



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021/2022

# *Our Mission*

Warrah is a Rudolf Steiner organisation providing a range of engaging, responsive services for children and adults with disability that maximise each person's capacity for self-determination, creativity and contribution.



# *Our Vision*

Our Vision is for Warrah to be known for its unique approach, innovative delivery and outstanding results in the provision of support that serves the needs and aspirations of individuals with disability.

# *Our Values*

Excellence · Respect · Community · Integrity

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# At a Glance



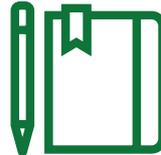
27,223 Individual service transactions with NDIS



3,265 hours of In-Home Support delivered



1,696 days of Short Stays delivered



Record number of student enrolments at Warrah School



230 people employed at Warrah



28 tonnes of compost spread at Warrah



50 produce boxes packed and delivered each week



44 farming and enterprise participants per week



3,700 bunches of leafy greens harvested from Warrah Biodynamic Farm



804 customer visits per month to the Warrah Farm Shop



# From the Chair

Taking the time to reflect on the prior year is incredibly important, although ironically, it feels like we do it far less than we should. This is because there is always something new or more urgent on the horizon to address! Thankfully the annual report process provides a welcome opportunity to take a moment and take stock. July 2021 to June 2022 was, in many ways, a confronting and challenging period for Warrah, however, we also have much to celebrate.

## Our Community

Our community was deeply saddened by the passing of our long-term residents Andrew Robertson and Joanne Stephens, and our thoughts remain with their families. These two wonderful people touched many and lived joy-filled lives that will be remembered fondly by our community. Although this report highlights some of the more tangible achievements and challenges that Warrah has faced over the last year, it is most important to recognise that enabling our participants to live the fullest and richest lives possible is the reason Warrah exists. Keeping this goal front and centre is the best way to ensure that we continue to deliver for all our clients in the same way we did for Andrew and Joanne, thus respecting their contribution and preserving their future legacy.

## Finances

‘Steady as she goes’ is probably the best way to describe the year from a financial perspective. Operationally we kept things fairly tight, and the financial statements reflect this. On the Capex side, we had hoped to spend a little more than we managed but were often hampered by logistics and lockdown constraints. Across the organisation, growth opportunities were impeded and priorities were continually adjusted as the management team navigated the COVID-19 situation. Our headline numbers are strong, although they need to be tempered and viewed in context. The \$982k received from the Federal Government as a COVID-19 stimulus initiative was unexpected but will certainly be put to good use. This grant explains the organisation’s annual operational surplus, as opposed to a small loss as budgeted.

Due to our solid asset base, Warrah remains in an enviable financial position compared with many similar organisations. This was again reflected in the property revaluations, which benefited from a surge in Sydney land prices over the last three years. We need to remain prudent, as unless we wish to sell some property (not part of our current plan!), these are just paper gains that have no impact on the day-to-day.



In summary, our finances remain healthy, but as we look towards the next chapter for Warrah, we expect to be leaning on our strong cash position. In particular, we have the challenge of addressing our ageing infrastructure (notably the houses on the Harris Road site). Providing high-quality accommodation for all our residents is a fundamental strategic priority that we need to focus on sooner rather than later.

## Our Services

As in previous years, our management team worked extremely hard to ensure that all service areas operated sustainably. The pressure from the tightening of NDIS pricing has been felt most by our Community Support Services (CSS) operation, although the most recent round of NDIS pricing has provided some short-term reprieve. Our farm, shop and bakery operations have performed admirably under significant challenges (including severe rain!) and remain a fundamental part of 'who we are' as an organisation. This is the first year they have been operating fully integrated under the CSS umbrella, and the significant uptake in participant engagement has been wonderful to see.

The Supported Independent Living (SIL) operations performed well financially, although we continue to monitor NDIS plans for signs of tightening that could have a significant impact. The school also operated at break-even, benefiting from strong enrolments.



*Our farm, shop and bakery have performed admirably.*

## Strategy and People

Strategically the last couple of years, we focused primarily on getting through the pandemic safely. Despite being unable to progress certain initiatives, it is important to recognise the positive achievements. Investing time and energy in areas such as organisational technology has allowed us to improve them considerably. Revitalising the Anthroposophical Council is another vital step in shaping Warrah's future. We should not forget that just getting through the pandemic is a huge achievement in itself! Navigating this has put enormous pressure on our staff, and we need to recognise and commend their performance.

***"It has not been an easy year, but everyone should feel proud of their achievements, and there is a good deal to celebrate."***

Investing in people is an area where we have been active. Our organisation is small but surprisingly complex. Significant labour shortages and competition for talent have impacted (and continue to impact) many organisations in Australia, including ours. Staffing remains extremely tight, but we continue to prioritise our 'people agenda'. The ageing demographic of our longer-term residents presents new challenges for us to overcome. Finding, training and retaining quality staff remains a priority to ensure we continue to provide the quality of care for which we are known.

For many years People and Culture was an area of significant underinvestment for Warrah, but to see it now ranked alongside all the other executive functions stands us in good stead. Our workforce continues to grow, and we will continue to invest in our people to enable us to provide the best support for our participants.



*Mr Sarkis Nassif and board members at the opening of the John Paul Discovery Centre.*

## Property and Infrastructure

Alongside people, the second most discussed topic by the board continues to be property and infrastructure. The opening of the John Paul Discovery Centre was an important milestone, and it's fantastic to finally see this facility in full swing. Celebrating the facility's opening with the Nassif family and other friends was certainly a highlight of the year.

We all love the Harris Road campus, but we can't ignore the fact that it is an expensive property to maintain and much of our current infrastructure requires attention. We are fully committed to providing long-term accommodation for all our existing residents and aspire to see moderate growth in this area. However, we need to understand our options before we can do this. We are currently undertaking a master planning exercise to help us understand the constraints on Harris Road. This plan will form a platform for strategic discussion as we look to the future.

## Warrah School

With credit to the Warrah Specialist School team, we can look back on the last year with a sense of pride. The team has seamlessly navigated some extremely stressful challenges, particularly those beyond our control, such as

COVID-related absences and vaccine mandates. To work through those challenges without compromising the program's quality is a testament to the collective effort of all staff.

After seven years as principal, we bid farewell to Jan Fowler at the end of the 2021 school year. Jan was instrumental during her time at Warrah in building the school into what it is today. We witnessed a positive transformation of our school because of her inspirational leadership, deep connection with our students, and the development of the immersive outdoor curriculum. This positive impact has been significant for our school and in our students' lives, and she leaves behind a fantastic legacy that she should be immensely proud of.

For a school board, a change in principal is a critical time. While most of the time a board's responsibility is to provide oversight and high-level strategy, managing a change of school principal presents the board with a tangible task. Recruiting a new principal was never going to be easy due to the unique profile of our school and our desire to ensure the seamless continuation of our educational vision.

As the only Steiner-inspired specialist school in Australia, finding qualified candidates required an extensive search process. After considering more than 30 candidates, we were delighted to offer the position to Anna Wetzel. Steiner educated and with professional experience that spans diverse education systems in Germany, New Zealand and Australia, Anna's practical experience and knowledge met our needs perfectly.



*We're delighted to welcome Anna Wetzel to our school.*

Her academic qualifications, which include a Bachelor of Education with Honours and a Master of Secondary Teaching (Research), an additional Master of Inclusion and Communication and a Graduate Diploma in Steiner Education, support her experience. With an obvious passion for teaching, and an enthusiastic approach, we are delighted to see Anna step into the role, and have already seen her flourish.

We are under no illusion that headwinds remain strong. The last year was a very challenging period for all schools, not just ours, but we have a positive outlook for the future post-COVID.

## Board Changes

This year we had two long-serving members elect to step down and take a well-earned break. Hannah Semler and Paul Power have both given tireless service to the organisation, volunteering their time over many years. I would like to sincerely thank them both on behalf of myself, the board and the Warrah community. While I will miss their input,

I am confident they will remain stalwart members of Warrah for many years to come, and I look forward to their ongoing contributions.

## Partnerships and Thanks

Everyone should feel proud of their achievements, and there is a good deal to celebrate. As the cultural events calendar starts to fill up once again, we look forward to an increasing number of opportunities to come together as a community. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the management team and all our committed employees, my fellow board members, partners, friends of Warrah and everyone who has helped us through the last year, and look forward with optimism to the year ahead.



**Steve Malin**  
*Chair*



# From the General Manager



The year has been a tumultuous year for the Warrah community. We entered the year under COVID-19 mandates and exited the year leaving most of the pandemic behind us. However, we are still subject to isolation rules and restrictions applicable to the disability sector. Our staff's resilience, adaptability and willingness to go the extra mile for our participants and students to keep them safe is inspiring. We remain grateful for the guidance from our board of directors, who are unwaveringly supportive of the management team.

