

President's Report

On behalf of Mansfield Community Radio Station Incorporated, I am pleased to present the President's report for the year ending 31st December, 2021

Overview -

What can one say about yet another year of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and what they have imposed on all of us? Yet, during each of the lockdowns, most of our wonderful volunteers felt able to continue to present programs keeping our community informed and entertained, so on behalf of the Committee I thank each presenter for your dedication throughout the year.

I am sure you would agree to have had another year when we have been unable to hold social events has been a distinct drawback, and it is my hope that this situation will change for the better next year.

Currently we put to air over 82 hours a week of locally produced programs which are varied, informative and entertaining.

I am pleased to welcome new presenters to the Radio Mansfield family – Helen and John Goldsworthy, Jack Arrowsmith, with his 'brothers in arms' Sam and William, Nathan Cronin and Marg Attley along with returnee presenters, Miriam Zolin and Tony Froud. On leave at the present time, Sandy Robinson, Hans-Peter Lang, Gilli Bruce and Michael Craddock will hopefully make a return when they are able. Sadly Ingrid Ueno, Graeme Tyres, and Kelli Gotje have decided to leave us, and I thank them for their valuable contribution to Radio Mansfield.

Despite some of the Committee's goals for the year being put on the back burner, we were able to achieve and implement some things which we felt were of importance to the station.

- **IT** -Initially the Committee felt hamstrung by not being able to sort out some of our IT issues, and we were grateful for the expertise of Matthew Grant of *Narrowgate Consulting*, Wangaratta, who was able to circumvent unknown or long forgotten passwords and help guide us to unlock programs, and streamline our computer systems.
- **Two operational studios** - We were very pleased to have finally got the second studio up and running again. Thanks to the work of Keith Rogers, Ray Sheldrick and Matthew Grant having two studios has certainly made things easier for presenters at program changeovers.
- **Frenchman's Gap transmitter lease** - Although Radio Mansfield has been broadcasting into Woods Point and surrounding areas since the transmitter site was set up during 2020, the lease for the site was not finalised and we found ourselves in contravention of the rules as set out by DELWP. As a condition of the lease, DELWP required a survey of the site, the cost of which was prohibitively expensive. The Committee decided to "fight" having to pay for such a costly survey and approached and received letters of support from The Hon. Cindy McLeish MP, Mark Holcombe, the Mayor of the Shire of Mansfield, both of whom are regular guests on Radio Mansfield, and Kevin Murphy, Chair of the Mansfield Emergency Management Committee. These were submitted to DELWP and The Hon. Lilly De'Ambrosio, Minister for the Environment, along with documents prepared by the previous committee. At the present time we have escaped having to pay for the survey, although the final decision rests with the Surveyor General of Victoria, who will decide if we have a no fee or low fee survey for the lease, but we have DELWP on our side so it looks more promising than it did at the beginning of the year.

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- **Chris Deutscher Memorial Music Scholarship** – Since Chris' death in 2018, it has been a desire of the station to offer music scholarships to two students in the name of one of the station's founding members. 10 applications were received for our inaugural scholarships, suitably qualified judging panel members were selected, and despite having our first attempt scuppered by a snap lock down, we were able to arrange a second date with all but one of the auditions taking place. The standard of applicants was so good the selection panel faced a difficult decision. The choice of primary school student and pianist, Trenton Bowen and secondary college student and drummer, Harry Murakami were excellent choices and take away a prize of \$300 and \$500 respectively.
- **Presenters' handbook** – There was a general consensus from the members of the Committee that our handbook was not welcoming or informative enough, especially for new members, so a new revised handbook has been created.
- **Handover document** – As a committee, we felt it necessary to create a formal handover document for the incoming Committee, primarily so that all relevant information pertaining to the station was documented. It is hoped each subsequent Committee of Management will update this document as necessary, as a means to making the transition between the outgoing and incoming Management Committees as smooth as practicable.

Governance -

During the course of the year, we accepted the resignations from three members of the Committee: Ray Sheldrick, technical advisor, Viki Rochford, station treasurer and Gilli Bruce, general committee member. I thank these former members of the Management Committee for their input and work on the Committee.

Additionally, although Rob Voice was not on the Committee, I will make mention of him as he was part of the technical team for many years, working in conjunction with Keith Rogers, Peter Weeks, of UGFM and Ray Sheldrick. His resignation was accepted in January 2021.

We have implemented three new policy documents during the year: OHS, Emergency Management and Committee of Management Dispute Resolution, which was a requirement of the ACNC registration.

We welcomed Miriam Zolin to the role of Treasurer on 1/9/21, filling the role until the 2021 AGM.

