



Anne M^cDonald Centre

A new deal for people with little or no speech



Annual Report 2019-2020

The Anne McDonald Centre Inc.

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What the Anne McDonald Centre contributed to Victoria, Australia and the World from July 2019 to June 2020

The Anne McDonald Centre (the AnnieMac) serves people with little or no functional speech, people whose opinions are often not consulted, people who cannot even say 'I need help'. Since opening in 1986 as DEAL Communication Centre, the AnnieMac has provided communication therapy to thousands of people without functional speech.

Communication strategies developed at the AnnieMac are used around the world, and have led many government agencies, schools and universities to establish programs in non-speech communication.

Early in 2020 I was invited to Jakarta to work with children and adults with little or no speech. Some were students at Kyriakon school that I'd seen previously, and I was thrilled to see the progress they were making thanks to the dedication of their teachers and families. The students at Kyriakon farewelled me with a splendid concert using their communication aids.

Hands-on therapy – In 2019-20 we provided ongoing therapy services to 142 individuals with severe communication impairments, 39 of whom were new clients. As well as providing hands-on services to Victorians, AnnieMac staff provided Skype consultancies to interstate and overseas families and professionals.

Research – We are continuing our efforts to have our important research into the appropriate cognitive assessment of people with little or no functional speech published. We have now re-assessed more than 100 individuals, mostly school-age children, using standardized non-speech tests. All scored well above their previous scores on Weschler tests that required spoken answers and unimpaired hand skills.

Advocacy - As a result of our research, in 2018 the Victorian Department of Education (DET) changed its rules to allow non-speaking children to be assessed with non-speech tests. Unfortunately DET's efforts to re-educate both Assessments Australia, individual psychologists, and special schools, appear to have fallen on deaf ears. During 2019-20 we received DET assessments for new clients that still used Weschler tests requiring spoken answers to assess students with no speech. One psychologist declared a boy had a 'Severe Intellectual Disability' based on his lack of 'verbal language' and 'fine motor skills', which precluded him from answering any questions. We have already raised this injustice with the Disability Royal Commission and DET.

Sadly, Communication Rights Australia has ceased operations following the cessation of DHHS funding on the (incorrect) basis that NDIS would provide advocacy, and the retirement of its wonderful long-term CEO Jan Ashford. Consequently the AnnieMac has to handle the advocacy needs of many clients.

Information & Education – The Centre staff continue to host students undertaking tertiary courses in disability and deliver presentations on AAC. In 2019 we delivered 4 presentations at the national AAC conference in Perth. Due to Covid-19 our 2020 presentations have been on-line, including one in the international Autism Explained Summit, in which the keynote was delivered by Tim Chan, one of our long-time students.

Rosemary Crossley, Director

Anne McDonald Centre Committee of Management President's Report July 2019 - June 2020

I am pleased to present the 2019 - 2020 Annual Report and accounts of the Anne McDonald Centre.

While 2019 was much as usual for the Annie Mac, 2020 has been a year like no other. Covid-19 and the associated lockdowns impacted on us all. Many people with little or no speech, whether old or young, found the isolation very challenging, because they can't just pick up a phone and call their friends.

Because of this, the Anne McDonald Centre staff and committee, according to state guidelines, decided we provided an essential service. Staff continued to see clients face-to-face in Caulfield or Brunswick or in their own homes throughout the lockdowns, with appropriate precautions. Attendance initially dropped but gradually picked up, to the point that we are now over-booked.

Financially we have benefitted from Job Keeper and the automatic Government grants to charities. Most of our clients now receive NDIS funding, and the Treasurer's report shows a pleasing improvement from last year.

AGOSCI held its biennial national conference on non-speech communication in Perth in August 2019, and the Director delivered 4 presentations on behalf of staff and committee members.

Three presentations by staff and committee were accepted for the international ISAAC conference that was to be held in Mexico in 2020, however the conference was postponed and will now take place in 2021.

In January 2020 our Director worked with children and young adults with little or no speech in Jakarta. Some had been seen on previous visits to Indonesia, but most were new clients. She was pleased to see how the older students were progressing, thanks to their parents and their school, Kyriakon.

The AnnieMac could not continue providing essential services to people with little or no speech without the generosity of our donors. This year we were very touched to receive a generous bequest from Joan Dwyer, former President of the Committee, who sadly died in 2019. Our thanks go to all our donors including those who contributed to our annual Tea Party.

The staff of the Anne McDonald Centre have again provided outstanding services and on behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank them for their hard work and loyalty. Our particular thanks go to the Director for her untiring dedication to the rights of those with little or no speech.

Finally, I wish to thank all the members of the Committee of Management for their ongoing support and enthusiasm. We've all learnt a lot about Zoom in 2020!

Leane Leggo, President

The Anne McDonald Centre Management Committee 2019-2020

President	Ms Leane Leggo
Vice-President	Ms Jill Johnson
Secretary/Treasurer	Mr Chris Borthwick
Members	Ms Sarah Barton Ms Kaye Gooch Ms Tracey Hayes Mr James Henry Mr David Wood

In 2020 the Management Committee has been meeting on Zoom. Our thanks go to all the members for their support in this difficult year, especially to our President, Leane Leggo.

Rosemary Crossley, Director

Farewell to John Warburton

John Warburton was one of the first children to come to the Anne McDonald Centre – then called DEAL – in the 1980's. Doug Biklen wrote about John in *Communication Unbound* (1993). John received awards for his - often very funny - writing. Sadly and unexpectedly, John, who used a Lightwriter to communicate, died in February this year. He is sadly missed by all associated with the Annie Mac. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.



