CBTS
Annual Report 2024–25

Cottage by the Sea
QUEENSCLIFF



Every child deserves a break

Contents

Our mission & values 3

A message from our Patron 4

A note from our Chair & CEO 6

The impact & reach of our programs 8

The year in review 10

Stories to be proud of 12

Programs: Take a Break 18

Programs: REEF 22

Programs: Mentor 26

Programs: Scholarships 30

In memory & celebration 32

Future Giving 33

Looking ahead 34

Who we are: Board of Directors 36

Who we are: Cottage staff 37

Who we are: Melbourne Community Relations 38

Who we are: Our volunteers 40

Who we are: Life Members, Ambassadors & Branches 41

Our donors 42

In-kind donors 44

Financials 46



Cottage by the Sea would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Cottage stands. Cottage by the Sea would also like to pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Wadawurrung nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people.

**Names within this Annual Report have been changed for privacy.*

Our mission is to enhance the lives of more children by providing inspiration, fun and opportunity within a holiday environment.

We achieve our mission through our diverse programs, which take the form of short-stay experiences offered in a wide range of environments. During programs, we provide children and young people with opportunities to build positive relationships with peers and adult role models, which helps them to learn and grow when they return to their schools and communities.



Everything we do at Cottage by the Sea reflects our values:

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

A message from our Patron



Welcome to Cottage by the Sea's 2025 Annual Report. We hope you enjoy learning about how Cottage has enhanced the lives of children and young people this past financial year.

We can all attest to the healing powers of the sea. The peacefulness of a wave gently lapping the shore, the invigoration of submerging beneath the surface, the weightlessness of floating in the water, the delight of sitting on the sand and taking it all in … and maybe even the surprise of witnessing a pod of dolphins or a whale surfacing. These are moments that leave a lasting impact on children at Cottage by the Sea.

More than 215,000 Victorian children are living in significant economic disadvantage*. When I think of the joy and light that children bring to this world, we must do what we can to reduce this vulnerability. Cottage by the Sea is one of the fabulous organisations addressing this need, which is why I'm so proud to be its Patron.

While it's just not possible for us to reach every Victorian child in need, what we can do is ensure that the children who do come to Cottage have the time of their lives … and for some, the beginning of a better future. This is made possible with your support as our charity continues to grow. Thank you for helping us offer the experience of a lifetime for children and young people in need. We look forward to increasing our impact in the years to come so that more children can enjoy the power of a break at Cottage by the Sea.



Rebecca Maddern
Patron, Cottage by the Sea



Rebecca Maddern – Patron

**2023 Victorian Council of Social Services Insights Report*

A note from our Chair



Scott Chapman AM
Chair, Cottage by the Sea

Like many of you know, the highlight from a visit to Cottage by the Sea is hearing sounds of the children having fun. Adventures at the beach, going down our famous slide, the laughter, the joy, the break that young people have from their challenges. But it is more than a break – the programs take these participants on a journey of personal development and growth.

It has been a challenging year from a financial perspective, with costs rising dramatically and faster than we are able to increase equivalent funding. The Cottage Foundation has done exactly what it was designed to do in challenging times, which is to support the operational needs this year allowing for nearly 1,900 children to attend a Cottage program. Changing the lives of children is a big job – a huge responsibility – and the Board is deeply grateful of your support and that you are all part of the Cottage community that makes it possible.

Over the past 12 months, we have looked thoughtfully at the future of Cottage and drafted our new Strategic Plan 2025-28. With most non-profits reporting similar challenges in growing costs over income, we consider this challenge is not going away soon. As a Board and management team, it is our responsibility to consider how we strengthen the balance sheet and diversify income to satisfy our current groups of visiting children to the increased capacity that will come with a completed Riptide accommodation facility.

It is my belief that the world is run by people who show up. Thank you for showing up to Cottage – whether it was by knitting a beanie, volunteering in the kitchen, attending an event, donating funds or simply having a conversation with someone about this wonderful organisation. I know I am proud to be part of this charity's 135-year history, and I hope you are too.



Scott Chapman AM
Chair, Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc



Adam Wake
CEO, Cottage by the Sea

For nearly 100 years, targeted outdoor education has been saving lives. The role of the great outdoors, the healing properties of being outside is well documented and known across the world. What do they say, "if you feel blue, touch green". Never has this been more important in our rapidly changing world both locally and globally, than it is today. Increase that relevance when it comes to children experiencing vulnerability. We know that what we do in offering inspiration, fun and opportunity in wonderful environments leaves a lasting impact that can and does change lives.

Recently, I had the privilege of reading a lovely thank you card from a primary school that participated in our Take a Break program. This feedback, I am happy to say, has been replicated over and over throughout the year.

& CEO

"Most of our students simply could not afford to attend a non-subsidised camp. Many of our students have not been to the beach, let alone swam and surfed in the sea. Many of our students do not get a balanced meal for dinner each night. Some have no electricity or heating at times. But what our students do have is respect and gratitude. They come away from camp at Cottage with a smile and many lasting memories. Thank you for all that you do for our students."

– Take a Break visiting teacher

During another group's stay, I was leaving my office one day and there was a fever-pitch racket coming from the dining room. It was a good noise, the noise we like to hear – kids having fun. I asked a teacher how their day had been, and the response was quick. I wrote it down as it was wonderful to hear, so I share with you now:

"Brilliant, this is the best camp I've ever been on. It's not just the facility and the activities which are amazing, it's the staff. The staff make this place. They're incredible. The kids… most have never even seen a boogie-board before, and they all saw dolphins. It's the best camp ever."

– Take a Break visiting teacher

I asked how many camps she had attended, and she made a noise I'm unable to spell but came with an exhalation of air and lips reverberating. She said: "In 21 years at this school, I've probably been on 40!"

This feedback serves as a reminder of the importance and potential impact of every moment at Cottage – each smile, nod of encouragement, shared laughter – and brings home why our charity has existed for so remarkably long – 135 years. Offering inspiration, fun and opportunity in a holiday environment is an extraordinary experience, but the moments that truly matter can be so simple: a hot shower, homecooked meal or warm bed.

This financial year has seen Cottage travel a busy and exciting path. Here are some of the highlights:

- Highest number of program participants to date – 1,862 (including community groups*)
- Rebuild of Riptide Cottage – expected completion by late 2025
- The Cottage Annual Fair playing host to around 3,000 visitors – this annual event has been running for more than 100 years

Our generous supporters – donors, volunteers and all stakeholders – play a vital role in helping us achieve our mission as a charity that currently receives no government funding. Thank you for helping us give more children than ever before a break at Cottage by the Sea.

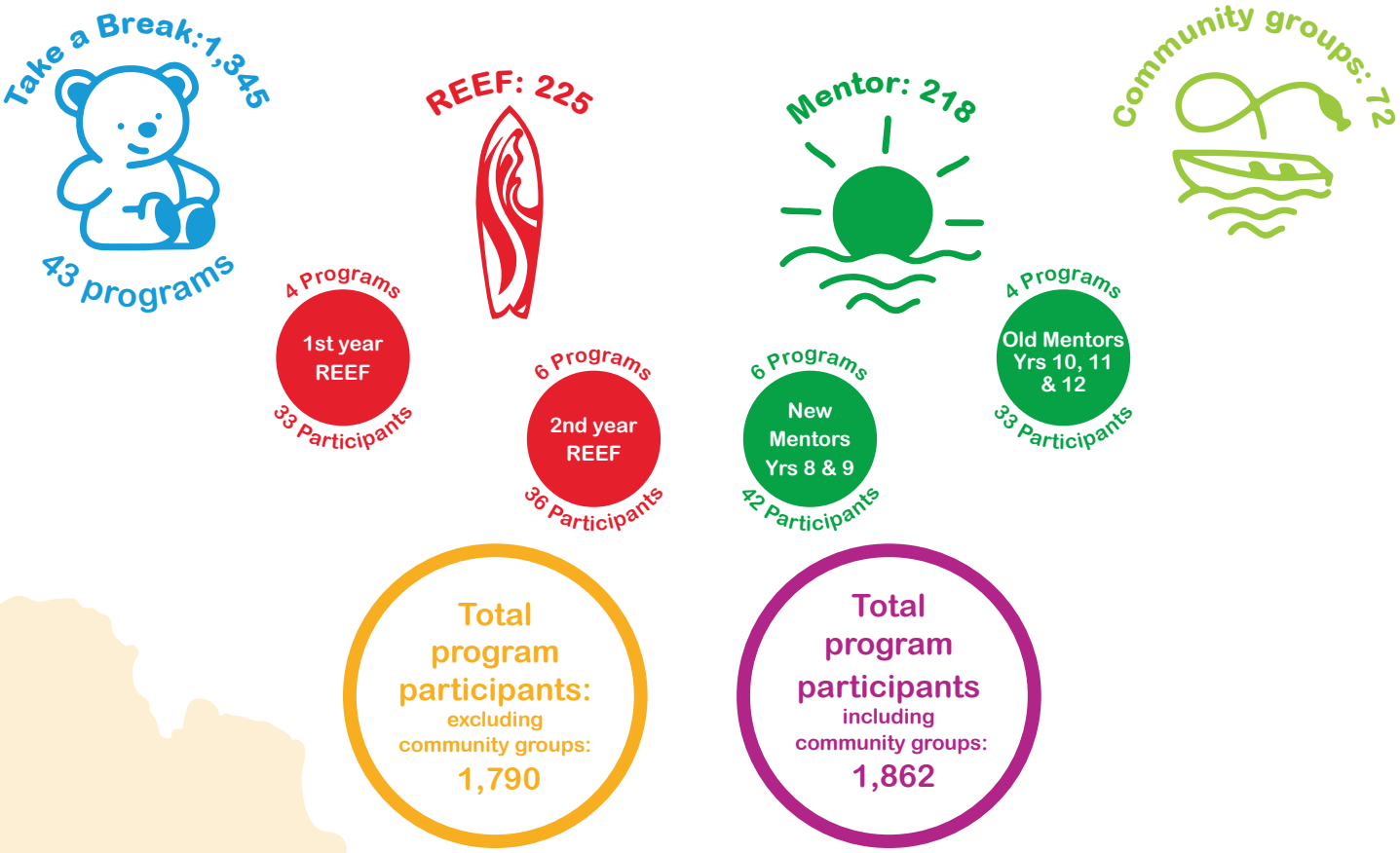


Adam Wake
CEO, Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc

**Community groups are from partner organisations that align with our values and mission to support children experiencing vulnerability.*

Programs

Programs at Cottage by the Sea support children and young people aged 6–18. Here's our program participant summary from this past financial year:



The impact & reach of our programs

Our programs have helped children and young people from far and wide. In addition to hosting participants from all around Victoria here in Queenscliff, Cottage by the Sea has also run offsite programs including Mentors to Sydney through the support of MFS International Australia Pty Limited and for a rural camping experience on the Edward River in Moulamein thanks to the generosity of the Anderson family and the APCO Foundation.

