



Chair's report to the Creative Clunes 2021 AGM

People

The end of the 2020 calendar-year proved to be a time of considerable upheaval for Creative Clunes. The effects of COVID-19 undoubtedly played a part in the turmoil. The Clunes Booktown Festival, having been the core focus of Creative Clunes for many years, was facing a potential lockdown for the second year in a row. However, challenges within our organisational culture and governance also undoubtedly contributed to the difficulties and resulted in a high turnover of staff and board members.

On behalf of the board of Creative Clunes, I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of former staff and board members.

The Creative Clunes Board would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Sharon Hughes, our Administration and Marketing Coordinator, whose skills and expertise are adeptly applied and who went over and beyond during a period of upheaval and transformation. Sharon has provided vital continuity.

Just in the nick-of-time for the 2021 *Turn the Page* festival, we brought in the assistance of Suzi Cordell as Event Producer. Suzi commenced in April, and expertly led the delivery of *Turn the Page* with an incredibly short lead time. Suzi provided a great deal of reassurance to the board as we worked to re-stabilise the organisation. In the 2021-2022 financial year, Suzi has since been appointed as a Creative Producer and the Board is delighted to continue our work with her.

Funding received from Creative Victoria in June 2021 gave us the confidence to carry out recruitment of a new CEO role, with a joint position being offered to Sue Beal and Jon Hawkes in August 2021.

Organisational and Strategic development

Following the sudden departure of key staff and board members between December 2020 and March 2021, Creative Clunes procured an external review of its organisational culture and governance. In completing this review, Sofia Adams from Press Pause Now, and has provided a clear pathway to integrating strong organisational culture and addressing key governance issues.

Sofia also conducted a visioning workshop with Creative Clunes Board and Staff, that helped to establish a framework from which to build a new strategic plan. In the current financial year, we have developed this new strategy based on this vital work and look forward to developing an implementation plan in coming months. Our refined purpose, vision, mission, and values are presented on the next page and our new Strategic Plan will be available to view at the 2020-2021 AGM.



Purpose	Creative Clunes aims to connect, inspire and engage communities through books and story				<i>Our purpose describes our reason for existing in the world</i>
Vision	Creative Clunes is a vibrant rural hub that supports making, telling and sharing stories in all art forms				<i>Our vision articulates our hopes for our organisation for the future</i>
Mission	<p>We will develop a focused network through which writers and other arts practitioners can be supported, seed ideas and collaborate. Through the exchange of stories, we build regional identity and wellbeing, empowering community to respond to environmental, social, cultural and economic challenges.</p> <p>We support stories to emerge from individuals or from collaborations, across artforms and in diverse media (from podcasting to quilting) and from folk of all ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds.</p>				<i>Our mission describes how we will work towards our purpose and vision.</i>
Values	<p>Collaborative</p> <p>We partner with the arts community, with individuals and organisations, working together to deliver impactful programs.</p>	<p>Equitable</p> <p>We are committed to equitable access to arts for our collaborators, presenters, and our audiences.</p>	<p>Joyful</p> <p>We approach our work and our communities with joy in our hearts.</p>	<p>Responsive</p> <p>We actively work with our community creatives to address the challenges and opportunities of our time and place.</p>	<i>Our values describe who we are as an organisation. We put these into practice in everything we do.</i>

Looking forward

As we focus on the current financial year and beyond, we are determined to further strengthen the organization both in its culture and its governance. We are committed to deeply ingraining our organisational values into our culture to become a *collaborative, equitable, joyful* and *responsive* organisation. We are embarking on a range of community engagement activities, such as an open day in December, and a range of workshops and meetings with local artists to build future opportunities to work together. We are committed to renewing efforts to establish the Clunes Railway Station as a creative cultural hub for Clunes. We are working to develop a partnership between Bookclubs Hub and Australia Reads. We are actively working on programs to build on the successes of Booktown whilst broadening our program to engage with the arts more broadly through story.

Acknowledgments

I offer my sincere thanks to our community including our members, and our volunteers for their ongoing support of Creative Clunes. I would also express thanks to the broader community that makes up our audience. The very core of our focus and our reason for being is for our communities; be they local, visitors, online viewers or international.

Dr Ember Parkin
16/11/21