they would and could work together. An early indicator of the merger between Impact and Melba having great potential was the fact that both are committed to ensuring the people we support have a real and genuine voice in the operations and services provided.

All of the people supported by Impact, their families and staff are watching with great interest in the development of the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme). They know the NDIS will impact on the services they receive, at one level ensuring they have a say in what services they require and for others being finally

able to get an appropriate level of service. It has been a year of many questions and several that have no accurate answer as yet, however overall people remain optimistic that the NDIS will be a great outcome for people with disabilities. No-one has an expectation that it will work perfectly from day 1, and we know there will be issues as it is implemented, but a great new support scheme nevertheless.

The merger has been a bit like a new marriage, and at Impact, we've been welcomed into a new family. It's been great getting to know all the new 'relatives'.

David Glazebrook
Manager Innovation & Development
(Former Executive Director - Impact)



Melba is the only organisation in Australia to be accredited for person-centred excellence with distinction.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

This year for Community Connections has been a memorable one, full of celebrations and farewells to what has been home and a major part of the lives of many people who access Melba's Community Connections!

Community Connections as we know it hasn't altered in how support is provided to people, the staff have remained constant and daily routines flow on. However, where Community Connections, at Ormeau Rd was based has changed significantly.

The sale and relocation from Ormeau Rd to Melba Ave in Lilydale, on the old Swinburne University site, has been the most fundamental change at Melba Support Services since the devolution of the Rosine nursing home in to what is now Community Living Support Services. There was much trepidation from staff about change on such an enormous scale and the impact this may have on people; how resilient the people who access Community Connections are, was vastly underestimated.

When you talk about what really matters, the move to the Swinburne site was as successful as it has been, because each person had the supports and props in place to assist with their individual transition. This could be having your own coffee cup, familiar chair, or familiar face and routines. For some people this included visiting Melba Ave on a regular basis, for other people it involved packing up boxes and taking them from Ormeau Rd to Melba Ave and for other people it was a social story, complete with pictures of Ormeau Rd, Christmas, and the new building at Melba Ave. This social story was designed to assist individuals with an understanding that after Christmas holidays we would not be going to Ormeau Rd but work (Community Connections) would be at the LD building, Swinburne University site on Melba Ave.

The new building has required some modifications including an accessible shower and change spaces, a laundry and a ramp from the bus parking space. The garden has also been developed utilising numerous ornaments, and other key signature pieces from the sensory garden from Ormeau Rd. The sensory garden remains a work in progress, as does the arrival of the Chooks.

For other parts of Community Connections it has meant looking for a new space to replace the 40 Birmingham Rd, known to most as "the shop". The shop has become 1b /3 Roland Ave, Mt Evelyn. It has also provided a base for several individuals where Melba Ave and Wray Crescent environments did not adequately support their individual needs and diverse requirements.

Moving with technology and accessing Facebook has helped renew family connections and strengthen existing connections for many people Melba supports. The use of iPads has given individuals an alternative to the paper based communication book. It gives people the opportunity to be like everybody else in the community, on trains, cafes and in shops. The ability to access photos to assist with communication that is real and relevant to each person has been an added benefit.

New people have joined Community Connections in the past 6-8 months, the success of these transitions for individuals has been largely based on Community Connections staff and Melba's information gathering and planning processes to identify what really matters to each person. This involves considering information about what each person does, who they spend time with and what that environment looks like. Gaining a good understanding of who a person is and what really makes them "tick" has proven to be a successful formula to assist with people joining the Community Connections crew.

Able Bake House, Yarra Ranges in a Box, Fruit in Schools, and a number of micro-business and community supports continue to operate utilising the abilities and interests of people accessing services. This includes mail runs, mail courier services at Oxley College in Chirnside and St Francis Xavier College at Berwick and Pakenham, clothing recycling assisting Discovery Church with clothing hampers for families in need, supporting people to walk dogs that need exercise when their owners are not able because of ill health or who are time poor.

We have had numerous Certificate IV students doing placement hours as part of their course requirements. This has been very beneficial for both Community Connections and the students. A number of students have subsequently attended our casual information sessions to become part of Melba.

The 2014-2015 year for Community Connections was one of many changes. It would not have been possible or as successful without the willingness, flexibility, support and hard work of our team of people (including our regular and ever reliable volunteers) within Community Connections. Staying focused on what really matters for one person at a time is a critical element to the recipe for achieving good outcomes and an every day life for people.

Sally Nicol
Manager, Community Connections



Able Bakehouse made and sold
over 15,000 biscuits





LIVING DISTINCTIVE LIVES

This past year LDL families continued to explore innovative ways in which to create, maintain and develop meaningful lives embedded within community, and to create homes and lifestyles of their own choice and design.

This year a couple of members have made big moves into new homes and some are also trialing sharing their homes with more than one housemate. Setting up a home culture that fits all housemates has proven to be useful. This involves spending time with housemates discussing how they would like their home to be and sharing each other's dreams and setting up base lines of communication and respect.

LDL Governance group members have also been heavily involved this year in work outside of LDL joining with others to look towards the future of housing, and how innovative community oriented approaches may suit their son/daughter who has a disability. Each individual arrangement seems to be going along well, with various members employed in casual jobs, doing volunteer work, playing active roles in their communities and living in their own rented or purchased homes with housemates and other supports around them and involved in their lives.

A few families have also benefitted greatly from the support of their own circles of support, which hold specific focus depending on each family's need and vision.

LDL's function is successful because of the support and involvement of people with a disability and their families, their natural networks of support, the interested community around them, volunteers and paid staff who assist people to actively engage in their homes and community. The vision, dedication, resilience, strength, love and hope of each family and person involved is what makes LDL and what contributes to the everyday successes and joy in each person's life. On behalf of LDL I thank Melba for auspicing our group and also acknowledge the assistance provided by Belonging Matters.