Bed-nights FY 2024–25



Take a Break:
3,539



REEF:
627



Mentor:
599



Total bed-nights:
4,765

Feedback from participants & teachers about Cottage programs:

"Wow!
What an incredible camp experience you and your team provided. Every time I think about it, I can't help but smile. The kids had an absolute blast and loved everything – the activities, the food and the facilities."
– Take a Break visiting teacher

"It was the best time of my life."
– Take a Break participant

"The REEF program has helped with my confidence, how to make friends and how to deal with challenges."
– REEF participant

"I feel the happiest I have felt in a long time."
– Take a Break participant

"Cottage is the reason I've felt a real sense of community."
– Former Mentor participant

"You all have created a safe and welcoming environment where our students have felt comfortable from the moment they walked through the door. I can confidently say that the kids will remember the fun and generosity they've experienced this week. The knitted goodies and the books from the bookshelf are incredibly generous gifts – our kids are witnessing acts of kindness and that is so valuable."
– Take a Break visiting teacher

"I am eternally grateful and appreciative of everything that has happened through this program."
– Former Mentor participant

"The activities were amazing. I feel more confident to do things and speak in front of crowds."
– REEF participant

The year



JULY 2024

Deakin University publishes its second research report – ***The Impact of Cottage by the Sea: From Ripples to Waves.***



NOVEMBER 2024

Fifth-generation Queenscliff resident Darren Allbutt hosts the Sea & Wood exhibition at Cottage by the Sea.

NOVEMBER 2024

The old Riptide building is demolished, and construction begins on the redevelopment of the new Riptide facility.

AUGUST 2024

Roderick Insurance hosts its Race Day fundraiser for Cottage by the Sea.

OCTOBER 2024

At Cottage by the Sea's 134th Annual General Meeting, Board member Natalie Hickey becomes a Life Member of Cottage and special guest Professor Louise Paatsch shares insights about our latest impact report from Deakin University.

JANUARY 2025

The Rippers annual summer function helps to raise funds and spread awareness about our children's charity.





JANUARY 2025

Cottage by the Sea's century-old fundraiser – the Annual Fair – brings more than 3,000 people to Queenscliff.

in review



MARCH 2025

Annual Giving Day, our single biggest fundraiser, raises a record-breaking amount – more than $365,000.



JUNE 2025

The Rippers annual luncheon helps Cottage achieve its mission through building connections and helping to fund our programs.

JUNE 2025

Cottage by the Sea reaches the greatest number of participants ever this FY – 1,862.

APRIL 2025

TenderPrint & Winki Solar host their Race Day fundraiser for Cottage by the Sea.



FEBRUARY 2025

The Bulls & Bears group holds its 19th Golf Day fundraiser for Cottage by the Sea.



Stories to be proud of

Everything we do at Cottage by the Sea comes back to the children. Here, we share stories from our partnerships, fundraisers and events that have supported program participants.

Partnerships

Cops N Kids

The blue and red flashes of a police car racing past can spark fear in any one of us – but not for children on the Cops N Kids Program. A Ballarat initiative has spent the past 30 years showing children affected by life-threatening illnesses that lights and sirens can also be a source of joy.

Early in 2025, Cops N Kids held a camp at Cottage by the Sea where volunteer police officers, their families and community members enjoyed a fun-filled weekend by the sea.



"We can't change what's in these people's lives, but what we can do is make sure that the time they have is brilliant."

– Cops N Kids Co-founder John Moloney



Scan this QR code to read more about our Cops N Kids partnership

Lucy Simms art & homewares series

Point Lonsdale artist and Rippers member Lucy Simms is a long-term, dedicated supporter of Cottage by the Sea. Her latest Cottage collaboration is an artwork and homewares collection, with all sale proceeds going towards our children's charity.







Photo by *Bellarine Times* & Ellie Claringbold

Mark Gingell & Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme

Through a partnership with Cottage supporter Mark Gingell, Searoad Ferries and Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), every eligible 10c recycling item disposed of while travelling with Searoad Ferries goes directly to Cottage by the Sea.

Additionally, since May 2025, Mark organised a MoU with the Borough of Queenscliffe (supported by TOMRA Cleanaway) to collect CDS items at some of Queenscliff's Council-managed sites to raise funds for Cottage.

Mark spends roughly 8 hours a month collecting and depositing the recycled items in a volunteer capacity. "It's raising the awareness of recycling, it's raising the profile of Cottage and it's raising some money for Cottage," Mark said. The initiative began in late 2024.

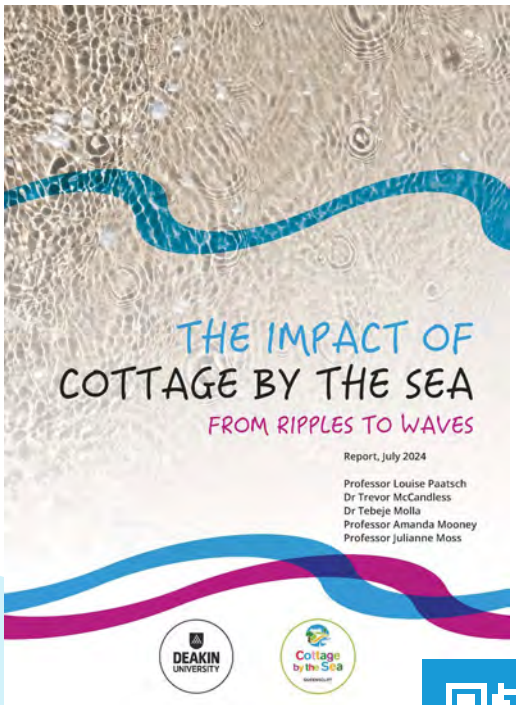
This financial year, Mark's CDS recycling initiative has raised $2,841 for Cottage by the Sea. We appreciate the support of all the organisations and individuals who are contributing to this project.

Deakin University

In July 2024, Deakin University published its second impact report from the Strategic Research Centre – Research for Educational (REDI) – *The Impact of Cottage by the Sea: From Ripples to Waves*. The research explored the medium- to long-term impacts of Cottage by the Sea through interviews with current and former program participants, going back as early as 1939.

Initially, the name of this research was *The Ripple Effect*. Professor Louise Paatsch, lead researcher on the project, explained how the name evolved: "We expected the waves to diminish in time but [the interview subjects] never forgot the time they had at Cottage by the Sea. That's why the name of the report changed to *From Ripples to Waves*."

So much of the data from this research is qualitative. One alumni participant remembered the care he received when he was sick – especially the chocolate he was given. "We can't measure that by statistics," Professor Paatsch said. "The ripples became waves rolling down the years of their lives," the professor shared of the enduring impact of Cottage.



Scan this QR code to read more about our Deakin research



Fundraisers & events

Kaelan's Norwegian ski trek

In June 2025, Cottage supporter Kaelan Lockhart completed a 4-month trek on skis across the entire length of Norway to raise more than $10,000 for our charity. Kaelan skied from the south of Norway to the Arctic Circle, swapping his skis and sled for a bike when the snow melted due to early spring conditions.

Kaelan shared how his journey has been life-defining: "Including detours around treacherous lakes and rapid rivers … roughly 2,300 kilometres of skiing and 700 kilometres of cycling took me from the bottom of Norway to the top, on what was the greatest adventure of my life!"

No stranger to a physical challenge, Kaelan was also a finalist on the 2025 season of *Australian Survivor: Brains V Brawn II* with Cottage Alumni and dual-Olympian Morgan Mitchell, which aired while he was completing the trek.

Giving Day

In March 2025, Cottage by the Sea raised vital program funds of more than $300,000 at the annual Giving Day. From 9am–9pm, matching donors doubled every dollar donated to the charity. More than 275 donors contributed to the fundraiser.

Adam Wake, Cottage CEO, expressed his gratitude: "Thank you to everyone who contributed to Giving Day's success – whether it was a matching donor, donating to the fundraiser, promoting the event or volunteering on the day. All the funds raised will go directly to our programs – offering young people the opportunity to create memories for life."

Giving Day 2025 matching donors included the APCO Foundation, Bulls & Bears Golf Group, Ducas-Paul Foundation, Geelong Connected Communities, Millbrook Asset Management, Millbrook Funds and The Shine On Foundation, plus anonymous philanthropic foundations and individuals.





Bulls & Bears Golf Day

In February 2025, the Bulls & Bears group held its 19th Golf Day for Cottage by the Sea. More than 80 golfers participated in the fundraiser at Flinders Golf Club. Over nearly 20 years, this group has raised in excess of half a million dollars. A great idea, with friends, that has stood the test of time.

Thank you to everyone who made the wonderful day run smoothly, including longstanding event organisers Alan Harrison and Geoff Counsel, plus Golf Day Coordinator and Cottage volunteer Julie Raunik, Cottage staff member Andrew Balaam and the other supporters and generous individuals who donated auction items and sponsored the event.



Highton/Ceres Acorn Branch 100-year celebration

In 2025, our Highton/Ceres Acorn Branch marked 100 years of supporting Cottage by the Sea with a celebratory afternoon tea. “It’s rather special,” Ros Leigh OAM, Highton/Ceres Acorn Branch President, said of the milestone. Ros has been part of the Branch for 50 years. Following in the footsteps of her mother and mother-in-law, Ros remembers helping at one of the Branch’s garden party fundraisers at Ceres when she was just 10 years old.

Adam Wake, Cottage CEO, shared his thanks: “We are so grateful for the dedicated commitment of the Highton/Ceres Acorn Branch and congratulate them on an incredible milestone.”

Adam’s Arctic ultramarathon

In February 2025, Cottage CEO Adam Wake completed a 5-day, 230-kilometre ultramarathon through Swedish Lapland as a fundraiser for our children’s charity. Adam ran across icy lakes, through fierce winds and unforgiving terrain to raise funds for our REEF snow program at Mount Buller.

“At Cottage, we work in a sector where we frequently ask children and young people to step outside of their comfort zones – how can we ask them if we are not prepared to ourselves?” Adam said. “Cottage helps young people to realise their potential and lead more fulfilling lives,” he continued. Embracing this challenge for Adam was a way to ensure more children and young people have the opportunity to enjoy an adventurous life.

> **“Cottage helps young people to realise their potential and lead more fulfilling lives.”**
>
> – Adam Wake, CEO CBTS



Annual Fair

In January 2025, more than 3,000 community supporters attended our oldest fundraiser in Queenscliff, which has been operating for more than 100 years. All the funds raised from the Annual Fair go directly to our children's programs.

