



# 2018 -2019 Annual Report Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.

ABN: 76 073 229 523

INC.NO: A0015737N

**Email:** [info@heartbeatvictoria.org.au](mailto:info@heartbeatvictoria.org.au)

**Website:** [www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au](http://www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au)



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## 2. Presidents Report

As “acting” President of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. (HBVCI) for only four short months, I had much to learn.

I learnt that we truly have an inspirational group of members. They are dedicated and passionate members who work tirelessly and with great spirit in helping others recovering and living with heart related issues. It is fabulous to see this great peer support, which provides opportunities for members to learn the latest development on heart care, learn from each other and have fun together. The Board acknowledges their hard work and leadership in actioning peer support.

From our 2018 Members Survey Report, I learnt that our Branches and Affiliates know their members well, and are successful in their efforts to support their members in looking after their heart health, and that members experience good health outcomes as a result of being a member. These are great outcomes!

I would like to recognise all the great work of all our members - those in leadership positions and those doing tireless work in their community; it is because of their efforts that we can continue to serve the community.

Many branches and affiliates have also raised considerable funds during the year to support their local health services and networks. This valuable work has enabled members to contribute to their community to benefit others and leave valuable equipment and tools that benefit those in the future who have a heart-related condition.

There are two outstanding members who deserve particular acknowledgement. We are awarding life memberships to Robyn Fennell and Ian Powell to honour their work in various roles over many years providing dedicated service to the Goulburn Valley community and the broader Heartbeat organisation. Their passion generosity and commitment are inspiring for all of us.

The Board was presented with many challenges and difficulties this year with too much to do and with too few people particularly when were down to only six board members at one point. (Putting into perspective against what our members face with their health, it's not that big a deal though!)

We did move forward in many positive ways with some good opportunities and outcomes for the future.

These included working together to redefine our Strategic Plan to provide Heartbeat with a shared focus. This plan positions us to ensure good corporate governance, community profile and community engagement and growth.

I am pleased to report we opened a new branch in South Gippsland in July 2019.

We gained four new Board members with a diverse range of skills, who will enhance the performance of our board. Welcome to Alan Hutchison, Robin Trotter, David Menzies and Georgie Bosch.

We reviewed our organisation's sustainability and future options for growth. The new look board will pursue these options in the coming year including more innovative ways of working to attract more members and new branches and enhance our brand.

We have started working closer with the Heart Foundation in the last few months. I believe this partnership is very important and I know the Board will continue to develop this relationship. I am pleased to report that our brand and peer to peer support work is highly respected and recognised by the Heart Foundation, and we should all be proud of that. Well done!

Our website requires further development and updating to a more administration and user-friendly interface, including processing of donations, and the development of a portal for our branches and affiliates.

Thanks to the continuing support of our sponsors who help us deliver to do our work; this support is highly valued and acknowledged.

I am excited to hand over to the new leadership team of HBVCI. I know they will take our organisation to a higher-level next year. I am confident that they will make good decisions to benefit all our members.

I want to sincerely thank all members and my fellow board members for their dedication, hard work and support. I've really enjoyed the opportunity to serve this great organisation, and I will remain a member of the Sunbury Branch.

Finally, what did I really learn?

“That Heartbeat Victoria has a very strong ticker that will continue to beat loud and strong.”

My best wishes to HBVCI and all its members always.

**Peter Georgiadis**  
**Acting President 2018-19 Board of Management**

## 3. Board Report

### 3.1 Introduction

The Heartbeat Board thanks all our members, together with those members serving on committees and/or the Board and our stakeholders for their work in providing and or supporting members and families living with heart-related conditions.

The past twelve months has been building on our organisation’s achievements of previous years, consolidating ongoing work and planning to benefit those affected by heart disease and their families and/or carers.

### 3.2 Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021

In 2018/19 the Board continued to develop and finalise the organisation’s 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.



The Board established three important objectives to focus on going forward, under the headings of *Corporate Governance, Membership Profile and Reach and Collaborate, Partner and Engage*.