Teresa Micallef

Living Distinctive Lives Community Facilitator

On behalf of the Living Distinctive Lives Governance Group





RESPITE

Melba's Carer Respite program continued to supply and deliver meaningful and individualised respite to over 100 families throughout all regions of the state in 2015.

Through Melba's Big Day Out we continued to provide recreation and learning opportunities to the people we support and their families. Some of the locations and activities that have been enjoyed this year include: trips to the Mornington Peninsula, a visit to the National Gallery, an undersea visit to the Melbourne Aquarium and a great day out on Lilydale Lake thanks to the great people at Sailability.

Our Respite Camps have given the people we support and their primary carers a break while at the same time allowing them to experience some of the most relaxing places in Victoria. This year we have experienced Phillip Island, Mt Martha on the Mornington Peninsula and Geelong.

Our 1:1 support has given carers and families the opportunity to personalise their support in a variety of ways that has allowed them to live everyday lives, their way.

Another exciting addition to Melba this year has been the inclusion of the Impact Recreation and Respite Program which offers supported respite opportunities for people all over the state. We have supported people to visit many locations around Australia including: Tasmania, Port Douglas, the Gold Coast, Sydney, Kangaroo Island and Brisbane to name a few.

Next year we are looking to expand the Respite and Recreational programs we offer to more people and their families across all regions of Victoria. We will continue to run all our current programs while looking for more places to visit for our Respite and Recreational activities. Moving forward we are planning to incorporate skill building and development into our programs so if people choose to they can set and achieve goals while experiencing new opportunities and activities.

It's shaping up to be an exciting year ahead and we hope that all the people and their families involved with the respite programs will continue to enjoy and experience meaningful, individualised and relaxing respite with Melba. We know it is something that really matters to them.

Kurtis Moore
Respite Coordinator

AWARDS

STEVENSON AWARD WINNERS 2014

The Stevenson Award was set up to acknowledge a staff person or team who have contributed significantly to improving the overall quality of the services provided by Melba. A 'significant contribution' to the people we support could include exhibiting a consistently high standard of performance, initiative and commitment, or one-off examples of work which are over and above the normal expectations of the staff member or team.

STEVENSON AWARD TEAM WINNER

Margaret Miller and Marion Graham; ISA and Larbert Road



Margaret and Marion were nominated for their Individual Support Arrangement (ISA) with Brendan. Although they support Brendan individually, they work as a team ensuring that Brendan's ISA is consistent with what he needs and wants, they consult with each other and his broader support network so that Brendan has an everyday life of his choosing.

Margaret has learnt iPad and social media skills so that she can

assist Brendan to keep in contact with his family in Ireland. Margaret supports Brendan to help his mum go to her medical appointments and weekly café catch ups. She has also supported Brendan to form relationships with the people at Men's shed every Friday. Marion supports Brendan with sensory projects, sailing and visiting Lillydale lake and is in the process of helping Coffee Club staff at Ringwood to learn Brendan's communication of coactive sign.

It is such an achievement for Brendan to be out and about in his community, connecting with family and enjoying life. Brendan has had numerous health issues which impact his life enormously, each and every day. However, Brendan's future is looking much brighter thanks to Margaret and Marion's consistent approach to his health issues, open and informed communication with his wider support network and excellent observation skills.

STEVENSON AWARD INDIVIDUAL WINNER

Olivia Bailey

Olivia has shown incredible commitment to the people who are supported by Melba, in particular at Pisces Court. In the last year she organised numerous fundraisers to help purchase a bus. She led and encouraged staff all on her own time. Her fundraising efforts included making Christmas balls that she and her mother spent hours making with the people of Pisces Court to sell. Organising a tin rattle collection at an intersection in Lilydale - spending two days of her own time there. And a chocolate drive and gold coin donation drive at Chirnside. Raising in excess of \$8,000 in less than one year!

Olivia also designed a sensory room, recycling furniture mostly on her own time. She has inspired the team at Pisces in joining her to go the extra mile for the people we support. She includes the people who live at Pisces in all that she does. She is a fantastic advocate and ambassador for Melba Support Services.



Yarra Ranges in a Box delivered over 750 boxes of fresh vegetables and fruit

THANK YOU

REBECCA BRITT AWARD 2014

Rebecca Britt passed away very unexpectedly following a short illness in 2010. Bec was a vibrant part of the Community Connections at Wray Crescent, Melba Advisory Group and reception at Ormeau Rd. Rebecca's grandmother, Mollie Quinton, donated an amount of money to Melba Support Services. A staff member, who knew Rebecca through Community Connections and secondary school for a number of years, suggested that an award similar to the Stevenson's award for staff be initiated in Rebecca's honour. The Melba Leadership Group strongly supported this suggestion and the new award was announced at the 2012 AGM.

The Award is presented to a person who demonstrates some of the attributes listed below consistently throughout the year:

- A strong sense of presence
- Is kind hearted
- A good sense of humour
- An ability to make others smile
- An ability to encourage others
- Is resourceful
- Takes care of others
- Is generous
- Contributes to the community
- Has a passion for life and all creatures great and small
- Advocates for other people with a disability

REBECCA BRITT AWARD 2014

Tony Agostinelli

Tony is extremely resourceful – if he is confronted with a challenge, he will try various ways to overcome it. He doesn't just give up.

This is exemplified in his role in the Yarra Ranges in a Box team. He is a part of the process from start to finish and is pivotal in the boxes getting out each week. Tony will often have to think outside the square and use his own initiative to get the job completed.

