



ANNUAL REPORT

Financial year 2022 - 2023

BEYOND WORDS IS AN INITIATIVE OF THE BIOGRAPHY PROGRAM

ABN 12 153 358 313



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Highlights

26

Number of biographies published



6

Number of biographies in progress

1600



Estimated number of volunteer hours spent publishing biographies

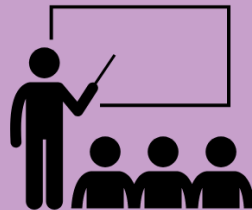
17

Number of aged care residences worked with



18

Number of new biographers trained



New!

We have expanded into regional Victoria, running training for volunteers in Geelong



BOARD CHAIR REPORT

It has been a good year for Beyond Words. Our success and development this year are evident in our growing community of volunteers, our stronger finances, our improved organisation and the gradual increase in the number of biographies as the aged care sector recovers from COVID-19. The details are in the reports on our program, financial situation, fundraising and the other reports that follow.

This success has enabled the board to take a major step forward in building a sustainable organisation. We have employed an outstanding information officer and are now able to employ a part time coordinator. These two roles will ensure that our systems and organisation are well-managed to support our growing community of biographers and operational volunteers.

A general meeting on Monday 7th August agreed new rules for the board that limit the number of board members to seven elected and two co-opted members. Elected directors can serve two-year terms renewable for up to eight years.

This year Austin Paterson, Nigel McQuitty and I will be standing for re-election. Toby Hayes will take a well-earned break. I have appreciated Toby's active and intelligent participation in board meetings through the challenging last three years. He led the early development of the fundraising committee that included producing a fine prospectus. He will continue as a biographer and be available to help the board when his legal expertise is required.

I applaud the commitment of all our board members who in addition to our monthly board meeting have met many times to pursue a range of issues. We are all members of our fundraising committee and volunteer time and talent in innumerable other ways.

RICHARD HILL





PUBLIC OFFICER REPORT

As public officer for Beyond Words my primary purpose is to ensure that governance processes are in place and that the company is legally compliant.

I confirm that such necessary compliance and governance matters have been completed for the past year as and when required.

Insurance coverage is in place, which protects volunteers involved in the work, and the company itself.

The company's trademark is protected through its ongoing registration.

The program remains registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). As the primary contact for the company, I lodged our Annual Information Statement with the Commission when required.

BRIGID RYAN





TREASURER REPORT

A message from Vera Considine our Finance Officer:

Richard Hill with his leadership style of tireless attention to detail, infectious enthusiasm, and encouragement to support a growing team of volunteers has presided over a remarkable rebuilding of the organisation. As a result, the financial position has improved remarkably through sponsorship, grants and generous donations to reach a very stable bank balance of \$34,860.53 as of 30th June 2023, enabling the organisation to plan the employment of support staff as the next step in development.

Whatever the reason, the improvement in our financial position is evident in the attached financial statements. The fundraising committee have produced outstanding and successful applications.

Our income has expanded particularly thanks to the grant generously provided by the Jack Brockhoff Foundation. There are several grant and sponsorship prospects giving us reasonable confidence that we can sustain our income and meet the employment costs, which are now our major expense.

Thanks go to the fundraising committee for this success, and to Vera for meticulously maintaining and reporting finances through the year.

Our growing finances mean the need for more scrutiny. We are currently seeking a pro bono auditor for our financial systems and accounts.

RICHARD HILL on behalf of our TREASURER TOBY HAYES





FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement

The Biography Program t/a Beyond Words

Financial Statement as at 30th June 2023

Balance Sheet

As at 30th. June 2023

Assets

Cash at Bank

Bendigo Bank	\$ 1,553.53	
Bendigo Bank Savings Acc	\$ 33,307.00	\$ 34,860.53

Fixed Assets

Recorders x 14	\$ 1,683.00	
HP Laser Pro Printer	\$ 692.00	
Startup Capitalisation Costs	\$ 859.00	\$ 3,234.00