Warrah has a cohort of ageing residents. This has been central to our strategic discussion throughout the year on adapting and pivoting our resources to facilitate and accommodate our residents who wish to age in place. There are key differences in the provision of aged care and disability support. Understanding this enables us to provide the best care possible for our ageing residents within the framework of their NDIS funding.

We have made significant improvements to our technology by fully embracing cloud technology. By the end of October 2021, we had completely migrated all our business applications to the cloud and utilised Office 365 and SharePoint Online. Undertaking this process enabled many staff the opportunity to collaborate online using Microsoft Teams during COVID-19 restrictions. We appreciate the contribution of our provider, Total Computer Technology (TCT), who assisted us through this digital transformation.

***“Our staff’s resilience, adaptability and willingness to go the extra mile for our participants and students to keep them safe is inspiring. We remain grateful for the guidance from our board of directors, who are unwaveringly supportive of the management team.”***

Cloud solutions do not operate without associated risks. We were subject to an unfortunate event involving a cyber-incident in May 2022 by one of our cloud-based service providers, leading to a breach of our participants' personal information. The provider managed the data breach process reasonably well and notified the authorities. As a result of this incident, Warrah, in conjunction with TCT, jointly reviewed all other outsourced cloud service providers used by Warrah to assess the state of their system security, data backup and privacy policies.

We purchased and issued 50 laptops for our teachers and front-line staff to enable them to access our cloud-based platforms and reduce paperwork. Additionally, we have replaced numerous desktops with laptops to facilitate a mobile workforce; this allows for greater flexibility, such as working from home.

Despite the challenges in securing various trades, competitive quotes and the impact of wet weather conditions, our maintenance team pressed on with much-needed repairs, maintenance and projects. During 2021/22, we spent more than \$1 million in facilities-related capital expenditure, repairs and maintenance. That is \$143k more than the previous financial year.

Central to our strategic planning is the property master plan, which will guide Warrah's strategies and growth for many years. We have so far invested approximately \$110k towards information-gathering, which feeds into the plan. At the board of directors' meeting in July 2022, the board approved Inclusive Housing Australia's (IHA) proposal for assisting us with our property master plan. The following steps will be consultation with the Rural Fire Service and the appointed town planner to understand the constraints of our 20 Harris Road campus before the stakeholder consultation and planning process can commence. We are excited by the opportunities this will bring to Warrah.



*Our maintenance team delivers vital repairs and quality improvements.*





*The Hon. Philip Ruddock AO officially opens the John Paul Discovery Centre.*

The long-awaited official opening ceremony of the John Paul Discovery Centre took place in April 2022 by the Mayor of Hornsby Shire Council, the Hon. Philip Ruddock AO. A number of staff and board members attended the ceremony along with distinguished guests including Sarkis Nassif, the founder of Holdmark Property Group, and his family. Representatives from SEC Newgate also attended and we are thankful for their assistance in managing this event. We are grateful for the Holdmark Group's generous donation towards the building cost of the Discovery Centre, worth \$641k. The new centre will deliver Warrah's Discovery program and short-stay accommodation.

We were happy this year to be able to reconvene our Anthroposophical Council in June 2022. Representatives from all service areas attend meetings. The primary purpose of the Council is to ensure our Anthroposophical ethos continues to be strong and guides our culture, mission and values. After exiting the severe COVID-19 restrictions during the year, we held several key events such as the Harvest Festival in March, Easter Festival in April, Winter Festival in June and Anthroposophical staff training delivered by Martin Porteous (ex-CEO of INALA) in June 2022.

Since the announcement of Warrah's new management structure in August 2021, we have made several other executive-level adjustments, mainly in response to changing business requirements. Ojas Mehta was promoted to Executive Manager Business Services and is responsible for Finance, ICT and Facilities. Anna Hay has incorporated Community Engagement and Marketing into her People, Culture and Community portfolio. Anna Wetzel officially stepped into her School Principal and Executive Manager position from Term One 2022. Her strong Steiner educational background will be an asset to the school and the Warrah community as a whole.

In recent years, the disability sector has operated with a highly casualised workforce. As of 30 June 2022 Warrah employs approximately 230 staff. We boast an equal gender representation in the leadership team with three quarters of the total staff being female. Over the last year we bid farewell to some long serving staff members and extended our thanks and good wishes to them. We would like to mention Frances Prior and thank her once again for an outstanding 43 years of service to Warrah.



*Thank you to Frances Prior for 43 years of dedicated service to Warrah.*



*Warrah's new Executive Team.*

The school commenced Term One 2022 with a record 32 students. This increase in student enrolments, combined with the sector-wide teacher shortage, has been challenging. We are happy to report that we are well positioned with a complete team of teachers and teachers' assistants, who provide a continually engaging learning experience for our students.

Community Support Services (CSS) returned to normal operations in February 2022. The team had to adjust to adverse weather and modify the delivery of services in a COVID-safe way. Several homes went into lockdown due to COVID-19, and the Supported Independent Living (SIL) team's commitment and dedication helped all impacted residents through the isolation period safely. Warrah felt the impact of the sector-wide shortage of staff. We have implemented several strategies to attract and retain staff during the year, and by June 2022, the situation had improved at Warrah. We continue to focus on improving our workplace culture and staff training to make Warrah an enjoyable and safe workplace.

To improve participant and student engagement at Warrah, we decided to place the bakery, biodynamic farm and retail shop under CSS. The aim is to ensure more seamless integration of services and improve experiences for our participants and students. We have also opened

up more opportunities for other schools to visit our biodynamic farm and showcase it to other groups interested in biodynamic farming.



*Trudy collects eggs on the farm.*

We received a government stimulus payment totaling \$989k during the year and a further \$448k in July 2022. We plan to put these funds to good and productive use towards executing the property master plan, which will benefit our community for years to come.



**Jason Lim**  
*General Manager*

# Disability Services

The year has again been challenging for the team with significant impact from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The effects of testing regimes and vaccination requirements, combined with isolation and extended stay at home orders, have all tested our resilience. The impact on our staffing numbers has been incredible and very challenging for us to navigate. Every team member is to be commended for their effort and commitment across the year.

Our absolute priority was the care and support of our participants, some of whom were deeply affected by the pandemic isolation requirements and changes to service delivery. It was a welcome relief for many when day services were again able to operate, and we commenced a staggered return for residents. At the same time, we saw a return to office based working for many of the Supported Independent Living (SIL) leadership team, who were required to work remotely for several months.

The team pivoted and found creative ways to navigate the pandemic, not just at the front line, but also our back-end operations needed tailoring. A contactless system was introduced for administrative processes and issue of supplies became a 'direct to boot' service. In October we saw vaccination mandates introduced, resulting in the loss of a number of staff who chose not to receive a vaccination. Some of these staff were long term employees and it was a difficult and emotional goodbye for many.

***“The team pivoted and found creative ways to navigate the pandemic, not just at the front line, but also our back-end operations needed tailoring.”***



***“Our ongoing reflexivity in meeting the changing needs of residents in an ever changing policy environment is remarkable.”***

With the relaxation of mask wearing in the broader community, we have also witnessed a surge in respiratory illnesses across both our client and staff groups, which also places additional strain on our rostering resources. We are fortunate to have Lezelle Spies at the helm managing our rostering and responding to the ongoing staffing challenges we face. Lezelle’s contribution across this year has been superior, and we are genuinely indebted to her.

We welcomed a new Community Visitor to Warrah in October, Tamara Wright. The Official Community Visitors (OCV) scheme is part of the Ageing and Disability Commission, and their role is to inform the Minister and the NSW Ombudsman of issues that affect residents. The OCV is able to enter our group homes and is permitted by law to review our files and documents, meet with residents and staff and raise concerns with organisations. Tamara has conducted a number of visits to date to Warrah residences and has been very helpful in providing feedback to Warrah.

A number of important planned maintenance activities were delayed this year resulting from the systemic effects of the pandemic, including supplier issues, availability of trades and access during the stay at home orders and isolation periods. Several key projects including painting of residences will be actioned in the new financial year. It was pleasing to see the much-needed replacement of the roof at Red Gum in September.

Our Support Coordination team has also experienced a number of challenges, not least including a turnover of staff. We were delighted to welcome Clarissa De Lima in April 2022, who joined Jenice Turner to support our participants in interpreting their NDIS plans and assist them to establish supports for daily living. It is often a high paced and intense role, and our Support Coordinators are constantly challenged with the often-moving targets the NDIS sets us. Of particular note across this year has been the change to the NDIS review process, with a number of residents having plans rolled over without consultation or process. We have also seen a number of participants receive a reduction in their plan funds and we commend the teams involved in their advocacy and quick response to these occurrences. Our ongoing reflexivity in meeting the changing needs of residents in an ever changing policy environment is remarkable.

