



Banyule Support and Information Centre Inc

2020 Annual Report

BANYULE SUPPORT AND INFORMATION CENTRE INC

Banyule Support and Information Centre Inc is a not for profit incorporated association established to provide services for the relief of poverty, suffering, distress, misfortune within the southern part of the City of Banyule.

PURPOSES OF THE ASSOCIATION

To provide emergency relief by means of food vouchers, food parcels, other material and financial assistance to those in need.

To assist in solving the problems which beset many of those disadvantaged by the provision of relevant information on the rights, privileges, support services and help available and by an assortment of counselling services.

To work in conjunction with other community organizations in providing services to alleviate poverty and distress within the community.

To recruit, train and retain a staff of volunteers dedicated to providing expert assistance to enable individuals and families to cope with diverse life situations.

PRINCIPLES

The agency provides a service that is:

Free

Confidential

Impartial

Independent

Respectful of the clients' rights to make their own decisions.

CONTACT DETAILS

48 The Mall, Heidelberg West 3081

03 9459 5959

info@bansic.org.au

www.bansic.org.au

Opening times Monday to Friday 10:00am to 3:00pm (by appointment only)

SERVICES

EMERGENCY RELIEF

The purpose of the Emergency Relief Program is to assist families and individuals in financial crisis and who live in the postcode areas 3079, 3081, 3084, and 3085.

BANSIC administers Emergency Relief (ER) funds from the Federal Government, Melbourne Magistrates Court, grants, donors and BANSIC fundraising.

ER is available in the form of:

- Food vouchers
- Food and grocery parcels
- Myki passes
- Telstra vouchers
- Telstra phone cards
- Payment for essential medication
- Back to school help – uniform and books
- Assistance with utility bills
- Referral to other ER agencies

All clients are assessed on an individual basis for their eligibility for each service.

The monetary value of funds provided, number of times assisted each year, and the period between Emergency Relief assistance are determined by the funds available.

INFORMATION

Accredited volunteers can access information to assist in the relief of poverty, suffering, distress or misfortune.

We advocate, provide further information, or may also, refer to relevant services for any of the following:

- Finance
- Housing
- Education
- Legal
- Mental Health
- Health
- Addiction
- Pregnancy & parenting
- Family violence, assault & trauma

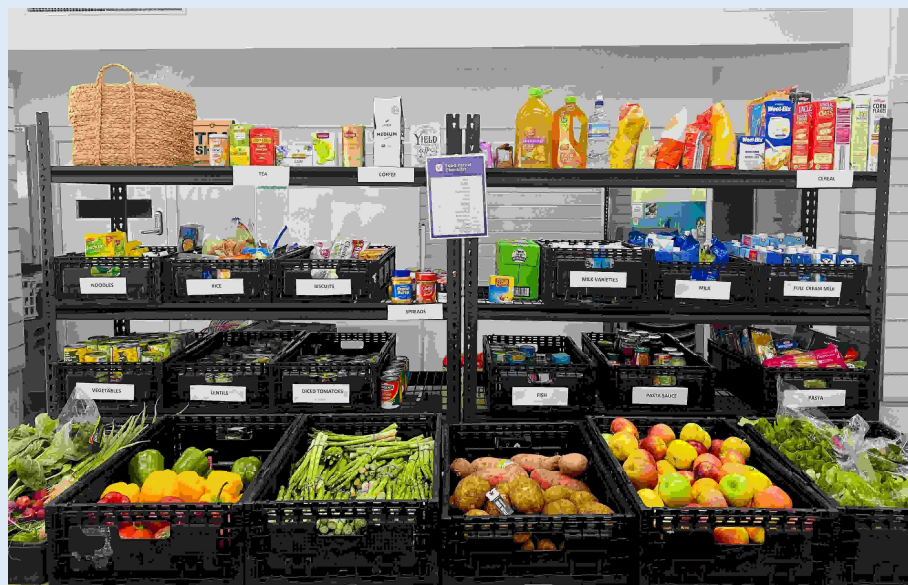
TAX HELP

BANSIC offers Tax Help starting from the end of July until the end of October.

