



50<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

*A Place to Belong since 1971*

2021 Annual Report

Open House acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Open House stands, and we pay our respects to elders both past, present and emerging.

**MILK / BAR**

**TARAX**  
COLD

## “Home is like hell. Doesn’t anyone care about us?”

With those words spoken from an angry gang kid to Open House founder George Farrington AM, in 1971, Open House was born.

The vision was clear; to be a place to belong for all people and to provide unconditional long-term support and friendship to those on the fringes of society.

This year in 2021, Open House proudly celebrated 50 years of positively impacting the community. Fifty years of seeing lives changed and 50 years of being a place to belong.

The life-changing work of Open House is still needed today more than ever, and we are proud to share with you in this Annual Report just how we have tackled social isolation over the last twelve months and brought real change to the community.



# Our Vision

To tackle social isolation head-on through creative programs and activities for all ages, giving people a place to belong.

# Our Values

- We respect each person, their social, racial and religious beliefs and treat them with dignity.
- We value, share with, and support people unconditionally.

# Our Mission

To live out Matthew 25:34-40 & Matthew 28:18-20

To give long-term friendship and support to children, young people and adults in our community, particularly those who are disadvantaged or socially isolated.

To give opportunities to people to express themselves and encouragement if they wish, to make positive changes to their lives.





# Chair's Report

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Welcome to the Open House 2020-2021 Annual Report.

The 2020-2021 year has been most challenging and uncertain for both Open House and our wider community. Lockdowns and other regulations have required the Open House Management and the team to find new and innovative ways to keep connected to participants and provide friendship through these difficult times.

As you read this report, I am certain that you too will be thankful for the incredible flexibility and adaptability of our staff and volunteers. On behalf of the Board, I commend and thank them all for their amazing contribution. I especially thank our CEO, Paul, with the support of his partner Theresa, for his steadfastness and clear leadership in this unprecedented time.

In April 2021, we were able to celebrate the 50th birthday of Open House with over 250 guests. The event was a celebration of God's rich provision in many different ways, including the contribution of George and Muriel Farrington and many of the early team and supporters who were in attendance. Also present were several of the (then) young people who challenged George Farrington for a place where they would feel welcome and accepted.

On a very sad note, it was only a few months later in July 2021, after being unwell for some time that George Farrington, with Muriel at his side, passed from this world to the next.

Due to the covid restrictions we were not able to hold an event to celebrate George and Muriel's lifetime of commitment and caring, however, work is underway to produce a testimonial production documenting and acknowledging the life of God's faithful servant - George Farrington AM.

I trust you will find the following pages informative and uplifting. The year ahead will present many new and unique challenges as we come to grips with living and serving God in a post-pandemic society. I expect the full fall-out of the covid virus will be with us for some time and that the provision of friendship, support, and a place to belong will be more important than ever.

Thank you for your continuing contribution to the work at Open House.



**Dr. George Giuliani**  
Chairman of the Board





The Bike Hut Program which runs at Malahang Reserve in West Heidelberg

# CEO's Report

As I sat down to write my piece for this year's Annual Report, the news headline flashed on my screen 'Victoria to enter Lockdown 6.0'.

Even amongst all the uncertainties of living in such a world, we have continued to find ways to support our people, evidence of which will be seen as you turn the pages of this report. The notification of a lockdown no longer comes as a shock. The message to the Team is simple: "You know the drill, back to home working, and please don't forget your laptop charger".

Since the pandemic started we have been in contact with our people more often than ever before by making phone calls, writing letters, and also using the latest technology available. In many ways, the pandemic helped us to re-kindle relationships as people were really appreciative of a call during lockdown. We have worked far closer with churches, local businesses, cafes and agencies than ever before.

This year Open House celebrated 50 years of serving the community. Whilst it certainly looks a lot different from the past, Open House will always be a place for people to belong. As our chair said in the middle of the pandemic, "going forward, Open House will need to be courageous."

The theme we adopted for 2021 was: **Be Courageous**. The first courageous thing we did was to book Ivanhoe Town Hall for our fiftieth gala dinner when we were in the height of lockdown. By some miracle, on the last day of April, we managed to have 250 people gathering together from all over Australia without a single mask in sight.

Even in such a difficult year, Open House has continued to support our community. This has only been possible due to the hard work, dedication and adaptability of our staff and volunteer team, whom I am so thankful for. Sincere thanks also to all those who have faith in what we do and have chosen to invest and partner with us; without your financial support we would not be able to do what we do.

We will continue to be courageous going forward as we seek new ways to give people a place to belong. As people are struggling with social isolation more than ever before.

Thank you one and all for making Open House a Place to Belong.



**Paul Burgess**  
Chief Executive Officer







# A Tribute to George Farrington AM

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This year not only did Open House celebrate 50 years of making the community a better place, but we also said goodbye to our founder, **George Farrington AM**, who passed away in July.

It was George's initial vision that helped shape Open House into what it would become today.

To celebrate an incredible life, David Woods, George's close friend and former Open House Chairman has prepared the following words:

On April Fool's Day, 1968, my wife of 10 weeks and I left Sydney to come to Melbourne to work for three years. Within six months we had met George and Muriel, and now 53 years later, I have been asked to make the following comments about George Farrington AM, principally based on his ministry at Open House.

To understand George's vision for Open House you need to understand the circumstances that led up to its commencement and you need to know George's underlying motivation – or at least my interpretation of these things.

In response to God's calling, George had given up a very successful business career and, in the mid-1960's he, with a team of volunteers, was running a very successful youth program at St. James Church Ivanhoe. Partway through 1970, George became very concerned that there was a large number of teenagers who had nowhere to go at night except the pub. A small number were in the youth program but this was proving difficult for both the teenagers and the Church. As a consequence, George invited three of us to a meeting in December at which the prospect of a halfway house was discussed.

At this point, George was about to take at least two big risks. The first was with me because, unlike the other two men who were experienced and mature Christians, I was being asked to participate in a groundbreaking venture for which I was unqualified and had no experience.