Across this year, our Quality Managers have made significant contributions to the review of our systems and processes, development of our pandemic response plans, improvement of our practice in relation to the restricted practice and requirements from the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commissioner. This work provided a strong foundation for Fred Cloos, appointed as Quality Manager in January 2022, to develop our future quality strategy and priorities.

We appreciate his enormous contribution which has also encompassed the restructure of our Work, Health and Safety committee; review and reporting on critical incidents, and the everyday development of quality service delivery systems and processes.



*Resident Ann enjoying the outdoor spaces at Warrah.*

Our ongoing commitment to continuous quality improvement this year saw the restructuring of our Supported Independent Living services, with a proposal to restructure the leadership team being accepted and rolled out in February. With the removal of the Residential Manager role, we introduced three Cluster Manager positions. The primary focus being the support of our coordinators to focus on development and ensuring we continue to refine and improve our frontline service delivery. We were pleased to welcome existing Warrah leaders Sandra Quisumbing and Lisa Bendixen to the Cluster Manager team. We were also fortunate to bring Alison Gold on board to this team. The restructure will also well position us for some modest future growth.

Our House Coordinator level also saw some significant changes as part of the restructure and a number of these roles are now working across two houses. Nicci Gilmour continues to coordinate Waratah and has also taken on Emily Cottage. Helen Macaskill continues to coordinate Tallowood and supports the coordination of our on-site health care clinic and Leanne Burton continues to coordinate Wattle Tree and Glenny. Brooke Saara was appointed to the role of House Coordinator at Jacaranda, Andrew Demetriou was appointed as Coordinator of Torrs Street and Greenway and Tapash Dey was appointed as Coordinator of Red Gum and Orana. We welcomed Rachel Pettigrew to Warrah as Coordinator for Mac’s Cottage. It is always pleasing for me to witness the care and support that our coordinators bring in prioritising our residents’ care and we thank them for their ongoing commitment to this task.



*We welcome the new Cluster Management Team, Sandra, Alison and Lisa.*

### Cluster Management Team Responsibilities

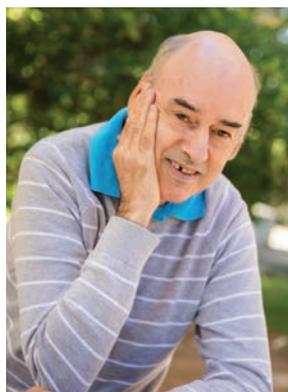
Sandra Quisumbing	Alison Gold	Lisa Bendixen
Emily	Tallowood	Greenway
Jacaranda	Wattle Tree	Torrs
Waratah	Glenny	Orana
Mac’s	Short Stay Accommodation	Redgum
	In-Home Support	

One of the challenges that continues to face Warrah are the ageing needs of many of our residents. Early in this year we commenced work on reviewing our elder strategy, resulting from the work done previously through a number of strategic workshops. We developed a number of strategies aimed at:

- Supporting our ageing residents.
- Developing tools to support advanced care planning and discussions.
- Addressing our skills deficits in order to better meet the changing needs of residents.
- Opening conversations with our families about future planning.
- Facilitating information forums for families.
- Developing opportunities for ageing parents and family members to be engaged.
- Challenging ourselves to consider what ageing in place looks like for our residents.

These strategies were initially commenced in a project undertaken by Lisa Bendixen, who has been in touch with many of our families as a first step. Unfortunately, the pandemic has delayed some of the information forums and these are being addressed in the next financial year.

This year also saw the sudden passing of two of our residents, Andrew Robinson in December, and Joanne Stephens in March. Both were much loved and long term residents and members of the Warrah community. Their passing has been a challenge for many of us to grapple with. We continue to hold them in our thoughts and their housemates continue to honour their memories. We are heartened by the support and care from the entire Warrah community who have given so much in supporting each other through these difficult times.



*Heartfelt condolences to Andrew and Joanne's families.*

We are grateful for the support of Lisa Devine who has also provided much needed pastoral support for our teams in coming to terms with the loss of these members from our community.

We have had much to celebrate this year and it was lovely to come together for the Christmas Carols, Easter and Harvest Festivals, and the beautiful Winter Spiral.

Thank you for the ongoing support provided to the team, we genuinely value the relationships we have cultivated with our families and the broader Warrah community. We look forward to a less interrupted year where we can action many of the tasks and events missed due to the pandemic.



**David Forfar**  
*Executive Manager  
Disability Services*

# Community Support Services (CSS)

## COVID-19

This year, yet again, our participants and staff have demonstrated their unwavering resilience as we continue to ride the pandemic rollercoaster. Our learnings from the first wave of COVID-19 served us well, and we were better equipped with our well-established Pandemic Response Roadmap and Covid Safe strategies to guide and navigate us through what at times felt like daily changes to public health orders.

In July, community transmission rates of COVID-19 were again spiking, and we decided to temporarily shut down our day programs for the health and wellbeing of our community. Shortly after, NSW Health ordered all disability day programs to cease activities in group settings.

We redeployed CSS staff to our residential group homes in a static roster to provide support to participants during their regular day program hours. We created a suite of daily activities that included a daily challenge, craft and cooking activities, and online activities and events that included music and yoga offered to our community.



*Residents participate in one of the daily challenges – create a nature mandala.*

Unfortunately, the impact of the stay-at-home orders meant that we could not offer a continuity of service to many of our participants. Participants impacted included those who regularly attended Short Stays, After School Hours programs, and Saturday Connect, as well as some of our regular day service participants. We remained in this holding pattern until October.

In early October, as the state reached a 70% vaccination rate, we could re-open with 10 participants per venue. Then on October 18th, we could recommence all programs to all participants in a COVID Safe environment. By February, we were again offering a full suite of activities, including externally facilitated programs and community events.

Mandatory vaccination became compulsory for all staff. This had a minimal impact on CSS, however, the increase in community transmission after the festive break, combined with mandatory isolation for positive cases and close contacts, significantly impacted our workforce. Despite a reduction in community transmission in the last quarter, it continued to cause considerable strain on our rosters.

## Opportunities through activities

Although the challenges mentioned above, our commitment to providing quality services and a range of engaging activities to our participants remains our priority. We maintain five programs based at Warrah's main campus in Dural. All our activities are tailored to assist participants in working towards individual goals. Our ever-growing offering of activities includes lifelong learning and skill development, creative art and traditional handcrafts, health and wellbeing, education and learning, social and recreational activities, community inclusion and volunteering.

One of the notable projects we continue to support is Lids4Kids, where Warrah is a hub that collects, washes, sorts and delivers bottle tops. Lids4Kids turns plastic bottle tops into mobility aids for children, park benches and roof tiles.



*Shari from Lids4Kids NSW with Warrah participant Matt.*

As part of our elder strategy and commitment to supporting participants as their needs change, we welcome allied health professionals to deliver support to our participants during their day service hours. A mutually beneficial arrangement allows our staff to learn how to improve the quality of support they are providing and implement therapeutic strategies where appropriate, such as exercise or communication programs. We have worked towards facilitating hydrotherapy sessions for some of our participants who have access to this therapy through their NDIS-funded supports.



*Tafe students learn valuable skills.*

We continue our connection with TAFE NSW, which delivers certificate programs in work readiness to participants through work skills in horticulture and construction and computer literacy.

Warrah's social enterprises, including our farm, farm shop, bakery, nursery and veggie box co-ops, create valuable opportunities for participant involvement, including: participants regularly involved in our bakery, several groups working on the farm four days per week, two groups helping to run the nursery, seven participants engaged in packing and delivering our veggie boxes for our co-ops, and two participants learning to serve customers in the farm shop. We are enthusiastic about the continuous development of activities in the enterprises, which is reflected in the farm and farm shop reports.



*Thomas sorting deliveries.*



*Veggie boxes ready for delivery.*



*Warrarah executive Alida Pruys addresses guests at the John Paul Discovery Centre.*

## Improving our systems, processes and facilities

The John Paul Foundation Discovery Centre at Warrarah was opened on Friday, 1st April 2022. The new centre will be used to deliver Warrarah's Discovery program. Discovery is a tailored program for school leavers, designed to deliver individualised plans that support the transition to adult life while building on skills developed at school. We are proud to provide young adults living with disability in northwest Sydney access to more opportunities and are grateful for the support of Holdmark Property Group.