At the end of our first year of implementing the strategic plan we now propose to evolve and revise our focus further in the coming year by seeking learnings from our Branches, Affiliates, partners and stakeholders on how best to raise community awareness and progress peer support to those living with heart related conditions. A summary of our progress is detailed below.

### 3.3 Board Members

- In 2018/19, in order to strengthen our delivery of services, the Board of HBVC has recruited and appointed board members with a diverse set of professional experience and work skills. Four new members were welcomed to the Board and the Board currently stands at ten members.

### 3.4 Delegates Meetings

- Conducted two Delegates Meetings to provide education and training together with guidance on risk management issues, survey findings, financial information and increasing membership and volunteer participation

### 3.5 Membership Profile and Reach

Various board members during the year provided support and information as follows:

- Distributed a Heartbeat survey to all branch and affiliate members, a Survey Report of which was published and findings distributed at the Delegates Meeting held in Bendigo in March 2019
- Finance and Fixed Asset register spreadsheets provided to assist branches prepare their financial statements more easily and consistently
- Met with the Latrobe Valley Branch committee in Morwell in February 2019 to develop a strategy to assist with promoting a relationship with local community health centres and increase membership
- Delivered a Heartbeat Victoria presentation to the new South Gippsland Branch in Korumburra in February 2019
- Visited the Sunraysia Branch in May 2019 to assist with preparing a grant application and increasing membership
- Distributed a quarterly Heartbeat Happenings Newsletter to its members and stakeholders.

### 3.6 Corporate Partnering and Engagement

During 2018/19 we commenced enhancing the HBVCI's network, and increasing access to the latest research and developments in the care of heart-related conditions so that this could be shared with Branches and Affiliates. These include:

- Attending the Heart Foundation Supporting Quality Cardiac Care Conference in October 2018
- Attending the Chronic Illness Alliance AGM in November 2018
- Participating in the Australian Government National Action Plan for Heart and Stroke in November 2018
- Attending and participating in the Heart Foundation Ecumenical Memorial Service at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne to celebrate the end of Heart Week in May 2019
- Meeting with the Heart Foundation on two occasions to strengthen our links
- Joining Heart Foundation webinars, participating in various cardiac-related surveys, perusing regular publications and newsletters from Government bodies and cardiac support organisations, and
- Stakeholders' meetings and following up potential networking opportunities.

### 3.7 Board Meetings

- In 2018/19, the Board increased the number of board meetings from quarterly to bi-monthly. In addition Skype and/or ZOOM video and audio conferencing was introduced

to the board room, particularly for those located regionally reflecting that we are a flexible and modern state-wide service.

### 3.8 Embracing Technology

- During 2018/19 we have taken advantage of technological developments implementing a Google Share Drive of current and historical documentation to streamline time and improve the distribution of information.

### 3.9 Presidency

- During 2018/19 we had changes in Board leadership to accommodate personal and work commitments. Kamaree Houllis-Berry resigned as President in February 2019. We thank Kamaree for her hard work and wish her all the best in her future endeavours. Subsequently, the Board elected Peter Georgiadis, an existing board member to take on the role as President. Regretfully, Peter is stepping down at the next AGM due to work commitments and again, we thank him for stepping in and leading the Board with diplomacy, sensitivity and loads of enthusiasm and encouragement.

### 3.10 Board Resignation

- It is with sadness that we farewell Robyn Fennell, our longest standing Board member, who has tendered her resignation and will step down after the AGM. The Board acknowledges her dedication and the major contribution she has made to Heartbeat.

### 3.11 Thank you

- The Board of HBVCI thanks all members, volunteers and Heartbeat Branches and Affiliates for their ongoing and tireless work during 2018/19 in motivating and educating their members and the community to embrace a healthy lifestyle in a social setting. In addition, The Board thanks all members for their fundraising efforts for a variety of cardiac equipment for their local health services and/or hospitals throughout Victoria.