Adam Wake, Cottage CEO, noted: "Our Annual Fair encapsulates the overwhelming generosity of our community. We loved seeing so many people enjoying the day at Cottage and contributing to the success of the fundraiser – our best yet. We thank everyone for their immeasurable efforts – from our dedicated volunteers to our generous supporters."

Bill Kerr, formerly in Strategic Partnerships at Cottage, explained the impact of this fundraising result: "The support of our community is incredible – made even more special as we celebrate 135 years of Cottage in 2025. The funds raised from the Annual Fair will help us bring more children to Cottage this year for an experience of a lifetime."

Thank you to everyone who supported the Annual Fair. More than 165 volunteers on the day helped organise all the stalls and products for sale. Volunteers included Cottage by the Sea's Board members, Branch members, Ambassadors, staff and their children – our community.



Darren Allbutt's Sea & Wood exhibition

Fifth-generation Queenscliff resident Darren Allbutt has continued his family's legacy of supporting the community with the Sea & Wood exhibition. Held in November 2024 at Cottage by the Sea, all the sale proceeds from the art, sculpture and woodwork exhibition – totalling more than $16,000 – were donated to Cottage.

The Allbutt (Golightly) family history with Cottage began with Darren's late grandmother Daisy Myrtle Golightly, who was one of Cottage's earliest volunteers. In 1969, Daisy was awarded a Certificate of Honour for Long Service to the League (now called Cottage by the Sea). "This exhibition was in memory of my late grandmother, Daisy," Darren shared.

"This beach was such a big part of my childhood – we would always walk past the Cottage on our way to the water. I found it so hard to grasp that so many children who come to the Cottage had never been to the beach before. The funds raised from this exhibition will ensure that more children have the opportunity to enjoy a trip to the beach," Darren continued.



"This beach was such a big part of my childhood – we would always walk past the Cottage on our way to the water. I found it so hard to grasp that so many children who come to the Cottage had never been to the beach before. The funds raised from this exhibition will ensure that more children have the opportunity to enjoy a trip to the beach."

– Darren Allbutt

Take a Break

1,345 participants FY 2024–25 enjoyed a break by the sea

Our Take a Break program is focused on inspiration, fun and opportunity. Children aged 6–12 attend a program at Cottage for 3–5 days.

Joy in unexpected places

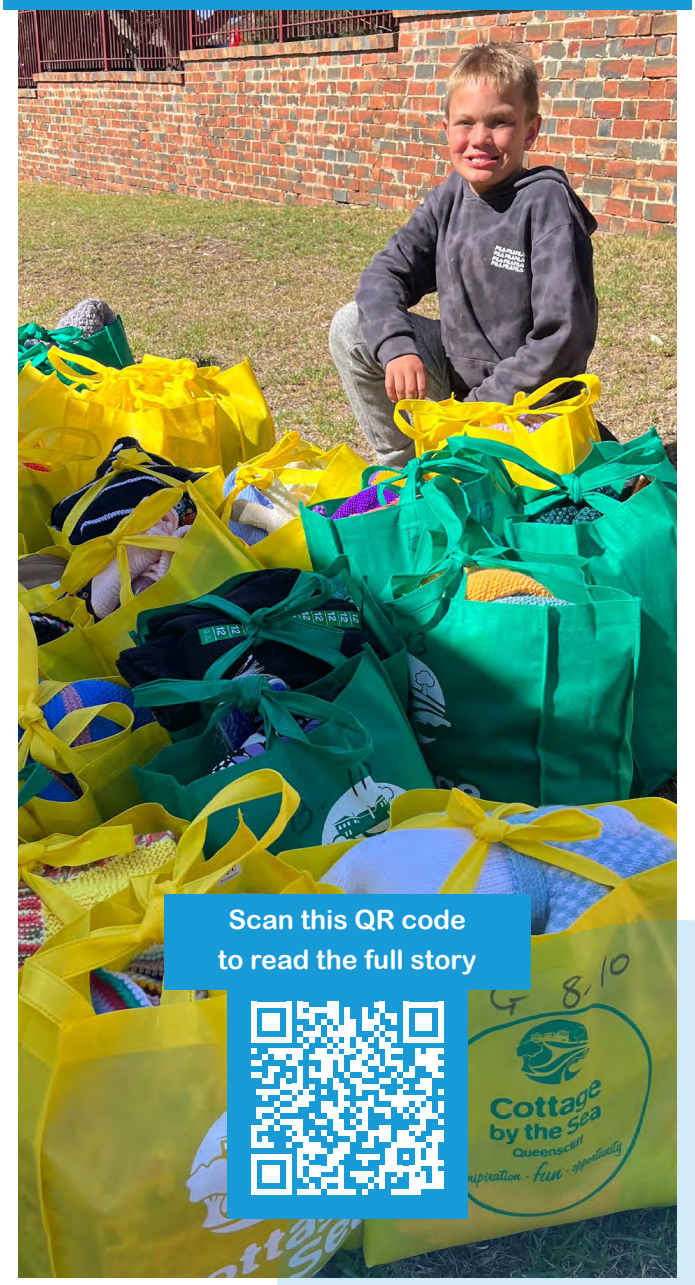
It's 7.30am on the last day of this Take a Break program for children from the Grampians. Participant Billy* has been waiting eagerly for Rob from our maintenance team; the 10-year-old boy is obsessed with taking in and out the bins and, fortunately, it's that time of the week at Cottage by the Sea.

Encouragingly, Rob directs the young boy to bring in the bins with him, placing them by the gate. "Billy loves having a job to do," his mum Andrea* explains, who is also the principal of his primary school. The young boy is grinning from ear to ear.

Billy was diagnosed with the childhood degenerative disease alpha-mannosidosis in 2021. He received a bone marrow transplant from his older sister that has helped stabilise the condition and extend his life, but day-to-day challenges from his intellectual and physical disabilities require management from his loving family, dedicated carers and tight-knit community. "His brain is shrinking, and we can't stop it," Andrea explains of the metabolic disorder, which has caused childhood dementia among other challenging conditions.

Each week on Cottage programs, participants are provided with opportunities to have fun and be inspired. Sometimes, this occurs in the excitement of a new seaside activity, but often the simple things bring the most joy. For Billy, the seemingly ordinary task of taking in and out the bins is a ritual he finds extraordinarily fun.

Each week on Cottage programs, participants are provided with opportunities to have fun and be inspired. Sometimes, this occurs in the excitement of a new seaside activity, but often the simple things bring the most joy.



Scan this QR code to read the full story



Resilience at the face of adversity

This Take a Break program is with the Ararat Cluster of Small Schools. “Last year was a crazy year for all of our schools,” Andrea reflects. This community has experienced the devastation of multiple bushfires, which is what initially brought them to Cottage – we have a long history of supporting communities that have been affected by natural disasters.

In February 2024, a bushfire burned 46 of the 90 homes within their community. Albeit devastating, this adversity has brought the community together, creating a newfound sense of resilience. “Our kids have bounced back really well,” Andrea reflects. The children have learned how the native vegetation and plants recover after a fire, going on regular bushwalks to observe how the environment is regenerating itself.

The resilience of Billy’s family and the Grampians community is as powerful as the regeneration of the land. “Tragedy happens, but there’s a community to support you to get through it,” Andrea shares.

The strength of family and friendship, the wonders of the natural world and the excitement of having fun anchor a child in a positive state of mind to help them weather the inevitable storms of life.

“Tragedy happens, but there’s a community to support you to get through it.”

– Andrea*, primary school principal & Billy’s* mother





Fun in the surf

A Take a Break participant glides along the surface of the sea on his boogie-board, riding the wave to the shore. He smiles at his teacher Sophia* standing on the beach. “Good boy!” she claps in encouragement to her Grade 5 student from Thomastown West Primary School. He stands up, raising his arms triumphantly as his boogie-board bounces in the water behind him.

Sophia explains how this young boy from Afghanistan has had quite the journey for a 12-year-old. His family emigrated to Turkey, where they tragically experienced the harrowing earthquake of 2023. Displaced, having lost everything, they sought asylum in Australia. Arriving in Melbourne as a refugee, he and his family have been placed in temporary social housing to help them get back on their feet. “He’s such a sweet boy,” the teacher continues.

A young girl in this same group is standing tentatively at the shore while her friends play in the waves. She calls out to one of them, nervously, as the water laps against her wetsuit-clad ankles. “It’s cold,” she says quietly.

“Many of these children are not beach people,” Sophia explains, reinforcing the adventurous nature of this activity. For many of these participants, going to the beach is a new experience. Navigating chilly water, breaking waves and whitewash can be a real stretch of their comfort zone.

Despite the discomfort, with the guidance and support of her friends and Cottage staff, the 10-year-old meanders further into the water. A Camp Leader guides her to lie down on her boogie-board and the wave picks her up. Keeping her head above the water so her hijab remains dry, she experiences the feeling of catching a wave. Yesterday was one of the few occasions she has been in the ocean. Today she is boogie-boarding with a smile on her face.

Being brave enough to try something new can transform an experience from fearful into fun. In Cottage’s Take a Break program, this wisdom is put to practice during activities in nature, allowing these participants to return home feeling empowered and open to new experiences.



Recreation, Education, Environment, Friendship (REEF)

225 participants FY 2024–25 gained confidence & belonging

Our REEF program fosters confidence, leadership and personal development. Reefies aged 11–14 attend 10 camps over 2 years. The program is designed to follow children through the transition from primary to secondary school.

Journey of resilience

On this camp, our REEF 2 participants from Whittington and Newcomb went hiking for the first time. For some, it turned out to be one of the biggest challenges of their Cottage journey – if not their lives.

The 11-kilometre hike along the Surf Coast became more challenging than we expected. The combination of heavy packs, uneven terrain and a few long, steep inclines tested the entire group. At times, some participants wanted to give up. But with encouragement from their fellow Reefies and the Programs team, every participant pushed through.

The hike became a true test of resilience – something we've been focusing on throughout this program. It's especially important as we prepare these Reefies for one of the most demanding adventures later in 2025: the snow trip. This hike served as an early insight into what it takes to meet such a challenge.



When reflecting on how the group worked well together, one participant shared: "Encouragement, telling them they're doing good and giving them confidence," while another Reefie said: "Supporting each other."

This hike was a tough but valuable lesson that will help the Reefies build the strength and mindset required for the upcoming snow adventure.


CHARIZARD

Life-changing snow camp

Story by Sean Dunne, Cottage by the Sea Program Coordinator

Over the past 15 years working at Cottage, I've had the privilege of witnessing the remarkable growth and development that takes place during this week-long snow adventure. It's not just another camp – it's a life-changing experience that teaches resilience, builds confidence and makes memories for life. Alumni, now in their twenties, still reminisce about their time on the slopes – often sharing it as their most cherished memory from Cottage.