Our volunteers can help you lodge your tax return, as long as you are eligible to receive Tax Help.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been my pleasure to serve as President of Banyule Support and Information Centre Inc. I am pleased to present this report, my last as President for consideration at this year's AGM. This past year has seen many challenges for our community and for BANSIC. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Victoria especially hard and the poorest demographic groups are always the most vulnerable. BANSIC has risen to meet these challenges with speed and flexibility ensuring that we are able to meet vital food and medication needs for our community, whether or not they are in isolation. Nobody gets left behind.



BANSIC FoodHub

The biggest change to BANSIC is the development and operation of BANSIC Food. BANSIC Food was born out of necessity when Diamond Valley Foodshare closed in March 2020. With nowhere for our clients to go for fresh food and the increased need for food parcels, our staff, Kate and Phil, moved to develop relationships for food deliveries with SecondBite and Foodbank Victoria.

Furthermore, they established donations from ALDI in Heidelberg West and Laurent Bakery and to link with the Sustainable Macleod (Community Garden) to provide food for grocery packages for BANSIC's clients. We are very grateful to these organisations for their generosity.

Along with the food, we have been donated new shelving from Bunnings and received a donated fridge and a large chest freezer loaned by our local Mosque for BANSIC's use. In addition an increase in cash donations from Sustainable Macleod, The Hon. Kate Thwaites office, many individual personal donations. Thank you all for your generosity.

Since COVID-19 began affecting Victoria we have been in negotiation with Banyule City Council for extra support to assist us in meeting the needs of our community. We are grateful to Banyule City Council for their resolution to provide extra funding and a seconded half time position for six months to allow us to further develop BANSIC Food.

Another area of development has been the cementing of strong partnerships with organisations for the mutual benefit of our community. I would like to thank and acknowledge the joint work and support of Himilo Community Connect as we bring together and meet the needs of culturally diverse communities within south Banyule. We envisage many years of strong collaboration to our mutual benefit.

This year we welcomed Mr Phil Conrick, Social Worker, as manager of BANSIC. Phil is a great asset to BANSIC and comes to us with a wealth of experience, a calm and easy manner and a ready smile. Phil stepped into the manger's role just in time to take on all the policy and procedure changes that accompanied the pandemic and to meet the new stringent reporting structures. Phil we welcome you and we hope you will enjoy a long and happy career with BANSIC.

Kate Farrelly is BANSIC's volunteer coordinator and has gone above and beyond to meet the gaps in service provision and to develop a strong, cohesive and diverse volunteer community. It has been Kate's passion and drive that has turned BANSIC's aspirations into solid programs of benefit to the community. Thank you Kate for all you do for us. We are particularly proud of our team of volunteers, both based at Shop 48, at the New to You op shop and behind the scenes on the committee.

Volunteers Donna Marchesi-Taylor and Peter Taylor have coordinated our Op Shop for the last four years. This year has been a year of opening and closing the shop, introducing social distancing measures and ensuring the volunteers and clients are all kept safe. They have supported their volunteers and managed all the work that goes into running a retail opportunity shop with the added work of providing appropriate donated items to many other community groups. Therefore, not only assisting BANSIC, but in true community spirit, assisting other community groups in need and reducing our landfill. So it is no surprise to us that Donna received a volunteer of the year award from Kate Thwaites MP for Jagajaga. Well done Donna, we are very proud of you.

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of Pat Tucker. Pat was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteer both at Shop 48 with the Community Support Team and on the committee. Our thoughts are with Pat's family, and we will miss his cheerful "can do" approach to BANSIC.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee of Management. This committee has had the hardest task of all, to bring an organisation back from the brink of windup to being a strong, community responsive organisation. BANSIC's governance is second to none. The committee are dedicated, supportive, skilled and committed to providing the immediate support that our community needs more than ever. So, it is with confidence that I stand down as President and sincerely thank my committee for their work. BANSIC's turn around has come from a full team approach and each and every volunteer, staff and committee member has contributed to its strong position in the challenging of times.