**Louise Zambello**

**Board Secretary on behalf of the Board**



## 4. Financial Report

### 4.1 Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc – Alone accounts, not consolidated

	30 June 2019	30 June 2018
<b>Income/Receipts</b>		
Revenue from Government grants	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Donations and bequests</b>		
Vic Super	\$1,250.00	\$1,300.00
Donations- Nuttelex, other	\$1,920.00	\$1,565.40
<b>Other Revenue/receipts</b>		
Raffle Tickets sales	\$0.00	\$24,558.00
Membership & Insurance Levy	\$2,355.00	\$3,523.50
Sale of merchandise	\$232.00	\$0.00
Other	\$60.00	\$676.88
Other income (incl interest)	\$629.82	\$891.95
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$6,446.82</u></b>	<b><u>\$32,515.73</u></b>
<b>Expenses/Payments</b>		
Grants/ donations made in Aust	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Fundraising/ raffle	\$0.00	\$20,896.95
Insurance	\$2,329.63	\$2,329.63
Hall Hire & Catering	\$639.15	\$435.48
Postage and Printing	\$621.65	\$4,344.96
Travel expenses	\$711.39	\$455.24
Other	\$1,170.51	\$7,150.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$5,472.33</u></b>	<b><u>\$35,612.26</u></b>
<b>Net surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b><u>\$974.49</u></b>	<b><u>(\$3,096.53)</u></b>

These accounts are the final accounts for the 12 months ending 30 June 2019 for Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc (HBVCI). HBVCI is pleased to report a profit of \$974.49, compared to a loss of \$3,096.53 for the previous year. The major reason for the profit was that HBVCI did not conduct a raffle this year.

Comments:

1. A generous donation of \$1,500 from Nuttelex funded the printing of HBV banners.
2. VicSuper staff continued its long-standing practice of donating to HBVCI.
3. The raffle was not profitable to HBVCI in 2018 and hence the Board determined not to proceed with another raffle in 2019. Raffle ticket sales and Fundraising/ raffle expenses related to this in 2018.
4. Membership and insurance levies were lower in 2019 due to the lower number of members this year.
5. Bank interest received was lower in 2019, due to lower prevailing interest rates this year.
6. Postage and printing were higher in the previous year as the banners were printed last year as well as printing material for the raffle.
7. Other Expenses were higher in the previous year due to consultant fees and storage costs.

## 4.2 Balance Sheet

	30 June 2019	30 June 2018*
Raffle Account & Cash Reserve Account	\$3.39	\$1,802.82
General Account	\$7,684.62	\$3,007.87
Term Deposit	\$41,618.65	\$43,525.09
Merchandise	\$1,414.71	\$1,485.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$50,721.37</b>	<b>\$49,820.78</b>
Equipment	\$720.00	\$900.00
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$720.00</b>	<b>\$900.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$51,441.37</u></b>	<b><u>\$50,720.78</u></b>
Creditors and accruals	\$0.00	\$0.00
Borrowings	\$0.00	\$0.00
Provisions	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$0.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$0.00</u></b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$51,441.37</u></b>	<b><u>\$50,720.78</u></b>

\*amended for calculation error as agreed at March 2019 Delegates meeting

Comments:

During the year, \$2,525 was transferred from the Term Deposit to the General Account and \$1,800 was transferred from the Raffle Account to the General Account.

HBVCI continues to not incur any debt or liabilities.

Net Assets of \$51,441.37 was strong.

Statement of Solvency

That based on our current level of cash holdings and current knowledge of future costs and in line with our spending history, we have adequate funds to pay our obligations and be trading solvent.