*Warrarah school graduate and CSS participant Zac gains work experience at the Warrarah Farm Shop.*

In May, we commenced a bathroom renovation in the south wing of the Banksia community centre. This updated bathroom is designed to meet modern accessibility standards. It will cater for participants and their changing needs well into the future with the capacity to cater for a change table and a hoist.



*Kevin enjoys his afternoon at Waaia.*

At the commencement of 2022, 30 laptops were purchased and distributed to all program areas across CSS to be used by staff for better access to our client management system CTARS and to support the introduction of Microsoft Teams across the organisation. These laptops have allowed us to increase efficiency and further progress our goal of becoming a paperless service area.



**Alida Pruys**  
*Executive Manager  
Community Support Services*



# Amanda's Story

Amanda is the much loved daughter of Ken and Julie Brown, and younger sister to Melinda. Amanda was born in Melbourne, brought up in Cherrybrook, and went to school at Karonga School in Epping. She was a member of the Epping troupe of Girl Guides and began her working life at the Endeavour Foundation at the age of 19, where she continued to work for 32 years! Amanda has a great love of animals, especially dogs and she grew up with Beagles! She celebrated her 50th birthday this year with a huge party that was enjoyed by family and friends at Waratah.

***“Amanda has the biggest smile which lights up every room she walks into!”***

Amanda moved in Supported Independent Living when she was in her thirties and came to live in Warrah's Waratah Cottage in 2019. She immediately redecorated her room in colours she chose herself, and selected some brand new furniture. Amanda chose an enormous television, although because of her many activities, she doesn't devote much time to watching it! Drawing, painting and puzzles are activities Amanda enjoys. She also enjoys shopping with sister Melinda, with whom she is very close. After a shopping trip she always loves showing off her purchases to her friends on her return to Warrah.

Since coming to Warrah, Amanda has flourished. She enthusiastically takes part in all activities with her housemates, and is particularly good at filling and emptying the dishwasher, doing laundry, vacuuming and dusting her room. She loves dancing and goes to every possible disco or event on offer at Warrah. In September she received a trophy for her goal scoring skills at her netball grand final. She was recently part of the drama group which performed songs from The Lion King at Warrah's Spring Festival. Amanda has blossomed in her communication skills and confidence at Warrah. She has become a treasured part of our Waratah family and the Warrah community.



# Finance

Warrah has again delivered a solid financial performance. Total operating revenue increased by \$1.3 million in 2021–22 to \$19,571,017 and Warrah registered a net surplus of \$730,000.

The increase was due to additional income of:

- \$988,000 from Job Saver.
- \$350,000 in NDIS income for PPE.

Adjustments included the following:

- Annual and Long Service Leave on costing (\$530,000).
- Casual loading rates on weekend shifts for FY21 (\$62,000).
- Under-expensing past depreciation of assets (\$83,000).

After adjusting for these unusual incomes and expenses, the business-as-usual net deficit amounted to \$67,000.

Government grants and subsidies continue to be the largest source of income, however, in the past year the biggest proportional increase has been in other income, 7.6% compared to 1%, which is due to the additional income from Jobsaver and NDIS for PPE.

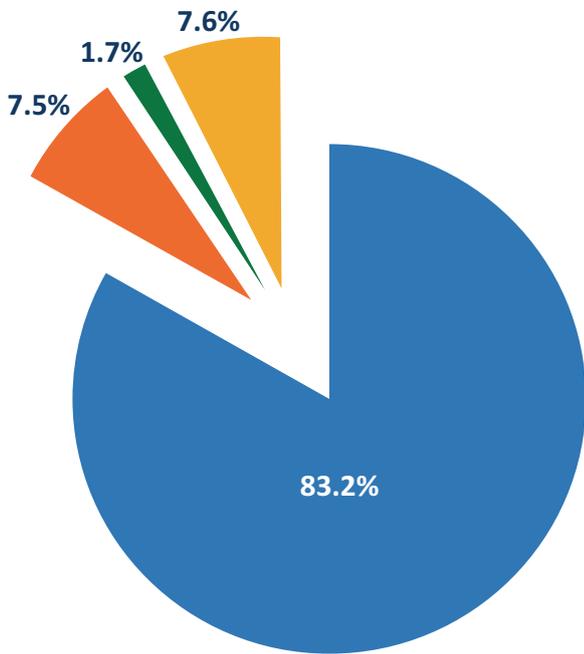
Employee costs increased by \$1.8 million to \$15 million compared to last financial year due to an increase in staff numbers from 190 to 230, however, compared to revenue they dropped marginally to 13% compared to 13.3% in the previous year.

As part of the triennial accounting requirement, a revaluation of the land and buildings owned by Warrah was carried out. This resulted in an upward revaluation of Warrah's land and buildings of \$6.5 million. This increased value of Warrah's assets reflects the continuing strength of the property market and whilst providing comfort in the asset strength of Warrah, the revaluation contributes little in providing operational financial assistance.

Warrah's Finance team implemented Divipay (WEEL), a new digital petty cash system that will improve the end user experience, significantly reduce administration processing times and provide more accurate and timely reporting of expenses across all our services. We also implemented multi-factor authentication across the organisation to improve our cyber security.

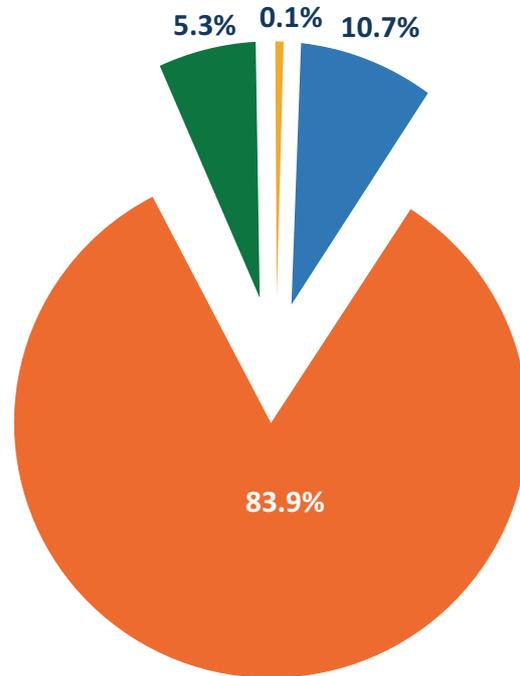


### Revenue Chart 2022



- Government Grants and Subsidies
- Fee Income
- Net Warrah Farm Revenue
- Other Income

### Expenditure Chart 2022



- Client, Property and Program
- Employee Expenditure
- Office and Administration Expense
- Other Expenses

During 21/22 the Business Services team has experienced many staff changes, creating an opportunity to reorganise finance, payroll, IT and administration responsibilities to ensure cross-skilling of staff and less key person dependency. While the amount of change has

been challenging, both within the team and for the services we support, we now have all vacant positions filled. Our priority going forward will be on continuous improvement of our processes and systems.



**Ojas Mehta**  
Executive Manager  
Business Services

# Warrah Farm

This year's weather has tested the resilience of Warrah Farm. By necessity we implemented a tight system of preparing beds well in advance and protecting the soil with silage tarps to reduce the impact of erosion caused by record-breaking rainfall. Chris and I would swap daily estimations about the weather, and we kept a keen eye on the rain radar. Our polytunnels played a significant role in protecting our crops by providing a haven for some select vegetables and ourselves during the wetter days.

***“We now have a large, dedicated group of participants working with us each week. With every visit, we see how relationships, trust and the social element of working together impact the work's success.”***

## Participant and Community Engagement

We are pleased to report that despite the challenges, we've managed to progress our strategy of increasing participant engagement on the farm. We now have a large, dedicated group of participants working with us each week.



With every visit, we see how relationships, trust, and the social element of working together impact the work's success. We've experimented with different methods of undertaking our jobs to involve more participants. We now place value on keeping the farm accessible and adaptable rather than searching out the most efficient way, as these can be ultimately exclusive.

We've enjoyed contributing to the Harvest Festival. Harvesting together as a community and later sharing a meal cooked by our participants with the vegetables grown on the farm is very rewarding. We also ran activities at both festivals allowing us to engage with participants, staff and families that we don't regularly see on the farm. Finding ways to maintain these connections is something we've begun to explore further, and we're interested in what that could look like in the future.

## Farm Tours

We've recommenced tours of the farm to visiting school students. On these tours, we explain the history and purpose of the farm while also discussing the environment, food security and responsible farming methods. The students can also take part in stirring and applying biodynamic preparations to the farm.