Total Assets \$ **38,094.53**

Liabilities

\$ - \$ -

Total Liabilities \$ -

Equity

Current Year Earnings	\$ 28,073.53	
Historical Balancing	\$ 10,021.00	

Total Equity \$ **38,094.53**

Profit & Loss Statement

As at 30th June 2023

Income

Donations	\$ 2,665.00	
Grants	\$ 32,450.00	
Sponsorship	\$ 5,000.00	
Bank Interest	\$ 149.59	\$ 40,264.59

Total Income \$ **40,264.59**

Expenses

Administration	\$ 10,178.89	
Biography Publications	\$ 1,257.67	
Biographer Training Program	\$ 754.50	\$ 12,191.06

Total Expenses \$ **12,191.06**

Net Surplus \$ **28,073.53**



FUNDRAISING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Several months on, the fundraising subcommittee is still celebrating our success in securing funds to support some paid administrative support for Beyond Words.

We hope to look back upon the \$32,450 grant awarded from the Jack Brockhoff Foundation in 2022 as a major turning point in the organisation's renewal period. The impact of this generous gift will be realised through the greater number of biographies enabled by better systems and processes and reducing the load for our dedicated volunteers. Many individuals and families will benefit, and we extend our deep gratitude to the Jack Brockhoff Foundation leadership and trustees for investing in our work.

Two other grants we submitted this year were unsuccessful. After putting so much work into the applications, this may seem disappointing. But each one helps us hone our grant-writing skills and clarify our funding needs, so it's all part of the pathway to success.

Fundraising is as much about networking and relationships as it is about money, so we are fortunate to have the inimitable Austin Paterson on our board and fundraising subcommittee. It seems there are not many people in Victoria's grant-making and aged-care sectors who aren't connected with Austin in some way. With concerted and collaborative support from the management group and subcommittee, Austin has helped us connect with and explore many sponsorship and grant opportunities.

Through a combination of meetings, proposals and our wonderful new social media presence, we will continue to build awareness among funders of Beyond Words' impact on our community. Not all opportunities will come to fruition and some may take a while to bear fruit, but we are definitely making progress. We feel sure there are other people in our extended network who might wish to make a meaningful contribution to our community, and we are here to help facilitate the joy of giving. Anyone wanting to share in this rewarding work would be a welcome addition to the fundraising subcommittee!

Encouraging our supporters to consider leaving a Gift in their Will to Beyond Words is also part of our fundraising strategy. We can certainly demonstrate that even a small gift can leave a huge legacy for our clients and their families. Nurturing a community of Gift-in-Will supporters and celebrating their planned giving fits naturally in organisations like ours that exist thanks to a close-knit group of passionate and highly skilled volunteers.

The logophiles among us will relish the challenge of naming our inaugural legacy society, and we hope many people will consider becoming a member of it to help Beyond Words continue supporting our community for generations to come.

LYN DAVIES

"Blessed are they who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit."
(Unattributed proverb)





OPERATIONS COORDINATOR REPORT

Our operation and development this year is the work of many capable and hardworking people. It has certainly been a busy year for me because we have been doing more than keeping things ticking over. We are building an organisation, which is not dependent on this aging volunteer or his over worked partner Dan Kavanagh, by sharing the load and employing people to help with some core support roles.

The attached organisational chart summarises the growing number of volunteers that share the load, and bring their various talents to the roles that make our biography program an excellent one. Our new coordinator will join Dan, Caroline Trubridge and me as a coordinating group.

There are insightful reports on many of our activities below, but it is hard to fully describe the way so many people work together to get things done. A random sample of these marvels is how: Dianne Parslow fixed the layout within minutes of me emailing a document; Anne Foster produces perfect board minutes within a day; Chris Childs seamlessly steps in if Julie Butcher or Anne Stonehouse are away; Vera's accounts are always accurate; Julie is supporting someone whose client proves challenging; Nigel edits everything and pens perfect words for the submission, policy or newsletter... There are many others. My apologies for not naming you all and thanks for how you work to ensure everything gets done.

Of course, my biggest thanks are to Dan who over the last three years has singlehandedly brought biographers and biographies back into action despite the dreadful impacts of COVID-19 and the challenges in getting aged care to identify the many storytellers who would love our listening ear and to have their biography written.

