



Ruth's Women's Shelter Cairns Inc

Inducted to the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Honour Roll in recognition of our action to prevent domestic and family violence, raise awareness and support people impacted by domestic and family violence in Queensland

Proudly located on Gimuy-Walubarra Yidi Land

Annual Report 2020/21





Ruth's Women's Shelter is proud to be located on the beautiful lands of the Gimuy-Walubarra Yidi People. We acknowledge their peoples' special spiritual connection to this country, lands and waterways, and we pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Our purpose

- To provide a safe environment for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.

Our aspiration

- To support women who seek our services as they explore their individual options, drawing on their strengths and our strengths as advocates.

Our Vision

- A world where women and children can live in safety, free from all forms of abuse. Together with the collective voice of an aware community, we work to end domestic violence

Our Values

- Act with integrity and honesty
- Make a difference
- Be non-judgmental
- Respect Others

President's Report 2021

The monetary amount that we received in donations was \$40,061.00 which is significantly higher than the previous year. This may have had something to do with all the media attention that was received with the possible closure of the Hub.

I would like to thank the wonderful staff, management committee members and our volunteers. Their dedication, energy and skills, continue to make it a great privilege indeed, to be a part of Ruth's and its work in the community.

I cannot wait to see what the next year brings and I am excited to be a part of it.

After being involved in some capacity for the past 8 years on the management committee, the 2020/21 year has been my first year in the role of President and it has been a honor.





Manager's Report

It has been an honour and a privilege to work and live on the beautiful Yidinji Yabandaylands of the Gimuy-Walubarra Yidi People. My heartfelt respects go to their elders past, present and emerging.

At Ruth's Women's Shelter Cairns, we are proud to serve this community and we strive to nurture and care for the land on which we work, and this year we have focused on caring for our gardens and taking steps to care for our environment. We have been busy putting in place an Environmental Plan and I would like to thank our Environmental Co-ordinator, for steering us all in the right direction.

I have had amazing support from the strong, loyal and passionate women who form our Management Committee and who volunteer their time to govern this very special organisation.

We are blessed with a fantastic team of workers. They are a wonderful mix of women who all share the same passion for working in the challenging but rewarding domestic and family violence sector. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge each and every one of them for the work that they have done over the last year.

I have a huge appreciation for our volunteers who have shown great loyalty and commitment to our organisation, and I thank them on behalf of the whole team at Ruth's.

This year sees our first Employee Innovation Awards to recognize and acknowledge new ideas. It was a privilege for me to present the inaugural Employee Innovation Award 2021 to Bronnie who felt that it was important that we respect the traditional owners of the lands by naming them as part of our address on all documentation. As a result, this now appears on our letterheads, reports and email signatures.

As always, we have continued to build on our network of partnerships which means that we can deliver collaborative and quality services to the women and children at Ruth's.

The generosity and support that we receive from the local community in Cairns never ceases to amaze me. During difficult times, we have received so many messages of support which really make a difference. So many individuals and businesses in our community have supported us by offering material and financial donations and by organising fundraisers. I want to acknowledge the passion, dedication and time that community members have put in to help the women and children that we work with.



Treasurer's Report

This year we welcomed Crowe Australia as our Auditors. I would like to thank Sarah and Fenita who spend a few days on site with us at the shelter.

The audit was very thorough and we are happy to present the audited financial reports to the members at the AGM tonight.

Sarah Hooper from Crowe Australia has kindly joined us tonight from Townsville by Zoom and is happy to take any questions about the financial reports.

The final financial reports have been circulated electronically to members head of tonight's meeting. In our attempts to reduce the volume of paper waste, we are not providing paper copies.

Revenue for the year increased by 17% to \$1,373,202

This was mainly as a result of additional one-off grant funding for COVID19 from the State Government and from the Paul Ramsay Foundation and an increase in donations as well as tax refunds due to the cash flow boost payments from the ATO as a result of COVID19.

All government and non-government grants were fully acquitted, with the exception of \$16,000 from Paul Ramsay Foundation. Agreement has been reached with Paul Ramsay Foundation that these funds can be allocated in this FY to upgrade our IT systems.

\$6,000 of our Muster grant was unspent and will be returned to the department. This was due to an amount of \$25,000 carried forward from the year before due to parts of the service not operating during COVID 19 lockdowns.