Tony collects and delivers the mail for Mt Evelyn Primary School and St Mary's Primary School every Friday. Both schools truly appreciate the service that Tony provides.

Since doing this, Tony has struck up a relationship with Gary at the Post Office, resulting in them going to the local football together. Tony mows the lawn for Alan and Nola, an elderly couple who used to volunteer at Melba for many years. Tony takes great pride in the fact that he is helping others.

Everybody who knows Tony will agree that he is a very positive person who has the ability to lift the mood of those around him. He always greets you with a smile and a pat on the pack.

Tony shows genuine concern if you are not well or tired - he will tell you to go home and go to bed!

If someone we support is unwell, has had a seizure or is unsteady on their feet, Tony will help support that person. He shows particular concern and care for Romy & Mal (his housemates). He is always keeping an eye on them, assisting them with their bags and seatbelts.

For a long time Tony was the chaperone on Darren's bus! Tony is the worthy recipient of the 2014 Rebecca Britt Award!



Melba would like to thank the following businesses, groups and individuals for their generosity and support throughout the financial year.

Mr Stan Alves
Beacon Lighting
Bowens, Mount Evelyn
Mr & Mrs Geoff & Marilyn Earney
Mr & Mrs Greg & Carissa Earney
Mr Don Elgin
Mr Andrew Erikson
Mr & Mrs Geoff & Linda Emonson
The Footmen Club
Mr & Mrs Ray & Bev Galloway
Mr Geoffrey Haggard
Hatrack Communications
Hatrack Electrical
Healesville Toyota
Ms Helen Hennessy
Ms Anita Howard
Inspiro
Mr & Mrs Harry & Pauline Jones
Kate Lee Productions
Lajari, Lori Lay
Lilydale Airport, Barry Mock
Lilydale Leader Newspaper
Lilydale Chamber of Commerce
Lilydale Uniting Church
Lions Club of Healesville, Mr Paul Walker
Mail Newspaper Group, Mount Evelyn Mail
Marysville Golf Club
Mrs Jenny McAllister
Methven Professionals Real Estate
Millar Merrigan
The Montrose Reserve Committee
Mooroolbark Community Bank
The Motet Charitable Fund
Mount Evelyn & Districts Community Bank
Mount Evelyn Chamber of Commerce
Mount Evelyn Community House
Mount Evelyn CFA
Mount Evelyn Pharmacy
Mount Evelyn Primary School
Mount Evelyn Supa IGA, Tony Ingpen and staff
Mount Evelyn Upholstery
Oakroom Wines, Mr Jason Robertson
Oxley College
Pinnacle Print Group, Mr Justin Hall
Quest Payment Systems
Mollie Quinton, in memory of Rebecca Britt
Mr Brett Ratten
Ringwood Mazda
The Scanlon Foundation
Stabil-Lime Group, Mr Tom Curnow
Mr & Mrs Alec & Nan Stevenson
Studio 536
Telarus
Wandin Custom Car and Bike Show, Sindy Redden-Vale
Yering Meadows Golf Club
YMCA, Trish, Frank and staff
Yarra Ranges Shire Council

& thank you to our generous donors who wish to remain anonymous

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

Every person is defined by the community they belong to, and given this year's theme, 'what really matters', community relations across the whole of the Melba community remains important and is well worth maintaining and developing. Again, in 2014 'Driving Choices' was the theme for our Golf Day and Dinner and it was with great pleasure we were joined by Melba's Ambassador, Brett Ratten. Our thanks to a great and ongoing supporter of Melba. 'Driving Choices' remained a relevant theme as the work of Melba is about creating greater choices for the people it supports.

The 2014 'Driving Choices' event brought over 150 people together, either playing golf or at the dinner, and took part in celebrating some of the great things in life we share in common, sport, business and community. The people who use Melba's services again shared their stories of how Melba supports them to lead lives filled with choices. The event was a fantastic opportunity to come together and celebrate what choice means to us all.

Our successful June Appeal enabled us to continue offering an outstanding quality system. We are not funded to do this work but we firmly believe we must continue to deliver this level of service so the people who put their faith in us to support them can live the best possible life of their choosing. We achieve this by getting to know them, continually learning about them and listening to what they want!

Melba continued its community involvement and with a move to Lilydale we are now members of the Lilydale Chamber of Commerce and had a great time joining in their Lilydale Street party. Mind you, we are still part of the Mt Evelyn community and remain members of the Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce, supporting their Big Morning Tea and the annual business awards celebrations.

Throughout the year we continued to engage with friends, supporters and partners via our quarterly newsletters. The newsletter allows us to share some of our wonderful stories. Through sharing these stories we know that we are able to provide insights into the ways we support people to lead everyday lives, something that really matters, not only for

the people Melba supports but for everyone. Thanks to every person, their families and Melba staff who contributed to the newsletter. Also our thanks to Lori from Lajari Design House and Justin from Pinnacle Printing Group for ensuring we deliver a great newsletter, and a huge thanks to the Mt Evelyn Community Bank for their ongoing generous support for the newsletter.

Melba's Development and Advisory Council continued to meet quarterly over the past year, coming together to provide expert advice, information and share ideas around our fundraising and marketing activities. Thanks to everyone for the support that they provide and the time they choose to donate to Melba. It is appreciated. Thank you to Andrew Graham, Pam Usher, Brian Baker, David Johnston, Pauline Jones, Marcus Jones, Wayne Mountjoy and Lisa Glassborow.

We have enjoyed working with many of our local community partners over the year. These have included the Mt Evelyn and Districts Community Bank, The Yarra Ranges Council, the YMCA, local church groups - Discovery Church and the Church of Latter-day Saints, Lilydale Rotary, the Healesville Lions Club and the Healesville Car Club, Mt Evelyn and St Mary's Primary Schools, Oxley College, the Lilydale Leader and The Mt Evelyn Mail. Along side these groups are numerous individuals and our thanks extend to you all.