**Chris Kunaratnam**  
Treasurer

**Lynda Andrews**  
Board Member

## 5. How You Can Support Heartbeat



## 6. Where We Are

Branch	When	Where
<b>Ararat</b>	Meets bi-monthly for lunch	Ararat RSL, 74 High Street, Ararat
<b>Ballarat</b>	Third Monday of the month at 6.30pm	Rink Room, Midlands RSL Sports Club, Hein Lane, Ballarat
<b>Bendigo</b>	Third Sunday of the month at 2pm	Uniting Church Hall, 68 Chum Street, Golden Square, Bendigo
<b>Goulburn Valley</b>	First Monday of the month at 6pm for dinner, then 7pm for meeting and speaker	Goulburn Valley Health, Graham Street, Shepparton
<b>Grampians</b>	Meets bi-monthly on the fourth Monday of the month at 6pm	Cashin Hall Eventide Homes Cnr Hastings & William Streets, Stawell
<b>Knox</b>	Third Monday of the month at 6pm	Knox Club, 480 Boronia Road, Wantirna South
<b>Latrobe Valley</b>	Second Thursday of the month at 12 noon for lunch	The Morwell Club, 136 Helen Street, Morwell
<b>South Gippsland</b>	Third Friday of the month at 10.30 am	Korumburra Bowling Club, 20 Charles Street, Korumburra
<b>Sunbury</b>	Second Tuesday of the month at 7pm	AVEO Retirement Village, Community Centre, 45 Cornish Street, Sunbury
<b>Sunraysia</b>	Third Monday of the month at 7.30pm	Mildura Base Hospital, Ontario Avenue, Mildura

## 7. Our Board



**Peter Georgiadis - President**

*Peter loves to swim, ski and believes in “Philotimo”.*



**Chris Kunaratnam - Treasurer**

*Travel, food and wine are high on Chris’ list of favourite pastimes.*



**Louise Zambello - Secretary**

*If only there were more hours in the day. Louise knits socks for her grandchildren and grows vegetables.*



**Lynda Andrews – Board Member**

*When Lynda isn’t visiting cardiac rehab she can be found in the Victorian High Country at a Blue Grass Music Festival or on some overseas adventure maybe climbing Machu Picchu.*



**Georgie Bosch – Board Member**

*Georgie is a self-confessed wannabe trail runner, hiker and lover of all things travel.*



**Robyn Fennell – Board Member**

*Robyn has been fulfilling her dream ... to four-wheel drive with "No Limits" on guided tours to Cape York, Simpson Desert, 2020 hopefully Cairns to Darwin.*



**David Menzies – Board Member**

*David is a 30 year plus commuter cyclist #MAMIL middle aged man in lycra. Yes, one of those. He is passionate about strength training Training barbells work best, and bleeds Yellow and Black that is of the Tiger variety of course EAT EM ALIVE Tigers.*



**Robin Trotter – Board Member**

*Robin is a forager and loves nothing more than finding local produce wherever she goes. In Autumn it is wild mushrooms and quinces, in Summer figs and berries and in Winter wood and pinecones! It is soo satisfying.*



**Meredith Crowe – Board Member**

*Meredith is a keen traveller and adventure seeker and tends to pick her next country based on a mountain to climb while she is there.*



**Alan Hutchison – Board Member**

*Alan is a bit of a wine buff and loves to converse with others about wine's complex beauty. He takes it seriously enough to have gained an internationally recognised WSET Certificate in wine knowledge and appreciation.*

## 8. Our Promise

**VISION:** to be an excellent and well recognised peer support organisation that assists in improving the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of people living with heart disease, or a heart condition.

**MISSION :** to advise and promote associated groups in conducting peer support activities for people living with heart disease to ensure they have a better understanding of the impact of their heart disease or condition; how they might seek ongoing services and support in their local area; and how to raise funds to improve cardiac services.

## 9. Sponsors, Supporters and Key Stakeholders



Chronic Illness Alliance



## 10. Branches and Affiliate Reports

### 10.1 Ararat

While Ararat Branch is one of our smallest branches operating in Victoria this has not deterred them or curbed their enthusiasm for getting together. Every Friday morning, they hold an exercise class. This is a great example of ongoing participation and its value for benefiting our health and quality of life, particularly when you have a heart-related condition. It is made more impressive that a couple of members are over 80 and 94 respectively!

The Branch also gets together every second month over a meal at the local RSL to share stories and connect. Sharing insights is a critical part of peer support and this branch sure walks the talk.