The second risk, which was very much bigger, was that he was prepared to give up a very successful ministry with a regular salary for an unknown future. This was the same risk he took when he left a successful business career some years earlier.

So began Open House in April 1971, and now I have been given the impossible task of summarising George's 50-year life at Open House.



In early 1971 we rented a disused milk bar and residence behind the Heidelberg Town Hall in Ivanhoe. Through speaking engagements, George was able to draw a group of volunteers together to help with the renovations and many went on to become team members who ran the programs for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. In addition to the one night they were on duty, they also had to commit to one night a week for training. Commitment and training were important to George.

Whilst George had a strong and clear view of God's call, he was willing to listen to the advice of trusted mentors and, if convinced, would willingly accept that advice.

A wise person once said to me that there is no such thing as luck – what we call luck is the point at which ability and opportunity meet. George had the undoubted ability to grasp or even create opportunities. A strong sense of God's calling, trust in God's provision, and the encouragement of a loving, supportive wife were also of great significance.

The lives of countless people have been enriched because George responded to God's call and I am so grateful that Pam and I together with our family are among those people.

Thank you, Harry Norman George Farrington AM, dear friend, brother and risk taker in God's service.



**David Woods**  
Former Chairman  
of the Board











# 50th Anniversary Evening

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In these ever-changing and uncertain times, it is an increasingly rare achievement for a business or organisation, particularly a charitable one, to reach such a milestone as its 50th anniversary. Well, this year on April 30th, Open House celebrated such an achievement at a gala event held at the iconic 'The Centre Ivanhoe'. For the Open House staff, the build-up to the event was both exciting and nerve-wracking. When Paul, our CEO, committed to a date for the evening, we were in lockdown with the rest of Melbourne and unsure if we'd be out of it by April. But a decision had to be made and in good faith (and optimism) the venue was booked, and preparations began. Over the next few months Open House staff, the Board, and a selection of volunteers, all pulled together to create what ended up as a highly memorable and enjoyable evening.

Over two hundred and fifty guests attended the event which included staff, former staff, participants, former participants, volunteers, friends, local politicians, and long-time supporters, all of whom were eager to support the night and celebrate all things Open House. As guests mingled amongst each other in the stunning art deco designed venue, the excitement and enthusiasm was palpable. Past participants connected with other past participants, friendships were rekindled, new relationships forged, and stories of old and new exchanged. Before a delicious three-course meal was served, Digby Hannah, a long-time supporter and author of the Open House book "The Power of Friendship", entertained us all with his guitar before rousing the guests into a sing-along.

During the speeches, Board Chair, George Giuliani, talked about Open House's origins and history, heaping praise on George Farrington's vision and commitment in starting Open House way back in 1971.

After the conclusion of the speeches and the online auction, the winning bidders collected their items and before we knew it, the night was over. Afterwards, Open House staff stayed behind to help pack up, happily recounting their versions of the night's events, a little sad it was finished. For many weeks after, guests emailed and phoned to say they'd had a wonderful time, which was incredibly rewarding for the events team to hear. It's no easy feat to successfully pull off a 50th-anniversary celebration for two hundred and fifty people. It's also no easy feat for an organisation to stay relevant for 50 years. But that is exactly what Open House has done and continues to do. Half a century after its inception, Open House is still here for the needy and disenfranchised, playing a vitally important role in the community. Well done Open House.



Nicole Riches  
**Volunteer & Administration Coordinator**





## YOUTH TEAM REFLECTIONS ON OPEN HOUSE'S 50th ANNIVERSARY

The Open House 50th Birthday Celebration was one of my most memorable and enjoyable evenings at Open House. Open House, as we all know, is about friendship, and that evening was all about friendships; friends and families coming together because we enjoy each other's company. My personal highlight from the evening was reconnecting with past participants who were able to share with me some of the struggles they had overcome and the life-changing impact Open House has had on them. It's a real privilege to be a part of Open House and the positive impact it has on so many.

- Steve

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There was such a buzz about the place, given we hadn't seen a big event happen in over a year, and this was such a big milestone to celebrate! Time flew as we caught up with those we hadn't seen for a long time, with new connections being formed between those who hadn't crossed each other's paths during their time at Open House. Joy filled everyone's faces. More than anything the night was about connecting, centred around enjoying the company of those in our Open House community. It was about friendship, the heart of the Open House mission.

- Naomi

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My time with Open House has only been a blink compared to other team members, volunteers and of course the founders who still to this day are involved. I can remember walking past the old Drop-In on Ivanhoe Parade when I would study at the library and think, this place seems unique. Coming full circle as a volunteer there in 2014, I soon realised why it was something special. It was like a small family for those who needed it. A community of all kinds of people, laughing, learning, praying and doing life together. Finally seeing most of these people together at once during the 50th Anniversary event was truly special. I have been told as a youth worker you may never get to see the fruits of your labour. However, there is one thing I have learnt, that is the seeds you sow into the lives of others, will turn into something amazing. This is what I have been able to witness by looking back at the work of all our volunteers and supporters during the 50 years of Open House. I look forward to the next 50 years and beyond!

- Tim





The Open House 50th celebration was anything but peaceful, it was a phrenetic night with the preparations no less energised. The scale of the event was no small undertaking for Open House, requiring a high degree of coordination to reach all milestones. To mention all the moving pieces would be impossible, but the lead up did remind me of the at-times under-recognised efforts that the Open House services department under-go. Without their hard work and tenacity, the 50th anniversary would have been an insurmountable task. The night itself was the shortest three hours in my life with little time to sit down. The multimedia and silent auction on the night required full attention. Although demanding, to not try our best would have been unwarranted, considering the 250+ individuals attending. During the night I was approached by one of these individuals who had recognised her husband in one of the photos we had, she requested that we find her that photo so she could show her family. It was then that my appreciation for Open House's legacy became more apparent than ever. Every photo I had collected was someone, it was their moment in time and Open House was lucky enough to have been involved at that moment. The 50th anniversary was not just a celebration of our past, it was a reminder to continue being a place to belong.