At the start of July 2014 Belinda Wilson took on the role of Community Relations however other opportunities arose and Belinda resigned in May 2015. Our thanks for the work she did in this period. On my return from study I was asked to take on the role and so now I have the great job of developing and continuing Melba's community development and fundraising. It's not marketing, it's ensuring the wonderful stories and great things the people we have the privilege to serve are shared so that others can join with us in the great opportunity to be part of a wonderful place. This is our community, where doing it well and working together matters!

David Glazebrook
Manager Innovation & Development





HUMAN RESOURCES

An important factor of what makes an organisation successful is its people. Melba is dedicated towards ensuring we attract and retain great people. We strive to keep our workforce healthy, happy and functioning to support Melba's vision mission and organisational objectives.

The quality of services provided by Melba is majorly dependant on the efforts of all our employees. What is important to Human Resources is that we foster and develop the required resources to ensure that Melba is achieving its goals, sustaining quality services and remains in a strong position for future growth.

Melba successfully adopts a well developed recruitment, selection and orientation process and has recently made updates to various policies and procedures to ensure employment processes are continually reviewed in line with current organisational requirements and legislation. Melba is also in the process of implementing a new performance and development system which will aim to enhance the way staff performance is managed, communicated and recognised.

Our current workplace profile is made up of 310 employees and our dedicated team continues to grow!

A staff forum was held in May 2015 for all staff to participate and be involved in a range of activities including learning and

development, and an opportunity for information and feedback to be shared. It is important to receive employee feedback about Melba in general, our management team, organisational culture and working environment to ensure we are continuing to move in the right direction. Positive results were received from our employee survey showing strong dedication and overall satisfaction amongst our employees and the forum was a great success.

Strategies to improve overall communication, information and efficiencies has been a strong focus across Melba. Human Resources has successfully implemented the processing of electronic pay advices to enable staff to receive their pay advice instantly each fortnight. Melba is also in the process of improving the utilisation of Carelink to enhance the way in which information can be stored, processed and accessed by staff.

Melba continues to focus on the health, safety and welfare of all employees and people who use our services. Our Occupational Health and Safety Committee continues to meet regularly to work together to identify and resolve health and safety issues and to develop and monitor safe work procedures.

Maria Cianciaruso
Human Resources Manager



251,866 hours of support were provided

ARROW

Getting to the heart of the matter

The merger between Impact Support Services and Melba Support Services finalised on 1st July 2015 also meant the merging of their advocacy/representative groups - The Participants Representative Group (PRC) and Melba Advisory Group. Both groups spent time together getting to know each other – BBQ’s, afternoon teas and joining in on such events as Melba’s Open Day. Over the past few months they have been busy completing their individual group workloads and are now ready for Melba’s new Person Centered Excellence Accreditation to develop their direction over the next three years as “one group”.

First things first: we needed to come up with a new name, the new advocacy group is called Advocacy, Rights, Representation, Outcomes and Worth (ARROW). With everyone’s input, we also have a new logo and have joined our Terms of Reference.

This year the Oakleigh team (formerly – the PRC):

- invited members who were participants of the former Mental

Health service to become volunteers of Impact’s PRC. The PRC were thrilled to have them and keep their expertise.

- Elsa joined as a volunteer. Elsa is an ex Impact Board member and was a participant of the Impact Leisure Service.
- She wrote a number of Impact newsletter articles.

VALE

“The passing of Peter Costello was sudden and unexpected and was an enormous shock to the PRC. Peter was a past President; founding member and valuable contributor to the PRC over many years. The PRC lost one of its own. Despite this tragedy, the PRC contributed by reading at the funeral and comforting Peter’s family by informing them about Peter’s PRC work which his family did not know about.”

By Warren Hammersley

The Lilydale Team (formerly Melba Advisory Group):

- Presented two Human Rights Shows

targeted at helping the community understand their need/want for Human

- Rights afforded to all people in community.
- Their first Road show was for the Mount Evelyn Community House where community members and members from the Shire of Yarra Ranges attended – thank you to Nicky Condello for helping to organise this.

The second Road Show was held at the Shire of Yarra Ranges with the various Shire departments including their inclusion / disability team, planning etc. It was a great success with possible offers of presenting at Knox City council early in 2015.

It is important that the ‘voice’ of the people we support is always heard and represented. With ARROW, we ensure this happens.

Warren Hammersley & Sarina Bunnett on behalf of ARROW

OUR RIGHTS, JUST LIKE YOURS ARE BASED ON

- The Victorian Charter of Human Rights
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights





Volunteering at Melba

“What really matters is what you do with what you have”

H.G. Wells

The theme of this year’s Annual Report is “What really matters”. This is certainly different from one volunteer to another and Melba Support Services prides itself on ensuring that all volunteers have valued roles that matter.

The success of Melba’s volunteer program continues with almost 90 valuable volunteers. The growth of volunteer numbers is fantastic as is the retention of them. I am pleased to report that some of the volunteers have transitioned into brilliant staff members. This is a great outcome for the volunteer and also for Melba Support Services. Melba has volunteer roles in:

- Community Connections Day Program
– Wray Crescent and Melba Avenue
- Community Living Support Services
- Individual Support Arrangements
- Respite Services & Melba Events
- Behind the scenes – Committee’s, Board, administration etc.
- Corporate Volunteers
- ARROW (Advocacy, Respect, Representation, Outcomes, Worth)

CORPORATE VOLUNTEER DAY

Aon, a global insurance company made contact with Melba to offer project volunteers for their Global Service Day. This was held on Thursday 11 June and a painting project was organised at Kenthurst Community Living Support Services. The group enjoyed interacting with staff and enjoyed a tasty barbecue lunch with some of the people who live at Kenthurst. Painting the bathrooms and laundry was not enough for this group and the magic words “What else can we do?” were spoken. The group commenced painting the concrete in a wonderful green colour. The group worked until they ran out of paint. The entire day there was a great energy in the house and for a very cold winter’s day the sun shone! I am pleased to report that the Aon group also donated a \$100 Bunnings voucher to continue the “Freshen Up” at Kenthurst.