*“My hope for the coming year is that as more people work and walk on the farm, the community sees it as a place they can belong and play a valuable role.”*

## Community Farming

We have been successful, as always, in passing our annual certification. The certification recognises the biodynamic methods we use and the records and data we maintain.

One thing that makes our farm so unique is its very visible and public location at the entrance of Warrah’s campus. We have a level of transparency that many other farms don’t. People have the opportunity to see precisely how their vegetables are grown. Customers can ask questions, get advice or observe the work that is taking place.

We’re trialling different varieties of vegetables to grow that we believe will assist our participants in being able to engage with even more as they work on the farm. The different types include bush cucumbers, pumpkins, and tomatoes. These varieties don’t require such intensive trellising or pruning. Pruning can be an everyday job in the height of summer, and it is pretty fiddly and time-consuming. The hope is the new varieties will be more accessible for more people to harvest as they won’t vine and spread out as much. Also, importantly, we think they will be tasty!

My hope for the coming year is that as more people work and walk on the farm, the community sees it as a place they can belong and play a valuable role.



**Steven Tennikoff**  
Farm Manager



# Farm Enterprises

It is a joy to face the new financial year with a solid weekly program of activities in place in and around the farm shop after all the upheaval and disruption of recent years. The organic industry has not only had to deal with the financial pressures caused by fuel and workforce issues, but many farmers have also been devastated by floods and crop failures. While supply, trading patterns and consumer confidence may fluctuate, there continues to be enough interest in our organic and biodynamic offerings for our participants to contribute to feeding their extended community. The farm, shop, bakery and nursery all provide opportunities for participants from various programs to have patterns of social interaction and work experience that are both comforting and rewarding.

The importance of repetition and rhythm and the value of engaging in valued work are fundamental tenets of the Steiner approach. We prepare fresh fruit, veggies, and loaves of fresh sourdough twice weekly for delivery to Billabong Retreat in Maraylya. In January this year, we began delivering to a new community co-op in St Ives called Grow Gather Graze. Then in May, we extended this delivery route to include the parents of Kamaroi Steiner School in Belrose. This new route compliments and builds upon the packing process already in place for co-ops in Lane Cove and with parents of Glenaeon's Steiner school in Castlecrag and their preschool in North Sydney. Four participants from Warrah's Discovery and Community Support Services and our school students are involved in the packing



*Borja the baker prepares the dough.*

of both standard and customised produce boxes. Co-op deliveries to the Eastern Suburbs did not resume after the extended COVID-19 lockdown due in part to the distance required to deliver to this co-op.

Zac from Discovery is fully committed to his work experience program across the bakery and the farm shop. He proudly contributes to the baking process, labelling bags and weighing out dry goods to be sold in the shop, entering grocery stock details and serving customers at the till. His confidence and skills are on a steady upward trajectory, and it is a delight to see him taking pride in his work and getting to know regular customers.

Talara and Melanie from the school commenced a weekly hour of work experience behind the till. They also help tidy the shelves, label bags, store new products and collect eggs. School student Evan also does a great job helping in the bakery once a week.

***“The importance of repetition and rhythm and the value of engaging in valued work are fundamental tenets of the Steiner approach.”***



*Melanie and Talara work in the shop once a week.*



*Rohan enjoys his new role.*



*Thomas knows exactly what is expected.*



*Thally draws Elke and Frangipani.*

Rohan from Banksia Community Centre is thoroughly enjoying his new role packing standardised co-op boxes on Tuesdays. Sergio, Thomas and Julian, also from Discovery, are consistently more engaged in packing customised orders for co-op members on Tuesdays.

Warrah's newly established bakery remains steady in its operation of 20 hours per week, baking fresh bread on Tuesdays and Thursdays and delivering high-quality sourdough to our farm shop customers and Billabong Retreat.

We successfully undertook the long-awaited waterproofing of the base of the shed in early 2022. All that remains on this project is building a retaining wall.

In August 2021, the management of Warrah's enterprises shifted from Business Services to Community Support Services to focus on the strategy of participant engagement. Given that most current farm shop staff members had never experienced a schedule of full participant involvement, there has been a lot to learn in 2022. The staff are to be commended for their efforts in adapting and accepting the changes.



**Debbie Tschepen**  
*Acting Farm Shop Manager*



# Danny's Story

Danny joined Warrah's Discovery program in 2022, after graduating from Warrah Specialist School. Danny was just 11 years old when he first came to Warrah Specialist School. He arrived with his big brother Thomas, and continued with our school until he turned 18.

As a young student, Danny flourished through his enjoyment of music and drama. In his first few years at Warrah, we witnessed Danny growing in confidence through traditional Steiner activities, such as Eurythmy movement, speech work and Bothmer gymnastics. He loved to sing and play musical instruments, and he was very good at making Kookaburra sounds.

As he grew, so did his abilities. Cooking became a favourite activity. He would cook toasted sandwiches and fried eggs for himself and his school friends. He enjoyed reading poetry with his teachers and had a special interest in riddles.

On becoming a senior student, Danny was a regular at the Endeavour Foundation work experience program, where he did a wonderful job collating items, packaging, applying stickers, working on the conveyor belt and on the factory floor. Danny looked forward to work experience, where he learnt about safe work practices, and acquired work ready skills. He was also an enthusiastic helper, packing vegetable boxes in the Warrah Farm Shop. Danny thrived working outdoors in gardening and woodwork and was a great role model for younger students in that space.

We discovered Danny's talent for customer service when we opened the 'Life Skills Café' – a café set up in the school specifically to provide life skills to our senior students. Once a week our senior students would invite the whole

school to eat at the café. Danny wholeheartedly embraced the challenge of greeting and serving customers, counting money, and serving the food. He took immense pride in the café, and looked forward to it all week long. His opening line was "Welcome to Life Skills café, how can I help you?".

Another strength of Danny's is his public speaking skills. During his schooling, he was a strong presence within the students' morning circle, where he led many verses and songs with confidence and pride. A moment we won't forget was at Danny's graduation concert where he performed an amazing rendition of "The Time of My Life" which left many of us in tears of joy and pride.

After graduation we were so pleased that Danny joined the Discovery program and continued his great work in the Warrah Farm Shop delivery program. He is now focusing on life skills and meal preparation, including purchasing ingredients from the store and following step by step recipes. Some of his favourite activities include swimming in the Warrah pool and bushwalking. He enjoys participating in the Return and Earn program, and purchasing his lunch on community outings. There are so many activities that Danny enjoys in the Discovery program, along with 2 other graduates from Warrah school, Campbell and Zac.

***"Danny's joyful and exuberant personality make him a very popular and respected member of our Warrah community".***

# Warrah Specialist School

Late 2021 was once again full of disruption to the regular timetable and we were physically separated from our wider community for some time. We all understand now, more than ever, how important it is to stay connected through word, deed, thought and interest with our work and personal communities.



*We farewelled our largest cohort of graduates in 2021.*

In 2021 we bid farewell to our largest cohort of Warrah Specialist School graduates. Six of our students were honoured at our Christmas concert and graduation ceremony. We are pleased that a couple of our graduates remain within the Warrah Community through the Discovery and Banksia programs.

In addition to this, after seven years we said goodbye to the outgoing Principal, Jan Fowler, who led the school with dedication and enthusiasm. Anna Wetzel commenced her official appointment as School Principal and Executive in January 2022.

## School Growth

2022 has been a successful year in many respects. We have had a healthy number of new enrolments to the school this year with numbers surpassing previous years. We are thrilled that all our hard work and dedication to

our students has been received so positively by the wider community. We are currently running at capacity and managing a waitlist. An increase in younger enrolments has led us to create a brand new early primary group, alongside our existing early childhood, farming and gardening and weaving classes.

## Staffing

We were not immune to the Australia-wide teaching shortages over the past 12 months, and have devoted significant time and resources to finding the right people for our school. We seek people who are passionate and committed to our unique outdoor curriculum, with a fine balance of Steiner knowledge and special needs experience. Despite challenges, we have built and maintained a strong team in 2022. We are dedicated to high staff to student ratios, ensuring that our students receive the individual attention they need to flourish.

## Professional Development

Former CEO of Inala, Martin Porteous, facilitated the first of many anthroposophy and disability trainings for all staff. Anthroposophy is the body of teaching that underlies our valuable work here at Warrah. Martin has spent his entire career specialising in the field of disability and Steiner education, so his teachings are invaluable to our staff. We have also been fortunate to employ the services of Rudolf Steiner College presenter and author, Meg Quinlisk, to guide staff in the area of Steiner pedagogy. We are committed to ongoing training for our staff, so that they may embody the principles of Steiner education and our unique outdoor curriculum. As such, we believe each and every one of our students has a yearning and the capacity for a rich and meaningful life. Our task as educators is to transform these strengths and qualities into capabilities that will serve them in the world beyond school.