Total Expenses for the year were \$1,127,949

Current Assets increased from \$613,677 to \$818,898 due to no major capital purchases.

Total Liabilities are \$286,551

Cash and Cash Equivalents are \$803,000

Finally, to the women and children that we work with every day. Words cannot describe the privilege it is, getting to know them and to be part of their journey into a safer future. Their kind, funny and supportive words are humbling, given the raw deal that life has bestowed on them. Their strength and resilience is breathtaking. To see how they change from the first day they arrive to the day they leave us is so inspiring.

I wanted to share the words of two amazing woman, who stayed at Ruth's Women's Shelter and who have rebuilt their lives

"I'm Sarah Manlis. I stayed at Ruth's Shelter in 1990/91, for over three weeks, with my two children. I am now 61 and they have grown up safely. I promised the lady I spoke to whilst I stayed there I would let her know how things panned out for us. I know you have helped enough women to know we never really fully recover our full sense of worth once our husbands have tried to kill us. I will all ways remember Ruth's because your kind thoughtful women saved me and my children's lives. There are no words on earth to thank you. However I vowed if I survived long enough I would channel my anger to try and fix something. Thank-you again, I said at the time I'd never forget you and I haven't. Sarah has just published her first novel, Lovers of The Remnant Forest, which she said was inspired partly by her time at Ruth's.

Sarah lives in England now and she took the time to send some copies of her books for the women at the shelter. I hoped that her words can give hope and inspiration to the women who stay at the shelter. With her permission, we have had her words inscribed on a plaque for all the women who come to our shelter, to see.

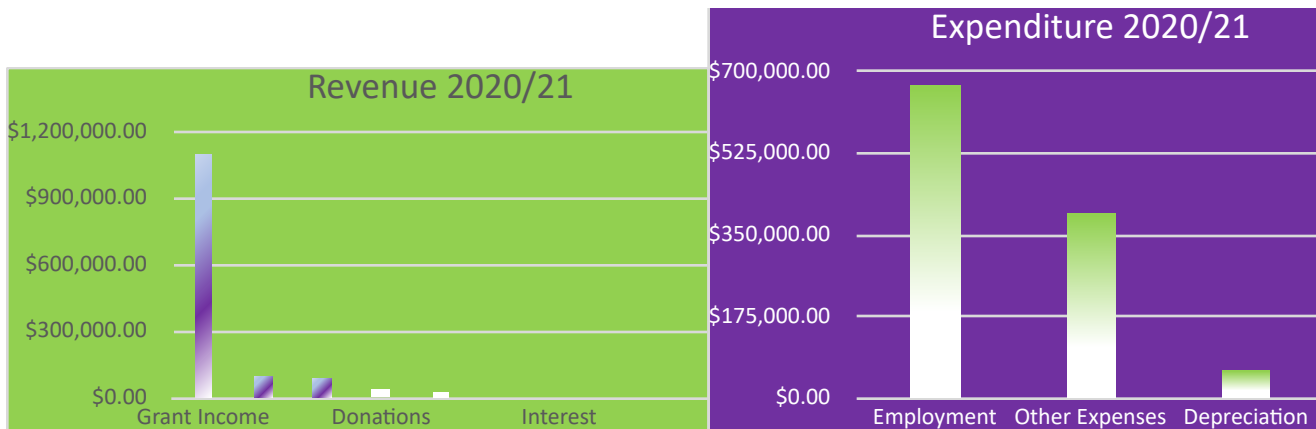
As we enter into a new year, we will remain true to the vision that was so important to Ruth Thomas and the other women who fought so hard to establish our Shelter in 1977.

Shelly Purvis, Manager, 2021



Artwork by my good friend and mentor, Anangu Elder, Kumana Gibson, 2018, Oak Valley Community, Southern APY Lands, who sadly passed away this year. He was so proud of this painting and I told him often, how much I loved it, which made him laugh. He gave me permission to use it in any way that helped to keep the Anangu Culture alive. I miss you and I will not forget you my Kuta.





Staff Reports

Ruth's Women's Shelter

The last twelve months has seen the global Pandemic continue to drag on, presenting continual challenges for both workers and clients alike.