I would like to thank the Aon group, Kathy and the gang at Kenthurst and Bunnings Croydon for the incredible support of this project. It was a huge success and a brilliant outcome for all involved. What really matters about this is:

- Kenthurst got a “freshen up”
- Aon and Melba were able to learn about each other
- Experiences were shared
- Relationships began to build

25 YEARS OF MUSIC AT MELBA SUPPORT SERVICES

It is with great pleasure that Melba acknowledges the Travelling Music Group. The group was formed to provide evening entertainment for those at the Rosine Nursing Home. In 1995 Melba moved to home based accommodation and so the music group began to visit the houses on a rotating basis. The houses host an evening of song which is still occurring now. On behalf of all at Melba Support Services I would like to congratulate and thank the travelling music group for the many years of service. “Time has a wonderful way of showing us what really matters”. (Margaret Peters). The music group is certainly a testimony to this.

FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Melba Volunteers were asked the question “What really matters to you as a volunteer?” The feedback is as follows:

“The staff are so willing to share their skills and advise us on how best to support the people that come to Melba”

“Being invited to Training Sessions”

“Feeling Valued”

“Being included in support planning sessions”

“A supportive volunteer coordinator!”

THANKS

The volunteer program would not be a success without the support of management, staff and coordinators whom I would like to thank very much for another excellent year.

Please share the word about volunteering with Melba. The options are many and varied. Enhance your life and that of someone else.

For further details on Melba’s valuable volunteer program please contact me on 9212 0117 or via my email belinda.allwood@melbasupport.com.au.

Belinda Allwood
Volunteer Coordinator

70 plus volunteers assisted
at Melba in 2014/2015

VALE



VALE - GUY DALE

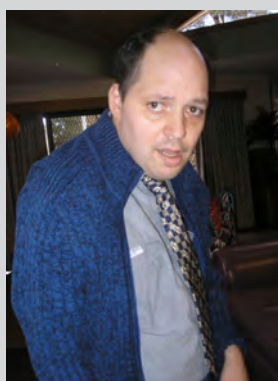
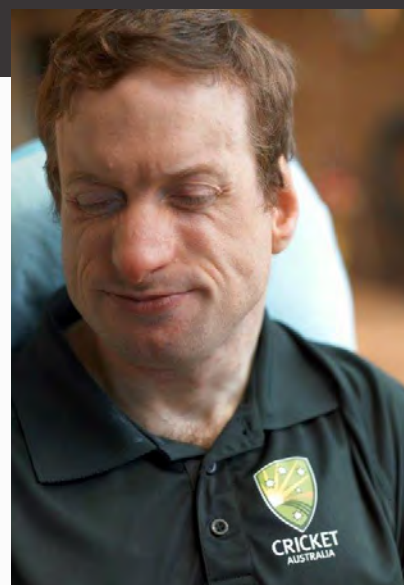
On the 10th of June sadly our friend Guy Dale passed away. We, the people living and working at Pisces, lost a man with a big personality! Guy was a character and he was loved by the people that supported him during his years at Melba. Guy knew exactly what he wanted and he was always determined to get what he wanted. Once he had made up his mind about something there was no convincing him otherwise.

Guy needed his own space and he made it clear to us when we got to close. He was often worried about what happened around him but he could be very relaxed and happy. He would then lean back, put his hands behind his head and make a humming noise. The neighbours

thought we have a Tibetan monk living here. That was what it sounded like for them!

Guy was a friendly man and he loved sitting with other people talking and holding hands. He was gentle and loved a good joke. He had the funniest chuckle and everybody at Pisces will miss hearing it.

Guy often was very brave, he was game to try new things, and he loved relaxing in his hammock or looking into his mirror in the sensory room. He liked being outside in the garden and he was always keen to see the newest movie at the cinema. We will miss Guy very much and we are glad that he could go peacefully with people present who loved and respected him. Farewell Guy Dale!



VALE – DARREN JOHNSON

Darren was a much loved housemate at Lara court, who was always keen to get out and about! Darren had the best 'puppy dog eyes' and used them well to get staff at Lara to get what he wanted! Darren was supported with an Individual Support Arrangement and he kept very busy throughout the week. One of jobs he enjoyed most was shopping for the house

and also doing deliveries for Able Bake House. This job led to Darren receiving his first ever pay slip! Darren was easy-going and staff would often find Darren in his favorite chair with his feet up. This, of course, was his down-time so he would have energy for later on as he liked to keep an eye on night staff.

It has been a great pleasure to get

to know Darren and support him to do the things that were important to him. We will remember him picking up his bag and taking staff by the hand to head for the front door so he could go for a drive.

We will miss his cheeky grin, his smile and all his antics; especially the brief cuddles that he gave sparingly.

May he rest in peace.

VALE – KATIE WEST

Katie West was a friend to all at Wray Crescent Community Connections. She was held in the highest regard by her peers and the staffing team. Katie's relationships stretched far and wide within the Melba and Mt Evelyn communities and she was much loved.