## Curriculum

Our work with educator and master craftsman John Lawry continues to develop our outdoor classroom curriculum through which our students gain a valuable understanding and appreciation of their natural surroundings. Students develop their sense of place within the Warrah landscape and community. This year we continue to place a deep focus on activities such as weaving, nature craft, bushwalking, gardening and farming, which we consider necessary companions to literacy and numeracy. We believe that it is not just WHAT is taught that is important, but HOW and WHERE children learn. We embrace all weather on our bushwalks, and we quite often don the raincoats and gum boots on rainy days. Children learn about the rhythms of the seasons and nature in all its forms.

## Work Experience

Despite the short window, the opening up after an extended lockdown period allowed the students to resume work experience for our senior students. Our relationship with Endeavour Foundation continues strongly, with

some very happy students gaining valuable workplace skills each week. The program facilitates an opportunity to work as part of a team in a vibrant and supported atmosphere, with the prospect for those who might seek paid employment or further education after leaving school. A new relationship with Access Industries has begun, and provides additional prospects for students.



*Students gaining valuable workplace skills at the Endeavour Foundation.*

Several work experience opportunities within Warrah have been re-established this year, such as packing food co-op boxes, gaining customer service experience at the Farm Shop and assisting in the Warrah bakery. Warrah students have built up a reputation for producing work of a high standard and we are very appreciative for the opportunity this provides our students.

## Festivals, Excursions and Community

Our festival program continued with some disruption, but we did our best to celebrate the seasons, and keep the festival program alive within our school. Our colourful Maypole festival in October 2021 was a joyful experience for our students and symbolises the tree of life and growth of spring vegetation. By celebrating the passage of the seasons through art, music and story, we strengthen our connection to the rhythms of nature. Our Easter Festival in April 2022 was a day of music, planting, puppetry and Easter egg hunts.

Even more exciting was to be able to invite the wider community back inside the school gates in May 2022 for our first in-person community festival in several months, our Harvest Festival. Autumn presents the opportunity for us to appreciate the bounty of the harvest. Our



*Students performing at the Harvest Festival.*

Winter Spiral followed in June 2022. A festival that symbolises the inward turning we tend to experience as the night grows longer and cold drives us indoors. It is a time for reflection on the past year and preparation for the next.

We have also reintroduced our excursion program, which has included trips to the theatre, indoor rock climbing, Golden Ridge Animal Farm, Sydney Zoo and the Easter Show. The excursion program assists our students to integrate with the local and broader community.

We endeavour to build networks and positive relationships within the community, and as such, we enjoy being able to re-establish our visits from Glenaeon and Kindlehill Steiner School students, with other school visits in the pipeline for late 2022 and beyond.



*The Riding for the Disabled program has many benefits for our students.*

## Therapists and Volunteers

At Warrah Specialist School we aim to provide rich experiences and therapeutic opportunities for our students. We continue our association with Riding for the Disabled, which provides physical benefits of muscle strength, posture and balance, in addition to the sensory, cognitive and emotional benefits. We continue our strong program with Noro Music Therapy.



***“Our school is in a strong position, and we are looking forward to a rich and lively year ahead.”***

Our weaving program has proven to be a great success – supported by our master weaving volunteer, Marianne, and a strong school team – the students have immensely improved their weaving skills. The quality of work has grown exponentially to the point of establishing an Etsy shop online – Woven with Love @ Warrah. We are extremely grateful for the vast experience, guidance and care that Marianne brings to the program.



*We are immensely grateful to our master weaving volunteer, Marianne, pictured here with one of our students.*

We are pleased to have implemented the Kiwanis Terrific Kids program, which recognises two of our students each term who achieve their personal improvement goals. In addition to this, Kiwanis Sydney has generously donated the funds for us to purchase a new weaving loom. We are very grateful for this new partnership.

It is wonderful to have had such a positive year, despite interruptions and inevitable change. We have received some delightful feedback from families who report that our curriculum and nature immersion positively contributes to their child’s temperament at home as well. Our school is in a strong position, and we are looking forward to a rich and lively year ahead.



**Anna Wetzel**  
*School Principal and Executive*

# People, Culture & Community

Our people, culture and community have been the foundation of Warrah for over 50 years, and they are our greatest strength. Our staff and volunteers work collectively to achieve Warrah's mission of making a positive difference for people living with disabilities. Our shared values of community, respect, integrity and excellence underpin how we work together, so everyone feels valued, accepted and empowered to contribute.

## Warrah Staff Community

At Warrah, we engage a diverse workforce across our range of services. Despite significant candidate shortages in both the disabilities and education sectors, we successfully recruited additional staff to ensure the continuation of high-quality services.

Our staff numbers increased from 190 to 230 in response to operational changes and increasing 1:1 participant support. Warrah is now well positioned to implement future growth strategies in some of our services, including SIL, short stay, in-home support and micro enterprises.

We implemented a casual conversion strategy in a competitive employment market, encouraging our casual staff onto permanent contracts and increasing the casual pool with new recruits. It is a balancing act, because we need the benefits of a stable and committed permanent workforce, without limiting roster flexibility and additional cover. We are confident in our ability to maintain our casual staff at 30%, which is low compared to other organisations in the sector with significantly higher casualised workforces of up to 55%.

## Warrah's Staff Community



**230**

### EMPLOYEES

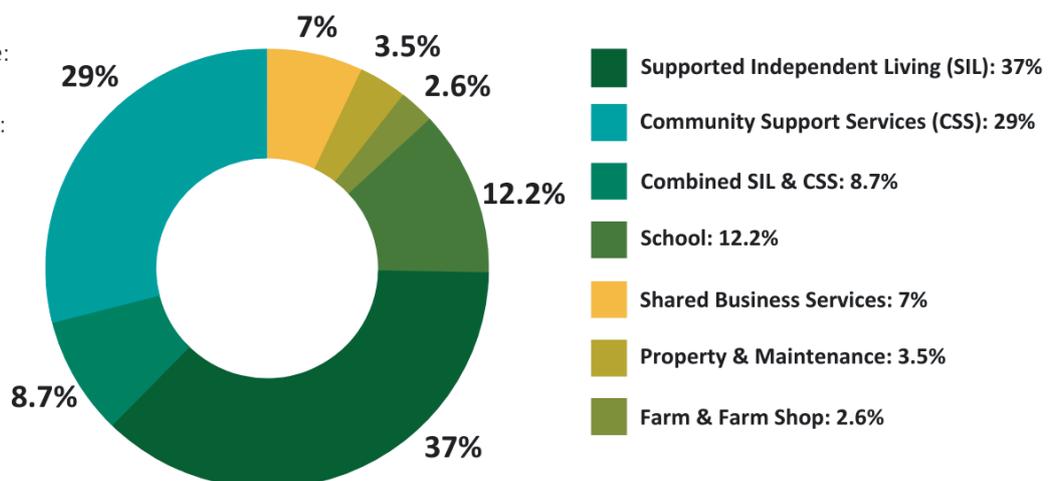
Average service:  
**4 years**

Longest service:  
**27 years**

Age range:  
**19 - 69 years**

Average age:  
**44 years**

Gender:  
**34% male**  
**66% female**



## COVID-19 Challenges

It was another challenging year for the People and Culture team, as COVID-19 brought new restrictions. Mandatory staff vaccination was introduced in response to two separate NSW Public Health Orders, one covering our disabilities services and the other covering our school. We were required to manage and communicate the constantly changing rules, regulations and timeframes to staff within different service areas. It was great to offer on-site vaccination clinics to make vaccination more accessible and alleviate some stress for our staff. We acknowledge it was a difficult time for our staff community, and we sincerely thank everyone for their understanding and support.

## 20/21 Priorities

Mental health and wellbeing were a priority, and we supported staff through programs such as AccessEAP counselling, a Managing Stress and Building Resilience workshop, mental health first aid training, and recognition of RU OK? Day. Throughout the year, we were committed to continuous improvement of our people processes.

- We implemented ELMO, an integrated Human Resource Information System across payroll, recruitment, onboarding and learning.
- We designed a new Learning and Development framework, including e-learning (180+ courses) and interactive face-to-face workshops. This program is supported by Tracy Keenan, who joined Warrah in April 2022 in a newly created position of Quality and Training Specialist.
- We formed a Performance and Remuneration Committee to monitor and review Executive performance and remuneration. We also introduced an Executive mentoring program and the Voice Project's 360-degree feedback survey to guide our senior leaders' development objectives.



Jason Lim and Richard Fekkes present Charlie Russo with his 25 year service award.