### 10.2 Ballarat

Heartbeat's Ballarat Branch has again had a busy and productive year. Branch Secretary Barry Nixon says that he and the other members are passionate about the power of peer support. He lists as one of the major achievements the success of the weekly walking group, which typically brings together around 20 members for fun and fitness. Barry says it is inspiring to be a part of a mutual support event which often sees members who could barely walk 50 metres in the early recovery period gain the strength and the fitness to enjoy a pleasurable long stroll together with their Heartbeat friends.



1 Heartbeat Ballarat Walking Group

Fund raising has also been a major focus for the Ballarat Branch with proceeds from sausage sizzles and an annual Heartbeat Bowls tournament raising significant funds for an ECG machine and other much-needed equipment for local cardiac centres. Fund-raising means friend-raising too, which helps to profile the vital importance of heart health awareness in the broader community.

### 10.3 Bendigo

Nola Ward, Treasurer of the Heartbeat Bendigo affiliate, says that in a productive and eventful year one highlight that really sticks out in her mind was the Christmas lunch attended by 125 people. As well as a great day for fun and friendship the lunch was also an effective fund-raiser and provided sufficient funds to be of significant benefit to cardiac wards in the regional hospitals and health centres, including Bendigo Health.

Bendigo is one of our larger affiliates and holds a diverse range of social activities for members and their families. These include Morning Music events, barbecues in the park and theatre trips to Melbourne. The regular bi-monthly meetings, on a Sunday afternoon, attract a large number. While sometimes guest speakers are invited, an interesting new segment is a live interview featuring one of the members. It is expected that this innovation will be very engaging and will enable a greater insight into members' lived experiences. What a great contribution Heartbeat Bendigo is making to so many individuals and families in the region.



## 10.4 Goulburn Valley

Goulburn Valley is an exemplary branch in the delivery of peer support for those living with heart related conditions. Of course, it has Heartbeat legends Robyn and Arthur Fennell and Ian Powell in its midst.

The Branch plays a leadership role across the Victoria through its program offerings and through the sharing of its expertise. It is true to say that Goulburn Valley has a footprint throughout Victoria - demonstrating regional excellence.

It has a very active program for its members that includes information and insights sharing to increase member understanding of heart care and raise their quality and enjoyment of life. The Branch benefits from Robyn's leadership in monitoring the latest research and developments in heart care and in her connections with Heartbeat partner organisations such as the Heart Foundation.

Highlights for 2018/19 include:

- Information and discussion sessions covering topics of relevance to members health issues and sharing their stories
- Information in a tailored newsletter – Goulburn Valley Heartbeat
- Volunteering at Cardiac Rehabilitation Program at Goulburn Valley Health
- A monthly walking exercise program to demonstrate the importance of exercise for heart health and maintaining motivation
- fund raising through the can collection recycling program, and
- social activities to support and to connect members and share information including a monthly dinner and a variety of specialist speakers at a Goulburn Valley Health venue.

Goulburn Valley Heartbeat we salute your continuing achievements. You inspire us all.

## 10.5 Grampians

The Grampians Branch focuses on providing peer support services for its members that informs, shares insights and connects them with information from other clubs and organisations operating in their region. They are all about the community and personal service.

Meetings are held every second month which are actively attended by 12 to 15 members. The meetings range from social events such as the Christmas get together, to providing opportunities for members to learn about topics relevant for their life, such as how to get access to respite care. They also draw on their connections with other clubs and Stawell Regional Health to access interesting talks for their members that allow them to learn from others on topics such as photography and Tai Chi. The Branch also supports the Cardiac Rehabilitation program at Stawell Regional Health.

When the newsletter is produced it is hand delivered to members by the Secretary, John Simpkin to give a personal touch whilst saving money for Heartbeat!

Once a year they conduct a survey to seek input from members and involve them in how peer support is delivered.



*2 Members were very happy to check out the Pacemaker display.*

## 10.6 Knox

The Knox Branch continues to be supported by the cardiac rehabilitation staff at Angliss, Victoria Rehabilitation and Wantirna Health. Knox Branch's focus is to offer ex-cardiac patients and their families an opportunity to share experiences, receive vital health education, participate in physical exercise, socialise and have fun.