Thank you, Chris Sherrell-Secretary, Alison Belot-Treasurer, Sumith Vellaikal, Jo Rodgers, Valerie Sace and Ann Ericson. It has been a pleasure to share the work of the committee with such a dedicated and passionate team.

Sharon Henderson

President

9 August 2020

STATISTICS FOR 2019-2020

There were 1,582 client visits for emergency relief assistance during the year ended 30 June 2020. This resulted in:

- clients receiving direct relief assistance from BANSIC on 1,311 occasions, and
- 445 client referrals being made to Diamond Valley Foodshare Inc.

The reasons for seeking emergency relief assistance were:

	Number of client visits
Material aid - food	1,175
Utility / phone	161
Medical expenses	137
Transport expenses	96
Sudden decrease in income	92
Education expenses	73
Material aid - clothing	71
Material Aid - household goods	67
COVID-19*	64
Housing - homelessness	58
Other	379

The value of emergency relief assistance provided by BANSIC was:

	\$
Food vouchers	32,000
Food parcels	17,000
Back to school support	15,000
Material goods/other	10,000
Utility bills	7,000
Transport	3,000
Health care	3,000
Total	87,000

FINANCE REPORT

Notwithstanding a strong first half of the financial year, 2020 proved to be a challenging year financially for BANSIC, simultaneously managing significantly higher demands for emergency relief with lower revenue from the Opportunity Shop. BANSIC recorded a small loss of \$1,491, compared to a surplus of \$16,480 for 2019. As a result, Members Funds decreased from \$84,343 to 82,853, consisting predominantly of money held in accounts with Bendigo Bank.

Banyule City Council, Community Information and Support Victoria, Department of Social Services and the Melbourne Magistrates Court are our significant funding partners. We thank these organisations for their ongoing support. The Opportunity Shop continues to perform strongly, however this was disrupted by COVID-19 closures which adversely impacted operations in April and May. Continued support from Ivanhoe Grammar School, Marathonians Social Club, Rosanna Uniting Church and William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Foundation is very much appreciated. In addition, new donor Sustainability Macleod provided much needed support, along with a number of individuals who made personal donations to assist in our COVID-19 emergency relief activities. For the first time BANSIC also received donations via Facebook, which is enabling us to connect to a new pool of donors.

Total income increased by 24% from the previous year, however total expenses increased by 39%. Increased funding from Banyule City Council and the Opportunity Shop revenue were utilised to support the wages of our two staff members, enabling us to temporarily increase operating hours to meet the higher demand for emergency relief during April, May and June. Financial items of note include:-

- Banyule City Council funding increased by 43% to support the increased wages costs.
- Community Information and Support Victoria provided additional COVID-19 based funding to support increased emergency relief requests.
- Court Funds decreased by 17% due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Donations increased by 115%.
- Wages costs increased by 56% as we had two staff for the full financial year and increased operating hours during April, May and June.
- Overall expenditure on emergency relief activities increased by 50%, with a much greater focus on food and household items to meet COVID-19 demands.
- Funds from Banyule City Council and Opportunity Shop are utilised to meet BANSIC's operational costs.
- Funds from Community Information and Support Victoria and Magistrates Court are utilised to meeting BANSIC's emergency relief costs.

