



"Childhood illness

touches the lives of everyone
in country communities..."



Annual Report

2019

Country Hope Trust

www.countryhope.com.au



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Message from the Chairman

Kerry Flinn

It is with much pleasure that I present my chairman's report for the year 2019.

Wow – what another incredible year for Country Hope. Our beloved local charity keeps growing and achieving more and more for the children and families we support. This year we had fifteen new families and the total families we look after is an amazing one hundred and fifty.

This wouldn't be possible to do without the enormous effort of lots and lots of amazing fundraisers, including Gavin & Tammy Gilbert and their "Riverina Redneck Rally". We would like to thank the following organisations for their very generous contributions; Riverina Redneck Rally, Wagga Wagga Amateur Picnic Races, BMW Food & Wine Festival, South Wagga Golf Day, Tey's Golf Day, GEO Group Australia (Junee Jail), Wagga Wagga Takes 2 and the Tumbarumba Rodeo.

With the amazing fundraising efforts mentioned above plus many, many other fundraisers and donors, grants and sponsorships, Country Hope has been placed in a very healthy financial position and in turn has been able to help so many more families. Our total income has increased which is very reassuring considering the economic and rural climate plus the ever-increasing competition for the charity dollar.

Welcome to our new board members, Sean Lee from Albury and Setchen Brimson from Wagga Wagga. We are very pleased to now have a director in the Albury region and I'm sure Sean, who is well known down there will help promote and grow that area greatly! Setchen brings with her a set of skills that will be well utilised by Country Hope including marketing and

community engagement. Thank you both for your active participation with Country Hope. We are still searching for a director to represent us in the Griffith area.

Our camp this year was held at the Great Aussie Holiday Park on Lake Hume at Bowna, via Albury. From all accounts the camp was once again a roaring success. Our thanks go to the camp committee, now led by Simon and Jo, who did a wonderful job. I would also like to thank all the volunteers, doctors, nurses and helpers who assisted to make this camp one the Country Hope children will remember and cherish forever. Next year the camp will be back at Borambola.

I would like to thank the Griffith and West Wyalong fundraising committees for their continuing support and hard work. They are always on the front-line raising funds for Country Hope with an array of fundraising ideas and activities.

Once again, a huge thank you to all our dedicated and amazing staff including Ellie (driving the ship), Kim, Tom, Stina, Bev, Nikky (who volunteers on a Tuesday in the Wagga office) and Julie (who volunteers three days a week in the Albury office). Your loyalty and hard work do not go unnoticed by me and all the directors of Country Hope and we all sincerely thank you.

In conclusion I would like to thank my fellow directors for their efforts, input, dedication and support throughout the year.

Kerry Flinn
Chairman





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*We want to **build a relationship** that creates endless ways for everyone to win!*

Message from the General Manager

Ellie Webb

Here at Country Hope we recognise that a child's life-threatening illness not only impacts the entire family - parents, siblings, grandparents, extended family but also their social networks and other significant people in their lives. Families often feel isolated, which reflects on society's fear of what might happen.

A life-threatening illness is identified as any condition a child develops whereby the child could possibly pass away prematurely.

Country Hope aims to help as many families as possible in our areas who have a child with a life-threatening illness financially and emotionally from the moment of diagnosis, during treatment and beyond. Families face significant financial stresses related to the difficulty of remaining in the workforce and providing full time care for their child with a life-threatening illness.

Country Hope continues to grow every year keeping the average at seventeen new families per year. This year so far, we have registered fifteen new families from across our region, with eleven of the diagnosis being cancer. Sadly, one little boy lost his battle.

We would not be able to help the families as we do if it was not for the wonderful support we receive throughout the Wagga, Albury, Griffith, West Wyalong and surrounding communities.

I will take the opportunity here to thank immensely Tom Looney, fundraising and events manager and Kim Taylor, administration officer who are both leaving us at the end of this year. I can't thank you enough for all your

hard work and dedication. Country Hope is in a great position thanks to you both. I have enjoyed working with you and I will certainly miss you.

Moving forward, 2020 will be starting off with at least two new staff members and the possibility of expanding into other areas...very exciting!

Once again, I would like to thank the wonderful staff and board of directors for their support throughout 2019 and I look forward to another great year in 2020.

Ellie Webb
General Manager





OUR MISSION:

To provide comprehensive family centred support programs for country children diagnosed with cancer and chronic life-threatening illnesses



OUR VISION:

Relief – when it matters most!



