

Inc. Assoc. A0059145H
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ACNC: TCC Donations over \$2 tax deductible
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Crashendo Bairnsdale Inc.
President's Report AGM 2019-20
Tuesday August 17 5.15- the Hub, Bairnsdale

Maureen Plunkett

What an amazing year it has been!

The 2nd half of 2019 was a productive and fulfilling experience for our students, volunteers, greater community and committee.

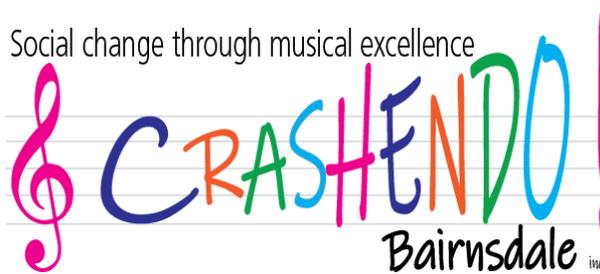
In July the 3 day Holiday Program saw 29 students and 9 mentors participate in choir, sectional and orchestral rehearsals with final concert displaying the achievements of the program. The mentor workshops, aimed at the secondary students and volunteers, gave an excellent opportunity for all to rehearse to a high level of musicianship.

The Little Squeaks & Whistles Early Years Pilot Program took place at 2 venues' the Toddler Room(18 month-3 yearolds) at Cubby Care Childcare and Four-year-old funded kindergarten children at Dala Yooro Aboriginal Children's Centre. The program was delivered in a Trauma informed approach whilst being Inclusive & Culturally Sensitive and sharing a deep love of music. This included focusing on trust, a safe environment, being attuned to the children, collaborating, ensuring each child had a choice and a voice, playful fun, an end goal of empowerment and relaxing and grounding techniques and activities. All this was done whilst building capacity with the kinder educators, talking with them about learning intentions, modelling the principles, practices and ideas, providing them with resources and how to access free or inexpensive resources. Essentially, upskilling them in how to include meaningful music activities in their programs. This program is waiting for its final report which will inform our next steps.

Open day at the Hub in August included Crashendo performances, students and mentors performing solo and a wonderful collaboration with the U3A ukulele group. It was the highlight of the performance for me, witnessing the benefits for all involved with an age range from 9 to, shall we say, retirees.

Around the same time as this, David Williams was taking Sunday afternoon rehearsals with the Gippsland Symphony Orchestra local musicians and Crashendo students. Football songs had been rearranged by John Schmidli, taught by Hilary in our orchestra rehearsals and were on the way to the ultimate concert in September. In September, The Gippsland Symphony Orchestra arrived in Bairnsdale for some quick rehearsals at the venue of the Forge Theatre, then our first professional concert with a near capacity audience. The program was sophisticated and presented with style and flair. Parents were invited to the performance which combined Crashendo with the GSO to make more than 80 musicians for the footy songs, all with origins in classical music. There were many proud parents listening to their first orchestral concert and very excited students.

In October we had a one day workshop with Alison Teychenne & Colin Iverson who are establishing a similar program in Traralgon. Many orchestra members from the Traralgon area, local musicians, secondary students and Crashendo students rehearsed for the morning, then presented a very entertaining program in Boucher Hall. Again it was the social cohesion of such a broad range of community who were giving their time and expertise to embrace our students and make music of a high quality that was so exciting.



Social change through musical excellence

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The Bairnsdale Street Parade included 80 plus 'floats' with the extended community lining the streets, waving and smiling at our students as they sat on the haybales and entertained off the back of the truck. A huge thanks to the Ridder-Strickland family for organising the truck from Jansons Concrete and Haulage, collecting, organising the welding of safety bars, driving and providing on-float communication.

We also decided to review our 2017-21 Strategic Plan and engaged a professional to workshop our revised plan. This was invaluable to us and enabled us to identify our strengths, talents and challenges and revisit our values, goals and vision leading to 2022.

Through our strong connection to the Bairnsdale Hub, Tom Ponting met with some of us to develop a marketing strategy. He generously offered his knowledge and experience to take on a mentoring role in developing our Media and social profile. His knowledge and experience are driving us to a more effective and visible profile in the greater community. With the assistance of Tammy available for Hilary, the website and Facebook are more up to date and active.

Then came the Dec-Jan bushfires and the ongoing impact on our local community and our program.

- In January, we had a predicted 60-90 people involved in 4 days of workshops/performances for 'In the Groove' in January, with some coming from other areas of Victoria to support local businesses and farmers with the drought. This was postponed as the community was still under warning for further flare-ups and visiting the region was discouraged.
- In January, Hilary, Anne and I met with our July Holiday Program Tutors from Melbourne to plan for our longer days and anticipated growing numbers. Our new venue was the Bairnsdale Hub to cater for this structure change and the inclusion of the Circus activities. Much planning for repertoire and resources were organised and we left very excited.
- Clifton Creek school had been burnt down in the fires and they were temporarily relocated to Swan Reach. We managed to keep a program there with innovation from our tutor and limited access to instruments.

Then came COVID and the opportunity for performances and joint rehearsals at our schools were put on hold but our in-school tutor provided online lessons for those students who could access internet. Hilary decided to trial her new knowledge of ZOOM rehearsals and started orchestral rehearsals online. This did not suit all families but was very successful to those who virtually attended.

Our re-programmed 'In the Groove' event had to be 'online' as we were not sure what would be happening with the Statewide shutdown. We ran a successful down sized online program in the April holidays by collaborating with Quasi Trad in Melbourne and using an intended Castlemaine based musician to lead the program from his home via ZOOM. There were 12-16 participants on each of the 4 days and Andrea Court from the East Gippsland Shire was thrilled by the program when she visited a session. This also provided excellent PD for Hilary on running a 'live' workshop on ZOOM.

When school resumed in mid-June, initial contact was made with Lucknow Primary school and was enthusiastically received with plans to start the program in COVID-free Term 3. But that's next year's story.



Some information from Hilary’s acquittal for our Salzer Foundation grant.

Overall:

Participants included

- 120 children from 5 – 17yrs + 10 adults involved as musicians (with 13-17 yrs as mentors),
- 1 youth trainee conductor
- 12 adults as instrumental mentors
- Plus a further 85 adult musicians from across Gippsland
-

If we look at the profile of our Children from 7 – 14 years from the weekly programs, you can see our target audience (some families are included in multiple categories.)

Indigenous families, including kinship carers	3
Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	2
Families experiencing locational disadvantage in rural and remote areas	42
Socially isolated families	33
Families in transition, including pregnancy, birth and infancy, family, health, education, housing and legal transitions	9
Sole parent carers	3
‘at risk’ children and families, including children at risk of abuse or neglect; families at risk of domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health issues and disadvantage, youth suicide	5
Young mothers and fathers	2
Families with children with a disability and/or developmental delay	8

We do make a difference to these families and students.

We wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for our local community supporters, who give generously of their time, skills and fundraising. Considering the financial impact on our region of the drought, fires and COVID19, they must also believe in the difference Crashendo can make to our greater community.

Nothing would happen without the hard work of our co-ordinator, Hilary, the committee, our tutors and our volunteers. I would like to sincerely thank you all for your valued input, your creativity, skills and your support.