Katie will always be remembered for her beautiful laugh and the special times she shared chatting on the sofa at Wray. We will always remember her love of coffee; but it was more than just the coffee. It presented an opportunity for Katie to stop, sit and "just be".

Loving, kind and a devoted friend, Katie was admired and respected by all who knew her. She had a true sense of occasion and Christmas or her planning meetings could never come around quickly enough.

Katie shone when those closest to her would gather around and discuss what was next for her. There is no doubt Katie continues to shine; watching us all. She will be forever missed.



VALE - MARIA VALLER



Maria passed away suddenly late in April while doing something she loved. She will be fondly remembered, especially by Melba's Individualised Support Arrangements team who worked so closely with her. Maria had experienced much adversity in her life, but she

taught those she cared about how with strength, courage and resilience life can always get better. While not every day was an easy one for Maria, her cheeky smile and infectious chuckle could right any wrong.

Maria, we will dearly miss sharing that next coffee with

you or that next swim at your favourite pool. We will miss watching you learn and grow and we will miss the lessons that you taught us. We will miss the funny things you would say and that trust you had in us.

We will remember you when we walk through the trees.

VALE - DAVID LEAVER

Over the years, David almost had a regular spot in this newsletter for one achievement or another, so it is with great sadness that he is now appearing as we say farewell. He passed away unexpectedly, but peacefully on Sat 27th June 2015 surrounded by his family and closest friends. Words cannot convey the massive hole he has left in the lives of his Mum and Dad and all at Blueridge. Sadly what a great ambassador Melba has lost!

David led a remarkable life and broke down barriers. He was well known in the community, and a powerful advocate for people with all abilities. His contribution with his mate Steve was one of his strongest qualities. David was involved in various community programs, especially his work at Animal Aid and Blue Cross dog refuges, engaging and socializing with dogs that are up for adoption to de-sensitise the more timid dogs from their fear of wheelchairs, and the people who use them. David was invited by the Yarra Ranges Council to the grand opening of the 'Lilydale to Warburton trail' in 2011 to acknowledge his achievement of successfully completing the full length of the trail and back. David spent time meeting with various community groups to improve the facilities for people with a disability, for example, a Bunnings store to keep disabled parking available after they had started to remove some places. David advocated to Yarra Ranges Council for the return of Sailability at Lillydale Lake and improved disabled parking.

David was awarded the 'Shine On' award in



2012 from the Rotary Club Southern District and in 2013 the Rebecca Britt Award at Melba. Both were commendations for his work within the community.

Away from the limelight, at home, David was affectionate, cheeky, sometimes naughty, and he loved to share a joke and play jokes on staff. He would be the first person to laugh when we bumped into a cupboard or he'd tip over a chair as soon as we vacated it.

He had an amazing ability to know if we were feeling sad and would blow us kisses to make us feel better and he would laugh which always made us laugh. His beautiful big smile always made us feel better.

David formed great friendships that we will treasure forever. We are proud of his achievements and honored to share his life and journey. A journey that has taught us so much about relationships, resilience and determination.

Dawn Reynolds

VALE - MATTHEW EMONSON

Our mate Matt taught us so much; tolerance, patience and acceptance. He had such strength of character and would never give up; making the most of his life while fighting many health issues. Matt really took control of his life when he started his one-to-one support with an ISA. He chose his support staff and they became strong friends. With their support Matt broadened his horizons; helping others and volunteering at a local nursery. He shared a love of music with his sister and adored spending time with his family; hosting the family catch up last year was a real highlight.

Matt found joy in many simple, every day things; hearing his mum and dad's voice, listening to his audio books, having his family visit, sitting in his favourite spot at the balcony door, his bedroom and keeping night staff on their toes!

Matt also gave us all so much joy; he would snicker at something silly we said and be very clear when didn't approve of his radio station being changed!

What a privilege to have been in your life, Matthew; you are a gentle soul and will be remembered with love and a smile.

Let's not mourn Matt's passing; let's rejoice that he was here.



VALE - WILLIAM "ARTHUR" GUERIN

We only had the pleasure of getting to know Arthur for a short time, but he certainly made a lasting impression. Arthur was supported through an Individualised Support Arrangement to get out into his community after retiring and spending a few months at home. He was a loveable character who had no trouble vocalising his feelings, both positive and not so positive! Arthur enjoyed movement and liked driving and catching the train, he often let the other passengers know how much he did or didn't like the train at any given time. Arthur loved music and was a regular at the Melba music group and Morning Melodies; he also loved to spend time in parks and bushland and often enjoyed a walk around the lake. He will be missed by those of us who had the pleasure to meet him and spend time with him.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



DR JOHN ANNISON PHD

President

John Annison joined the Board of Management in July 2010 and became President in March 2013. John has a long and distinguished career in the disability field working in both the government and nongovernment sectors. For many years, John was the Principal Lecturer in Deakin University's Disability Studies area of Health Sciences in the School of Health and Social Development. John was previously President of the Council of Intellectual Disability Agencies (now merged with National Disability Services, Victoria) and a former President of Inclusion Melbourne.



PETER VINCE

Vice President

Peter has practised exclusively as a Chartered Accountant in corporate recovery and insolvency for over 25 years. During this time, Peter has been responsible for the conduct of numerous insolvency assignments encompassing the administration of companies as well as bankrupt estates and turnaround assignments.



JAN REBBECHI

Secretary

Jan has been on the Board since 2000 and currently holds the role of Secretary. Jan is the mother of Miles who attends Melba Avenue Community Connections. Jan is a strong advocate for her son and others who attend the day service and has contributed in a range of consultation groups at Melba for over a decade.