During last 12 months, guest speakers have given presentations on the history of Knox, the community services offered by the Aussie Veteran Opportunity Shop for returned services personnel and members of the community in need and Knox Community Gardens. Health professionals have represented various health and wellbeing topics including Tai Chi, Yoga, Brain Training, Health and Cardiac Resuscitation by Ambulance Victoria. Ian Andrews, Editor of the Branch Newsletter spoke on his recent Aortic Valve Replacement.

Strong demand for an evening meeting has meant that the Knox Branch has rescheduled its meeting to occur on the third Monday evening of the month.

## 10.7 Latrobe Valley

In 2018/19 Latrobe Valley has commenced the rebuild of the Branch to respond to the challenge of how to attract new members and grow the Branch to a sustainable level. It has been a year of research, where David Leonard has networked and looked for opportunities to learn from others. He has sought support from the Heartbeat Board of Management, and initial support has been provided.

In the coming year he will move forward to defining an action plan and commence the drive to attract and gain new members.



*3 David Leonard and his wife Erica*

His resilience, passion and commitment are an example of what is great about Heartbeat members.

He has been quietly but actively working whilst also addressing his own health challenges. He provides an example to us all on the importance of exercise and good nutrition. He recently met a major milestone – he has come off insulin due to his good health - well done on 2018/19 Dave “Smiley” Leonard! We look forward to seeing you progress in 2019/20 and learning from you so these insights can be shared across our branches and affiliates.

## 10.8 South Gippsland

Heartbeat's newest Branch is South Gippsland. Branch Treasurer John Grenon says the Branch Executive is busy doing all kinds of preparatory and set-up work including ordering all the necessary brand profiling paraphernalia, including stationery and even new polo tops. The team had a previous existence affiliated with another organisation but has made the decision to become a branch of Heartbeat Victoria. We are very pleased to have them on board!

The Branch plans to continue and further build on the previous social activities, which have provided valuable peer support to members and their families. On the first Friday of every month, members and their guests board the local hospital bus to enjoy a variety of social and cultural functions including sharing an enjoyable lunch together where people can share their stories and experiences. A more formal Branch meeting is also held once a month at the Korumburra Bowling Club, and again this provides a great regular opportunity for socialising and fellowship.

## 10.9 Sunbury

Sunbury Branch members continue to be entertained, motivated and educated every second Tuesday night of the month.

A demonstration by Dusty the Hearing Dog was pure entertainment, informative and fun. We were not only motivated by a black belt karate expert, but inspired to form a regular walking group by a Heart Foundation representative. Diabetes Victoria gave an informative presentation on the link between obesity, the onset of diabetes and the possibility of ensuing heart issues. We learned about



*4 Membership drive and afternoon tea held in February 2019*

the importance of eye health from an optometrist and a pharmacist impressed on us how medicines can affect driving, to name just a few of the excellent guest speakers who kindly and voluntarily offered their time to support our Branch. We heartily thank them all. A healthy supper and socialising after each presentation is "icing on the cake".

Sunbury Branch is about sharing experiences, socialising, new friends who care, education, motivation and fun. Go Sunbury!

## 10.10 Sunraysia

Heartbeat's Sunraysia Affiliate has achieved a highly successful year of fund-raising and community events. While the Sunraysia economic region centres around the Mildura area and the Murray River's rich agricultural region, it also takes in parts of southern New South Wales.

During the year Heartbeat Sunraysia undertook a wide range of major fund-raising activities. Undoubtedly one of the year's highlights was the trip in April of twelve Heartbeat members to the Pooncarie Bush Hospital in the Wentworth area to directly witness in action the positive outcome of the substantial funds, over \$7,000, donated several months earlier to support the acquisition of much-needed cardiac equipment. Another highlight was the approach from the Almond Board of Australia

to raise substantial funds for Heartbeat's work through the 520km Murray to Moyne cycling event also held in April. These funds are currently being carefully considered for the most suitable allocation, which is just about to be decided upon.

Great community networking, of the kind which led to that beneficial association, is now very much a focus of Heartbeat Sunraysia's work and is just as important in reaching out for better community heart health awareness as it is for the direct fund-raising outcomes.