Financial Sustainability -

- **Treasurer Position** - Shortly after the start of the new financial year our Treasurer, Viki Rochford, tendered her immediate resignation citing pressures of work in Melbourne. Viki's accounting knowledge and expertise was extremely valuable to the Committee particularly in the early days of our tenure, and we are grateful to her for her time and assistance.
It is unfortunate that no one on the Committee had enough knowledge of MYOB to feel confident to step into her shoes, so an immediate solution was to engage a bookkeeper so that monthly invoices could be issued and our accounts reconciled. Miriam Zolin succumbed to the desperate pleas for someone to take on the role of Treasurer and we are most grateful to her. To assist Miriam, book keeper, Paul Robinson from *MMK Accounting* was engaged.
- **DGR and ACNC registration** - It has been on the wish list for the station for some time to register for Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, and register with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) as a charity, which will offer us tax benefits. We

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agreed that these would be worthwhile, however, in order to begin these processes, we needed to correct some of the errors identified in our audited 2019/20 financial records. To that end, we sought a review of those documents by sending them to *MMK Accounting* in Euroa. On completion of that process, we were finally able to submit our records to Consumer Affairs and instruct Pam Kiessling of *MMK Accounting* to initiate those registrations on behalf of the station. These are currently under review.

- **MYOB** – We have also upgraded our accounting package, to a cloud version and Paul Robinson and Miriam were able to set this up using the information in our rather outdated version of MYOB.
- **Financially speaking**, the station is looking healthy, due in the main to our sponsors. We have approx. 40 sponsors who, despite the ongoing conditions, have stayed with the station throughout another difficult year.

Into the future –

Having begun the planning for the following items, we are disappointed that we have come to the end of our tenure without completing them. Nevertheless, we feel confident that the incoming Committee will be as excited about implementing these as we are.

- **Web Site** - The Committee felt the website could use a freshen up and with the assistance of Matthew Grant from *Narrowgate Consulting*, the Committee decided to undertake a new web site and streaming service. It is currently under construction. We acknowledge Gabrielle Rose and her IT students for their work and maintenance of the previous web site.
- **Upgrade of the studio** - During the year the Committee was pleased to “find” retired radio engineer, Graeme Stevens, with a view to upgrading our technology to industry standards. After meeting with the executive and Keith Rogers, Graeme submitted his proposed costings and the equipment required to undertake this huge task. The Committee have accepted the proposal, subject to obtaining the necessary finance. One of the main impediments to this work not being completed this year has been the difficulty in finding a suitable grant, however, we are hopeful that 2022 will be the year for equipment grants. Graeme paid another visit to the station recently and began some of the preliminary work in conjunction with Keith, and we look forward to having Graeme back in 2022 to undertake this rebuild.
- **IT upgrade** – Matthew Grant of *Narrowgate Consulting* has also submitted his proposal for an upgrade of our IT, which has been accepted by the Committee conditional on obtaining suitable finance, and he will be working in conjunction with Graeme Stevens.
- **Archerton Lease** – Another lease which had not been resolved thus far is for our Tolmie/Archerton transmitter site. This transmitter stands on private property and the lease document was drawn up in 2019 but has never been signed. The Committee felt that the lease arrangements are not in the Station's best interests and although we have been working on resolving this, for various reasons there have been significant delays.
- **Emergency Services Precinct** – There has been some preliminary suggestions and discussions with the Mayor, the Shire's CEO and Ellen Hogan, chair of the Emergency Services Precinct community group, about the possibility of Radio Mansfield being included in a future Emergency Services precinct. This would perhaps offer the station a permanent purpose built home and it would certainly raise our profile as an integrated part of the Shire's emergency management plan. The discussions are on-going.

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- **Strategic Plan-** We have begun the process of formulating a Strategic Plan, which will take in some of the items mentioned already, and identify ways in which we can plan for the future.

In closing -

On your behalf, I would like to make mention and thank two people whose contributions to the station are immeasurable. Although we don't see Peter Weeks over this way all that often, it is he who oversees our transmitters and keeps us on air, so I would like to formally thank him for his work.

Someone else, closer to home, who has been at the station almost as long as Radio Mansfield has been broadcasting also keeps us on air, often by driving up to The Paps to fill the generator, crawling around under the desk and tracing bits of wire, and especially taking panicked calls from presenters at all times of the day and night, with more good grace than most of us could muster. He wouldn't do it if he didn't love being a part of the station and we're awfully glad that he does. Thank you so much, Keith Rogers!

I am inordinately grateful to the members of the Committee without whose experience and support would have made navigating a course through the issues we encountered this year much more difficult. I wish to thank, Laurel Lawrie (Vice-President), Lyn Holland (Secretary), Miriam Zolin (Treasurer), Roger Nolan (Sponsorship and Training), Marg Seeber and Michael Craddock for their commitment.

Lastly - thank you all once again for the part you play at Radio Mansfield, and I look forward to seeing our station continue to grow and prosper in the coming years.

Dallas Daniel

President, Management Committee 2021