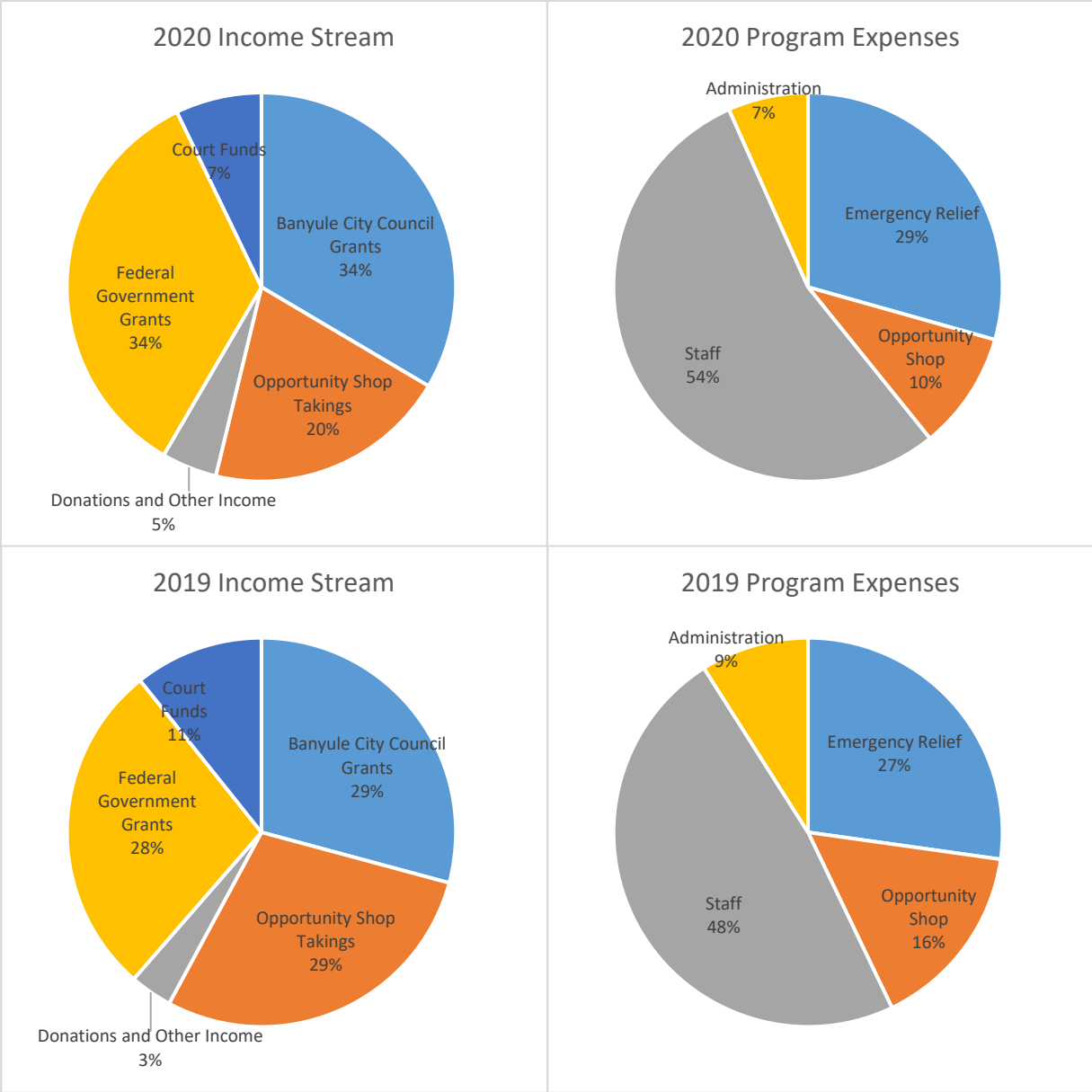
The charts on the next page provide a high-level overview of the composition of BANSIC's income and expenditure.

This report should be read in conjunction with the financial accounts shown on page 8.

Alison Belot

Treasurer

Composition of BANSIC's income and expenditure



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Income & expenditure statement for year ended 30 June