## 11. Life Memberships

The Goulburn Valley Branch is delighted to see two of its long-standing members receive Life Memberships in acknowledgement of their sustained and outstanding dedication in service of Heartbeat's mission. Gerard Brown, President of Goulburn Valley Branch recently presented them with Life Membership badges.

### 11.1 Ian Powell

Ian Powell has been a member of Heartbeat Victoria's Goulburn Valley Branch for 22 years. For 15 of those years Ian was Branch President, and from 2011-2015 he was President of the Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. His contribution to Heartbeat has been immense. So many members of Goulburn Valley attest that they were drawn to the Branch because Ian personally reached out and invited them when they were very much in need of reassurance and guidance in managing their recovery and longer-term heart health maintenance. Ian's high visibility in the community does much to promote recognition of Heartbeat and its vitally important work.



*5 Lance Brown, President (left) awarding Ian with his life membership badge*

His commitment and energy are legendary, along with his highly recognised networking skills and his personal persuasiveness. As a volunteer at Goulburn Valley Health's Cardiac Rehab unit and in service to numerous other clubs and organisations in the region, Ian has done so much to further the goals of Heartbeat. He richly deserves this award of Honorary Life Membership which is bestowed with our deep gratitude for all he has done.

### 11.2 Robyn Fennell

Robyn Fennell took over Ian Powell's role as President of the Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc in 2016 until 2018. She remains a current Board member and her long-term commitment to furthering the work of Heartbeat has been remarkable and an inspiration to all who have come to know her. As a founding member of the Goulburn Valley Branch in 1986, Robyn's involvement in the development of Heartbeat has been constantly maintained and intricately interwoven.

Robyn holds so much of the history of Heartbeat in her head. Along with her extremely personable and persuasive approach, which makes her such an effective networker with other organisations on behalf of Heartbeat, Robyn's organisational flair and her devotion to accurate detail have ideally suited



*6 Robyn (left) receiving her life membership badge from Lance Brown, President*

her for the roles she has taken on. This has included her leadership of the review of the Constitution of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc and the development of the highly specific and precisely detailed Policy and Procedures Manual. For so many years Robyn has represented Heartbeat in the Goulburn Valley and in Victoria more generally with her great personal warmth, organisational acumen and generosity of spirit. We thank her for such sustained and distinguished service.

## 12. Personal Stories

### 12.1 Peter Rovers

#### *'For me Heartbeat equals heart health vigilance'*

That's Peter Rovers enthusiastic endorsement of the value of Heartbeat in his own and so many others' lives. A member of the Sunbury Branch, Peter is a strong believer in peer support and community advocacy. While already an enthusiastic participant in a diabetes peer support network, towards the end of 2017 Peter heard Heartbeat Board member and Sunbury Branch representative Louise Zambello speak about Heartbeat's mission and some of its community activities and he became immediately interested. He describes Louise as 'very magnetic' and her presentation struck a chord with Peter's own commitment to altruistic volunteer work.

Peter believes strongly in sharing experiences with others and being open to learning from like-minded people. An energetic go-getter, Peter believes whenever an opportunity knocks you should grab it with both hands, and at the time the chance to join Heartbeat was one which he didn't hesitate to take up.



*7 Peter with partner Suzie recently enjoying a cruise on the Murray River*

Heart health awareness is really important to Peter. He says that if you take proper responsibility for yourself and for those who care for you then 'you can't help but be vigilant' to monitor your heart health and have regular check-ups. In fact Peter describes himself as 'hyper-vigilant' and he regularly has a full health check with his GP. He agrees that in general most men are not great at doing this and he strives to be a good role model in this regard.

This is a message Peter says needs to get out to the broader community, and most definitely including younger people. He says that you can never know when a heart issue or serious cardiac incident will arise, often right out of the blue and at any age, and if you are not properly prepared you can be in much more difficulty and more vulnerable than you need to be.

