

Toc H Australia Inc. – National Directors Report

For the period October 2017 to December 2018

(presented at the AGM held on Monday 21st January 2019)

Introduction

During the past year, Toc H has continued to carry out many important projects, and we have made good progress on several important tasks in relation to governance, public relations and future planning.

For this report, I intend to provide some perspectives and a summary of the main work conducted by Toc H Australia, as well as some thoughts on the activities carried out by the Northern and Southern Regions during the 2017/2018 period, but for full details of projects conducted by the regions I encourage readers to refer to the respective Director's reports prepared by Ray Geise and Patrick Korbel.

Toc H Australia

In the previous year, Australia Council focussed on finalising our National Constitution, and this was done following our annual meeting which, in 2018, was conducted at the Victor Harbor camp site. Work has continued on the Northern and Southern Region Constitutions, with the Southern Region Executive more recently working on both updates to reflect the Toc H Australia Constitution, and changes that will enable Toc H South Australia Inc. to achieve DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) status. This is considered extremely important for the purposes of fundraising and growth. Depending on how this process goes, the plan is then to decide whether similar variation can be made to the Toc H Australia and Northern Region constitutions, to also obtain DGR status. When completed, the three updated constitutions should be similar in most important regards, and better reflect current times and current requirements for governance of organisations such as ours.

Other important issues addressed by Australia Council included:

- The development of policies and procedures for workplace health and safety, risk assessment, and child protection (in progress)
- Planning for dealing with future bequests (in progress – report at annual meeting at Bribie in May 2019)
- Completing the design of the new Toc H brochure – quotes for printing are now being obtained
- Good progress is being made on developing a new Toc H Australia web site – this is expected to be completed in January
- Continuing to produce the Link; and
- Continuing the Toc H Vietnam Project, with many children supported through YWAM's Education Assistance Project by Toc H members, branches, and the Birdathon Fundraising Project.

The World Chain of Light, which links together all Toc H Branches and members around the world, started in Brisbane on 11th December and finished also in Brisbane on 12th December. In Australia it was

also observed at Maryborough, Adelaide and Victor Harbor. Encouraging messages were received from Poperinge, South Africa and India.

All of the above activities have continued to require considerable effort on the part of members of Australia Council and other Toc H members and supporters, and I sincerely thank all of you who continue to make this possible. We have made good progress in relation to important governance matters such as constitutions, policies and procedures, and estate planning. We now need to focus on growing our organisation and attracting new members. The new brochure and Toc H Australia web site will help in this regard. As noted later, Southern Region are working on marketing and already have attracted increased interest in the Victor Harbor camp site. Overall, there are many exciting growth opportunities, and we are now in a good position to take these up. I encourage all members to make sure we make a concerted effort to do so.

Toc H Northern Region

The Director of Toc H Northern Region Ray Giese has reported on a successful year, with four branches currently active: Toc H Brisbane Branch, St Margaret's Anglican Girls School Action Group, Toc H Canberra Branch, and Toc H General Members Branch. Toc H Cairns Branch is currently inactive, while it is expected that when new caretaker Caroline Dawson takes over at Coungeau House in January, the Toc H Bribie Island Branch will recommence activities. We also continue to have a small but enthusiastic presence in Maryborough, Townsville and Newcastle. We must make every effort to maintain and, where possible, grow the Toc H presence in these locations.

Brisbane Branch continued to maintain strong links with Childhood Cancer Support, with members of the branch providing considerable help at Camp Crystal, and the annual Christmas Party. The Branch also organises the annual Ekka outing for CCS children and their families, as well as other disadvantaged children, and refugee families. Many Toc H members from several branches help make this event possible, with this year being the 92nd Ekka Outing. Overall, this project involves more than 250 people. Special thanks to the organisers of the event – Dan Boucaut, The Clacher Family and Nick Dubravcic, and to the many helpers.

As in previous years, many Toc H members and friends were involved in the 2018 ANZAC Day Observances. A very successful concert was held at St John's Anglican Church, Bulimba, while the annual Toc H Midnight Service on ANZAC Eve was again very well supported. There was very good support for Toc H's involvement in the main ANZAC Day Parade in Brisbane.

All branches continue to provide an opportunity for fellowship, with this role particularly important in the Bribie Island Branch amongst the many retired people in the community. These get-togethers, concerts etc. are expected to recommence in 2019.

Coungeau House continues to serve an important role on Bribie Island, with regular bookings and branch activities. Bob and Jan Cleaver, who have been caretakers for many years, are moving on and we would all like to sincerely thank them for the excellent work they have done for many years managing the place, and on the Bribie Island Toc H Branch. The new caretaker Caroline Dawson commences in January and together with the management committee, will continue to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

St. Margaret's Toc H Action Group continues to organise concerts in an Old People's Home. They also collect cans of food for people in need and this year its members knitted poppies for Remembrance Day Ceremonies. Some members help with the EKKA Outing and the ANZAC Day Ceremonies.