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
INCOME		
Grants Received		
Banyule City Council	70,538	49,500
CISVic - Consortium	57,053	44,775
CISVic - SACS	15,509	–
Department of Social Services	–	2,500
William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Fund	2,000	2,000
Court Funds	15,050	18,200
Opportunity Shop Takings	42,431	48,203
Recycling Income	203	475
Donations	7,127	3,304
Fundraising	–	–
Interest	588	687
Sundries	–	–
TOTAL	210,500	169,645
EXPENDITURE		
Staff	114,647	73,620
Emergency Relief Benefits Paid		
Food and Household Goods	11,383	1,675
Vouchers for Food and Household Goods	28,006	31,059
Back to School Support	12,558	5,262
Medication	3,159	833
Transportation	2,374	850
Utilities	4,699	1,984
Accommodation	175	–
Utilities		
Telephone and Internet	1,686	643
Electricity	971	968
Water	836	1,069
Rent	25,314	25,153
Rates	675	2,086
Insurance	1,069	2,626
Maintenance and Office Supplies	1,836	4,523
Legal Fees	275	–
CISVic fees	330	330
Bank Fees	19	50
Tyro Fees	388	–
Sundries	1,591	433
TOTAL	211,991	153,164
Surplus/(Deficit) transferred to		
Members Funds	(1,491)	16,480
Opening Members Funds	84,343	67,863
Closing Members Funds	82,853	84,343
REPRESENTED BY		
Bendigo Bank	102,337	92,650
ANZ	–	624
Rental Bond - Macquarie Bank	2,703	2,703
Till Float	50	50
Debtors	–	–
Creditors	(22,237)	(11,685)
TOTAL	82,853	84,343

MANAGER'S REPORT

In the past twelve months, the Banyule Support and Information Centre (BANSIC) has experienced multiple challenges and substantial change. The commitment and hard work of all who have been part of BANSIC (committee members, volunteers and staff), combined with a willingness adapt to a rapidly changing environment, has resulted in the provision of emergency relief to an increased number of clients and their families and an enhanced reputation within our community.

BANSIC commenced the 2019-2020 financial year with a new staff team. Kate Farrelly had been recently appointed as Volunteer Co-ordinator, and Mr Phil Thomson was appointed as Acting Manager for a period of three months. I started as Manager of BANSIC in late October 2019.

The recruitment of new volunteers continued to be a major priority in the second half of 2019 for both BANSIC's Emergency Relief services and the BANSIC 'New to You' Opportunity Shop. This enabled the establishment and consolidation of two sessions per day (morning and afternoon) and ensured that four volunteer Community Support Workers were rostered daily. The BANSIC volunteer group brings together people with extensive life experience who are committed and passionate about making a difference for disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our local community.

The increased numbers of trained volunteers has resulted in a corresponding increase in the numbers of clients who have been able to access Emergency Relief services from BANSIC. At the commencement of the 2019-2020 financial year, BANSIC was assisting 69.7 clients per month. At the end of June 2020, the number of clients accessing BANSIC services had risen to an average of 113.5 client visits per month.

For the majority of the past twelve months, BANSIC provided individuals and families with services such as Emergency Relief and Material Aid, Tax Help and with Utility debt assistance, advocacy, counselling, and support and information services. BANSIC also provided a referral service whereby clients could be referred to the most appropriate agency to assist with specific needs such as homelessness, mental health or drug and alcohol addiction.

The advent of the COVID 19 Pandemic In March 2020, resulted in BANSIC having to implement significant changes to its work practices and service approaches. At this time, the sole 'Foodshare' provider in Banyule decided to cease operating as it was totally reliant on an ageing Volunteer workforce. Consequently, BANSIC decided to establish its own BANSIC Food Hub, temporarily located at Shop 48, that now services the southern Banyule area. It provides nutritious non-perishable food items, fresh fruit and vegetables, bread and frozen cooked meals to BANSIC clients.

In addition to the establishment of the BANSIC Food Hub, major changes to the Emergency Relief program's work practices also had to be quickly developed. These work practices have included the move from face to face support to telephone support, and the implementation of physical distancing and infection control procedures. BANSIC also organised a 'home delivery' service for clients who were self-isolating or where ill health meant that a client could not travel to Shop 48 for food assistance. These became quickly embedded into the way BANSIC Community Support Workers provide assistance to our clients.

At the start of the Pandemic, a proportion of our volunteers needed to self-isolate given their circumstances. However, we have been able to retain sufficient numbers of volunteers that have ensured that BANSIC has been able to provide a full service throughout this period.

BANSIC's primary service focus in recent times has been the provision of food and health assistance to clients in financial crisis. In the period of April to June, the number of Food Parcels given to BANSIC clients increased by 225%.



