

Yeronga State School P & C President's 2022 annual report prepared for the Annual General Meeting to be held in February 2023

2023 finds the Yeronga State School P&C at a moment of transition. Accompanying this report is a planning document generated from the penultimate meeting of 2022 which I hope assists the new executive in charting a steady and successful future for the children of Yeronga SS.

Advocacy

The last ten years have seen the P&C provide enormous assistance to the school as service providers, advocates and builders. We have air conditioned the entire school, landscaped huge areas of the grounds, installed play areas and were key participants in advocating for the renovation of the former Dental Hospital into the wonderful new learning facility. At the official opening on Monday 13th February, it was noted by the Education Minister, Grace Grace, local MP, Mark Bailey and senior bureaucrats was that the school community had performed a remarkable thing, reversing a process to have the building demolished.

New Learning and Curiosity Centre

This reversal process did not begin with well-connected, high-powered professionals, but with ordinary P&C members attending planning meetings and realising the Dental Building project was going in entirely the wrong direction (a car park). Along with the school, local member and community we were able to persuade the education infrastructure department for a rethink, then a redesign and then new funding, and eventually a building.

Landscaping

At the same time this renovation was being completed the outdoor area from the tuckshop to the pool-side gate were redesigned and landscaped. As some may remember this area previously looked like a quarry and children in YOSHC were regularly injuring themselves on tree roots. What resulted was the largest landscaping project in the 150 year history of the school, all paid for and planned by the P&C. The Landscaping committee, in particular our groundsman Mr Sutherland were of enormous assistance in bringing this project to life. Our other major thank you must go to parent and designer, Tessa Leggo. Tessa's company, Fred St, won an open tender to complete the design, but as Tessa is also a parent she continued in a liaison role with the project managers and construction crew to ensure a successful result. Despite the massive rains and flooding of Brisbane over 2021-2022 the project was completed very close to budget.

As the president I would also like to thank you, the members of the P&C, for your courage in approving and spending the money required to fix the whole of the problem. The disrepair this area of the school had fallen into was because a lot of small fixes had been overwhelmed and added to the problems. The P&C funded an end-to-end solution to water flows, children's access, areas of fun along with something beautiful to be proud of. In January 2022 this area was put to the test with the second largest deluge of rain the Brisbane history... it held up very well.

Ending P&C's association with YOSHC

The bulk of my work this year has been overseeing the transition from a P&C owned after school hours care service to a privately run service. The first day of that services operation was Monday (14 November 2022). This is a significant moment for the P&C and has involved enormous amounts of work by me and principal, Eunice Webb.

OSHC was incorporated in 1987 and existed in a less formal sense long before that. However, growing from a handful of children and casual carers to a fully professional service of 180 children a day, employing dozens of professional staff, and maintaining compliance with the regulations of four state and federal departments has meant the service needs professional oversight, not that of volunteer parents. One of the unique features of YOSHC is the high percentage of families who depend on the service to maintain their employment. The state average is 10%, Yeronga is over 20%, this is a lot of pressure on parents with little knowledge of how to run such a service.

As well as regulations growing, legal liability has grown to the point of the executive members having complete legal liability for the children and employees, with no capacity to limit liabilities. This leaves the volunteer members of the executive very exposed to civil or criminal proceedings. Parents need to feel they can make a positive contribution to the P&C executive without putting their house on the line.

Parents can be proud of the service we shaped. At the time of handover, YOSHC was running more successfully than at any time in my five-year tenure on the executive. The children are safe and happy, the staff are engaged and loyal and the management was creative, efficient and committed.

I would like to thank all members of past and present P&C Executives who have given up significant amounts of their time to support and grow the service.

2022 Activities

Prep morning tea - Gulnara, Chris and I attended the Prep morning introduction day in March. It was a very successful morning with lots of parents meeting and chatting all things Yeronga SS and lots of little kids talking about whatever it is they discuss between themselves. Thanks to Sarah Cordingly for putting together goodie bags for the morning, the Rocklea Fire Brigade for a surprise visit, but mostly Gerlinda Amour for all her brilliant organisation and early connection with the parents.

Democracy Sausage – May 21 saw a successful election Day BBQ and cake stall, organised primarily by Secretary Chris Day. We cooked sausages from 7:30 till 3pm and sold every sausage, every bit of bread and every single cake and could have sold more.

Massive thanks to all who cut onions, worked the BBQ and baked cakes especially Chris, all parents who contributed cakes and their time to cook. Even Ms Webb donated two cakes that were auctioned to bemused voters on the day.

Mothers / Father's Day stalls

These are key events for our children and take a quite a bit of work to complete each year. This year Anna Rimpau led a team of parents to communicate with families, collect and store donations, wrap presents and make sure all children had something to buy and give their mum/dad. It was very successfully completed in both instances and P&C Executive are grateful to all the parents who contributed to these activities. These are the kind of events that bind the P&C to the children of the school, who are the people we are all here to help, so I hope the new executive is able to build these events further.

Garden open day

The new gardens were officially opened in September along with an Open Day for the new Learning Centre. The P&C hosted a BBQ and a number of activities for the children including the very successful **First Yeronga Cubby House Building Contest**. This was a great activity and I hope the P&C is able to build on these excellent foundations to make it an ever larger, annual event.

Trivia Night

On Saturday 12th November the school hosted its famed trivia night, again MC'd by Rachel Mackenzie and Simon Lake in their usually flamboyant manner. The theme was myths and legends and not only did many people take up the challenge, but apparently many more myths and legends were created on the night. Rachel and Simon are set to hand over the reins this year, so again the P&C thank them for everything they have done for the school and community over many years.

Art Soiree

Saturday 26th November was the final P&C fundraiser of the year. The P&C ran a bar and fromagerie at the school's first Art Soiree. **Helen McKee** was the hero of this adventure as the P&C had never done this activity before. Anna Rimpau and Kerri Macklin were brilliant with the cheese plates. In the end it was a highly successful event and exhibition which has already formed strong memories for the children and families of YSS. I hope we able to help this event grow.

New services team

The year ended with the resignation of our long-term uniform and tuckshop team to move to the High School. Stacey Rossetti, Yvonne Starr and Claire Vermey have been a magnificent asset to the school and P&C, especially over the COVID years. Our new team of Tracy Holroyd, Stacey Kerr and Kristy Stewart have begun the school year ensuring almost no noticeable change in service levels. A huge thank you needs to be extended to Stacey and Yvonne for their very thorough handovers and assistance in transition.

Conclusion

After a huge decade, the Yeronga P&C is now free to pursue an agenda of community building and fun event planning that will make Yeronga State School and Community an even more vibrant and cohesive place. Large-scale structural improvements have been completed, over-burdensome services have been restructured and executive have been relieved of stressful legal liabilities. My five years on the executive have to come to a close. I wish the new executive and ongoing P&C members all the best in the future.

Kind Regards

Hamish Townsend (February 2023)