It was wonderful to hold our first staff service awards since 2019, to recognise staff who achieved long service during 2020 and 2021. We had 16 staff members who completed 10,15, 20 and 25 years' service with Warrah during this period.

## Staff Engagement Survey

In March 2022, Warrah participated in the Voice Project's employee engagement survey so all our staff could have their say about improving workplace culture. The survey measured our performance across engagement, wellbeing and progress compared to industry benchmarks. The results showed that staff wellbeing was the main concern, primarily due to high stress and lack of staffing. This area continues to be a priority. However, we were encouraged to see that staff engagement and commitment to Warrah's values were exceptionally high, scoring between 90-94%, which is above the industry benchmark. The survey results will guide our people and culture initiatives in the year ahead.

94%	of staff believe in Warrah's purpose
94%	of staff enjoy their work
93%	of staff believe in Warrah's values
92%	of staff are proud to work for Warrah

Staff Engagement Survey Results

## Community Events

For a second consecutive year, COVID-19 restricted our community events, however our community spirit remained strong throughout. When restrictions eased, we were grateful for the opportunity to come together again in everyday life and for special occasions. While our events and festivals were smaller and simpler, they were appreciated and enjoyed by everyone.

In early December 2021, we held a small ‘Carols at Warrah’ event with staff, students and participants. One of our musically talented staff members, Tulele Faletolu, led us all in an afternoon singing carols. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate Christmas.

Our most significant community event was the long-awaited John Paul Foundation Discovery Centre’s official opening in April 2022. It is fantastic to now see this facility fully operational, with both Discovery and Short Stay programs utilising the new facilities funded by Holdmark Property Group.

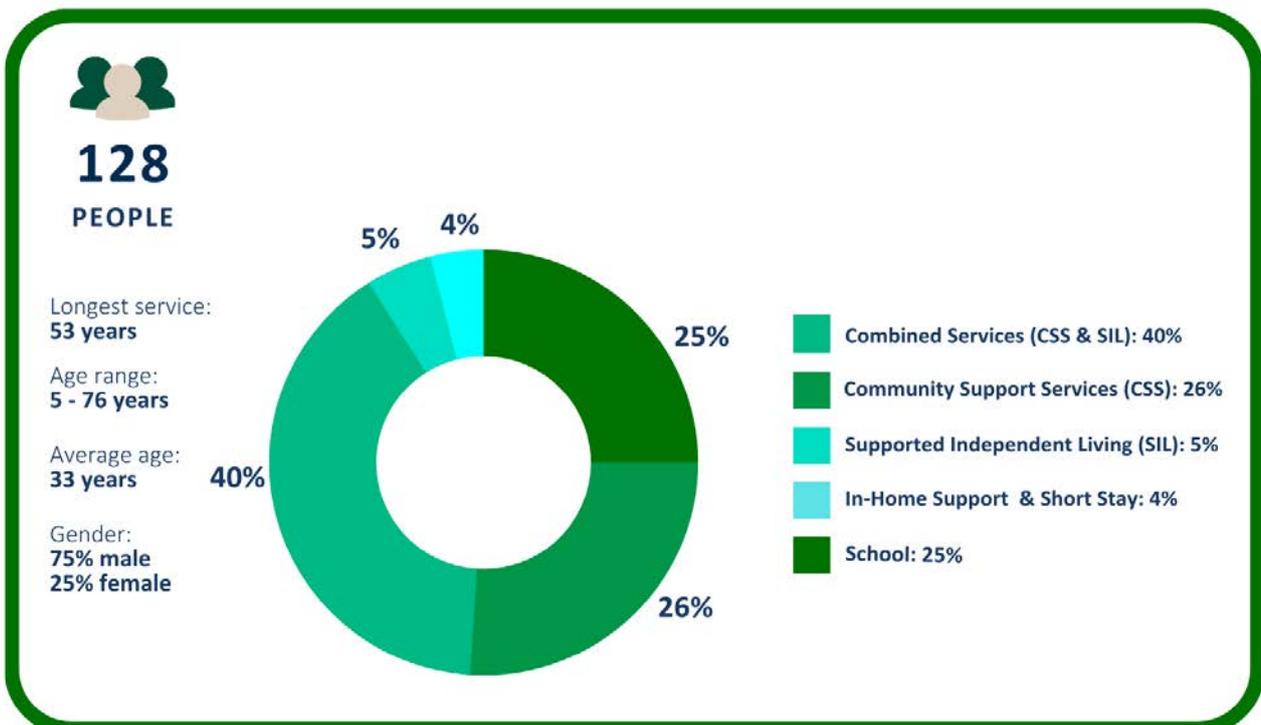
More recently, Warrah staff and participants enjoyed celebrating many of our festivals, including Easter, Harvest, and Winter Festivals. Warrah’s festivals are organised by our Anthroposophical council and staff sub-committees who volunteer their time to make these occasions possible. We appreciate their inspiration and commitment to our culture.



*On the farm for Harvest Festival.*

Festivals are a meaningful and important part of Warrah, as they lift us out of the ordinary and into the rhythm of the seasons, each of which has its own special qualities. We honour and celebrate these occasions together as a community.

## Warrah’s Community – Students and Participants



## Gifts in Wills

In August 2021, the Community Engagement team launched Stage 1 of the Bequests/Gifts in Wills program for Warrah. A letter with an informative brochure and response form on leaving a lasting legacy to Warrah was included in the mailout. Leaving a gift enables Warrah to maintain homes, improve many vital facilities and further enhance the services and opportunities we offer now and in the future.

## Community Grants

Warrah was successful in several community grant submissions. In September 2021, Warrah received a donation of \$3,290 from West Pennant Hills Sports to upgrade the Waaia Café. Through this grant, we purchased a wonderful new coffee machine, new crockery, cutlery, serving ware, and branded café aprons. As per the grant application, Warrah has purchased new tables and chairs for seating to invigorate the café and make it more appealing for visitors. It is lovely to see our Barista trained participants using their skills and getting involved in making coffees for participants and staff each Friday in the café.

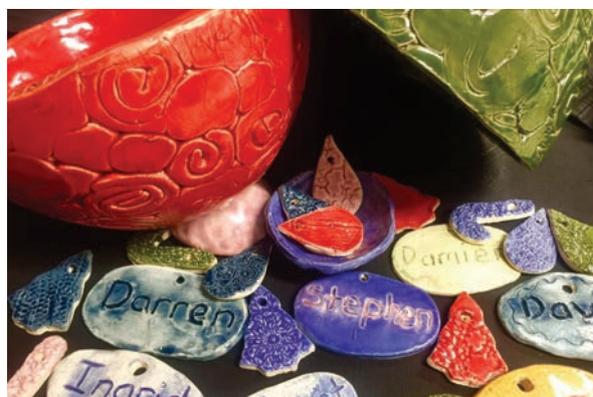


*Welcome to the Waaia Café.*

Warrah's grant application for a Street Library to be installed outside Warrah on Harris Road was also successful. Street libraries are a home for books that are accessible from the street. They are an invitation for neighbours, Warrah visitors, staff, participants and students to borrow books. They may be returned to the street library or passed on to others.

## Appeals

Our annual Christmas Appeal for a new pottery kiln raised \$9,198, allowing us to purchase an 85-litre kiln from Woodrow Kilns. This new kiln will replace Warrah's very old pottery kiln, which had not been functioning and, therefore, not in use. The new kiln will be used by our adult participants and students participating in Warrah's practical crafts and skills program, including clay modelling, and pottery making. We are very excited to take delivery of the kiln in October 2022.



*Participant pottery projects.*

With our participants' changing individual needs, the fundraising focus continued to be contributions towards purchasing new vehicles so that our participants could better access the community. This year's tax appeal supported the purchase of two new vehicles and raised \$20,472. This was a pleasing result, and was greatly appreciated by staff and participants.



**Anna Hay**

*Executive Manager*

*People, Culture, Community*

# Quality & Training

Quality and Safeguards at Warrah has been an essential part of Warrah's commitment to its stakeholders. The team set out to ensure that safety and continuity of daily operations was the organisation's highest priority. It is evident in the past year that preparations and improvements created a safe and secure environment.

## Commitment to Quality and Safeguards

With the development of Warrah's Learning, Training, and Development plan, the Quality Team will identify and equip staff with the skills our clients need the most. We set out to build upon each team's existing best practices while developing proactive solutions through staff training.

- Interdivisional learning continues to increase communication across the organisation.
- Awareness, collaboration, and appreciation for the different requirements across Warrah's several divisions and areas.
- Promotion of common standards across the entire organisation which promotes clarity, direction, and clear guidance.
- Engaging, involved, and equipping staff through coaching or consulting.
- Setting the trend and leading by example for all stakeholders to be inclusive and transparent.
- Creating a safe space for all stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of incident management processes, positive behaviour support strategies, and a stronger focus on health and safety.