Produce donated from the community garden at Sustainable Macleod

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequent changes to Government programs such as Jobseeker and Job Keeper, has altered the type of clients currently accessing BANSIC Services. While client numbers have remained high, the percentage of new clients (people who have never had to access Emergency Relief services before) has increased from 25% to 40%. Many new clients have indicated that they have experienced significant income loss due to the COVID 19 pandemic. They have often been people who have been ineligible for Government payments.

In terms of vulnerable groups in our community, we are continuing to assist a small but stable number of clients who are homeless, who are from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community or who are Asylum Seekers. The number of clients with Language other than English (LOTE) has risen from 21% to 40% of the total number of clients accessing our service.

An exciting feature of the past 12 months has been the growth and enhancement our partnerships with other community organisations. Our long standing partnership with Banyule Council has particularly focussed on Emergency Relief network development, the issue of food security and the provision of resourcing to cope with increased demand for our services. This year we have worked increasingly closely with HIMILO (a community based support agency for the Somali community). In recent months this partnership has particularly focussed on the joint provision of culturally appropriate food assistance for the Somali community.

The Macleod Sustainable Food Group has been a great support to the Banyule community, providing weekly supplies of fresh vegetables grown in their community gardens for distribution to BANSIC clients. It is notable that throughout this pandemic period we have received significant in-kind support and donations from individuals, local community organisations and Churches.

Moving forward, BANSIC is well positioned to continue to support the south Banyule community. Our success is primarily based on the joint effort of our Committee of Management, on our staff and the many volunteers who are at the core of our work in the community.

Phil Conrick
Manager

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT

This past year has seen many changes and triumphs for BANSIC. We have been growing and our volunteering team has expanded to include a great number of dedicated and skilled professionals. We have been able to offer energy mentorship with two of our volunteers undergoing training and enabling them to mentor our clients.

We have recruited a dedicated team of data entry volunteers who have been essential in allowing us to accurately enter and process our data. These volunteers have gone above and beyond during this current period and have developed strategies to enable us to enter data remotely.

Donna Taylor our wonderful Op Shop manager was recently nominated for the Jagajaga Volunteer Awards 2020! We congratulate Donna on this fantastic and well deserved nomination!

BANSIC was happy to be a part of The Banyule Children's gift Appeal in December and we were able to help 36 families. (80 children) Thank you to Banyule City Council for all your help in facilitating this incentive.



COVID-19 has had a major impact on BANSIC and its operations. When Melbourne was first placed under lockdown we were able to successfully change our service delivery and open a fresh Foodhub.

The provision of fresh food to our community has been our first priority and BANSIC has been able to establish relationships with local supermarkets and Foodbanks. We have also been able to offer deliveries to our most vulnerable clients and ensure that they stay home and stay safe.

Our Op Shop at Macleod has had to close during this time but I would like to acknowledge all the hard work Donna and Peter from our Op Shop have volunteered to BANSIC. They have both made sure that our clients have food delivered when needed.

'COVID-19 has impacted the volunteering sector substantially with almost two thirds of volunteers estimated to have stopped volunteering between February and April 2020 new research shows. The researchers estimate that this reduction in volunteering is equivalent to 12.2 million hours per week.'

The above statistic has come from Volunteering Victoria and shows just what an impact volunteers have on our workforce. I am so pleased to say that the BANSIC Volunteering team has really stepped up and our volunteer numbers have only decreased minimally. Our dedicated volunteers have been putting in extra hours and have adjusted to the changing conditions amazingly well.

I would like to thank every one of our volunteers. Their commitment and hard work this year have enabled BANSIC not just to stay operational during COVID-19, but to grow its services.

I would also like to extend a big thank you to Share the Dignity, Knit One Give One, Viewbank Scouts, Scots Uniting Church Heidelberg, Ivanhoe Grammar, Heidelberg Marathonians, Who Gives A Crap, Pinchapoo, Skye Children’s Co-Operative, Kate Thwaites, La Trobe Uni, Serenitea, Sustainable Macleod and Bunnings Northland, for their generous monetary donations of pantry goods.