Peter emphasises that Heartbeat branch meetings are not primarily about sitting around and sharing personal medical stories. Branch social events are mainly just good fun. Peter comes across as an authentic straight-shooter who speaks directly and can tell a very good yarn. He's grateful to be a member of Heartbeat and at the same time it's obvious that Heartbeat Sunbury is very fortunate to have him. Thanks for your fabulous contribution to Heartbeat and the broader community, Peter.

## 12.2 June Reid

### *'You make such great friends through Heartbeat'*

June Reid from the Goulburn Valley Branch is a great advocate for the power of peer support in assisting those recovering from a heart incident and maintaining their health in the longer term. Always a great believer in the positive benefits of community involvement, even before her encounter with emergency heart surgery seven years ago, June says that the valuable peer support offered by Heartbeat relieved her post- operation stress and gave her a greater sense of confidence in how to predict and better manage the recovery and health maintenance issues which would arise.

June says that after her heart valve operation at Royal Melbourne Private her specialist strongly promoted the benefits of joining a membership-based peer support organisation. Ian Powell from Heartbeat's Goulburn Valley Branch really sealed the deal with a warmly welcoming invitation. June and her husband Kevin, have been an active and enthusiastic proponent of Heartbeat ever since. June assists at the Goulburn Valley Health Shepparton Hospital in rehabilitation and is part of the regular volunteer roster. Husband Kevin is equally committed to Heartbeat and is proud of the focused fund-raising efforts in conjunction with the Hospital which recently provided around \$18,800 to enable the Diagnostic Cardiology and Neurology Service to have four much-needed Holter monitors available for patient use. June and Kevin say that the Goulburn Valley Branch is flourishing so strongly because of its direct continuing relationship with a great community hospital.



*8 June and her husband Keith*

When June had a more recent aneurysm emergency in 2015 she was amazed that the responses from the medical professionals were so swift, decisive and caring. Fully conscious, June assumed she would be driving in the car with Kevin down to Melbourne to St Vincent's Hospital for the necessary surgery. 'No time for that,' insisted the doctors. 'It's the middle of the night and it's the ambulance for you, June.' She didn't immediately realise that they meant the helicopter ambulance!

June gives generous praise to all the medical staff she has encountered throughout her journey, from her meticulously thorough GP through to all the miracle worker specialists who have cared for her. She reinforces the point that all Heartbeat enthusiasts know to be true. As June has discovered, it's during the relatively long recovery period and then over the long haul in your ongoing health management that you come to rely on Heartbeat's peer support advice - and the ongoing friendships which always go with it.

### 12.3 Ian Andrews

#### ***'Heartbeat was right there when support was suddenly needed'***

He strongly believes that the Newsletter not only promotes the purposes and activities of Heartbeat in the Knox region but also serves an important educative heart health awareness function in the broader community. Ian has a very positive view of the quality of professional medical care available when people face a sudden cardiac emergency and throughout their hospital recovery period. However, it's the long-term management of a heart condition which is the more difficult and challenging issue for patients and their families. Ian says this is where the true value of an ongoing peer support organisation like Heartbeat really shines.



*9 Ian and his wife Lynda*

It was not for concerns around his own heart health that Ian first became involved with Heartbeat, but to support Lynda who empathises with those afflicted with heart issues in her desire to help in some way. It wasn't until his awareness of shortness of breath when exercising raised a concern that he sought a medical diagnosis and found a problem with an aortic valve, which resulted in the necessity for open heart surgery just last November.

Ian's existing Heartbeat membership put him in an excellent position to benefit from the advice and support of others who had dealt with similar issues. He appreciates the acute irony of

having been already in the box seat. As Ian says of himself, 'I'm not the kind of person who just waits for things to come to me – I believe in always taking the initiative.'

How fortunate for Heartbeat Victoria, the Knox Branch in particular, and the general community that we have proactive volunteers like Ian always ready to step up and take a lead.











# 2018 -2019 Annual Report Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.

ABN: 76 073 229 53

INC.NO: A0015737N

**Email:** [info@heartbeatvictoria.org.au](mailto:info@heartbeatvictoria.org.au)

**Website:** [www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au](http://www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au)