The employment of our information officer and a coordinator will ensure that the systems and support are in place to enable that community of volunteers to work effectively and enjoy the work they are doing. Caroline's information management, database, policies, development of our online presence and general progress in chasing up projects has been applauded by many of those volunteers, especially Dan and myself. We look forward to seeing how this develops when a coordinator joins us for two days a week.

Beyond Words is becoming a more outward looking organisation that assists and partners other organisations who are passionate about the value of storytelling for our elders. Of note is our partnership with Calvary. We are enjoying working with them to create their biography program and have agreed to work in close partnership for at least two years. Such partnerships and sponsorships bring us resources and enable more biographers to share and celebrate our elders' stories. That's what we are here for.

RICHARD HILL



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Organisational Structure 2023

Board

Chair	Dep Chair	Treasurer	Secretary	Member	Member	Member
Richard	Vacant	Toby	Brigid	Nigel	Dianne	Austin



Fundraising Subcommittee
All Board Members + Lyn

Operations Coordinator	Program Coordinator	Information / Admin Coord
Richard	Dan	Caroline



Finance Off	Information Officer, Website	News & Forums	Training	Admin & records	ACF Liaison / Area Coordinators	Editorial team
Vera	Caroline, Rachel	Anne S, Chris, Dianne, Richard, Dan	Richard, Dan, Julie, Nigel	Dan, Richard, Anne Foster, Dianne	Dan, Area Coordinators: Jill, Penny	Nigel, Brigid, Val, Andrew, Hanna, Dianne



Biographers
Supported by all the above. Area Coordinators will be their first calling point to make sure they can find whoever they need for a particular issue.

Biographers who are Company Members elect the Board.





PROGRAM COORDINATOR REPORT

Despite aged care residences (ACRs) continuing to be affected by partial and complete COVID-19 lock-downs we managed to navigate our way through the interruptions to visits and achieved good results in service delivery and training.

We had a productive day in late 2022 when we prepared a group of biographers to assist in liaising with ACRs in their own areas and conduct the resulting assessments. However, this development has been slow to progress as the group of biographers encountered personal situations that impeded their capacity to commence. We are now trialing another approach to spread the workload of this activity on which Beyond Words critically depends.

Our reach during the year extended to Geelong, Trentham and Kilmore. There is keen interest from Regional Victoria that we need to address as we strengthen our resources and capacity.

It's concerning that we are unable to respond to the many approaches we receive to assist those in home and palliative care. Again, in time, we can maybe explore partnerships with other bodies to enable them to work in these deserving areas.

My sincere thanks go to the people from Beyond Words, our partners in the aged care sector, and the many wonderful residents who have entrusted us to preserve their remarkable stories.

DAN KAVANAGH



A tribute to Dan

Dan will always be important part of Beyond Words. However, he is currently reducing his workload to look after his health and enjoy his family. What a massive contribution he has made over the last three years! It is Dan who has almost single-handedly revived our program. He has driven all over Melbourne knocking on the doors of aged care residences, assessing clients and placing biographers all while wading through a sea of COVID-19 restrictions to get there. He has been a major part of the training programs and of all our development over the last three years.

We would not be here without him.

On behalf of our community, a big thank you to Dan.

Richard



EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT

The flow of biographies has been smoother this year as we move beyond the issues brought by the disruption of the COVID-19 years. This 2022-2023 financial year we edited, formatted and printed twenty-six biographies and as the organisation continues to train biographers and assign them to clients, we are certain we will reach our goal of seventy-five to a hundred biographies per year.

During the editing process, we continue to ensure we preserve the client's voice but also present the life story to the reader as clearly as possible. This can be a fine balancing act, but we respect the integrity of the client's voice and the work of our biographers to create lasting legacy documents. In addition, this year our copy editors and proof-readers have enhanced our process by providing biographers with a short paragraph of feedback to help them improve future biographies.

In addition to editing, the team continue to contribute to the monthly forum, have a column called; From the Editor's Desk, in the monthly newsletter, and assist with many other aspects of Beyond Words such as the training program and fundraising.