The Anne McDonald Centre — Staff 2019-2020

Director	Dr. Rosemary Crossley, <i>A.M., M.Ed., Ph.D.</i>
Speech Pathologist	Ms. Leslie Zimmerman, <i>B.App.Sci. (Sp.Path.)</i>
Office Manager	Ms Sarah Greene
Research Consultant	Dr. Douglas Biklen, <i>Ph.D., Emeritus Professor</i>

Leslie Zimmerman has been on leave in 2020 during the Covid-19 lockdowns. We look forward to seeing her back in 2021. The AMDC would not be able to function without Sarah Greene, who books our appointments and takes care of the ensuing NDIS paperwork.

The Human Research Ethics Committee, chaired by Dr. Tony Coady, ensures that our ongoing research is ethical and meets the NH&MRC guidelines. We are very grateful for their honorary contribution to our work, and for that of our honorary Research Consultant, Dr. Douglas Biklen.

Rosemary Crossley, Director

Farewell to Bruce Marks

Bruce Marks, honorary bookkeeper and volunteer administrator at the Annie Mac for more than a decade, died earlier this year.

Staff and clients all appreciated his helpfulness and friendship, and miss him greatly.

We remained in touch after he retired, and send our condolences to his family.



**ANNE McDONALD CENTRE INC.
2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TREASURER'S REPORT**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION,
30 JUNE 2020**

18-19		19-20
	Assets	
\$40,110	Cash at Bank	\$125,963
\$3,957	Funds on hand	\$3,017
\$10,676	Debtors	\$10,847
\$54,743	Total Assets	\$139,828
	Liabilities	
\$948	Creditors	\$514
\$217	Accruals	\$460
\$1,277	Provision for Long Service Leave	\$1,171
\$2,442	Total Liabilities	\$2,145
\$52,301	Net Assets	\$137,682
	General Funds	
\$31,789	Balance	\$52,301
\$20,512	Surplus for year	\$85,382
\$52,301	Balance	\$137,682

Treasurer's Statement

In my opinion the attached Statement of Financial Performance gives a true and fair account of the Centre's results for the year ended 30 June 2019 and the Statement of Financial Position gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs at that date.



C.J. Borthwick,
Treasurer
10 December 2020

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

1 Jul 2018 - 30 Jun 2019	Income	1 Jul 2019 – 30 Jun 2020
\$5,950	Current year Tea Party	\$11,806
\$6,940	Previous year Tea Party	\$2,500
	JobKeeper subsidy	\$12,000
\$96,638	NDIS	\$142,012
	Grants - Government	\$10,000
\$25,000	Grants - Foundations	\$50,000
\$1,440	Seminars & Consulting	\$7,922
\$34,655	Donations	\$7,674
\$150	Membership	\$665
\$20	Sale of Materials	\$535
\$170,778	Total Income	\$245,025
	Less Expense	
\$2,403	Electricity & gas	\$1,504
\$2,157	Water & Rates	\$1,867
\$4,267	Insurance	\$3,884
\$215	Computer Consumables	\$3,103
\$664	Website	\$729
\$5	Office supplies	\$20
\$227	Postage & Freight	\$104
\$939	Stationery, Printing & Copying	\$575
\$49	Subscriptions/Dues	\$60
\$23,500	Rent	\$24,000
\$449	Repairs & maintenance	\$183
\$191	Communication Equipment	\$300
\$9,696	Superannuation expense	\$10,294
\$2,583	Telephone	\$625
\$88	Travel	\$236
\$102,308	Wages & salaries	\$111,595
\$91	AGM Cost	\$100
\$139	Cleaning	\$310
\$203	Sundries	\$446
\$150,154	Total Expense	\$159,643
\$20,512	Operating Profit/Net profit	\$85,382

How the Stegosaurus Lost Its Plates

One summer when the earth was new, a stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back went to look for a better place to live. The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back didn't know what was on the other side of the up and down mountains so it climbed up the up and down mountains to look.

The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back saw a big blue lake surrounded by bushes and brambles and thought that it would be good to have a paddle. The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back ran down the up and down mountains to the big blue lake surrounded by bushes and brambles and walked into the water.

The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back didn't know that the big blue lake surrounded by bushes and brambles was very deep and it got a nasty surprise when the water went over its head. This was a big problem because it could not breathe. The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus with pointed but pointless plates on its back tried to swim but it couldn't.

The stumpy grumpy stegosaurus stretched its neck longer and longer until its head was above the water. Then it took off all the big pointed but pointless plates from its back to make stepping stones and walked out of the big blue lake surrounded by bushes and brambles.

And that, gentle reader, is where the big bald brontosaurus came from.

Tom B, October 2020



Pointless Plates?

One day a young brachiosaurus went to look at a lake. He saw a brontosaurus walking through the water on scales from a stegosaurus.

“How did you get the scales?”

“I used to be a stegosaurus.”

“Why did you change?”

“Because I wanted a longer neck. I like to paddle in deep water because it's cool.”

“I have a long neck,” the brachiosaurus said. “I can paddle with you.”

The young brachiosaurus walked into the lake but it got stuck in the mud because it did not have any plates. It died there.

The moral is everything is useful, including apparently pointless plates.

Charbel F, November 2020