- Nathan



Brian McManus  
Youth Team Volunteer

Jennifer and I attended the Open House 50th Anniversary Celebration and what a wonderful occasion it was!

That night I was lucky enough to catch up with a number of the young people I had worked with during my volunteering over the past 14 years helping in the Youth Workshop Mentoring Program.

The growth and confidence obvious in these young people made me further realise how powerful the good work carried out by Open House is in the local community.



# Our Board

Open House is managed and run by a Volunteer Board which meets once a month. We are so thankful for the expertise and time they invest in Open House to make sure it remains a place to belong.

**CHAIR** Dr. George Giuliani  
**DEPUTY CHAIR** Phillip Sporton  
Reverend Melanie Moore  
Rex Anderson  
Oscar Ruiz

Tom MacDonald  
Caroline Quinn  
Barry Gunning  
Rosalind Look

# Our Staff

## SERVICES

Paul Burgess, Chief Executive Officer  
Peter Choma, Operations Manager  
Nicole Riches, Volunteer & Administration Coordinator  
Jordan Wakelin, Relationships Manager

## ADULT PROGRAMS

Wendy Farrington, Clubwork Manager  
Nathan Turner, Program Support Worker  
Wendy Barlow, Adult Support Worker  
Harmony Cook, Adult Support Worker

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Steven Marks, Youth Programs Manager  
Tim Womersley, Youth Support Worker  
Naomi Kop, Youth Support Worker

## PASTORAL CARE

Ann-Marie Fife, Pastoral Care Support Worker  
Brett Ross, Pastoral Care Support Worker & Site Manager

Open House would like to formally acknowledge and thank both **Harmony Cook** and **Wendy Barlow** for their ministry here at Open House.

We wish them both the best in their futures and they will be very missed.



# Our Volunteers

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Open House is proud to have over 30 volunteers who faithfully serve both the people of Open House and the wider community.

We are blessed with dedicated people, from the board all the way through to those who work with some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

There is always an opportunity to get involved with Open House and our life-changing work. To use your skills and time to support the community of Open House, please enquire through our website Volunteer Portal or email Open House at: [office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au)

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## STUDENT PLACEMENT

At Open House we love having students join us and complete their placement with us. However, due to the lockdowns, our placement students were put on hold until 2021.

Kimberley was able to complete 60 hours with Open House. She initially started her placement in 2020. However, due to the restrictions, she did most of her hours in 2021.

Kimberley wrote the following about her time at Open House;

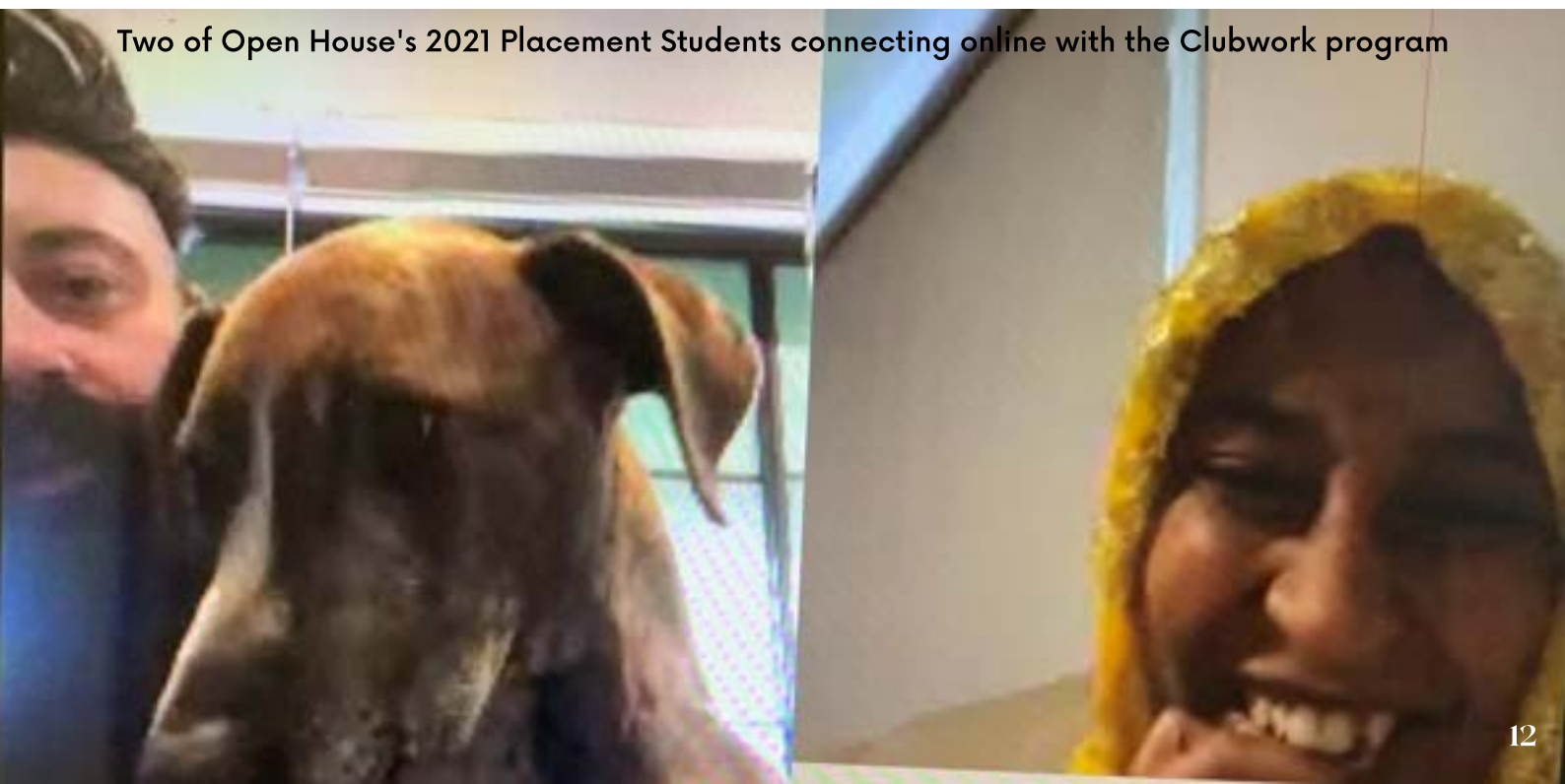
At Open House I initially started working alongside Steve and Brett experiencing youth work with a group of boys, which I was sad to leave behind as I did enjoy these days and outings. I observed the way that Steve and the team interacted with the young people and I found them to be excellent role models to these boys while keeping firm when needed be.