Our manager Shelly, has succeeded in negotiating our service through various hurdles developing throughout the course of the last year, thus allowing Ruth's to continue to provide this essential service to the community.

We have also had some changes to the shelter support staff as we welcomed two new casual support workers Vendela and Melinda, and said goodbye to Claire, Kathryn, Lauren, Michelle and Jayne. We also have a new Finance/Compliance Officer, Natalie, having farewelled Louise and Donna. We are, as always, grateful for the ongoing commitment and support of the rest of the staff: Bronwyn, Emalee, Marlene, Raylene, Sara, Melinda and Virginia.

The impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic have been disruptive in many ways; the effects of economic disruption; isolation

within the home enforced by lockdowns; and reduced access to statutory, community and voluntary services that support survivors. When combined with the extraordinary rise in rents and extremely low vacancy rates, presents considerable difficulties in transitioning clients to stable long-term accommodation. However, despite the present difficulties, we have had some recent successes with three of our long stay clients gaining permanent residency and obtaining stable employment, thus providing them with the ability to transition into shared accommodation. Another client was able to purchase her first home unit and has now moved in and is enjoying her new home.

Ruth's continued commitment to support staff with their professional development training ensures staff have the knowledge and skills to support our clients on their journey through our service, whilst also providing valuable opportunities to engage and network with other service providers in the sector.

Here are a few of the highpoints for this last year:

- Extensive shelter renovations completed including two 2nd floor bathrooms renovated providing ensuite facilities, rear garden landscaped and turfed, artificial turf replaced in children's play areas; and new curtains and cupboards in client bedrooms and communal areas
- Nominated for a Qoin Small Business Achievement Award
- International Women's Day Event at Vivaldis Restaurant
- Hosting a visit with our colleagues from Lena Passi Women's Shelter on Thursday Island

We are extremely appreciative of our committed and professional network of service providers in Cairns and would also like to thank the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, The Women's Centre, Department of Housing, Access Housing, North Qld Women's Legal Service, The Hub and many others.

Janice

Ruth's Hub

It's been a big twelve months at Ruth's Hub, Michelle and I managed to keep the hub open during the 2020 COVID lockdown to support any women and their children if they needed assistance. Once the hub reopened, we were very much supported throughout the community with the generous donations we received, especially around Christmas and Easter. International Women's Day we also saw a lot of support from the community and other services, one exciting event was Vivaldi's, they held an International Women's Day event in which they raised a significant amount of money for us.

Over the last twelve months Ruth's Hub has managed to maintain 2 staff, 6 volunteers and has managed 20 sessions a week to support women and children. We have managed to maintain our relationship with other service providers and thanks to the Department of Social Services we are now able to operate for a further 12 months, focusing on education around Domestic and Family Violence.

I want to personally thank the staff who work at Ruth's Hub and Ruth's Women's Shelter, our wonderful committee, the volunteers who support us, and all the service providers and clients we engage with.

Lauren



Our Strategic Plan 2021



People and Culture

Attract and retain a skilled team
Develop a strong, motivated team
Create a positive, safe work environment for the team
Develop a team who have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the



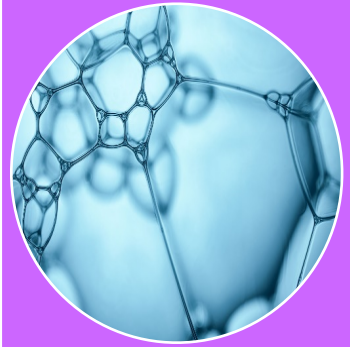
Service Delivery

Increase positive outcomes for clients
continue to increase client satisfaction levels
Offer a range of services to improve clients' safety and wellbeing
Increase access for clients from diverse communities and cultures
Improve our understanding of risk and safety management for clients



Innovation

Increase opportunities for staff to participate in sharing their ideas
Develop Ruth's position within the community as an innovative organization
Introduce ways of piloting ideas put forward by clients
Maximise opportunities for introducing new ideas and



Partnerships

Transition informal partnerships to formal ones where appropriate to acknowledge their importance
Increase the number of soft partnerships
Maximise the use of social media to create and