We have also been lucky enough to have been gifted wonderful donations from many individuals in the community who have reached out at this time wanting to help.

This past year, in the face of continued change, BANSIC has led strongly and has fostered partnerships in the community through volunteering. We have developed a partnership with Himilo and have been able to assist many individuals and families in the Somalian Community. Our volunteers have worked closely with Himilo staff and volunteers and we are so pleased to have been able to develop a close working relationship that has benefited both organisations. Thank you Himilo!

To the Committee of Management, volunteers, and staff – congratulations on another year assisting our community in such a challenging environment!

Kate Farrelly

Volunteer Coordinator

Shop 48 volunteers

Marge Dunn	Hannah Graham
Dale Ziesing	Louise Millar-Hoffmann
Cathryn Dunlop	Helene Beihatz
Anne Ericson	Judy Webb
Bryan White	Helen Bayley
Terry Williamson	Karen Wheelwright
Susan Palmer	John Mitton
Jo Roger	Maree Peacock
Lauren Whitehouse	Trevor Wight
Debbie Misipi	Kerri-Anne Bourke
Thank you to all of you who have moved on	
Jaqui Mckinnon	Carolyn Gurrisi
Kerri Ruiz	Ryan Buesnel
Mark Fernandez	Sarah Williamson
Rachel Fitzgerald	Natalie Parker
Joseph Cai	

NEW TO YOU OP SHOP

Our op shop had been doing well in the first half of the financial year and like most businesses during these times it's been difficult to maintain our sales. This hasn't stopped us trying though.

During the lockdown the shop was closed although we did accept quite a few donations. When the restrictions started to lift we were able to pass on many donations that we couldn't fit into our little shop.

One of the organizations was St Marks Op Shop in Collingwood; this organization has done many decades of helping the homeless of inner Melbourne. We also passed things onto 3081 Angels, another fantastic organisation.

Most Friday nights we took clothing, bedding, fruit and other varieties of food to the Vic Market where a few organisations help out those who needed it. BANSIC's new Food Hub has been a godsend for supplying what they can to help us on Fridays; thanks to everyone there.

A big thank you to Sustainable Macleod for all their help. We had a jeans sale with them at one of their veggie swaps and they help with the Food Hub too.

Thank you to our volunteer staff, some who have moved on and those who are waiting for it to be safe for them to come back to the shop.

They are the most wonderful group of people, I have missed them.



Donna Marchesi-Taylor, Kate Thwaites and Paul Gale-Baker at the jeans sale

Peter Taylor

Chamila Wijewickram

Bronwyn Chiu

Suzie Williamson

Patricia Rodgers (retired)

Bev Colclough

Thy Huynh

Jasmine Marchesi

Lohith

Kay Burke

Sue Everard

Shirley Currie

Freda Abrams

Stella Dabal (retired)

Amavi Wijewickram

Alyson Lohrey

Steph Kennell

James Drossinis

Our local community is so supportive and understanding, it's hard to thank them enough.



The shop did become pretty full of donations due to so many of the organizations we share stock with being closed, however, we managed once the restrictions started to lift.

I'd like to thank the wonderful committee members of BANSIC and all the staff who keep the whole thing going. This past year has been a game

changer for BANSIC, thank you everyone and thank you to the Banyule Council and for their continuing support and encouragement.

Donna Marchesi-Taylor

Op Shop Manager

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

As at 18 August 2020

President	Sharon Henderson
Treasurer	Alison Belot
Secretary	Chris Sherrell
Ordinary Members	Anne Ericson Jo Rodger Valerie Sace Sumith Vellaikal

Thank you to former committee members Karen Wheelwright and Phil Thompson for their contributions. Pat Tucker died on 22 July 2020. Pat had been a valued member of the committee from September 2018 to September 2019.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Banyule City Council



OUR SUPPORTERS



Office of Kate Thwaites MP



Viewbank Scout Group



SereniTEA Infusions