BRIAN BAKER

Treasurer

Brian was invited to join the Board in 2011 after being a member of the Finance sub-committee since 2009. Brian is a retired wholesale banker and a qualified Accountant, Company Secretary and Company director. Brian has extensive experience in the areas of finance, management and board governance.



KRISTY BURROWS

Board Member

Kristy is the Director of her recently established legal practice, Yarra Ranges Lawyers and joined the Board in 2008. Kristy handed over the vice presidents role to Peter Vince in February 2014 and remains as a member. Kristy also worked in the real estate industry for 6 years prior to becoming a Solicitor.



ANGELIA DIXON

Board Member

Angelia is the CEO of the Pancare Foundation, her previous roles include Executive General Manager positions at Ambulance Victoria and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute. In 2007 Angelia participated in the Williamson Community Leadership Program, she has an MBA and a Bachelor of Science. Angelia is passionate about making a difference in people's lives.



SUE DRISCOLL

Board Member

Sue is the Principal of The Clowder Group, a consultancy which specialises in providing communications and fundraising advice and support to the Australian health care sector. Her clients span all areas of healthcare: metropolitan and rural hospitals, aged care and disability agencies, mental health support, community health, health partnerships, general practice organisations and disease-specific support groups. Sue was elected to the Board at the 2011 Annual General Meeting.



SANDRA HAY

Board Member (resigned October 2014)

Sandra has qualifications in welfare studies and human resource management and has also completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors course and examination. In her earlier career Sandra worked as a Case Worker and Community Development Officer. Later she worked as the Executive Officer at Box Hill Hospital and most recently as General Manager, School Services at Curriculum Corporation, now Education Services Australia. Sandra has a particular interest and skills in networking, strategic planning and communication, including marketing and public relations.



GRAHAM LEAVER

Board Member

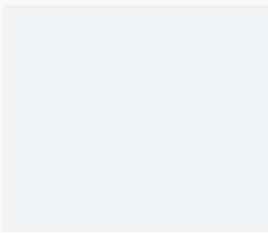
Graham has been a member of the Board since 2006. Graham's son, David, was supported for many years through Melba's Community Living Support Service and Individualised Support Arrangements. Graham has been involved with Melba since 1988 and has played an integral role within Melba on many committees and working parties during this time.



COLIN ROSE

Board Member

Colin re-joined the Board in December, 2010, having previously been a member for 9 years, finishing in 2007. Colin is a panel member of DHS Eastern Region's review panel for emergency accommodation and he is a long standing member of the Lions Club.



DOMINICA TANNOCK

Board Member

Dominica joined the board in 2014. She is the principal lawyer of DST Legal located in Abbotsford.



GLENN FOARD

Ex-Officio Member

Glenn has extensive experience in the sector, including 11 years with DHS, Executive Management in both Commonwealth and State Governments and, in earlier years, he worked in research and academic institutions.



KIRSTEN FILMER

Minutes Secretary

Kirsten is the Executive Office Manager of Melba Support Services. She has over 10 years experience working in the disability and aged care sectors and has served on a number of not-for-profit committees. Kirsten has supported Melba's Board as Minutes Secretary since February 2012.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE MANAGER

It is often said that time has a wonderful way of showing us what really matters. Certainly, from my perspective, that is a truism that is lived every day at Melba Support Services.

Our organisational chart puts people we support right at the top, and that philosophy is lived and breathed in every corner of the organisation. Our head office - rather than being a sterile environment where doors are closed to shut out noise and signs dictate who is allowed to pass beyond a certain point - is full of life and love. Administrative staff at Melba go beyond the stereotypical idea of an office and think about what really matters to people we help to support every day.

Whether it's jiving away to 'Blame it on the Boogie' on a Wednesday morning or enjoying regular visits at our desks by any number of people we support (checking in to make sure we're working hard!), working at Melba has a way of constantly reminding us why we do what we do.

Speaking of our office, towards the end of 2014 Melba's head office and one of our Community Connections sites relocated from Mt Evelyn to Lilydale. We're now in a wonderful, light-filled, comfortable, safe building, just a stone's throw from Lillydale Lake and from the heart of Lilydale's shops.

I've only been at Melba for a few years but some staff have been here for decades and packing up 40 years' worth of history was certainly an emotional affair. A lot of people put in a tremendous effort to make the move happen, but my special thanks to Sue Smith who was an endless supply of energy and enthusiasm during the relocation - not to mention a lot of fun! Thanks also to Kate Lee, videographer, who captured this momentous move for Melba with her deft and incredibly talented touch.

Moving to Melba Avenue put in place a couple of big puzzle pieces for us. Not only is the site much safer from the risk of bushfires and falling trees but being located so close to shops, public transport and other community activities allows us to really support people where they want to be; in the community.

While we were relocating - we don't like sitting on our hands! -

we also completed a terrific wheelchair art project with Mt Evelyn Primary School. You can see the artwork either at Melba's new home in Lilydale, at the school or on display in the Mt Evelyn Community Hall. This project was a lot of fun and students at the school learned a lot about disability and how it's ok to be different.

Another huge project this year has been completing the merger with Impact Support Services. While there has been a lot of work behind the scenes to complete the merger, the opportunity to meet staff and people supported by Impact and welcome them into the Melba family has been great fun. Also, it has been a pleasure to support and get to know the merged Melba Board this year. Our Board members volunteer their time generously to Melba.

Working closely with our Volunteer Coordinator, Belinda Allwood, and Executive Administration Assistant, Kim Harvey, has again been a joy this year. Belle is totally dedicated to finding out what really matters to our volunteers so that she can successfully match them with the right individual or group. Kim's kind smile and thoughtful manner on reception at Melba Avenue goes a long way to making sure everyone who comes in our front door knows they are welcome here. Thank you Kim and Belle for your wonderful work.

