



STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

The Doxa Youth Foundation (DYF), board and staff have been working on a new strategic plan. The cornerstone of our planning process was a workshop held in May. It was informed by extensive consultation with our key stakeholders including our members and service users. In attendance was the DYF board, senior managers, two members and representatives from our funding arm, the Doxa Community Club (DCC). Amongst the key priorities identified at the workshop were finding a venue for City Camp and upgrading the ageing infrastructure at our Malmsbury Camp. In response to feedback from members, we will also be reintroducing a regular Friends of Doxa Youth Foundation newsletter.

Welcome to our new-look Friends of Doxa newsletter.

Thank you to the members who have been involved in our recent consultation. We are relaunching it in response to your feedback.

We aim for the newsletter to be a regular publication to keep you up to date about everything that is happening at Doxa Youth Foundation. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

OUR CAMPS

At both our **Malmsbury** and **city** venues, we were fully booked for school camps during the first half of the year and had many more enquiries than places. We provide affordable camps for schools in low socio-economic communities. This allows these schools to go on camp when they usually could not afford to, and for all the families of their students to have the financial means to send them. In Malmsbury, we provided 37 camps for 984 participants while in the city, there were 35 camps with 921 participants.

Our long-term partnership with V/Line continues. We are excited that V/Line is now providing tickets to special events at the Melbourne Museum and the Arts Centre for our city campers. Of particular interest at the moment is Victoria the T-Rex experience at the Melbourne Museum. It has real fossils, interactive audio visuals, films and holographs. The key highlight of the display is the fossil skeleton of a 66-million-year-old Tyrannosaurus named Victoria, which was found in South Dakota in the USA.

At our Malmsbury Camp, we have recently set up a frisbee golf course. The game is very closely related to golf, with the primary difference being throwing a frisbee like disc in place of hitting a ball. Our course looks particularly picturesque in its natural bush setting. Frisbee golf is very popular in the USA, and its popularity is on the rise in Australia. It has definitely proved to be a hit with our campers.

During the summer and Easter school breaks, we provided holiday camps at both Malmsbury and the city for children who would

otherwise not have had the opportunity to go away. We are constantly reviewing our programmes and adding new and interesting activities. At Easter time, the children at our Malmsbury Camp went canoeing and had a tour at the Lauriston Reservoir. Our city campers saw the Tricky Nick Magic Show and went for a ride on the KIIS Eye Ferris wheel on the St Kilda Beach foreshore.



GENERAL MANAGER - CAMP PROGRAMMES

Earlier this year, **Tom Kelly** was appointed to the position of General Manager Camp Programmes. He is based at our Malmsbury Camp and is living there in the Manager's house.

Tom has broad experience in the outdoor and environmental education sector with a passion for spending time in and learning and experiencing bush environments. Before moving into his current role, Tom was Manager of Doxa City Camp and has coordinated Holiday Camp and Journey programmes within our organisation. He has also developed and maintained statewide environmental programmes for schools while working at CERES Community Park. Tom holds a Bachelor of Education and a Graduate Diploma of Outdoor and Environmental Education from Federation University.



INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES AT MALMSBURY CAMP

Our Malmsbury Camp is awash with activity as we tackle an ambitious programme to upgrade our ageing infrastructure. This is only possible through the very generous financial support of the board of the Doxa Community Club, our funding arm. First cab off the rank is fixing our very patchy and unreliable access to Wi Fi. In a recent survey of our camp users, they were keen to see the Wi Fi access improved and in the digital age, it is a must have for staff to do their jobs. JEM, our current IT provider, is managing the remediation project including modernisation of our satellite service and installing current generation Wi Fi equipment.

UPSKILLING OUR STAFF

In early June, Tom Kelly, our General Manager of Camping Programmes, attended the International Camp Directors Course run by the Australian Camping Association (ACA). While originating in North America and being recognised worldwide, the curriculum has been adapted to the local Australian industry. This intensive four-day course addresses all aspects of camp management in an interactive exchange with other members of the camping and outdoor sector. The facilitators included some of the leading lights in the Australian camping sector such as Brendan Smith from the YMCA. Tom found the experience invaluable.



CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Our City Camp team celebrated Christmas in July at our Melbourne office on the last day of the school term. Our meeting room was decked out in Christmas decorations and staff had made and brought in all sorts of yummy Christmas delicacies. We even had a Kris Kringle. It was a very enjoyable way to mark the beginning of the holidays until our City Camps resume again in Term 3.



Tom celebrates with other participants

CITY ADMINISTRATION COORDINATOR

Stephanie Mulchay has recently joined our city team as Office Administration Coordinator.

Stephanie's main focus is taking enquiries and developing programmes for City Camp. Before taking on this role, Stephanie was working as an outdoor recreation instructor at our Malmsbury Camp. She has qualifications in outdoor education and has broad experience in the sector. Amongst the camps where she has worked are Sunny Stones in Merrimu and the Outdoor Education Group.

OUR CADETSHIP PROGRAMME

We have now reached the middle of the year and so far, the cadetship programme calendar has been jam-packed.

We kicked off the academic year with a delightful dinner at the Oxford Scholar in March, where we connected with current cadets and wished them all the best for the academic year ahead.



In April and June, we hosted workshops for our cadets led by esteemed international facilitator, Linda Gidlund. The topics covered included learning about learning itself and the impact of values on teamwork. Our cadets welcomed the interesting and diverse way the material was presented during the workshop.

In May, we attended the VCE & Careers Expo at the Melbourne Convention Centre, followed by the Victorian Careers Expo at the Melbourne Showgrounds two weeks later. The combined attendance at these events was an impressive 34,590. A total of 222 schools attended, which is 37.7% of all Victorian secondary schools. We had the opportunity to meet and inform careers teachers about our program and many students expressed interest in applying without seeking just another hat or lollipop giveaway. This was backed up by

attendance at a number of secondary school careers nights and the Western Victoria Careers Expo at Longerenong.

At the end of June, we held a drinks party for the friends of the Doxa Cadetship Programme celebrating the week of the winter solstice. We welcomed alumni, cadets and sponsors as the first half of the year drew to a close and we began to enthusiastically look forward to the remainder of 2024.

