

The 29th Annual Report of The Southern Peninsula Food for All Inc.
1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

Welcome to our 29th Annual General Meeting.

What an extraordinary year it has been! None of us could have imagined when we attended last year's Annual General Meeting that we would have faced the trials of the last seven months. Nor could we have imagined that today we are already in the worst worldwide economic crisis in just on 100 years. I do hope that come the next AGM I will have been proved wrong, but I fear that well into next year, when State and Federal support is cut back and the true unemployment figure emerges, we are likely to see an unprecedented demand for emergency food aid.

I begin this year's report acknowledging the wonderful gift we received from the late Mr. Dennis Frost, a Southern Peninsula resident who died in February 2019. Mr. Frost bequeathed to "Food For All" \$40, 296 dollars which was received just as we were entering the first COVID-19 lockdown and were scrambling to try and lift our stocks of food. Mr. Frost could not have imagined how timely his gift would prove to be. We, and our community, have benefited greatly this year from the late Mr. Frost's generosity.

As the COVID-19 lockdown began to bite in early April 2020, we initially experienced difficulties obtaining food. On several occasions, orders placed with supermarkets remained undelivered for three weeks and more. Our local State member Chris Brayne took a genuine interest in our plight and his office was quite helpful to us. Direct approaches to Woolworths and IGA brought understanding and help from senior executives in those two organisations and after a rather tense month or two, the delivery of food began to flow and we have been building up our reserves ever since. I should add that Coles at McCrae have been consistently helpful to us. We are currently endeavouring to hold a reserve of three months food in anticipation of a "demand tsunami" beginning late this year. I am able to report that throughout the current crisis we have been able to meet all requests for assistance.

We packed and distributed at least 3300 emergency food parcels in the year under review. This is a drop of approximately 22% on recent years and almost certainly reflects the substantial assistance provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Jobseeker program. I have not given a precise figure this year because, with the stage four lockdown, we were required to move to teams of no more than four or five for our regular food pack and there were just a few occasions when the number of parcels packed were not recorded.

In our 2019 Christmas Giving program we provided to local families 481 hampers and toys for 495 children. Included in that total were 110 hampers donated to our friends in Westernport to help families on that side of the peninsula. While we estimate that the

value of the toys we distribute to children is about \$20,000 thanks to the support from the bikers who participated in the Peninsula Toy Run, The Woodworkers of the Southern Peninsula, the Tyabb Aero Club, Curves of Rosebud, Ray White Real Estate at Rye, Red Hill Consolidated School and Our Lady of Fatima Primary School, Rosebud together with a number of private donors, it was only necessary for us to spend \$2082 of our own funds on the purchase of toys.

I am pleased to be able to report that our financial position continued to improve during 2020. There is no doubt that this was substantially due to the late Mr. Frost's bequest. Referring to our Statement of Income and Expenditure (attached to this report) you will see that our gross income was \$186,103 and gross expenditure was \$169,646 of which \$110,045 was spent on food at local supermarkets for our emergency food parcels. The cost of food for our Christmas hampers at \$26,774.36 is included in that figure. Our excess of income over expenditure increased to 16,456 for the financial year ended 30th June 2019. Donations for the year under review from all sources totalled \$113,974.

Despite our best-efforts, administrative expenses continue to rise. This year a total of \$7218. One notable expense was \$1,880 spent on refurbishing and updating our website. The number of hits on our website is always a surprise. Just one example, in the first six months of this year 176,225 interested persons spent some time on the site.

An initiative born out of the pandemic was a suggestion from a lady on the Southern Peninsula for local donors to contribute to a program whereby donations are used to have local restaurants prepare cryovac meals which are then included with emergency food parcels. During the period under review the program had only been under way for just over two months and in that period with the donations provided we purchased and distributed 200 cryovac meals. The program is continuing. An amount of \$9,000.00 has been received and allocated to this program.

A feature of the current crisis has been the even closer relationship we have developed with Southern Peninsula Community Support and Information Centre (SPCS&IC) staff, especially CEO Jeremy Maxwell and Mrs. Karen Tatman. We have been assisting with donations of food and sourcing food while SPCS&IC has been using its staff and volunteers to deliver food parcels for the Saint Vincent de Paul Conferences, most of whose members are in the danger zone for contracting COVID -19. We thank all SPCS&IC staff for their help.

In April we received an SOS from Hastings SVDP Conference President, Tom Leighton. Normally relying on donations of food from local churches, Hastings had run out of food. From time to time we have been making parcels available on the other side of the peninsula to support that community.

Even as I am preparing this report in early October 2020 it is impossible to say what this year's Christmas Program will look like. Even if we are able to meet the timetable set for the roadmap out of lockdown it is likely that the logistics of the program will be very different, our ability to obtain the necessary food in doubt and supporters (due to being in the Covid -19 danger zone) significantly reduced. Whatever the difficulties "Food For All" will be providing support to families needing assistance this Christmas. I must thank all our members who have helped keep our weekly pack going. Four small teams of no more than five persons led by Brian Allen, Barry Hodgkinson and myself have kept up the supply of emergency food aid. I also thank Brian Allen, Paul Anderson, Alan Hawkins and Peter Bourne who have made themselves available to help with purchasing and moving food. Ever dependable Diane Falconer OAM, of course, working at home and on the telephone.

This will be my last report. It is time to make way for a fresh approach to our work. I am delighted that Brian Allen OAM, coming from leadership roles in Education and Rotary, has agreed to take on the role of President. With Brian at the helm, I have every confidence that our Association will go from strength to strength. For my part, I must acknowledge that what we have achieved over the last ten years has been a team effort where, in all our initiatives, I have had great support from not only our Management Committee but also all of our members both past and present. It would be remiss of me if I did not pay special tribute to our Treasurer, Alan Hawkins, who guards our donors' money with his life and Diane Falconer OAM our wonderful Secretary. I remain committed to "Food For All" and its work, happily confining my future involvement to sorting food and breaking up cardboard boxes where I began some 11 years ago.

I end by acknowledging and expressing my personal thanks to the small army of members of our Southern Peninsula community who in various ways and over just on 30 years have seen fit to support "Food For All".

God Bless,

Ken Northwood
President
12 October 2020