What Our Clients Said on Survey Monkey

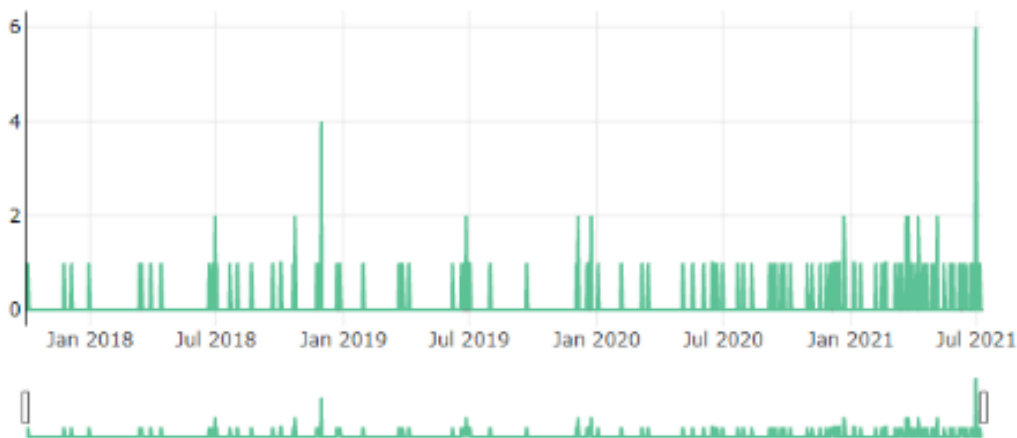
"all staff kind, work from the heart and support me for everything that why i can survive they all like my family"

"It is a beautiful facility which has really helped a lot of women and the staff are a good group of strong women with varying knowledge on different things but all were very supportive. I'm really appreciative of all the support I have received to get back on my feet."

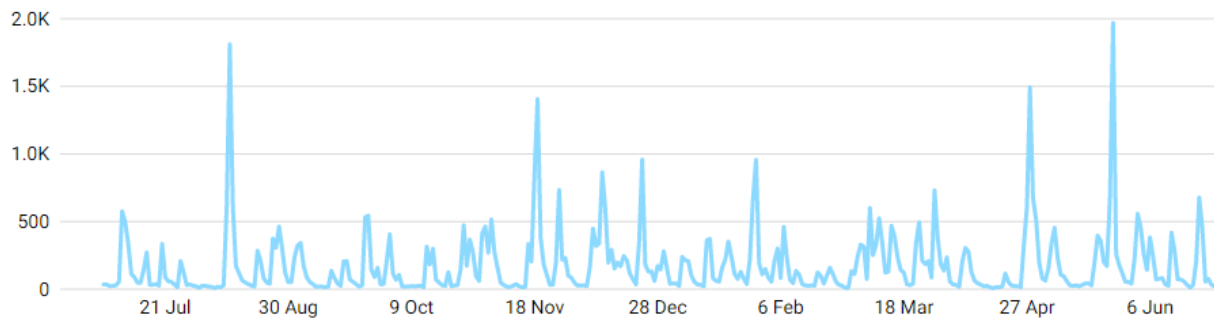
"Ruth's has been amazing for me and my children. Thank them dearly"

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our local community. The number of donations being made through our website significant increased during 2020/21

Number of Donations Raised Over Time

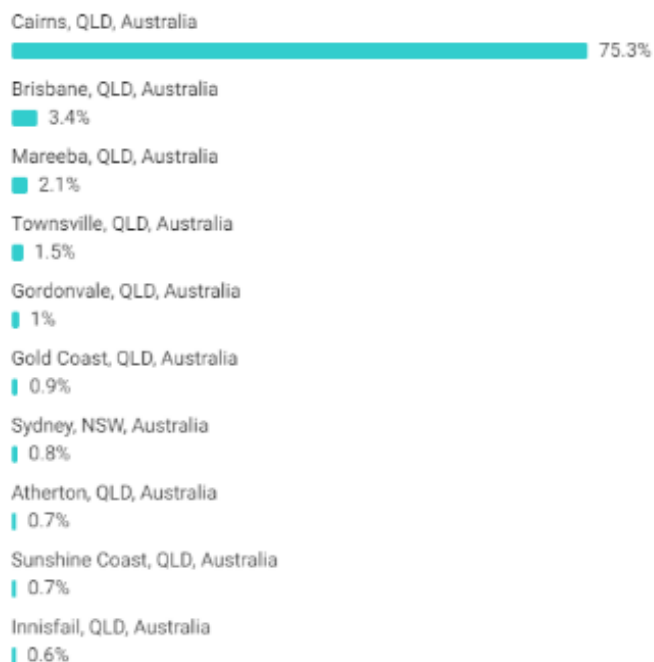


The 2 most reacted to posts on our news feed were in August when we announced that our Red Benches had been installed, and in May when we were able to confirm that Ruth's Hub would stay open for another year.