"Alumni, now in their twenties, still reminisce about their time on the slopes – often sharing it as their most cherished memory from Cottage."

– Sean Dunne, Cottage by the Sea Program Coordinator



The start of an exciting adventure

Excitingly, for most of the Reefies this is their first encounter with snow. The moment they spot that first patch is an experience that's hard to put into words – awe is an understatement.

The first morning at Mount Buller is an adventure in itself. Putting on snow gear for the first time is a challenging task, but as the week progresses, the Reefies quickly become self-sufficient, learning to gear up on their own – a small but significant victory in their snowboarding journey.

Each day begins with lessons from skilled instructors who guide the Reefies through the basics of snowboarding. By lunchtime, the group comes together – sharing their progress and setting personal goals for the afternoon session, which is led by Cottage staff. This is where the real growth happens, as the Reefies practise the skills they learned in the morning session.

The first day is always the hardest. There are moments when some participants feel like giving up, but with the encouragement of their peers and Cottage staff, they push through. It is a powerful lesson in perseverance and resilience.





Lessons that surpass the slopes

One of the most valuable lessons the Reefies learn is that everyone progresses at their own pace. Their skill levels and abilities vary, and that's okay. What matters most is setting personal goals and working towards them – a lesson that extends far beyond the slopes.

This adventure is not just physically demanding, it's also mentally challenging. The Reefies discover muscles they never knew they had and feel fatigue in places they didn't know could be sore. Early mornings, long days and the mental focus required to control a snowboard takes its toll. But every day brings new goals and achievements, and the sense of accomplishment outweighs the exhaustion.

By the end of the week, watching the Reefies confidently navigate the slopes, independently riding down Bourke Street and loading themselves onto the chairlift is the highlight for everyone. The camaraderie that develops among the group, as they encourage and support each other, is a testament to the growth they've experienced. The transformation from the first day to the last is incredible. The hardest part of the week then becomes saying goodbye to the slopes.

As one Reefie reflected, "I had the time of my life. Maybe I'll be lucky enough for Mum to bring me back someday, or better yet, I'll bring her back. Thanks Cottage."

Creating memories for life

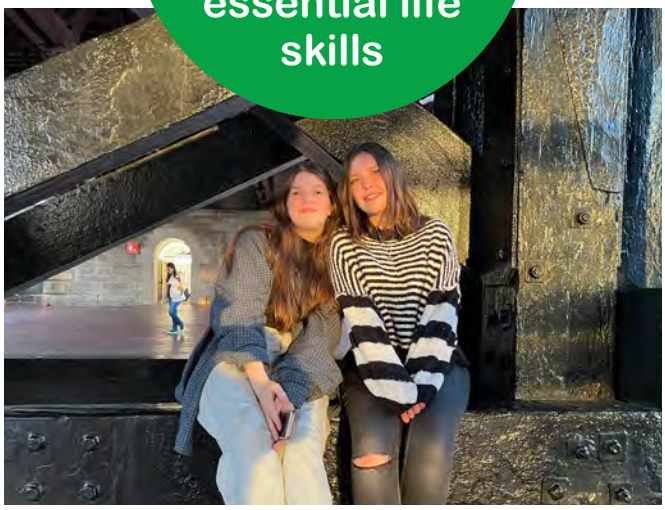
For many of these children, this is an experience they may never have again. The reality is that the cost of a snow trip puts the adventure out of reach for most families. However, thanks to the support of our donors, the Reefies will remember this experience for the rest of their lives.



Mentor

Our Mentor program is for graduates from the REEF program and focuses on personal development. Mentor participants aged 13–18 attend 5–6 programs per year over 5 years. The underpinning goals of the Mentor program are for young people to be actively contributing to their community, school and home, as well as Cottage.

218 participants FY 2024–25 developed essential life skills



Space to breathe

When the Welfare Officer of a Geelong primary school suggested that Cottage by the Sea would be a valuable experience for Grade 6 student Anna* in 2018, she embraced the opportunity. Little did she know that for the following 6 years, Cottage would become a sanctuary in which she could seek refuge, create lifelong friendships and embark on adventures that would transform her life.

Cultivating connection & community

When reflecting on her highlights at Cottage over the years, the friendships Anna has forged have been just as memorable as the activities. "Starting in REEF was really good because I met most of my friends that I have now and we've stayed friends. We all grew very close," Anna explains. When asked about her fondest memory from Cottage, Anna's face lights up: "The sense of community – that's the part I've always loved."

Anna's family recognises the immense support of the Programs team and the positive impact they have had on Anna's journey throughout 27 camps on the REEF and Mentor programs. In particular, their guidance through important junctures in life – from primary to secondary school to the workforce, from child to teenager to adult.

"The Camp Leaders have been phenomenal – they've been rock solid. Anna's been able to talk to them about whatever," Anna's dad Brayden* shares. Not only do they offer support and encouragement, but they also celebrate the successes and milestones of the participants. "They've seen us grow up – graduated high school, graduated TAFE. They're there – having your celebrations with you," Anna continues.

"Anna's had some challenges along the way, and everybody has always been open and willing to work with Anna. They've never restricted what she can and can't do … They've been able to understand Anna and see what she's needed and help her. They do an amazing job," Brayden shares.

One of the values of Cottage – community – has had such a meaningful impact on Anna that it has shaped how she gives back in her personal life. "Cottage is the reason I've felt a real sense of community. We did a lot of volunteering with Cottage – whether it was cleaning out the sand dunes, going to the aged care home and now I do volunteering outside of Cottage. I think they really instilled that – participating in the community," Anna shares.

"Cottage is the reason I've felt a real sense of community."

– Mentor participant Anna*



Scan the QR code to read this full story

"She's different when she comes home from camp … The benefits have been phenomenal."

– Brayden*, dad of Mentor participant Anna*

A camp to look forward to

"No matter what she was going through – and there's been quite a lot – there was always a Cottage camp to look forward to," Anna's sister Hayley* shares.

"Anna could always have a break when she came to Cottage. She could relax. She could breathe. No matter what, she had a community … Cottage was this place that Anna could rely on when she was going through a lot," Hayley explains.

"She's different when she comes home from camp," Brayden shares. "The Camp Leaders have always been here to support her. The fact that she's here, now, is massive … it's everybody that's helped her along the way. The benefits have been phenomenal – the changes in Anna are massive," he continues.

The "end" is just the beginning

In many ways, Anna sees the end of her time at Cottage as just the beginning. On the day of this interview, serendipitously, she has just completed her Certificate III in Community Services. Anna's experiences on the REEF and Mentor programs have naturally led her to explore this career pathway.

"I always really liked youth work, and Cottage fuelled that in me. I really want to work in youth work, especially adolescence, because I know how important it is for everyone to feel valued and like they belong during that time," Anna shares. "When we look at Anna doing her Community Services … what she's seen and learned here has fuelled that – to give to people who have had it worse off than her," Brayden adds.

"As much as my time at Cottage is ending, it's only just beginning!" Anna reflects. "Maybe it's what you've learned here that you can take into the next part of your life," Hayley suggests.

The turn of seasons

"Hello, stranger!" a voice says from behind Anna. She turns around and sees the delight of a smiling Camp Leader who has overseen Anna's entire journey at Cottage. They chat about her Cert III, future plans and reflect on some notable memories. In just a few weeks, Anna will graduate from the Mentor program.

The afternoon sun is shining as Anna leaves Cottage. As her journey at Cottage nears an end, another door will open to a new season of her life – one grounded in lifelong friendships, remarkable experiences and a strong sense of community fostered from her treasured time at Cottage.



Mount Arapiles adventure

Success on a program isn't always measured by how far someone climbs or how loud they cheer. It can also be found in the quiet moments – the ones where a young person takes a step they didn't believe they could. One of those moments happened at Mount Arapiles.

A participant arrived on this rock-climbing adventure with one very clear goal: she wanted to try on the harness. Not climb, not belay, not abseil – just try it on and be part of the group.

On the first day of climbing, she stayed on the sidelines – watching, listening, observing. When asked if she wanted to have a go, she politely declined. But she was present, and she was taking it all in.

Later that morning, a Camp Leader sat beside her – no pressure, no expectations – and had a conversation. They spoke about fear, trying new things and trusting the people around you. Something shifted.

The participant stood up. She put on the harness again. Then, to all our surprise, she clipped in! With shaky hands and determined eyes, she placed one foot on the wall ... then the other. She climbed higher than she ever thought she could.

That moment opened a door. Over the next couple of days, she didn't just climb – she belayed, she abseiled, she took part in a cave swing that pushed even the most confident participants out of their comfort zone. Each time she stretched herself, her confidence grew. So too did the smiles on everyone around her.

When Cottage by the Sea gives young people the space to grow at their own pace – showing them trust and surrounding them with encouragement – they rise.

This participant arrived thinking she'd only wear a harness. She left with a string of achievements: she climbed cliffs, built trust and discovered a strength she didn't know she had. This experience showed that it's not just about the adventure. It's also about the quiet victories, the brave first steps and the ripple effect those moments have on a young person's future.

When Cottage by the Sea gives young people the space to grow at their own pace – showing them trust and surrounding them with encouragement – they rise.



Scholarships

Cottage scholarships are funded by philanthropy and allow participants to pursue dreams that may have once felt out of reach. These scholarships are crucial to helping support a young person's dream by providing funding for approved training and equipment to explore new opportunities. They offer inspiration, hope and confidence for participants to reach for their goals, flourishing now and into the future.

A ballerina's journey

When participant Annabella expressed an interest in ballet, a Cottage scholarship enabled her to pursue this dream. Annabella's journey has been fuelled by determination, passion and devotion. She recently danced with The Western Ballet Project, and wrote a letter of thanks to Cottage for this opportunity:

"Thank you so much CBTS, for all your support and encouragement … You have truly allowed me to follow my dreams."

– Scholarship recipient Annabella



In April of this year, I auditioned for a Western Ballet Project production called "Eva". I received feedback and was fortunate to be cast in the ballet as a villager and porteño. Cottage by the Sea (CBTS) supported me to participate in this ballet by providing me with a scholarship that funded the experience.

For 5 days, I rehearsed at a performing arts school in Melton for the show. I met and reunited with many dancers from past productions. Over the 5 days of rehearsals, I made new friends, extended my ballet skills and learned from those around me. In my role as villager/porteño, I learned and practised 7 dances and delved into the world of Eva (Evita Peron) in 20th-century Argentina. As a keen Humanities student at school, I was able to learn more about an influential and inspiring woman in history while extending my dance skills and expression. I loved the tango aspects and Latin style of dancing that I utilised in the ballet.