General Members Branch helps keep in touch with members who live in remote areas. Its main project is providing a Bursary to a trainee nurse from the University of Queensland who is both caring and compassionate, and who is making excellent progress in their nursing studies.

Maryborough, the birthplace of our founder Tubby Clayton, has a visible Toc H presence at a number of locations including St Paul's Anglican Church and on the Heritage Trail. In 2018 a magnificent mural of Tubby/Toc H was painted on the outside wall of the Colonial and Military Museum. There are several General Members of Toc H in Maryborough and in time it is hoped that a branch can be formed there. Each year a Toc H Bursary is given to a student at the Fraser Coast Anglican College in memory of Tubby.

The excellent Northern Region web site, designed and run by Eilis Rigby, continues to provide interested people with information on our activities and upcoming events. Extension work in the Northern Region will focus on Maryborough, Canberra, and rejuvenating the Bribie Island Branch. Strong support for these and other growth opportunities by members will help ensure the future of our Movement.

I would like to sincerely thank all members and supporters of Toc H in the Northern Region for their efforts, many of whom are named in the Northern Region Director's report. In particular, I would like to thank Director Ray Geise who continues to be an inspiration for all by working enthusiastically and tirelessly for Toc H.

Toc H Southern Region

As reported by the Director of Toc H Southern Region Patrick Korbel, exciting changes continue in Toc H Southern Region and as the vision of Regeneration Review is gradually implemented in an attempt to rejuvenate the Movement in that region.

Sale of the Thebarton property was completed in late 2017, and the new office established in Parkside in September 2018. This should provide a good working environment for staff and volunteers.

CEO Adam Hooper commenced in his newly created position in July 2018, and is working closely with the Southern Region Executive to implement the Strategic Plan. He is reviewing the operations of the organisation, including the camping program, developing policies and procedures, and working to expand programs, and achieve both financial and membership growth.

Marketing and Engagement Coordinator Dana O'Brien started in October 2018. Her role is to coordinate marketing, brand development, fundraising and outreach.

The camping program continues to be the Movement's major project in Southern Region, with four successful camps held in 2017/2018 for children in need. These are of great benefit to those attending, but also provide excellent volunteering opportunities for those who help run them. Camping program manager Andy Davoren has brought great enthusiasm and many new initiatives to the campsite. Important maintenance works have been undertaken, and building on an open day held in October 2017, involvement with the local community has increased, with plans to establish a community garden, and an environment group to look after the scrub. It is hoped to set up a 'Friends of Toc H Camp' group.

Victor Harbor Branch continues its activities, and organised the camp open day referred to above. Other activities conducted by the branch include Remembrance Day and ANZAC day commemoration, and a very successful inaugural Quiz Night fundraiser.

The Adelaide East branch continues to meet regularly with guest speakers, and provide fellowship for members, who fundraise for the Vietnam Education Study Assistance project, and some Christmas Shoeboxes.

Overall, these continue to be exciting and challenging times for our movement in the Southern Region, and good progress is being made in rejuvenating the organisation. I would like to thank Director Patrick Korbelt and all members for their commendable efforts, and encourage all involved to continue the good work, whilst still ensuring that we keep the critical elements that make our 100 year old Movement unique. Members of Toc H Australia and Northern Region look forward to regular updates, and are happy to help or advise if and when required.

Concluding thoughts

Overall, I think we can be very pleased with what our Movement has achieved in the last 12 months. Northern Region continues to implement projects that make a difference to the lives of the sick, the lonely, and the disadvantaged. Southern Region's camping program continues to provide valuable respite, recreation and learning opportunities for the disadvantaged, while Southern Region's rejuvenation program is making excellent progress, and we look forward to seeing the fruits of this in the next few years. Toc H Australia has dealt with some difficult issues and made good progress with difficult tasks including our constitution and other governance matters. We are close to finalising our new web site and producing a new brochure.

My thoughts are that we now have to focus on people. Telling more people – lots more people – about Toc H. We will have the new website and brochure as well as good websites in both Southern and Northern Regions; a marketing co-ordinator in Southern Region; and a wonderful mural in Maryborough – so we have the tools and resources to expand our organisation. We need to now take the next step by spreading the word and INVOLVING more people in our activities and our movement. We can do more than survive – we can grow if we take full advantage of these new opportunities. As I mentioned last year, being an organisation based on Christian values, we have an obligation to show Jesus' unconditional love to everyone, and help where we can, following the example of our founder Tubby Clayton. Whilst the world will continue to change, the need for what we can offer will always be with us, and by being 'people caring for people' we can learn to understand the real meaning of Jesus words as quoted by Paul in Acts 20:35 that 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all members for the excellent work everyone has contributed to our movement over the last 12 months. Together we can look forward to another exciting year, and I encourage you to build on the progress we have made, as we continue to 'do our best' for Toc H.

Dr. Owen Nichols

National Director, Toc H Australia

December 2018