OUR OBJECTIVES:

- » We are dedicated to developing support programs and services, in response to the needs of families as and when they arise
- » We recognise that childhood cancer and chronic life-threatening illnesses have a tremendous impact on an entire family
- » We ensure the money raised in the country stays in the country to support country children and their families

About Country Hope

Country Hope was formed in 2003, starting with an annual holiday camp for the diagnosed children and their siblings, which contributed to the extraordinarily positive impact on the lives of the children. The camp also gives the parents much needed respite.

Although the camps undoubtedly achieved great success in increasing a child's ability to cope with and recover from their illness, it was quickly identified that an annual camp was simply not enough. It came to be obvious that country families had so many more pressures and additional needs when dealing with such life altering events compared to families residing nearer to the major paediatric hospitals.

Country Hope's aim was to adequately address the very critical and specific needs of local children who had been diagnosed with cancer or a chronic life-threatening illness and their families...when it matters most.





The support we provide is:

FINANCIAL

We help with the never-ending bills like mortgages, rents, utility bills, school fees. Families are often running 2 households. Usually, it's mum who stays with the diagnosed child in hospital in the city, a long way from home, and dad is home with the siblings, juggling work, getting the other children off to school or care, then packing them up on weekends to travel to the city to visit mum and the diagnosed child.

EMOTIONAL

It's very hard on the entire family when a child is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. It's very important for them to be able to speak to someone as much as possible and not bottle it up inside

TIME OUT FOR LIFE HOLIDAY CAMP

Each year we hold a camp for not only the diagnosed children, but their siblings as well. The siblings do it pretty hard too. All the attention is on the diagnosed child...siblings need and enjoy the camp as well. They mix with children who are going or have been through exactly what they are going through. Great friendships are formed between the children and the buddies.

TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

A very big cost to Country Hope. We provide fuel cards when the family is driving, and we make sure their car is road worthy to handle all the trips to treatments and appointments. We book flights when they need to fly to and from treatments and appointments. We pay for their accommodation where necessary.

HOME VISITS

We visit families in their homes, making sure they have food, checking to see if their car tyres are ok, helping with their never-ending bills mounting up

HOSPITAL VISITS

Families are separated for long periods of time, sometimes up to 12 months when a child is receiving treatment in the city hospitals. It means a lot to them to have a visit from someone from Country Hope.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

We have the use of 4 homes in Ulladulla that the families can use. We provide fuel, groceries and spending money so it costs the families nothing to have a holiday away from their stresses. Families rarely can afford a family holiday.



THE COUNTRY HOPE JOURNEY

CHILD IS DIAGNOSED

Family's lives change for the entire family. The whole family feels the pain.

TREATMENT

Families are separated. Feelings of guilt, anger, exhaustion. Siblings feel left out.

LOSS OF -

Income - jobs
Family as they knew it
Education
Time, energy & hope
Sometimes loss of life

RECOVERY

Can take a long time.
Hard to get back to normal
(if they ever do)

ILLNESS CAN RETURN

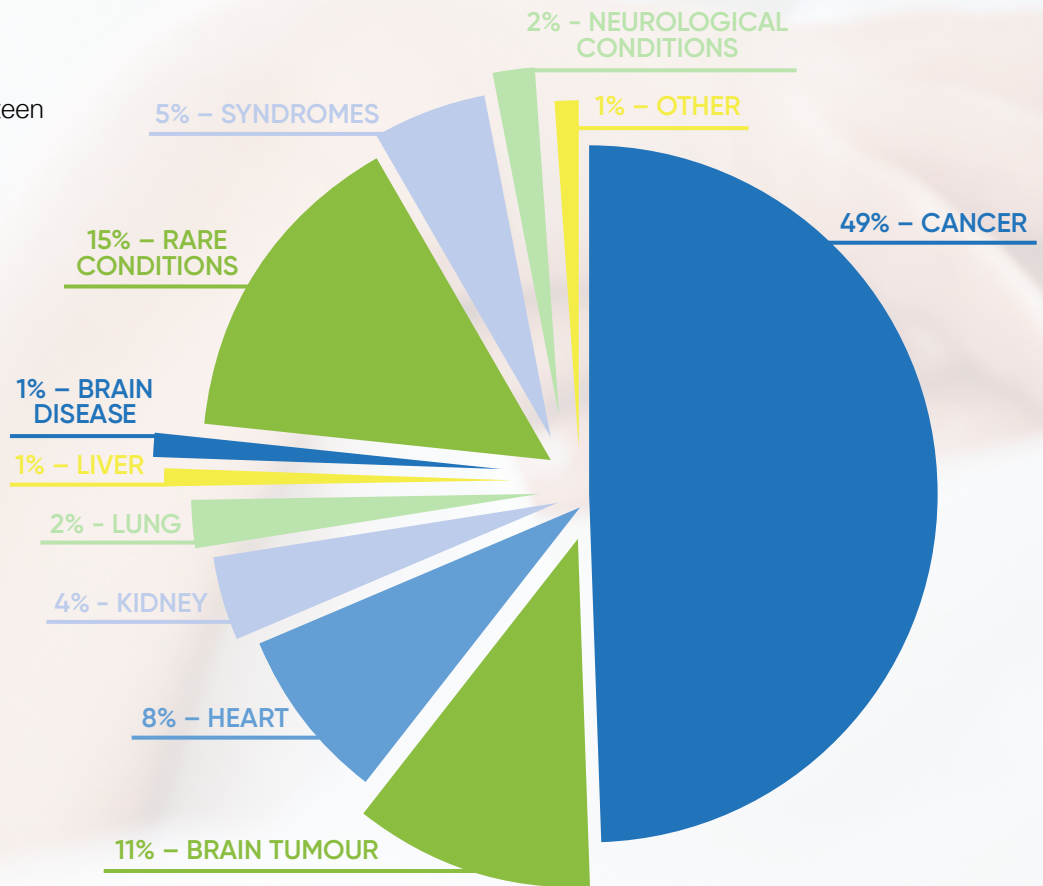
The journey starts all over again. Sometimes worse than the first time.