I would like to thank CBTS for their support and offering me the scholarship to pursue my passion for dance. CBTS helped me to access:

- Morning ballet classes, where I developed my ballet skills with like-minded dancers.
- Choreography and coaching to showcase our talents as dancers and tell Eva's story.
- Company uniform, so we were all part of a collaborative team.
- Dress rehearsal at The Clocktower Centre in Moonee Ponds, where I experienced what it is like to rehearse with a ballet company, including four hours of stage rehearsal at the theatre.
- Costume hire. I wore two costumes in my roles in the ballet, in keeping with the fashion of the era. The long dresses I wore also featured heavily in the choreography and helped me tell the story.
- Video and photographs of the production taken by En Pointe Productions, as a memory of this very special experience.

Thank you so much CBTS, for all your support and encouragement. I would not have been able to enjoy this experience without your support. You have been with me every step of my Western Ballet Project journey and have supported me to be part of several Western Ballet Project youth ballet productions over the last few years. You have truly allowed me to follow my dreams.

New level of photography

Very keen photographer Max wanted to take his creative passion to the next level with a drone. Our scholarship program enabled him to bring this dream to life. The participant shared his gratitude with Cottage through this letter and amazing drone photo:

"Thanks for my DJI Mini 3 drone that I received from your generous donors and the scholarship. I have been learning photography over the past year, and I find it incredibly fun to do. With this drone, I can take my photography skills to the next level – thank you Cottage and the donors that made this possible."

– Scholarship recipient Max

Passion for playing trombone

Through a Cottage scholarship, Aimee* has been learning how to play the trombone over the past 2 years. The participant is grateful for the scholarship because it has helped her meet new people and share new experiences together. She has really enjoyed learning and playing the instrument. Through her school band, she has had the opportunity to perform in Melbourne and at the Victorian School Music Festival.



In memory

Our 135-year history is built upon the hard work and dedication of many who have come before us. Cottage by the Sea honours the memories and gives special thanks to all our dedicated supporters who, during the past financial year, have passed away or we have received a donation in memory of.

Alison Beswick

Alison Nash

Andrew Batson

Betty Baensch

Dorothy Hepburn

Gillian Gubbins

Jill Bell

Joan Fell

Judith Allen

Julian Sullivan

Marie Clatworthy

Rita Andre

Vivienne Brown

Future Giving: Gifts in Wills

In 2012, following the receipt of several bequests, the Board of Cottage by the Sea made a strategic decision to establish a Foundation. These generous gifts were carefully invested to "future proof" the ongoing work of Cottage. Interest and dividends from the Foundation are used to pay for Cottage's overheads each year.

Leaving a gift in your Will is one of the many ways to support Cottage, without affecting your current income or bank balance. It allows you to leave a legacy of money, property, shares or goods beyond your lifetime, which will support generations of children to come.

Guardians by the Sea: Your gift, their future – forever by the sea

Guardians by the Sea has been established to honour the generosity of those who have notified us of their intention to pledge a gift in their Will to Cottage. By letting us know that you have included Cottage by the Sea in your Will, you will join a very special group of people who have also chosen to support future children in this significant way.

There will be invitations to special events, private tours and regular updates on the progress of the children experiencing vulnerabilities in our care. There are also opportunities to be acknowledged in a number of ways, including listings in the Annual Report and our Honour Roll on the website.

As a member of Guardians by the Sea, you will be helping us plan our future with confidence and security. A precious security for thousands of children who we will care for in the years to come. We invite you to be a part of this friendly group, knowing that together we are making an extraordinary difference.

Recognising estates

Once a gift has been received, the estate will be officially listed on the Roll of Honour on our website and in the Annual Report. Most significantly, the name will be added permanently to our Bequest Garden, which sits proudly in the gardens at Cottage by the Sea. We invite you to visit us and see first-hand the wonderful work we do and view this beautiful garden.

Every gift Cottage by the Sea receives is deeply treasured



Free online Wills service for Cottage supporters

Cottage by the Sea has partnered with Gathered Here, an online Wills and Estates law firm that hosts a free and easy step-by-step service to writing your Will online at http://wills.gatheredhere.com.au/c/cottage-by-the-sea or via the QR code.

Already have a Will?

Cottage by the Sea has a Codicil-style form, which will allow you to easily include a gift to Cottage by the Sea in your existing Will without incurring the expense of rewriting it.

We are always deeply grateful for any gifts left in Wills. They make a phenomenal difference to Cottage by the Sea, allowing us to protect our work for generations to come. For more information about gifts in Wills or a Codicil form, please contact Tony on 0409 535 863 or tony@cottagebythesea.com.au.

Tony Featherston
Future Giving, Cottage by the Sea

Looking ahead

Supporting more children

Connections foster good health & happiness

On researching what makes a good life, Harvard University found that the quality of our relationships matters significantly. The 85-year-old Harvard Study of Adult Development established that human connection is a precursor to a happier, healthier, more meaningful and satisfying life. With loneliness and social isolation in young people on the rise, this is relevant to us at Cottage.

It comes as no surprise that connection was also a powerful theme in our impact research with Deakin University. Our first study with Deakin found that children develop a sense of belonging on our Take a Break program, while our second study established that building relationships was a key theme of the medium- to long-term impact of Cottage by the Sea.

Increased need in younger years

New research from Victoria University's Mitchell Institute highlights an "achievement gap" – the impact of socioeconomic background on education outcomes. The difference begins in children as young as 2 and can become substantial by the time a child starts school, often progressing throughout their education.

The digital child

Technology is continuing to have a significant impact on young people, which we see each week on our programs. But this challenge can be transformed into an opportunity to support even more young people.

Professor Louise Paatsch, the lead researcher on our Deakin University reports, is also the Deputy Director and Chief Investigator of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child. The Digital Child is an organisation that supports young people in the digital age through play-based education, providing evidence-informed resources to support young people in this space.



"Children are growing up in a digital society, where digital play is part of their diverse, social worlds … it's well established that play is at the heart of early childhood and is an essential part of their learning and development," shared Professor Paatsch in 'The Social Worlds of Children's Digital Play' – a Digital Child x ACMI seminar. Professor Paatsch's work explores using digital play as a tool to build confidence and problem-solving skills in children while encouraging new ways of thinking.

"It's well established that play is at the heart of early childhood and is an essential part of their learning and development."

– Professor Louise Paatsch

Professor Michael Phillips from Monash University is the Professor of Digital Transformation and is one of three leaders of the UNESCO EDUsummIT, a global community of researchers, policy-makers and practitioners committed to supporting effective integration of technology in education. He is passionate about shaping digital futures through educational technologies.

We look forward to working with Professor Paatsch and Professor Phillips to take the impact of CBTS beyond the confines of our physical boundaries.

Riptide Cottage

Our secondary facility, Riptide Cottage, has been undergoing a rebuild so that we can support an additional 700+ children a year.

We have received wonderful support from the community and the Borough of Queenscliffe for the project. The redevelopment is funded entirely by philanthropy, in the main part by ABN/ Boutique Homes.

After an extensive tender process, we appointed Plan Group Geelong for the build. Project managed from start to finish on a pro bono basis by the greatly respected, local builder David McDonald, the build began in November 2024 and is estimated to be completed by the end of 2025.

The Riptide building was originally a motel, which Australian singer-songwriter Vance Joy holidayed at as a child. Vance Joy's time at Riptide inspired the name of his hugely successful song "Riptide". The singer-songwriter has supported the rebuild with a generous donation. Fair Harbor, a sustainable beachwear brand, created a limited-edition collection with Vance Joy and donated $56,842 from the proceeds of the collection to Cottage. The funds were put towards an indoor slide and welcome area in the facility.

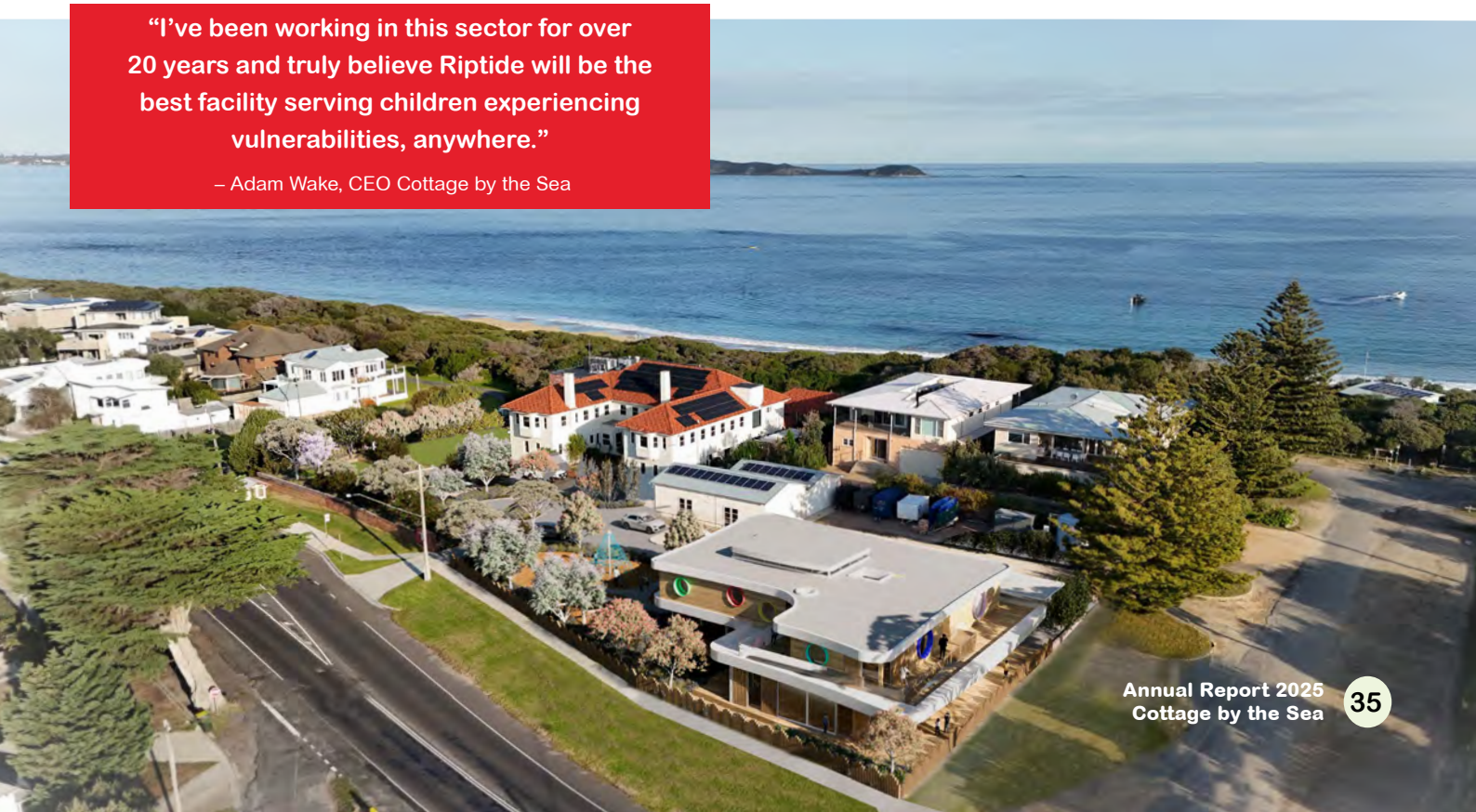
"I've been working in this sector for over 20 years and truly believe Riptide will be the best facility serving children experiencing vulnerabilities, anywhere."