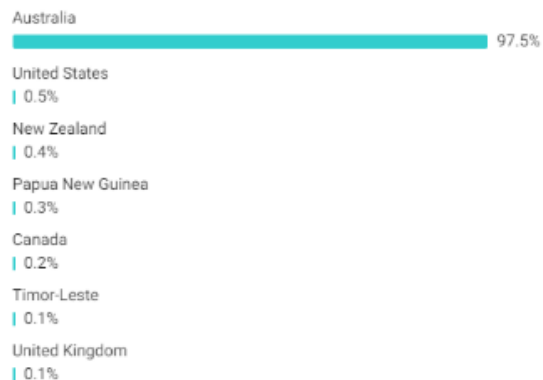


Our social media was followed by people worldwide.

Top towns/cities



Top countries



Some Statistic

Thanks to our partnership with Centacare FNQ, we have provided emergency relief on 178 occasions, providing essential food, material assistance and transport for women and children in crisis.

We accommodated 140 women and children at the shelter. 59% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The women and children we accommodated came from 15 different countries.

Ruth's Women's Shelter would like to thank the many businesses and individuals who have supported us during the year:

ABC Far North Crowe Australasia Optimal Pharmacy Raintrees
Access Community Housing Days for Girls Cairns Oral Hygiene
Advantage Sports and Leisure Department of Justice and Attorney General Oz Harvest
Annee's Caphe Sua Da Dep of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy Parrish Financial
ANZ Cairns Department of Social Services Paul Ramsay Foundation
BDO North Qld Donna Cahill Real EstatePHD Cairns
Benson Hotel DV Connect PICA Group
Bentley Park College Ease Natural Therapies Piccones IGA
Big W Stocklands Edmonton Storm Preston Law
Bunnings CairnsElla Bache Cairns Central - Danielle Pullman Resort
Business and Wealth Envision Q.I.T.E
Busy Schools Everhard Foundation Queensland Ambulance Service
C3 Church Cairns F45 Training Redlynch and Cairns CBD Queensland Health
Cairns Airport Fit by U Rain Trees Shopping Centre Management
Cairns Brothers League FNQLA Reaston Drummond Law
Cairns Canine and Cat Care Freedom Harvest Ministries International Sacred Tribe
Cairns Dental Boutique Future Computers Smith and Sons Renovations and Extensions
Cairns German Club Gambling Community Benefit Fund Specsavers
Cairns Golf ClubGDA Constructions St Andrew's Catholic College
Cairns Men's Shed Grill'd Cairns St Monica's College
Cairns Post HAS Project – E2G Project Stacey Twaites Drive for Justice
Cairns Private Hospital Helen from The Breathing SpaceStratford Deli
Cairns Raw Material Just Purple Telequip
Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service Kindy Zone Mount Sheridan and Manoora The Reef Hotel Casino
Cairns Security Monitoring Lane Orthodontics The Zonta Club of Cairns
Cairns Spiritual Centre Lion Australia Tracey from Queensland Police
Cairns State High SchoolLynda from Commonwealth Bank Cairns Vicki from Koala Blue Real Estate
Cairns Women's Center Mama Cocoa Vivaldis Restaurant – Thomas, Victoria and Anya
Cazalys Cairns Michelle Thompson Wasabi Barbie
Centacare FNQ Miller Harris Lawyers Wayne from Myers Cairns
Coles at DFO and Edmonton Min Xu Photography Wellness Embodied Cairns
Community Gambling Fund Motion Osteopathy Wild Ginger Hair
Community Grants Hub Mount Sheridan Plaza WIN News
Containers for Change Muddy's Café Women in Construction FNQ
Crawfs Corner Neighbourhood Watch Brinsmead Zeal Hair
Nortax Accounting

All of the wonderful people who have donated personally and everyone else who contributed in any way.