I was also lucky enough to gain some experience on Wednesdays working with adults with disabilities. The Clubwork program is a wonderful place for participants to socialise, have a laugh and enjoy each other's company whilst knitting, colouring, or doing arts and crafts. It is always a lovely place to be.

In the future, I would love to visit the staff, volunteers, and participants again as they all had a great and positive effect on me and my experience at Open House.

To find out more about doing placement at Open House please contact Ann-Marie directly on: [afife@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:afife@openhousecic.org.au) or call our office on (03) 9450 7600

Two of Open House's 2021 Placement Students connecting online with the Clubwork program





# Youth Programs

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I can't quite believe that another year has gone by and I'm writing this during another lockdown.

Despite all the challenges we have faced, it's so important to remember we have done it before together and will get through it again together! In saying this, the youth team have had some real wins and opportunities to celebrate our team and participants and seen amazing growth through the diverse range of programs we have on offer.

As we look back on this past year, there are so many experiences and adventures we are grateful for and want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your ongoing prayer and support for Open House and our community.

I hope you enjoy reading through some of our reflections over the past 12 months and together share in celebrating 50 wonderful years of Open House's friendship in the community.



Steven Marks  
Youth Programs Manager

## YOUTH WORKSHOP MENTORING PROGRAM

It certainly has been a different year in the YWMP, with a wave of new referrals from local schools and agencies desperate for support for their young people who have struggled as a result of Covid and the negative issues/challenges associated with lockdowns and home learning. The staff and volunteers in the YWMP have done a fantastic job welcoming new participants and continuing to support those already connected to the program.

The team were raring to go at the first opportunity we had to take a young group of participants out for their first adventure post lockdown last year. We focused on outdoor activities and so bike rides, BBQ's and exploring King Parrot Creek were all on the agenda.

Our participants are always open to learning new skills and experiencing different cultures and it was certainly a highlight having Luke Mitchell (Reconnect Worker) come to Open House over a couple of sessions and teach a group of young participants how to make a Didgeridoo and then a few lessons on how to play them.







On another occasion, the youth had an educational visit from Tim and Libby (Vic Police) who were keen to meet some of our young participants and share some stories, learnings and demonstrate some of the tools and strategies they use in their jobs. They also role-played a situation whereby they would need to arrest a person and one of our participants eagerly volunteered.

The workshop has been 'buzzing' along... literally, with a number of participants, teachers, parents all interested in Brian's design and construction of a horizontal beehive. It has been great seeing how popular these hives are and we have started building another three hives for those in our community!

Our Tuesday girls YWMP has seen a real variation of activities and ventures over the year. With a few new participants welcomed into the group came the opportunity to meet a new set of needs, to encourage our new participants in specific areas of interest to them, as well as trying things outside of their comfort zone. Some of these activities included woodwork skills development readying them for some restoration work, making fettuccine pasta and wood-fired pizza from scratch, going for a Warrandyte river walk, a trip to Artvo (3D painted art) at Docklands and some car maintenance/mechanical skills development.

As you can see, there have been plenty of exciting projects we have been blessed to be a part of over the past year, however, the key to this program is re-engaging these young people with education or helping to keep them connected to education, as well as mentoring and building friendships and relationships. It has been a privilege working alongside some wonderful schools, teachers, youth workers, agencies and partners all with a similar goal of focusing on the young person and supporting them and their families positively to move forward.



Naomi Kop  
Youth Support Worker





The participants getting "WILD" on a river adventure

## WILD ADVENTURES WITH OPEN HOUSE

Towards the end of 2020, Open House and Each Wilderness began a conversation about ways in which we could re-engage some of our disconnected, vulnerable and isolated teens after the lengthy lockdown last year. We planned the entire program during the lockdown with the intention of 'hitting the ground running' once restrictions eased!

The green light was given and the program commenced mid-way through November 2020 with nine of our participants. The program provided an opportunity for these nine young people to get back into the outdoors following the lockdown and to challenge themselves, discover new skills and work alongside others, whilst having lots of fun and doing some exciting wilderness activities, from river sledding to caving and everything in between.

The program challenged these participants in a safe and supportive environment through a range of day trip adventures and culminated in an awe-inspiring five-day expedition; canoeing down the Murray River and camping on the river banks each night.

The highlight for many of the participants and team was the five-day journey down the Murray River. There were certainly plenty of challenges faced during the camping trip and lots of emotions flying high, however, the team managed each situation with empathy and provided support to each participant.

It was so encouraging to see the growth and achievement in the young people who at the beginning of the trip, did not believe it was possible for them to paddle for 5 days, however, at the end of the journey, we as a team had paddled 80kms – a fantastic achievement for all involved.

This trip and experience would not have been possible without the generous help from our supporters.







The Youth Group out and about enjoying a Night Walk

### YOUTH DROP OUT & YOUTH GROUP

The Friday youth program has seen a lot of name changes in the past two years: Drop-In, Drop-Out, Drop-On and in term two this year, the Friday Youth Group! The transition from online back to outreach at Malahang Reserve on a Friday afternoon was well received. The young people got a double dose of Open House youth workers and volunteers during the week which really boosted our presence in the area. Games offered were more “chill” than Thursdays, including UNO, Pictionary, Connect Four, vortex throwing and of course a bit of basketball! Having the soccer club Melbourne City F.C. run clinics at the park at the same time really spoil the young people, as they would often have to choose between the activities or jump from one to the other! Term two saw the youth program transition back to Open House Macleod with more of a youth group style. The program starts with a meal together followed by activities such as campfire cooking, indoor minigolf and a night walk at Wombat Bend Park in Templestowe.