– Adam Wake, CEO Cottage by the Sea

Deakin University

Deakin University is currently undertaking its third report for Cottage by the Sea. This research is highlighting the amazing work of our supporters – volunteers, donors, Board members and Ambassadors – and the impact of their service to our children's charity. We will share this exciting research with you when it is published.





Board of Directors

Cottage by the Sea's Board of Directors kindly volunteer their time, skills and knowledge to help steer the governance of the organisation.

Scott Chapman AM – Chair

Scott was the Chief Executive of the Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria for 14 years. He has had a lifelong involvement in outdoors and camps during his exciting professional and voluntary career. Scott and his wife Jacqui's favourite part of the world is Point Lonsdale, where they recently moved to from Port Melbourne.

Jerome Walsh* – Deputy Chair

Jerome is a Chartered Accountant and Fellow of FINSIA, with more than 20 years of experience in the finance industry.

Don Rankin – Treasurer

Don was a Founding Partner of Pitcher Partners and National Chairperson of the Pitcher Partners Association for 11 years. With more than 30 years' experience advising private and family businesses across a broad range of industries, he specialises in assisting clients in the management, growth and evolution of their business. Don, his wife Megan and family have spent holidays at their house in Point Lonsdale for almost 40 years.

Natalie Hickey

Natalie is a barrister at the Victorian Bar, specialising in commercial law and intellectual property. She is also an alumna of Point Lonsdale Primary School.

Liam Petrie-Allbutt

Liam is an award-winning designer who provides design and engineering solutions across various industries. Liam was raised in Point Lonsdale and is from a sixth-generation Queenscliffe/Point Lonsdale family. He was the Borough of Queenscliffe's Young Citizen of the Year in 2016 and Citizen of the Year in 2022.

Michael Randall OAM

Michael has been in the securities industry for more than 30 years and is a Founding Director of the Financial Services Foundation. Along with his wife, Nikki Coghill, and two daughters, Michael enjoys spending time at his holiday home in Point Lonsdale.

Dr Priscilla Seyfort

Priscilla's professional and academic life has focused on the wellbeing and interests of children. She has an interest in supporting disadvantaged children, and has a PhD from the University of Melbourne. Priscilla holidayed at Queenscliff as a child, and she and her husband, Anthony, own a house in Queenscliff where they enjoy holidays with their four children.

Dennis Smart

Dennis had a career spanning more than 30 years as a Managing Director of the Woods Auto Group. Now retired, Dennis and his wife Sue are spending more time involved with their five young grandchildren, travelling and enjoying their Queenscliff beach house and the local community.

Board meetings held

Board member	Meetings attended
Scott Chapman AM	6/7
Jerome Walsh	2/7
Don Rankin	6/7
Natalie Hickey	6/7
Liam Petrie-Allbutt	3/7
Michael Randall OAM	5/7
Dr Priscilla Seyfort	6/7
Dennis Smart	7/7

In addition, all Board members attended an all-day session this year focusing on Cottage by the Sea's Strategic Plan for 2025-28.

Cottage by the Sea also has a range of Sub Committees made up of Board members, Cottage by the Sea staff and independent advisers.

Board movements*

In April 2025, Jerome resigned from the Board of Directors, which was effective immediately. Jerome served on the Board of Directors at Cottage by the Sea from 2016–2025. He was Treasurer from 2021–2023 and Deputy Chair from 2024–2025. Jerome was a very supportive Board member, and we are incredibly grateful for his long-term dedication to Cottage and the humour that he brought to the table.



Programs staff

Cottage by the Sea staff

Cottage by the Sea staff members work full time, part time and casually within the Programs, Corporate Services and Marketing & Fundraising departments.

Programs department

Our experienced Programs team's primary focus is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people attending our programs.

They come to Cottage with a variety of relevant experience, including teaching, outdoor education, community welfare and youth work. In addition to holding a Current Working with Children Check and Police Check, staff are qualified in First Aid, Safe Food Handling, Mental Health First Aid and Community Surf Life Saving. Our team have also completed updated snorkelling qualifications, Youth Mental Health First Aid and Conflict Resolution Training. In addition, most of the team has or will undergo training in Cultural Awareness, Trauma-Informed Therapy and Remote Area First Aid.

The experience and professional development of our Programs department enables them to facilitate transformative experiences that help build confidence, respect and resilience in children and young people.

Corporate Services department

- Accounts & Finance
- Administration & Reception
- General Counsel
- Facilities – Health & Safety, Housekeeping and Maintenance

Marketing & Fundraising department

- Community Relations
- Fundraising, Marketing & Communications
- Gifts in Wills
- Grant Writing
- Special Projects

Melbourne Community Relations

"I've had the privilege of witnessing growing support for Cottage across Melbourne. It's been both exciting and heartwarming to meet so many of those individuals and groups. Thanks to the generosity and dedication of our supporters, we're able to provide life-changing experiences for even more children."

– Donna Campisi, Melbourne Community Relations representative

Highlights of the past 12 months

- W Melbourne hotel launched a festive Giving Tree campaign in their foyer throughout November and December 2024, encouraging guests to donate funds for gifts for Cottage children. This wonderful initiative marked the beginning of a new partnership, and Cottage is grateful to the W Melbourne team and their supporters for their enthusiasm and generosity.



WMelbourne – Christmas giving tree

- KOGO made Christmas at Cottage extra special by contributing funds for gifts for the annual Santa visit. Their support helped create a joyful and memorable time for Take a Break participants.



Applewood winter warmers stall

- Applewood Retirement Village Craft Group elevated their annual Winter Warmers Stall by adding a popular soup stall to accompany their beautiful handmade items. Donna attended the event and experienced the buzz firsthand. The funds raised have directly supported Cottage programs; we thank the talented women and their community.

Community growth & engagement

- Toni Daniele is a new supporter all the way from the Sunshine Coast! She handmakes wonderfully fun pencil cases, toiletry bags, scrunchies and purses for the children, and has now become a regular supporter. We thank her for her creative hand and warm heart.



Toni Daniele with handmade gifts



Pinchapoo Team

- We thank Kate Austin and the team at Pinchapoo who provided much-needed toiletries throughout the year for Cottage children.



Marj and Wilna

- Meet Marj Decastegne, our wonderful new supporter from Mildura. A dedicated knitter, Marj has become a regular contributor with the help of her sister, Wilna Lawford – a long-time supporter from Melbourne. Donna had the joy of meeting Marj in Mildura, where Marj cheerfully filled her car with donations

- This year, we've partnered with GIVIT, an incredible charity that helps connect those in need with exactly the right support. When we urgently needed children's clothing, Donna put a request through the GIVIT website and Mel Peverill made it happen. We're so grateful for their support.



Donna & Mel Peverill from GIVIT

Donna has played a key role in expanding Cottage by the Sea's reach across Melbourne, attending community events as a guest speaker, and building strong new connections. Her efforts, combined with the ongoing support of existing Cottage advocates, have helped grow awareness and engagement. Donna extends her sincere thanks to all supporters – both new and long-standing. Your contributions help create lasting, positive change for children at Cottage by the Sea.



Our volunteers

Supporting others is integral to the philosophy underpinning Cottage by the Sea, which includes the assistance of our dedicated volunteers.

Our wonderful volunteers are part of the team and beauty of Cottage by the Sea. We share in the delight of a child's joy, laugh over lunch and work together to give visiting children a memorable experience.

Cottage volunteers provide up to 160 hours of support each week in administration, archiving, donations, the kitchen, morning and afternoon teas, gardening and maintenance, among other areas. Many of our volunteers have been supporting Cottage for decades!

Each year, we acknowledge the generosity and support of our volunteers with a celebratory lunch during National Volunteer Week in May and a Christmas luncheon in December. These annual events provide an opportunity for us to thank our volunteers for their dedication and service.

Our volunteers are also made up of our Board members who generously donate their time and expertise, as well as our Branch members, Ambassadors and Patron who support Cottage by spreading awareness and helping to raise funds.

Cottage by the Sea volunteers

**New volunteers this financial year*

- Angelo Lombardi
- Anne-Maree Fitzgerald
- Catherine Robb
- Chau (Jo) U
- Christine Jenkins
- Corinne Mitchell
- Danette Morrison
- Daniel Guiney
- Deb Stephens
- Debbie Purcell*
- Diane Lombardi
- Em Ambrose
- Gillian Barclay
- Graham Mason
- Hartley Budd
- Helen Grummett
- Helen Mason
- Ian Jenkins
- Jan Heriot
- Jenny Blake*
- Jenny Grossman
- John Fitzgerald
- Judith Way
- Julie Fitzpatrick
- Julie Harrington
- Julie Raunik
- Kate Parton
- Kerryn King
- Kos Bratan
- Lois Dillon
- Lynn Collishaw
- Mary Gibbs*
- Pauline Rickard
- Raymond Chapman
- Robyn Russell
- Rosalyn Balzer*
- Sandra Vizard
- Sue Wood
- Suzanne Cronin*
- Suzanne Ivermee
- Suzie Capell
- Ted Heriot
- Tricia Ansell*
- Trish Greig*
- Wayne Chrimes

We have recently farewelled the following volunteers: Michele Farrar, Silvana Bongiovanni, Suzanne McDonald, Trish Martin & Ute Cook.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at Cottage by the Sea, please call us on 03 5258 1663 or email info@cottagebythesea.com.au.

Life Members

Beverley Davies
Eril Deighton
Eva Milne
Gillian Gough
Gloria Joan Longden
Gwen Pitfield
Heather Moore
Jean Diment
Jean Williamson
Michael Randall OAM
Natalie Hickey
Prue Forster
Robyn Harper
Roma Balaam
Ros Leigh OAM
Sue Armstrong
Sue Reilly
Sue Richardson
W.G. Philip

Ambassadors

Alan Harrison
Andrew Cannon
Andrew Simms
Annie James
Curtis Stone OAM
David McDonald
Eric Black
Glynn Harvey
Ian Cover OAM
Jade Augustine
Jan Wilkinson
Joel Selwood
Louisa White
Mal Campbell
Patrick Dangerfield
Phil de Fégely
Rod Laver MBE
Warren Davies

Branches



Bellarine

President: Penny Hawker

Secretary: Julie Duffield

Treasurer: Jo Baker



Queenscliff

President: Robyn Eadie (2024) & Claire Bolster (2025)

Secretary: Cynthia Eunson

Treasurer: Janet Finlay



Highton/Ceres Acorn

President: Ros Leigh OAM

Secretary: TBA

Treasurer: Coral Laing

Branch Liaison Officer: Julie Werrett



Geelong

President: Rhonda Rotherham

Secretary/Treasurer: Robyn Harper

Our donors

Special thanks to all our philanthropic supporters, including those who have anonymously donated more than $248,000 in the financial year 2024-25.