BEYOND

Country Hope helps the families until the child turns 17. Hopefully once the child is well, lives can return to normal - although lives are changed.

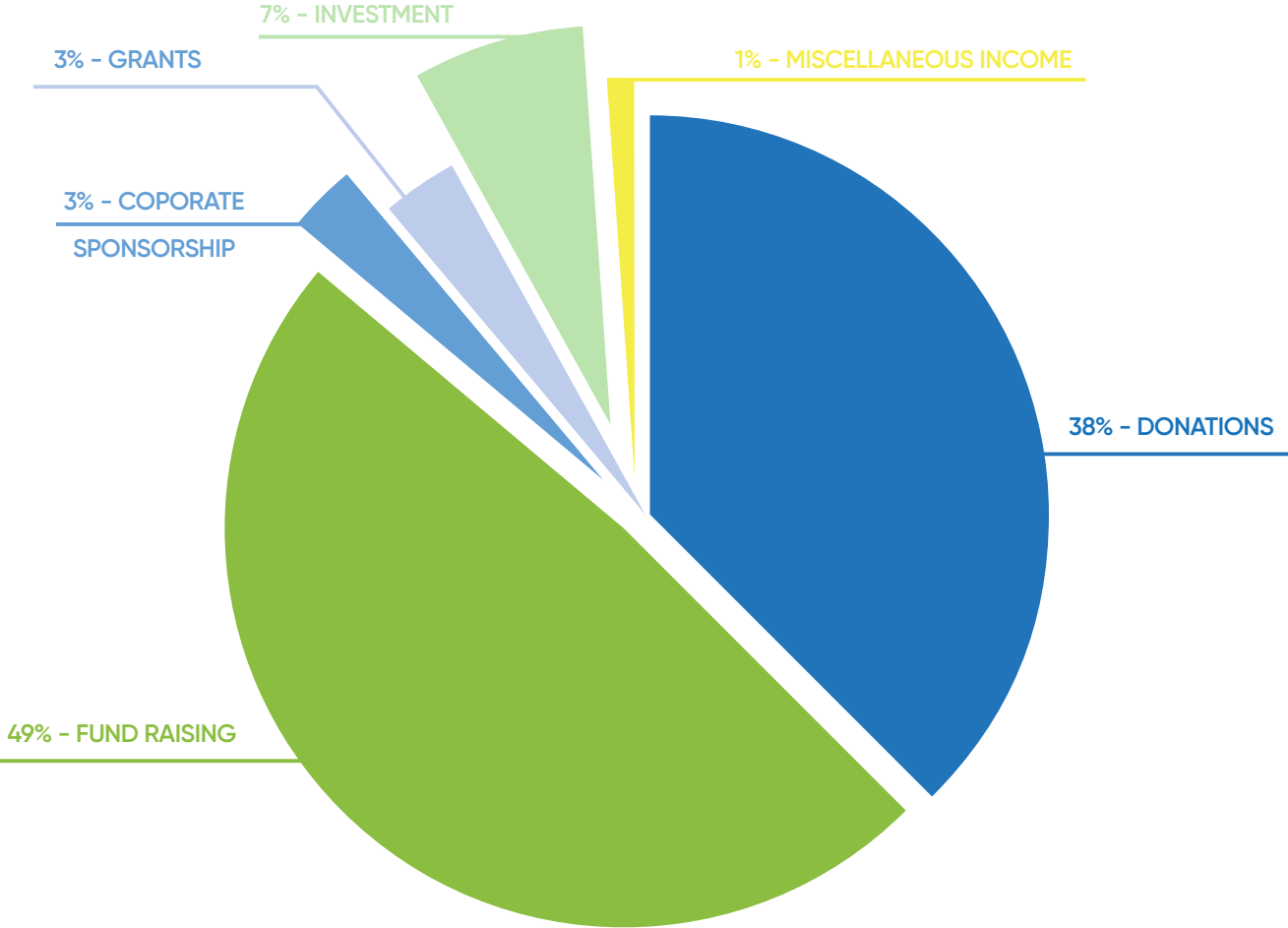
Illnesses in Australia

Categories of Life-Threatening Illness Presented over our Fifteen Year History

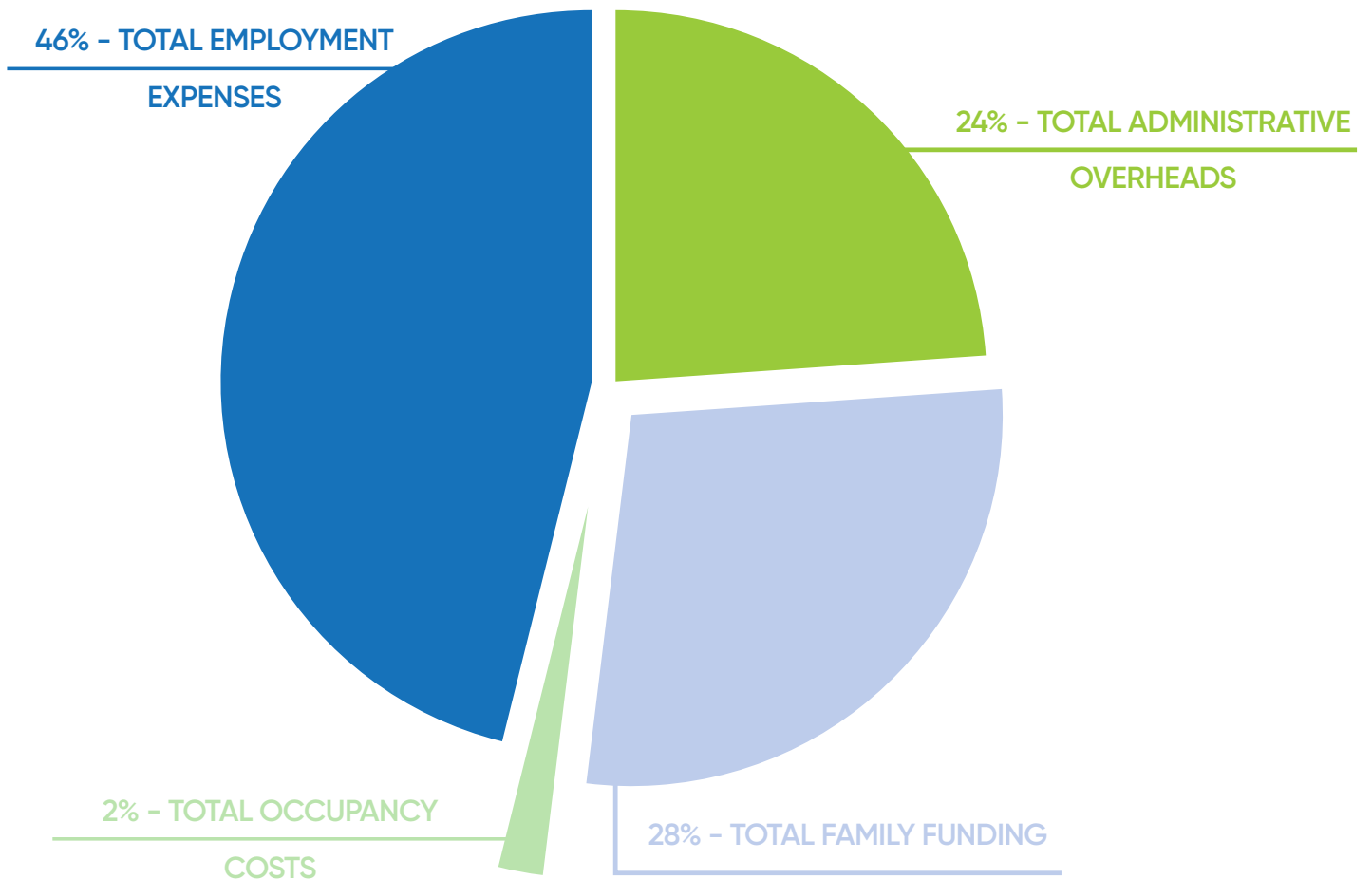


Category of Illness	Number of Children
Cancer	96
Brain Tumour	21
Heart	15
Kidney	8
Lung	5
Liver	2
Brain Disease	2
Rare Conditions	29
Syndromes	9
Neurological Conditions	5
Other	3

Income for the 2019 Financial Year



Expenses for the 2019 Financial Year



EXPENSES	TOTAL COSTINGS
Total Administrative / Overheads	\$151,655.40
Total Family Funding	\$170,609.99
Total Occupancy Costs	\$13,747.53
Total Employment Expenses	\$282,145.19
Interest Expenses	\$1,634.72

Time out for "Life" Country Hope



The 2019 Time Out for Life Holiday Camp was again a great success, with just over 50 campers attending the Circus themed event from Sunday 29-SEP-19 to Friday 04-OCT-19 at the Great Aussie Holiday Park, just outside Albury (on the banks of Lake Hume).

The Holiday Park provided 2 full days of on-camp activities, from archery to disk golf, rock climbing and raft building, even zip lining and animal feeding. The facilities at the park were also new and exciting, with a jumping pillow, tennis courts, playground and recreation area available for the campers. Campers were able to collect limited edition Circus Tickets at each of the activities as a keep sake.

Visiting performers for the week included The Great Dane (Magician), Captain Pete (musical/education performer) and the always loved Steve Bowen for Disco Night.