The team are very grateful for our volunteers in this program who have been with us throughout the lockdown and continue to come week-in and week-out to be there for the young people. A big thank you to those volunteers!



Tim Womersley  
Youth Support Worker







## YOUTH SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Over the past year, we've seen some wonderful memories being made on our Youth School Holiday Program as we've ventured out to places unseen by many of our participants.

Our journey to Sorrento Beach for a day to play in the sun had our participants buzzing as they caught that excitement that can hit some of us when we get nearer to the beachside! It was pure joy to be out together again with a group made up of participants from our many programs.

These holiday activities saw us connecting to those we hadn't seen in quite a while. New friendships were forged, old friendships strengthened and there was real joy found in enjoying the simple and important things in life. We can't wait to see what our next youth School Holiday Program holds!

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## ONE TO ONE SUPPORT

One of our participants in the Youth Workshop Mentoring Program experiences difficulties in reading and writing. During the first lockdown, we identified a need and offered a supporting hand to this young participant and his family. We support him in his studies, providing aid to work around his challenges (both online and face-to-face). Despite these hurdles, he continues to engage with his classes and will try his best in overcoming his difficulties.

An area he has struggled heavily with has been his engagement with peers. A naturally quiet and contemplative individual this participant shies away from larger groups. There was therefore a level of nervous anxiety when this participant's curriculum required him to partake in an outdoor group project. In this group he was required to build a scaled-down cabin; a task that required him to step out of his comfort zone and engage heavily with his team.

I was inspired by how quickly he met this challenge, beginning quiet but developing a strong voice in the group by participating in conversations and being quick to lend a hand.

This experience has been excellent for his development and a window into the promising future that awaits him.



Nathan Turner  
Program Support Worker & Former  
Adele Trainee



## A THOUGHT FROM ONE OF OUR INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS

Hey my name's Joel,

I have been at Open House as a Youth Volunteer for the past 3 years and I've enjoyed every minute of it! I love Open House so much. They believe in helping the community and everybody from all ages. From the youth to the elderly and everyone in-between.

I volunteer at Open House because I want to help the youth. I love spending time with them and the Open House staff. Everybody is so friendly and it always has such a cool, wholesome vibe.

When people are nice to one another strong communities are formed and Open House is a great community with good people, with good intentions and they help everybody.

Open House cares for its community so much and Open House cares for you. Stay safe everyone and remember to remain positive.



Joel Barresi  
Youth Volunteer

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Interested in volunteering with the Youth Team at Open House? If so, we would love to hear from you!

To find out more about doing placement at Open House please contact the office directly on:  
**[office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au)** or call us on **(03) 9450 7600**



# Malahang Reserve

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## BACKYARD SPORTS

It's a Thursday in 2020/21. Our Backyard Sports team are sitting at their home desks, Zooming and calling our participants.

Usually, we'd be down at Malahang Reserve in Heidelberg West, shooting hoops or kicking a soccer ball but by this stage of deep lockdown, we had pivoted our programs online and even considered running some kind of e-sports for our participants. However, due to the nature of Backyard Sports being a public outreach sports program, we had limited contact details for our young people and families. Regular phone calls to those whose numbers we did have was the best we could do to check in and see how they were tracking.

The easing of restrictions was quite liberating for all – reconnecting with old faces was such a blessing. Some of the early games of soccer and basketball were done in bursts, as fitness levels had suffered a bit during lockdown. We trialled a few new activities such as dodgeball and street hockey. The hockey was quite fun as some of the participants had never experienced it and were asking to play it again! This would not have been possible without a generous grant from HealthAbility which enabled us to buy new sporting equipment and update old stock.

The highlight of the first two terms of 2021, however, has been the reconnection with past participants. A group of young males we knew from years ago, returning to play basketball (and now beating us!). A young girl from past school holiday programs joining in and also inviting her friends too. Another male who rarely played sports, now regularly playing in our full-court basketball matches. One past participant who fondly remembers the sports and bike hut approached us to say hello and now works for Banyule Council as a youth program support officer! It's been great to see their growth in maturity and see the appreciation they have for the program.

I would like to thank all the volunteers, placement students and supporters of Open House who keep this wonderful program running.



Tim Womersley  
Youth Support Worker





## THE BIKE HUT

The Bike Hut has been open and closed during the lockdowns, but as soon as we open people flock to the park to catch up, play basketball and fix bikes. Riding bikes is an important part of so many people's lives and our team of "fixers" love restoring their bikes to keep them rolling.

Malahang Reserve is an awesome public space and provides the perfect backdrop for our monthly picnics where often 75+ people enjoy great coffee, good music and a sense of community, thanks to our committed volunteers and community partners who make these occasions so special.



**Brett Ross**  
**Pastoral Support Worker**  
**& Site Manager**

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## COFFEE CART

Though we had some time on hold with our Coffee Cart barista training course (due to covid lockdowns) we had one participant complete the training course, with another currently close to completion.

Our participant who completed Open House's barista and customer services course demonstrated real persistence as we stopped and started with training. With a keen eye for detail and a desire to do her best, she brought a smile to many others in her community as they received their wonderfully created hot drinks. This participant recently got a job in hospitality, working at a local café/restaurant.

The participant was asked to make the Open House 50th Anniversary cake, due to her excellence in her food-related skills. The final product made with her mum was marvelled at and enjoyed by many.





# Adult Programs

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## CLUBWORK

20/21 has been a challenging year, but also a productive one.

We have managed to turn the negatives into positives. And keeping positive helps us to keep happy, and to share that happiness around to others.

Below is the word COVID, and our amazing Clubwork participants have outlined their own definition of the word. These words are what that they have come up with and have experienced through the pandemic.