We thank the following legal firms for their pro-bono support this financial year: HWL Ebsworth Lawyers, K&L Gates, Nevett Ford Lawyers

$200,000 or over

ABN Group VIC
Private Philanthropic Foundation
The Shine On Foundation

$150,000 or over

The Anthony Costa Foundation

$100,000 or over

Campbell Edwards Trust
Cottage by the Sea Branches
John T Reid Charitable Trusts
Peter Latham
The Sir Wilfred & CH (Roger) Brookes Charitable Foundation

$50,000 or over

Ararat Rural City Take a Break Fundraiser
Percy Baxter Charitable Trust
Smart family
The G W Vowell Foundation Ltd
The Rippers Club
Winki Energy & TenderPrint Race Day

$40,000 or over

Mary Harrison
Roderick Insurance Race Day
The Marian & E H Flack Trust

$30,000 or over

Bulls & Bears Golf Day
Estate of Ann Huffam
Geof Nash
Randall Foundation Pty Ltd
The Eric & Elizabeth Gross Foundation P/L
The Stuart Leslie Foundation

$20,000 or over

APCO Foundation Pty Ltd
Barbara & Ralph Ward-Ambler
Collier Charitable Fund
Di Edwards
MFS International Australia Pty Limited
Pierce Armstrong Foundation
Rita Andre
Rosemary Norman Foundation
Steadfast Foundation
The Eirene Lucas Foundation
The Grangers Foundation
Women of the University Fund

$15,000 or over

Darren Allbutt
Dunoon Family Foundation
Geelong Community Foundation
Ian Leckie
Millbrook Asset Management
Peter & Sally Steele
Sue Armstrong/WSSK Family Trust
The King Family Foundation Ltd
Wakanyanas
Walter Campbell Memorial Trust

$10,000 or over

Adam's Arctic Ultramarathon
Barb & Rod Ashby
Dimmick Foundation
Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust – Lawyers
Handbury Foundation
Janet Torney
Kaelan's Norway Ski
Michael Randall OAM
Michael Vickers-Willis
Millbrook Funds Pty Ltd
Raelee Wilson
Social Enterprise Group Ltd
Stawell Gold Mines
The Bourne Foundation
The Dawn Wade Foundation
The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Fund
Vicki Perrett

$5,000 or over

Ainslie Cummins
Allan Wilkins
Andrew M Cannon AM
Anne & Michael Reed
Applewood Retirement Village Craft Group
Betty Fraser
Bruce Edmunds & Associates P/L
Count Charitable Foundation
D & X Williamson Family Charitable Fund
Edith & Rick Westcott
Farm Foods Pty Ltd
Gerties Group (Inc.) Opportunity Shop
Hugh Bromell
Jack Moody Charitable Foundation
Jean Williamson
Lago Corporation Pty Ltd
Marion Isabel Thomas Estate
Mark Gray
Martin Robb
Melbourne Marine
Metricon Homes
Pt Lonsdale Dinner
The Gray Family Charitable Trust
The Gwen & Edna Jones Foundation
The Isabel & John Gilbertson Charitable Trust
The Mona Georgina Harris Perpetual Charitable Trust
The Ray & Joyce Uebergang Foundation
Tony Pace
Valerie Osbourne
Wendy Tonkin Endowment

$4,000 or over

Freemasons Foundation Victoria Limited
Kate & Tony Robinson
L R Cazaly Trust Fund
Peter Carah
Queenscliff Cruising Yacht Club
Rotary Club of Essendon North Inc.

$3,000 or over

Catherine Gray

Geelong Connected Communities
Glynn Harvey
Illabrook P/L A/C J.Roach, R.Roach & Sally Gough
Mt Waverley Uniting Church
Omexom Australia
The Delta Group
W Melbourne (Daisho Developments Melbourne Pty Ltd T/A)
Wendy Michell

$2,000 or over

Acorn Wealth
All Saints Anglican Church Opportunity Shop
Andrew & Fiona Balaam
Australia Post – People of Post Grants
Brigid & Hugh Robertson
Coralie Erwin
Elise Perry
Elizabeth and Andrew Turner Legacy
Elizabeth Ward
Eril Deighton
Fitzroys
Jim & Judy Allen
Lions Club of Waverley Inc.
Macquarie Bank
Stawell Lions Club
Stella Haigh
The Ricketson Foundation
Tony Robinson
Torana Owners Club Inc
William Huffam

$1,000 or over

360Q
Amicus Ivanhoe Freemasons Lodge
Andrew Crockett
Ann Summers
Ann Perrott
Barry Gilbert
Bill Pretty
Bob White Electrix
Bombora Advice Pty Ltd
Catherine & Robert Vickers-Willis
Chesley Taylor
Christina Cheers
CM Commercial
Cricket Australia
Darebin North West Uniting Church
eManaged
Fuze Electrical
Gabrielle Mann
Gayle Narita
Gill Hunt
Gold Diggers Arms Hotel
Graeme Marchment
Hadfield Community Activities Group
Henry Berry Estate and Trust
Ian Cover OAM
Ian & Margaret Hunter
International Trade Management
Jan Short
Jenny Blencowe
Jeremy Blackshaw
JI & WI Mactier
Jill Maddox & Ian Evans
John Boundy
John Leaper
Kaye Nixon
Knit One Give One (KOGO)
Lavinia Cuming
Leigh Van Ingen
Lions Club of Footscray
Margaret Gibson
Mark Whiting
Mary Davidson
Matthew Teasdale
Melissa Hope
Nikki Coghill
Noel Boniface
Ocean Grove Uniting Church Outreach Centre & Opportunity Shop "The Dove"
Paddy White
Patricia Lowe
Patricia White
Raelee Wilson
Rhonda Dingle
Richard de Fégely
Rosemary Wilkinson
Sally Eastoe
Sir Charles Hotham Hotel
The Rotary Club of Greater Geelong
Tim Dennis
Vauna Jaensch
Whittlesea Rotary

$500 or over

Alan Harrison
Alison Moore
Andrew Padgham
Barbara Bell
Barry Medew Building Supplies Pty Ltd
Bellarine Belles
Bob Bellhouse
Carmen Carew
Catrin Taylor
Chirnside Park Senior Citizens
Country Women's Association Boroondara Branch
Craig Partington
David Thomas
David Ursic
Dawn McDonald
Deirdre Barnett
Dianne Cheevers
Don & Judy Cameron
Don and Megan Rankin
Elaine Forde
Elizabeth Koch-Taylor
Fay Jones
Gerard White
Glenroy Lions Club
Graham Moffat
Holy Trinity Lara (OP Shop)
Jane Caldwell
Janet Cameron
Jeremy Slattery
Joan Hammonds
John & Anne Dawborn
Joy Raftopoulos
Julie Bingley
Julie Raunik
Keith Roderick
Leanne O'Connor
Leopold News & Lotto
Lifestyle Mount Duneed
Link 21 Foundation
Lions Club of Little River
Littlewood Charities Club Inc
Louise M Gourlay
Maree Muir
Margaret Addison
Margaret Cash
Mary Carter
Mary Patricia McKenzie
Matt Armstrong
Moira Kairys
Mont Albert Reading Circle
Peninsula Parklands Craft Group
Peter Buckley
Peter Gates
Point Lonsdale Bowls Club Inc
Probus Club of Maling Combined Inc
Probus Club of Torquay Ladies Inc.
Randall & Lynda Lewis
Rick Loader
Roslyn McKee
Ryman Healthcare Australia
Simon & Sophie Holloway
Simpson Family
Sitetech Solutions
Tintern Grammar
Torquay Golf Club Ladies

In-kind donors

Here are some of the supporters who have donated their time, skills or goods to Cottage by the Sea over the past financial year.

ABN Group/Boutique Homes
Acacia Trefoil Guild
Adrienne Rowland
Alan Harrison
Alan Kossatz
Alison Dillon
Alison Lloyd
Ally Munzel
Angela White
Anglican Church Altona
Anita Stapleton
Ann King
Anna Numberson
Anne Martin
Anne Way
Annette Loader
Anthony Costa Foundation & Family
Applewood Retirement Village Craft Group
Arcare Point Lonsdale
Armstrong Green Retirement Village Craft Group
Barbara Foenander
Barbara Mackey
Barbara Parker
Barwon Heads & Bellarine Knitters Group
Barwon Health Social Support Belmont
Beaut Beanies Knitting Group
Belinda Edwards
Bellarine Adventure Golf
Bellarine Country Butchers
Bellarine Historic Vehicle Club
Bellarine Peninsula Church of Christ Craft Group
Belmont Uniting Church – Craft Group
Bernard & Liz Hooley
Beryl Adams
Beth Hamilton
Betty Baensch
Betty Clarke-Wood
Betty Down
Bev Archdall
Bev Crosthwaite
Bev Harris
Bev Vanderhoeven
Beverley Gamble
Beverly Cole
BlueCross Highgrove
Bob Bellhouse
Bonds
Bonnie Davies
Boronia Uniting Church Craft Group
Box Hill RSL Knitting Group
Box Hill RSL Sub-Branch Women's Auxiliary
Box Hill RSL Welfare Dept
Brenda Sims
Broadmeadows and District Garden Club
Carmel Capon
Carmel Turner
Carmen Carew
Carol McRandall
Carole Hey
Carolyn Edwards
Charles Le Fevre
Charlie Borracci
Chef Fresh
Chirnside Park Senior Citizens
Chris Unwin
Christina Ward
Christine Garvey
Claire Dalton
Coffee with Amore
Colleen Egan
Cottage by the Sea Branches
Cynthia Eunson
Dandenong Probus Group
Daphne Briscoe
Daphne Krake
Darren Allbutt
David Dobney
David McDonald
Dawn Joyce
Deb Forth
Delamates
Denise McTighe
Denise Rovulston
Diane Kemp
Dianne Denning
Dianne & Peter Kemp
Dianne Perrett
Dina Cantamaglia
Doncaster View Club
Dorothy Hepburn
Dot Miller
Drysdale Family Support Inc.
Drysdale R.S.L. Women's Auxiliary
Drysdale Uniting Church
Ed Morris
Edith Clark & Ed Morris
Edrington Park Retirement Village Ladies Group
Elaine Freer
Elaine Hatty
Elaine Orchard
Elizabeth Broadfoot
Elizabeth Markwell
Elizabeth Roberts
eManaged
Emily Smith
Eunice Purvis
Evelyn Collins
Evelynne Brown
Fab Friends
Faye Maher
Faye O'Brien
Feed Me – Bellarine, Geelong Surf Coast
Felicity Lee
Friendship Quilters Geelong
Gail Towers
Gaylene Fehlberg
Geelong Citrus Packers
Geelong Fishing Charters
Geelong Food Relief Centre
Geelong Women's Shed
Geoff Counsel
Gladys Wilson
Glenda Leigh
Glynn Harvey
Good Vibe Society Charity Group
Goulburn Valley West Group C.W.A
Grace Milne
Gwenda Antcliffe
Hadfield Community Activities Group
Hadfield Ladies Gymnasium
Hamilton Community House Inc
Hanes Australasia
Heather Knight
Heather Moore
Helen Brebner
Helen Denton
Helping Hands Quilters
Hilda Lee
Holy Trinity Anglican Ladies Guild
HWL Ebsworth
Ian & Heather Duncan
Ian Loader
Ikebana International – Melbourne Chapter 29
Inala Probus Group
Irene McAdam
Irene Walsh
Isabelle Harkness
Jackie Massouris
Jan Edwards
Jan Heale
Jane Hill
Janice Georgiou
Jazwares
Jean Robertson
Jean Ryan
Jeanette Stevenson
Jeanette Wallace
Jeannette Straub
Jennifer Sermon
Jennifer Vale
Jenny Edwards
Jenny Gleeson
Jenny Thomas
Jill Brown
Jill Jackson
Jill Thom
Jo Swanson
Joan Coleman
Joan Orelli
Joan Yates
Jodie Walters
Johanna Evertsen-Mostert
Joyce Gray
Judy Thompson
Judy Watson
Judy Webb
Julie Morris
Julie Viccars
Julie Werrett
June McLaughlin
K Royle
K&L Gates
Karen Fry
Karen Joyce
Kaye Davidson
Keilor View Club
Keith Allen
Kerry Wicke
Ket Baker
Kim Hall
Kim Smith
Knit One Give One (KOGO)
Knit4Charities Inc
Knoxfield Ladies Probus Club
Ladies Hearts & Crafts Club, St Peters Anglican Church
Leigh Murray
Len & Audrey Milligan
Leopold Ladies Midweek Tennis Club
Lesley Burnett
Lesley Robinson
Libby Allen
Liberman Family