A day off camp included a visit to Totally Fun in Wodonga, where campers experienced activities like mini golf, train rides, virtual reality video games and jumping castles, with lunch provided by the local Lions and Rotary Clubs. A visit to the Wodonga Sports

and Leisure Centre was also greatly enjoyed, where campers got to go swimming and run across the water on a massive inflatable obstacle course.

The older campers (13+) got to experience a unique night owls' activity off camp at the Albury Escape Room. This off-camp night owls' activity was the result of direct feedback from campers in 2018 and the enjoyment of the campers indicates that an off-camp night owls' activity is something that should be continued into the future.

As always, the last night of camp saw another successful concert night, with a number of parents attending and sharing in the enjoyment (even with the technical difficulties!).

The Camp Committee is eager to get started on camp for 2020 and would like to thank all Buddies, Trainees, Volunteers, Medical staff and Office staff for their tireless effort in making this year's camp another huge success!

Simon Barton
Camp Coordinator

FAMILY LIAISON REPORTS:

Wagga Wagga / Albury



The year has gone past quite quickly with 3 days of work until November when my Miss Wagga Wagga commitments will be over.

During these last 12-months I have gotten to know our Wagga families quite well including creating family stories both in written and assisting for video format for Country Hope Promotions. I've also had the pleasure of speaking at a couple of engagements including a Teys Meeting, Centacare Professional Development and the Buddy Training day. Unfortunately, due to illness I was unable to attend the much-anticipated camp, after 12months of anticipation I was most disappointed not to be able to attend. However, our families have been raving about camp and the benefits they have seen in their children since.

In November, I will be taking on 4 regular days of work a week with the intention of 1 day becoming a regular Albury meeting (families and services) day. Although Albury is somewhat familiar to me, there are a number of services I would like to get to know in order to best support our Albury/Wodonga families adequately. These included government, non-government and other local charities.

I am also looking for ways to better spread Country Hope awareness in Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, as it has been brought to my attention this is a bit lacking.

I'm enjoying the additional load of families to support and look forward to meeting more of them in person as we move towards Christmas, especially at both Albury/Wodonga and Wagga Christmas parties.

In addition to this, I have also had the pleasure of supervising a Social Work placement student who is collaborating with me in working on a peer support program for our teenage children. As I was effectively on leave all of September there was a bit of communication involved to ensure she was staying on the right track. We should have a program ready to trial in the first half of 2020.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with our families and their children to support them through this tough journey of hope.