We are:

**Capable:** Able to achieve efficiently whatever one must do.

**Overjoyed:** Extremely pleased about something.

**Versatile:** having great variety or diversity, freely movable.

**Improved:** To make someone or something better.

**Delighted:** Joyous, filled with delight and Wonder.

Clubwork continued to reach out and stay connected with all participants and volunteers. Our weekly WhatsApp sessions allowed us to see each other and have some fun and laughter, something that was needed. Some of our sessions included:

funny hat day, visiting different destinations around the world, what am I quiz, a visit to the Royal Melbourne Zoo and lots, lots, more.

But the participants mostly enjoyed seeing the family pets that would occasionally join us in our sessions!

It has been incredible seeing the growth of participants in technology. They have developed skills since using the Samsung Tablets, just goes to show "you can teach an old dog new tricks" Never underestimate the capabilities of a person.

It felt like we were in lockdown for a great deal of the time, but we did manage to have some face-to-face time together and sharing how grateful we were to see each other again. It is not until you have something taken away from you, that you realise how much we take things for granted.

A big THANK YOU to our amazing volunteers who continued to stay connected with each other, as well as the participants. Your love and faithfulness abundantly shine through.

Also, a big thank-you to Wendy Barlow for stepping up and assisting myself while Harmony was on maternity leave, as well as covering for me while I was on my Long Service Leave.



Wendy Farrington  
Clubwork Program Manager





## TUESDAY NIGHT MEAL PROGRAM

Each Tuesday a small group of us gather around the table to enjoy a nutritious home-cooked meal, a meal that is cooked with much love and compassion. This is our Tuesday Meal, a vital component of our ministry here at Open House.

Can you imagine yourself being at home, all alone and isolated? This is what some of our participants endured, week in, week out, until they discovered this program. Attending this group gives people the opportunity to meet others, enjoy conversations, develop friendships, but most of all, it's somewhere for them to belong!

Many conversations take place around the table, many stories are told, it is a time of coming together and feeling included. As most of those attending do not have any family, we come together as the Open House family.

In July 2020 we once again found ourselves in lockdown. Even amongst this lockdown, we were still able to deliver meals to our people who needed them.

The meals were generously sourced with the help of Latrobe University. They were supplied to Open House by the Two Birds One Scone charity, in partnership with Second Bite. The meals were delicious and our community members who received them absolutely loved them and loved they could still have a connection with Open House during this hard time.

Amongst all the lockdowns towards the end of 2021, we continued to deliver meals until the program finished for the Christmas break.

We resumed early February 2021 onsite at Open House. The meals had continued onsite until the recent lockdown in June. Like many things, we have had to remain flexible and be able to pivot quickly.

Our Tuesday Night Meal is very blessed to have such dedicated volunteers, and we acknowledge their wonderful support. They are all hands-on, and the participants also enjoy spending time with them as well.

I would especially like to thank the Year 10 students from Ivanhoe Grammar who since April have been making meals for Tuesday night meal.

We would also like to say a huge Thank You to Chef Paul from Sideshow Burgers in Rosanna for also making and delivering meals in our latest lockdown (including writing lovely notes to our participants).

Thank you to everyone!



Wendy Barlow  
Adult Support Worker





## PASTORAL SUPPORT

This year was a particularly challenging year for everyone at Open House due to Covid and the extensive restrictions and reoccurring lockdowns.

It was a time when the people we work with needed our support more than ever.

Many of our older participants were not able to leave their residences for months. The families with school-age children found it exceedingly difficult to navigate their children with online learning. Single parents felt very alone and isolated.

It was so important that we stayed connected with all our participants and volunteers while they were not able to come to Open House.

Pastoral care in lockdown involved lots of phone calls, cards, letters and many zoom sessions.

We worked closely with other local agencies in our food relief network including the Salt Foundation, UniHill Church, The Exodus Community and Two birds and One Scone. We also picked up bread every week from Brumbies bakery in Montmorency.

Through these partnerships, we were able to deliver substantial food parcels to many of our participants each week.

During lockdown, we also worked in partnership with The SALT foundation in giving out meals on Friday nights in Heidelberg to people living in the commission flats. These meals were made by a local café and the Salt foundation.

Miss Marie café in Rosanna also made meals for Open House to deliver to our participants.

The pandemic created an opportunity for us to connect with organisations and work together to support the community and The Open House Family.



Ann-Maire Fife  
Pastoral Care Support Worker



The Year 2020 – 2021 was like a trampoline, up and down, all year long.

I think the word of the year must be "Zoom"; it changed our conventional ways of communicating from face-to-face interaction to screen-to-screen. The shift was a challenge for the Site and Garden teams as well as our participants.

### **THE SITE MAINTENANCE TEAM**

This year our Team spent the first half at our homes due to the continuation of the covid pandemic lockdown. We connected mainly through phone calls and the property was left to its own devices; void of people and looking barren.

Fortunately, during the months of absence, our facility was spared any damage or vandalism.

On return, our focus was to restore the property so we reconvened the team and set out to put the smile back on Open House Macleod.

A big thanks to our dedicated team who are committed to Open House and to improving our facilities. You Know who you are!

### **THE GARDEN CLUB**

Our vegetables and fruit trees bolted, and the grass and weeds took over the whole property during our absence. An intensive effort to bring the garden back to how it looked pre-covid is ongoing and laborious but our Garden team is the group who can do it. With the help of staff and our mystery lawnmower, we are on task to eradicate the weeds, clear out unwanted and outdated sections and make way for new garden beds and covered areas for the expansion of our programs.

A highlight of the year are the olives that survived with lack of attention. With a good crop, we picked and pickled the 2021 harvest and are currently curing before release.



Brett Ross  
Pastoral Support Worker  
& Site Manager





The Bible Fellowship back on site!

## BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

This year along with Open House's 50th Anniversary we are also celebrating 50 years of Bible Fellowship.

What a testament to God's goodness and to George and Muriel's faithfulness in serving God for 50 years.