Lifestyle Ladies
Lifestyle Ocean Grove
Lions Club of Leopold
Liz Hunter
Lois Matheson
Loris Harris
Lorna Church
Lorraine Baxter
Lorraine Bishop
Lorraine Collison
Lorraine Hughes
Lou Gladman
Lucia Baysen
Lucy Simms
Lyn Bishop
Lyn Fleming
Lyn Hill
Lyn Kennedy
Lyn O'Brien
Lyn Prescott
Lynne Stewart
Magarita Gudimenko
Maggie Stowers
Mandy Calderwood
Manie Malloy
Maree James
Margaret & Malcolm Campbell
Margaret Clarke
Margaret Kell
Margaret Kerr
Margaret & Graeme Laurie
Margaret Safstrom
Margaret Stewart
Margaret Waland
Margaret Way
Margaret Wayland
Marie Bennetts
Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre
Marj Decastegne
Marj Miller
Marjorie Francis
Mark Cline
Marlene Lamont
Mary Micallef
Maureen Cattanach
Meat Chef Fresh
Meredith Cooke
Meredith East
Mermaids Swimming Group
Mernda Retirement Village
Miriam Gray
Moonee Valley Probus Club Ladies Inc.
Morgan Stanley Wealth Mgt
Mt Duneed Lifestyle
Mt Waverley Uniting Church
Nola Woods
Norlane Community Centre Craft Group
North Metropolitan Trefoil
Ocean Grove Carols in the Park
Ocean Grove Chat & Craft Group
Ocean Grove on Barwon Ladies Probus Club
Opal Kew
Pakenham Anglican Church Aid
Pam Harrison
Pam Kinsman
Pam Roberts
Pam Templeton
Pam Timmins
Panache Cafe & Creperie
Pat Wilmott
Patricia (Tricia) Ansell
Patricia Bullen
Patti Stewart
Pauline Bradley
Pauline Corbett
Pauline Shaw
Patricia Everitt Deering
Peggy Knowles
PFD Food Services Pty Ltd
Phyllis Hoffman
Point Lonsdale Newsagency
Portarlington ARCARE
Portarlington Guardian Pharmacy
Probus Club of Bayside Inc
Probus Club of Bentleigh Inc.
Probus Club of Brighton Central Combined Inc
Probus Club of Camberwell
Probus Club of Drysdale Ladies
Probus Club of Endeavour Hills
Probus Club of Fawkner-Merlynston
Probus Club of Hamlyn Heights Combined
Probus Club of Hawthorn Glen
Probus Club of Keilor East
Probus Club of Knoxfield Ladies
Probus Club at Lower Templestowe
Probus Club of Maling Combined Inc
Probus Club of Melton Ladies
Probus Club of Mooroolbark Combined
Probus Club of Notting Hill Combined
Probus Club of Queenscliff/Point
Lonsdale
Probus Club of Ricketts Point
Probus Club of Seaholme
Probus Club of Waurn Ponds Combined
Prue Thom
Queenscliffe Maritime Museum
Quilts for Orphans
Ray Rayford
Rhonda Knight
Rhonda Rotherham
River of Life Apostolic Church
Robbie Pearce
Robert and Valerie Edwards and Greville
Robyn Beer
Robyn Harper
Robyn Holt
Roma Julian
Roslyn Eddington
Roslyn Stanley
Ross Shimmen
Russ Cameron
Salford Park Community Village Social Club
Sally Stewart
Sandra Miller
Sandra Talbot
Sarah Walton
Sea All Dolphin Swims
Seaholme Probus Club
Sew N' Sew Craft Activity Group of Probus Club of Bayside Inc.
Sew What So Good
Shanagolden Ladies Group
Sharon Hill
Sharon Murray
Sharon Welgus
Sheena Haggerty
Sheila Madden
Sherril Cooper
Shirley Grace
Shirley Lasham
Shirley Rogerson
Southern Ocean Environmental Link (SOEL)
Spectrum Group
Springvale View Club
St John of God Hospital Auxiliary (Berwick)
St Laurence Park Retirement Village
St Paul's Lutheran Church Ladies Fellowship
Star of the Sea Retirement Village Craft Group
Stephanie Orr
Subaru Geelong
Sue Birch
Sue & Anthony Hudgell
Sue Moger
Sue Thompson
Sue Walton
Sue Wood
Susan Carroll
Suzanne Sheridan
The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.
The Naked Sheep
Thread Together
Toni Daniele
Tony Imrie
Tricia Miller
Trish Hockley
Uniting Church Adult Fellowship
Urbanbar Design
Val Kenneady
Valerie Priddley
Van Loon's Pty Ltd
Velma Rudder
Vera Rochester
Vicki Higgerson
Vicki Osborn
Vicky Griffiths
Virginia Bowden
Vivien Gibbs
Wandarrah Arts & Crafts
Wantirna Village
Wantirna Retirement Village
Warralily Estate
Waverley Day View Club
Wellness Group – Lifestyle Village
Wendy Cook
Wendy Cooke
Wendy Hatzikides
Wendy Lancaster
Wendy Stephen
Wesley Craft Group
Wesley Uniting Church
Westgate Diners Group
Wilma Allen
Windsor Park Retirement Village
Women of the University Fund
Woodcraft Manningham
Yarn Me Calm

Financials

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of Cottage by the Sea over the past financial year.

It has been a challenging year financially, with costs rising dramatically and faster than we are able to increase equivalent funding. Total expenditure increased by $182k over the year, reflecting increased costs associated with insurance, safety and wellbeing, employment, information technology and compliance.

As noted in the addendum accompanying the Financial Report, Cottage operations recorded a loss of $124,232, which was partially offset this year by support from the Foundation, including a substantial distribution from the Program sub-fund specifically allocated to directly support program activities.

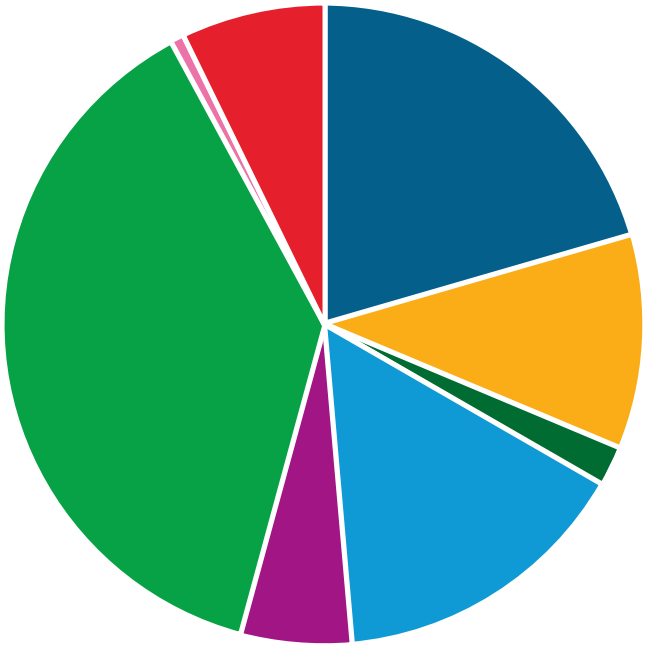


Allocation of funds

- 36% Operating & program expenses
- 19% Future site development
- 16% Administration and fundraising
- 12% Foundation investment
- 10% Future children's services and programs
- 7% Capital purchases

Sources of income

- 38% Trusts & foundations
- 21% Interest & dividends
- 15% Individual
- 11% Fundraising & events
- 7% Corporate
- 6% Cottage Branches & community groups
- 2% Cottage generated income, hire & sales
- 1% Bequests



Cottage by the Sea
QUEENSCLIFF

Thank you for your support in 2025

Thank you, Cottage by the Sea community, for your support this past financial year. Together, we will continue to achieve our mission of offering inspiration, fun and opportunity to more children.

Give a child a break



Cottage by the Sea

QUEENSCLIFF

www.cottagebythesea.com.au

ABN: 21 987 748 593
Registration No: A0006878E

29 Flinders Street
Queenscliff, Vic. 3225

+61 3 5258 1663
info@cottagebythesea.com.au

The Australian Tax Office endorses Cottage by the Sea for charity tax concessions, including donations $2 and over, which are tax deductible. Cottage by the Sea is entered in the public register maintained by the Australian Business Register at www.abr.business.gov.au.