## Continuous Improvement

Quality implementation at the organisational level will greatly support continuous improvement in systems across all divisions. Developing a new policy framework that encompasses a company-wide scope will specifically support each division to achieve their unique targets while meeting their specific regulatory standards and requirements. We have set out to better support Warrah's Disability and School Divisions by ensuring our policy framework clearly identifies roles and responsibilities across the organisation.

- Launching in April 2022, the quality implementation plan spans over 12 months, is delivered in four (4) phases, and is aligned with Warrah's ethos to support continuous improvement.
- The plan's initial phase is focused on the development of confidence and leadership amongst teams, managers, staff, participants, and external stakeholders alike. This phase has allowed our team to assess, review, and establish an initial baseline of quality across Warrah.

The active participation of Warrah's stakeholders in our policy development and practice is vital to continuous improvement. We have set out to review and assess the effectiveness of our policies with a greater focus on incident and risk management. Review of our systems has allowed us to plan for continuous improvements that will better assess and meet the needs of our stakeholders.

- Management reviews and auditing has assisted our team to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our systems currently in place.
- Our team has developed a Quality Implementation Plan to organise and systematically achieve audit readiness.



*Staff learning to safely administer insulin.*

The enthusiasm, response, and acceptance of quality implementation will continue to support Warrah's continuous improvement: setting goals, team building and team exercises. Our team has set out to continue the momentum achieved and create pathways.

- Adoption of a compliant policy framework that is organic, person-centred, and focused on the needs of the people at Warrah.
- Deliver a rewarding experience for all levels of Warrah's stakeholders, including Board members, executive managers, cluster and area managers, coordinators, staff, clients, and their family members alike.
- Ensure that resources and time are dedicated to the healthy development of improvements with people at the centre of decision-making and quality.

## Practice and Outcomes

Planning has been paramount in the months leading up to the launch of several quality-driven initiatives. Short and long-term projects were launched to review and develop Warrah's policy framework. Implementation and improvement of the use of software solutions have been key to verify the effectiveness of planning and implementation. Supporting the change and transition of staff roles across Warrah has assisted in the reallocation and training of essential responsibilities. Our team has set out to interpret quality in its many forms and lead by example.

- Development of a Policy Review and Development plan targeting the review and update of Warrah's policy framework and scope before the end of the 2022 calendar year.
- Projects centred around systems improvement have supported the implementation of Folio for facilities management workflow, tracking, and reporting. Technical challenges and obstacles have also been navigated to ensure the security, integrity and competency of workflows and information management at multiple levels.
- Shifts in the organisation provided opportunities to reallocate roles and responsibilities so that staff support is enhanced through stronger internal processes. This includes behaviour support plan implementation, training and professional development, workers compensation and Return to Work programs.
- A refocus on workplace health and environmental safety for all stakeholders saw a refresh of Warrah's Health and Safety Committee with a stronger focus on policy development and safe work practices.



**Fred Cloos**  
*Quality Manager*

# Property & Housing

2021/22 has been another busy year for Warrah's maintenance team. In response to increased cleaning requirements due to COVID-19 and ongoing repairs and maintenance, we expanded our onsite team to include an additional Cleaner and Maintenance Officer. This has allowed us greater capacity to complete many improvements to our facilities and our major works, which are listed below.

## Residential Homes

- Orana – exterior painting and new carpet (\$45k).
- Wattle Tree – new fire escape path (\$3k).
- Greenway – new hand rail to path (\$5k).
- Macs Cottage – repairs due to termite damage (\$3k).
- Jacaranda & Tallowood – new split. airconditioning system and installation of roller doors (\$26k).
- Waratah – painting (\$17k).
- Upgrade of smoke detectors across all homes (\$48k).
- Red Gum – new roof.

## Community Support Services

- Banksia – airconditioning in short stay; new switch boards, accessible bathroom renovation (\$102k).
- Waaia – concreting work (\$11k).
- Farm Shop – new drainage around building to prevent flooding (\$16k).
- Discovery Centre – new airconditioning system (\$2k).
- Pottery Room - the old boiler room near Banksia was internally demolished and cleaned out to make a safe place for our new pottery kiln (\$10k).

## School

- Repair and replace roof (\$246k).
- Completion of woodwork workshop for our outdoor curriculum (funded by the proceeds of the 2020 tax appeal).

## Swimming Pool

- Painting (\$5k).

Warrah is fortunate to have a beautiful bushland campus with many mature trees, however, risk management of our trees is a priority for the safety of our community. In 20/21 we spent \$75k on a comprehensive arborist review and report, with necessary works carried out to reduce risk of falling trees on our campus.

In 21/22 Warrah implemented Folio, a property management software platform that will streamline workflow processes, improve prioritisation of maintenance work and provide accurate and timely reporting on work in progress.

Members of the Property Committee and Maintenance team have been actively involved in our project work and planning for the property master plan, which will be critical to planning our property projects at Warrah in future.



**Richard Fekkes**  
*Maintenance and  
Property Manager*



# Donors & Supporters

We are grateful to those who continue to give generously to support our services and projects. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our 2021/2022 donors and supporters.

## Warrah Appeals and Donations

Clive Atkinson  
Anne Ball  
Barbara Box  
Florence Chandler  
Alison Clark  
Alex Cleland  
Robert Cochrane  
Katrina & Charles Cordina  
Robyn Craft  
Bryan Deane  
June Deane  
Alan Eisenberg  
Annette Embery  
Mary Embery  
Shuan Ghaidan  
David Ghannoum  
Michelle Gough  
Richard Grace  
Dianna Green  
Paul & Robin Gregor  
David Hamilton  
Frank & Elaine Hanlon  
Christine Hardwick  
Elizabeth Hargreaves  
Margaret & John Hargreaves  
Kate Hodgkinson  
M Holt  
Jacqui Keady  
Rob & Joanne Kerr  
Melina Kerswell  
Graham & Robyn King  
Marcelle & Ross King  
Micheline Lane  
Judy Lau  
Anelah Leighton  
Judith Lewis  
Nina Lim

Tina & Steve Malin  
Valerie Marsh  
Darryl McAllister  
Elaine & Vic McCartin  
Graeme McCumiskey  
Don McLeay  
Janie and Max Miller  
Hugh Outhred  
Anne Owens  
Muhammed Saeed  
Ralph Saunders  
Hannah Semler  
Barbara Stannard  
Joan & Bob Stephens  
Joseph Vassallo  
Jeanette Weston  
John Williams

## Support In-Kind

Carol-Anne & Barry Lunn  
Loshini & Mitchell Cameron  
Lisa Cooley  
Kim Culling  
Zulfiqar & Sabeen Mahar  
Pushpa Mendes  
Maria & Indrek Paas  
Flinders Stokes  
Marc & Analuisa Sukkar  
Chris Thomas

## Clubs, Trusts & Foundations

Dural Men's Shed  
Kiwanis  
Rotary Club of Glenhaven  
Rotary Club of Greater Hills  
Urban Taskforce Foundation  
Limited

## Local Business Donations

Bunnings  
Grilld Burger  
Think Outside  
Round Corner Newsagency  
Urban Taskforce  
Vinva Foundation

## Local Business Support In-Kind

Belcastro Building  
Dural Music Society  
Holdmark Property Group  
Martin's Building and  
Landscape Supplies  
Sanctuary For Hair  
St Vincent's Health Network  
SEC Newgate

# Our People

## Board of Directors

Steve Malin	Chair Member Finance Committee and Performance & Remuneration Committee
Annet van Kesteren	Deputy Chair and Chair Finance Committee
Annette Waterson	Chair Performance & Remuneration Committee and Member Finance Committee
David Ghannoum	Member Property Committee
John Williams	Member Property Committee and Performance & Remuneration Committee
Ross King	Chair Property Committee
Peter Gurrier-Jones	Member
Paul Power	Member – resigned 23/02/2022
Hannah Semler	Member – resigned 28/07/2021

## Executive Group

Jason Lim	General Manager – appointed August 2021
David Forfar	Executive Manager Disability Services
Anna Wetzel	School Principal, Executive Manager – appointed January 2022
Anna Hay	Executive Manager People, Culture, Community – appointed August 2021
Alida Pruys	Executive Manager Community Support Services – appointed August 2021
Ojas Mehta	Executive Manager Business Services – appointed March 2022

## Auditors

Nexia Australia





# WARRAH

LIVING LEARNING GROWING

*Enriching the lives of people with disability*

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