I have also enjoyed working with our CEO, Glenn Foad, and Melba's Leadership Group. This is a group of super-passionate individuals who advocate fiercely for the rights of individuals we support. I am constantly inspired by the Leadership Group's dedication to matters of social justice, their tireless efforts to improve what we do and, at the end of the day, their ability to enjoy a laugh together.

As I am writing this, the disability sector is waiting to hear how the roll out of the NDIS will occur come 1 July next year. We are so excited that disability service in Australia is changing forever - not a day too soon! As we move forward into this new world, I am confident that Melba will continue to do great work through finding out what really matters to people we support and striving to improve every day.

Kirsten Filmer
Executive Office Manager





This year the Board of Management decided to produce Annual Accounts in a consolidated format, which presented the financial performance and position of both Melba and the Melba Group (the latter representing the merged associations of Melba Support Services Inc. and Impact Support Services Inc.).

On behalf of the Board of Management, I am pleased to report that for the financial year 2014-15, the Melba Group produced a surplus of \$73,605 (2013-14 a surplus of \$71,697). Although this is a modest result, it masks the losses resulting from the cessation of funding for Impact's mental health support services very early in the financial year. This is now behind us and the Melba Group did and continues to operate in a financially sustainable and responsible manner.

Some highlights in 2014-15 were the successful merger of Impact and Melba, the successful tendering for work with the Transport Accident Commission (TAC), the sale of the Ormeau Road Mt Evelyn property and the transfer of that site's activities to our new site at Melba Avenue, Lilydale.

As in the previous financial year, Melba expresses its appreciation to the Mt Evelyn and Montrose Community Bank® Branches for their financial support in securing property dedicated to providing residential accommodation choices for the people we support.

As in past years, this year the effectiveness of Corporate Services is due to the support, direction and hard work of a number of people and I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank them, in particular the Board of Management, the Finance Sub-Committee, our CEO, Glenn Foard, Melba Leadership Group and the other members of the Corporate Services team - Karen Gibson, Leigh McAlister, Jean Kalns, Maria Cianciaruso, Mandy Lister and Nicole Crawley. Karen Gibson has recently left Melba to pursue another career path. We wish her well and thank her for close to 18 years of dedicated service.

Lorensz Senn
Corporate Services Manager

The following information is an extract from the Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2015.

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	MELBA TRADING		MELBA GROUP	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Total Income	12,717,421	11,211,945	14,449,635	11,211,945
Total Expenditure	<u>12,573,288</u>	<u>11,140,248</u>	<u>14,376,030</u>	<u>11,140,248</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS	144,133	71,697	73,605	\$71,697

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

Total Current Assets	4,891,507	3,560,905	5,417,743	4,347,896
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>1,777,787</u>	<u>2,967,530</u>	<u>2,240,070</u>	<u>3,445,025</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>6,669,294</u>	<u>6,528,435</u>	<u>7,657,813</u>	<u>7,792,921</u>
Total Current Liabilities	2,526,547	2,523,237	2,836,854	3,042,944
Total Non-Current Liabilities	<u>1,075,847</u>	<u>1,082,432</u>	<u>1,082,852</u>	<u>1,085,475</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,602,394	3,605,669	3,919,706	4,128,419
NET ASSETS	<u>3,066,900</u>	<u>2,922,766</u>	<u>3,738,107</u>	<u>3,664,502</u>
Accumulated surplus	253,165	1,629,376	360,056	1,873,478
Reserves	<u>2,813,735</u>	<u>1,293,390</u>	<u>3,378,051</u>	<u>1,791,024</u>
EQUITY	<u>3,066,900</u>	<u>2,922,766</u>	<u>3,738,107</u>	<u>3,664,502</u>

The full set of financial statements including accompanying notes and the audit certificate can separately be obtained by contacting the Corporate Services Manager at Melba Support Services Inc.



HISTORY

Melba began in the early 1970s, established by families who wanted an organisation they could trust to provide a day service for children with disabilities. It also provided a support network for parents, who had nowhere to go and no one to turn to for advice and help. Through the generosity of community members, a congregate care facility was built which was used until the late 1990s. As society changed, so too did the views on providing supports to people with disabilities. Congregate care facilities dissolved and houses located in the general community were purpose built; adult training day services became places where people could come, not just to learn life skills, but be assisted to make meaningful connections to their community through employment, volunteering and developing friendships. The focus moved away from 'care' and towards the provision of support to achieve outcomes for each person, centred on each individual's likes, dislikes, dreams and desires. Today, and throughout its more than 40 year journey, Melba has held a reputation within its field as progressive, forward thinking and always a provider of quality services.

LIFE GOVERNORS

Melba's Life Governors have each made significant contributions to Melba over many years. They have dedicated enormous hours, given endless energy and worked tirelessly for the organisation and the people we support from the early days right through to the present day. The efforts of these extraordinary individuals have been recognised through the awarding of Life Governorship by Melba's Board of Management.

We would like to thank and recognise these wonderful people for their contribution to the Melba 'family'.

23.11.77	Mr C. B. Soward (Dec)
25.6.80	Mr G. T. Stevenson (Dec)
16.3.83	Mrs N. Stevenson
7.9.83	Mrs P. Jones OAM
17.10.84	Mr H. F. Jones
26.10.94	Mrs P. Buck
27.10.99	Mrs J. Van't Riet
23.10.01	Mr G. K. Welsh
24.10.12	Mrs A. Blomfield (nee Carter)
24.10.12	Mr A. Kolmus
19.3.13	Mr D. Johnston
20.11.13	Mr T. Greene



2015 Annual Report

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2015

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**TRANSPORT
ACCIDENT
COMMISSION**

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