For most of 2020/21, the Bible Fellowship group were not able to meet in person due to the various lockdowns that were in place, but this didn't stop us from reaching out to our people.

Whilst we couldn't meet in person, myself and the amazing volunteers, David, Bill and Ken sent out weekly letters and Bible studies to the participants and also made regular phone calls. These letters and phone calls helped our participants to stay connected and reassured everyone that they were not alone.

I really enjoyed getting to know our participants a lot better through our phone conversations where we would talk about their childhood, their families, and what they enjoy.

When we could return on site we were so excited to meet again and see each other. Even with masks, social distancing and QR codes, we were so happy to be back! What a different world.

Bible Fellowship has also had some incredible people join us, two of whom I would love to say a special thank you to.

The first is Chef Paul Anand, who is a fully qualified Chef (you can taste some of his incredible cooking at Sideshow Burgers in Rosanna), and makes our delicious lunches every week. They are loved and enjoyed by everyone.







The second is Dianne Chybowski, who has also joined the team. Dianne helps with serving the lunches and cleaning up. She is a fantastic volunteer who has a great sense of humour and is well-loved by all. We are very thankful to have her be a part of the team on a Thursday.

One of the many highlights over the past twelve months has been getting to see the joy we bring to some of our participants who were doing it particularly tough.

In 2019, due to health reasons, one of our participants Paul could no longer come to Open House, and in 2020 he moved into a retirement home in Clifton Hill. We kept in regular contact with Paul via the phone and letters in 2020. But in March of this year, the entire Bible Fellowship group had a BBQ with Paul in the park opposite his retirement home. It was incredibly special for everyone to see Paul and for Paul to see all his friends from Open House.

Thank you for all your prayers and support. We cannot wait to see the Bible Fellowship continue for the next 50 years.

George and Muriel Farrington continued to be part of Bible Fellowship as much as they could over the last twelve months and they are both very loved by all the participants and volunteers who attend the program.

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Recently we said goodbye to George who has gone to be with our Lord. His impact will be felt by all who attend the Bible Fellowship program and we once again would like to acknowledge our sincere gratitude to both George and Muriel.

We also said goodbye to two of our beloved and beautiful long-term participants, Des Patterson and Annie Wilson, who passed away. They were both very loved, valued members of Open House and will be missed.







# Ways to Partner with Open House

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## DIRECT DEPOSIT

**Account Name** – Open House Christian Involvement Centres  
**BSB** – 633 000  
**Account Number** – 155054588

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## CREDIT CARD

To give via credit card please go to: [www.openhousecic.org.au/donate](http://www.openhousecic.org.au/donate)

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## CHEQUE

Please make all cheques out to  
**Open House Christian Involvement Centres**  
67-71 Strathallan Road, Macleod VIC 3085

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## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Open House is proud to keep our community and supporters up to date with our monthly emails full of encouraging, uplifting stories and updates.

To join our email list, please email [office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au) or call the office on (03) 9450 7600

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## WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT PARTNERING WITH OPEN HOUSE?

If you would like to discuss any further ways of partnering with Open House please contact Jordan Wakelin directly at:  
[jwakelin@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:jwakelin@openhousecic.org.au) or call the office on (03) 9450 7600



Jordan Wakelin  
Relationships Manager



### LEAVE A LEGACY

Here at Open House, we see firsthand how extraordinarily difficult life is for a lot of people.

Open House's ability to help is to a large extent based on our very loyal supporters who have been with us over these past 50 years.

In continuing the work of Open House and sustaining it in years to come, we would like to warmly remind our compassionate supporters and friends of our initiative called: **LEAVE A LEGACY**.

Leaving a gift in your will, but not before taking care of your loved ones first.

Your gift will change many a life at Open House and make a lasting difference.

For more information on how you can leave a legacy please contact: **(03) 9450 7600**

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### HIRE OUR COFFEE CART

At Open House we love coffee and as such we have an incredible Coffee Cart that can be hired, including a Barista as well! The Open House Coffee Cart is a great addition to any event and the funds raised through the hiring of it go back into supporting the life-changing work of Open House.

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### HIRE OUR BUS

Open House is also continuing to hire out our 12-Seater Bus for groups that require it. Please note: There are age and licence restrictions for hiring and operating the bus.

For more information (including prices) on either Coffee Cart or Bus Hire please contact our office on: **(03) 9450 7600** or email: [office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au)



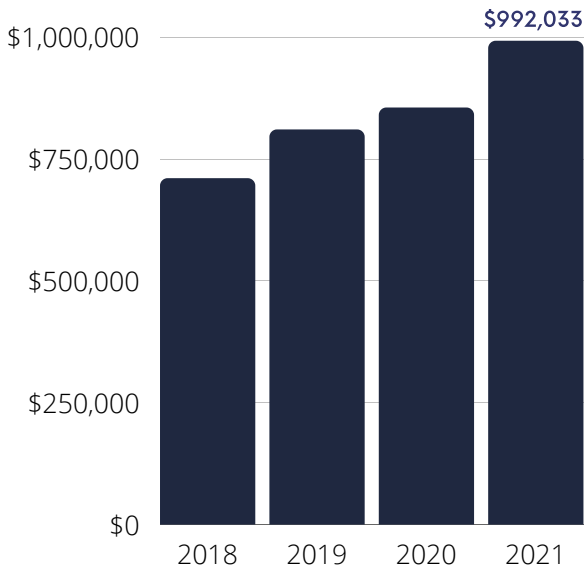
# Financials

The majority of Open House's operating costs are the staff wages and other expenses related to the cost of running programs and also the upkeep of the Open House Macleod site.