I would like to thank the small team of eagle-eyed editors; Andrew, Val, Brigid and Hannah who are always willing, sometimes at short notice, to edit the precious life stories that we are entrusted. Of course, our biographies would not look professional without our fantastic formatter, Dianne, who ensures the layout is clear, photographs and other contents are captioned, and all these contribute to an engaging story.

NIGEL MCQUITTY





MARKETING REPORT

We have implemented a modern and bright new logo and branding colours. The feedback has been very positive, and we would like to thank our graphic designer, Mun Wong, for guiding us through this process.

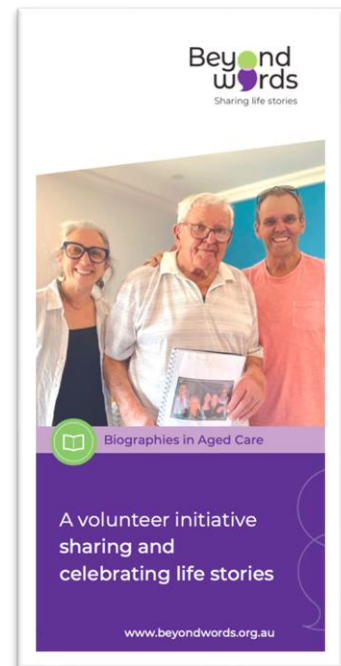
The meaning behind the logo design and colour choices is available on the website: <https://tinyurl.com/BeyondWordsBrand>.

Clients were very generous in allowing the use of their image and testimonials on our refreshed brochure. An electronic copy is available on the website.

<https://tinyurl.com/BeyondWordsBrochure>

Social media accounts have been setup for Facebook and LinkedIn. You can find us by searching on 'Beyond Words – The Biography Program'. As more content is added, we expect that these channels will provide potential volunteers and sponsors more insight about what we do, as an adjunct to the website.

CAROLINE TRUBRIDGE



I.T. REPORT

We have taken major steps this year to improve the management and sharing of our information, which will help us to streamline our operations and ensure information is up to date.

Key to this has been the implementation of a new web-based system to track our volunteers, biographies, and the details of the aged care residences we work with. Training of key volunteers in the use of this system and automation of some processes will be the next step of this implementation.

Communication with our volunteers has been improved through the creation of centralised email distribution lists.

The information available on the website continues to be improved and a blog has been created to allow more in-depth articles to be produced and easily shared on social media.

CAROLINE TRUBRIDGE





TRAINING TEAM REPORT

Eighteen people have been trained in the last year to help our Beyond Words clients capture their stories.

We now offer a three-day course spread over seven to ten days, which gives trainees more time to preview our website's resources page and to absorb more of the material presented and discussed. We believe this enables trainees to engage more actively with trainers and colleagues, and to complete the homework exercises more confidently.

We have tried to remove some of the stress associated with using Beyond Words templates and styles. This is because we want the initial training to be more attuned to the essence of - and writing - the story.

The first biography is now considered to be part of the initial training. A new biographer needs to discuss their experience, the process, the story with their area coordinator and or an experienced "biography buddy" to complete their learning.

The training course in Geelong revealed the advantage of a geographical connection. Trainees were linked by virtue of their region and seemed more likely to bond.

I am still in contact with members of my training cohort. We helped each other enormously in our early days with Beyond Words and still it is wonderful to have this link for both biography and friendship.

JULIE BUTCHER



MENTORING REPORT

A visit from experienced biographer Catherine Sullivan was inspiring to all in the Geelong training room. She demonstrated the importance of bonding with budding biographers.

The on-line monthly forum is an opportunity for our biographers to meet other colleagues, share experiences and continue learning. Open discussion is always on the agenda.

Mentoring and buddying does not need to be formal. I strongly recommend our biographers draw from each other, motivate each other, and share our experience with our fellow biographers.

JULIE BUTCHER



WITH THANKS

We are a volunteer organisation and rely on donations to undertake and publish biographies.

We appreciate the generosity of our donors; and acknowledge the financial contributions of our current sponsor: aged care providers *Uniting AgeWell* and our grant provider: *Jack Brockhoff Foundation*



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