Sitina Constantine

*Family Liaison Officer –
Wagga Wagga & Albury*

FAMILY LIAISON REPORTS:

Griffith

The Griffith Office has been very busy helping our children & families in so many ways. Being in a multi-cultural city we now see our assistance reaching out into the community for those families who struggle with a very ill child of all nationalities. Illness has come to new families in this area & we have assisted them with flights, accommodation, medical bills, medications & emotional support at hospital & the home. Some of our children have made wonderful progress this year also with their treatment & goals being reached.

The "Time out for Life" holiday camp this year was held at the Big Aussie resort on the banks of the Hume weir. It was an amazing week with the children, Buddies & support staff all having a great time. A lot of new children & Buddies getting to know each other & forming new friendships ready for next year's camp.

Fundraising in the Griffith area has been ongoing with Easter & a Christmas raffle coming up, raising much needed funds & getting our word of support out into the community.

Donations have come in from Rotary Clubs, the public & generous businesses within the area. I have secured Grants in the local Council Community & the NSW Club Grants programs to be used to help our local children who have been diagnosed with cancer or a chronic life-threatening illness & their family. I also would like to thank my small group of volunteers who help me with the raffles, catering & functions. They all contribute to the Country Hope need in our Community.

I am humbled by many & inspired by the children & their families every day.

Bev Devery

*Family Liaison Officer –
Griffith*



FUNDRAISING & EVENTS:



This year has been very busy and a fantastic time to be involved in our events and fundraising activities.

We were off to a flying start on New Year's Day at the Tumbarumba Rodeo, which resulted in excellent exposure in the area and a fantastic donation from the Rodeo committee.

The Riverina Redneck Rally was held again in March and was hugely successful. The organisers and the entrants are brilliant in their efforts to support our families, as well as having a fantastic time crashing through the outback. The 2020 rally will see their fundraising efforts for Country Hope crash through the \$1million barrier in just four years. An unbelievable achievement by everyone involved.

For the first time, we were the beneficiaries of the Wagga Food & Wine Festival, and this resulted in a very substantial donation from the Wollundry Rotary Club.

The annual South Wagga Rotary Club Golf Day was again well supported and Country Hope were the recipients of a wonderful donation that came from the Clubs' hardworking members.

We again supported the Thomas Brothers Wagga Wagga Takes Two competition and our entrant performed magnificently and raised excellent funds for us. This was achieved through many afterhours functions over a three months period.

The Wagga Vintage Car Club's Show 'n' Shine chose Country Hope as their benefitting charity this year and resulted in another excellent donation.

The Wagga Picnic Race Club held their annual race day to provide funds for our Time Out for Life Holiday Camp held in September. This is the 15th year they have sponsored our camp and we are forever grateful to them for their hard work.

One of the highlights of the year was the GEO Australia Ltd / NSW TAFE Car raffle. The inmates of the Junee Correctional Centre built the Peter Brock Tribute Commodore under the guidance of these two wonderful organisations. Tickets were purchased from all over Australia and New Zealand and not only contributed to a substantial financial dividend for Country Hope, but also created enormous awareness in the community of the work we do.

Teys Australia Ltd held their annual Golf Day in October with Country Hope as the beneficiary and it was highly successful. A fun day with our volunteers doing a great job and a wonderful financial benefit to our families.

Many other fundraising activities were held during the year and I want to thank everyone involved for their assistance, guidance and friendship. A special thank you to Ellie, Kim and Kerry as well as others in the office during the year who formed part of a great team.

Tom Looney

Fundraising & Events Manager



Sowing the Seeds of Hope

The Board of Directors



Kerry Flinn
Chairman



Pat Barrett
Deputy Chair / Secretary



Sally Whitley
Treasurer



Yvonne Braid
Director



Ged Madden
Director



Jen Spain
Director



Sean Lee
Director



Setchen Brimson
Director

Sowing the Seeds of Hope

Our Staff



Ellie Webb
General Manager



Kim Taylor
Administration Officer



Tom Looney
Fundraising & Events Manager



Bev Devery
Family Liaison Officer – Griffith



Sitina Constantine
Family Liaison Officer – Wagga Wagga
& Albury

Our Patrons

Vera Entwistle
Brian & Joy Kahlefeldt
Richard Alsop

John Studdert
Babs Donaldson
Steve Dwyer

Rod Dunlop

WAGGA WAGGA
GRIFFITH & ALBURY

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A country based, family centred
support organisation for

**CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH
CANCER AND OTHER CHRONIC
LIFE THREATENING ILLNESSES**