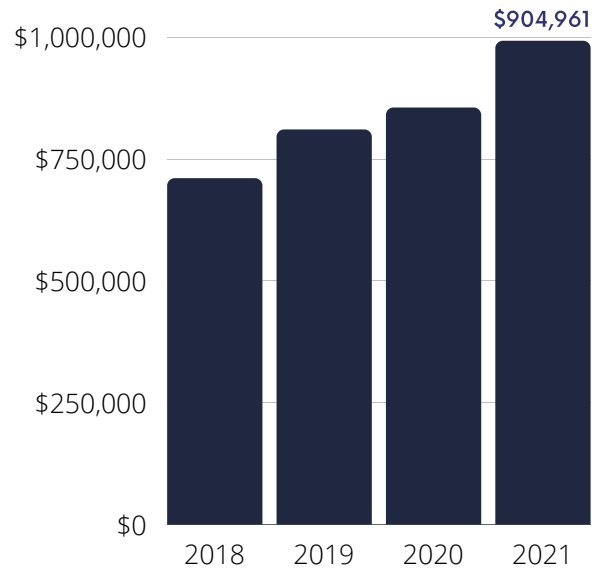
It is also important to acknowledge that Volunteers are the lifeblood of Open House, and we are proud to have over 30 incredible volunteers who volunteer the same amount per year as 3 Full-Time Equivalent Staff.

It is because of these Volunteers that Open House can provide the vulnerable members of the community with care, support and a place to belong.

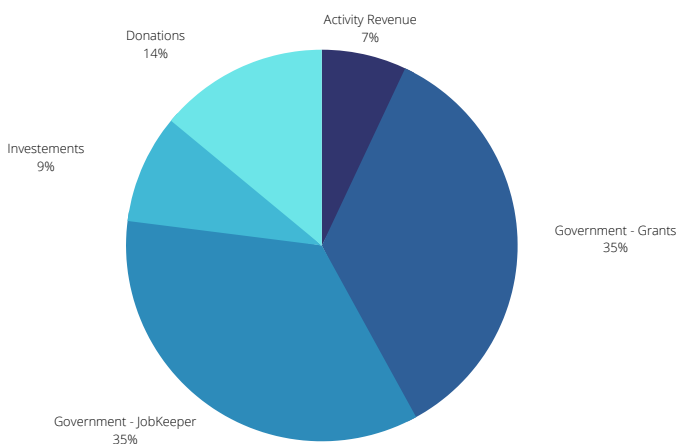
## TOTAL INCOME



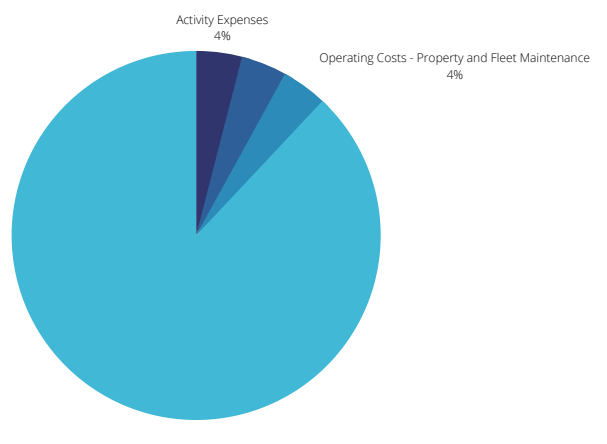
## TOTAL EXPENSES



## OPERATING INCOME



## OPERATING EXPENSES



For Open House's full audited financials please visit the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

To discuss any of Open House's finances please feel free to contact Peter Choma at: [pchoma@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:pchoma@openhousecic.org.au) or call the office directly on (03) 9450 7600



Peter Choma  
Operations Manager

# Our Partners

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Open House's achievements are largely the result of our community of partners who have committed their resources to support our mission. As you can see below we have a diverse range of partners who share our vision and are determined to make the world a better place. We sincerely thank you for your dedication, generosity and continuing support, here's to another year!

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Adventure Flight Training                           | Macleod Village Traders (Little Free Libraries) |
| Anglican Men's Society                              | Melbourne Cricket Club                          |
| Ambrose Archery                                     | Miss Marie's Cafe                               |
| ARM - Architectural Services                        | Miles Real Estate – Ivanhoe and Rosanna         |
| Atlas Masterclass                                   | Morrison Kleeman Real Estate - Eltham           |
| Australian Social Value Bank                        | Mr. Macleod Cafe                                |
| Autoclinic Heidelberg                               | Mr. Martin Cafe                                 |
| Banyule Network of Churches                         | Ocha Japanese Restaurant                        |
| Banyule City Council                                | The Order of St John of Jerusalem               |
| Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation        | P2P Cricket Coaching                            |
| Bill Brady Organisation                             | Planetshakers                                   |
| Bunnings Northland                                  | Reload Fitness                                  |
| Coffeemax   | Rosanna Baptist Church                          |
| Crittenden Wine                                     | Rosanna Uniting Church                          |
| Crossgen  | The SALT Foundation                             |
| Diamond Valley Singers                              | Sandi Foundation                                |
| Drop Bear Escape Rooms                              | The Salvation Army                              |
| Empower Church                                      | Sideshow Burgers                                |
| Emeny Art   | Soroptimist International of Deakin University  |
| Enchanted adventure gardens                         | St. George's East Ivanhoe                       |
| Fairfield Trust – The Properties Corporation of the | St. James' Ivanhoe                              |
| Churches of Christ                                  | St. Johns' Diamond Creek                        |
| Gresswell Uniting Church                            | St. John The Beloved Liberal Catholic Church    |
| Gospel Resource                                     | St. Katherine's St. Helena                      |
| Hardrock  | UniHill Church                                  |
| Heidelberg Court Fund                               | Uniting Church Ivanhoe & Heidelberg             |
| Heidelberg/East Ivanhoe Community Bank              | Tao Tao House                                   |
| iFly World  | Training Now Pty Ltd                            |
| Inger Rice Foundation                               | Two-Birds One Scone                             |
| Iris & Ken Baldwin Foundation                       | Wessons   |
| Ivanhoe Grammar school                              | Wildlife Coast Cruises                          |
| Love Your Space                                     | William Angliss (Vic) Charitable Fund           |



Tackling Social Isolation and  
giving people a place to belong since 1971

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ABN: 1300 513 0272

