

2025-26 Chairperson's Report

It is a privilege to present my report as Chairperson of the Choir of High Hopes Hobart.

This year has once again demonstrated what makes our choir so special. While singing is at the heart of what we do, the Choir of High Hopes Hobart is about so much more than music. It is about connection, belonging, friendship and creating a safe and welcoming place for people experiencing disadvantage in its many forms.

When Miriam stepped down as Chair, I knew I had some very big shoes to fill. Miriam has given so much to the choir, and I would like to acknowledge her contribution and the strong foundations she helped create.

I also came into the role knowing that my own time would be limited.

Thankfully, one of the great strengths of the choir is that it has the ability to keep moving forward because of the commitment, enthusiasm and generosity of its Board, choir members and volunteers. In many ways, the choir has managed to keep running because of the people around it who step up when needed, and I am incredibly grateful to everyone who has contributed to making that possible.

A special thank you to David

I would like to give a very special thank you to our Deputy Chair, David Rose.

David has done a tremendous amount of the heavy lifting this year on my behalf, particularly at times when my own commitments have meant that I have not had the time I would have liked to give to the Chair's role.

From helping keep things moving behind the scenes to taking responsibility for organising the AGM, David has been someone I could rely on to step up and get things done.

His support has made a very real difference to me personally and to the choir, and I am extremely grateful for the time, effort and commitment he has given throughout the year.

A year of singing, connection and community

As we do each year, we began 2026 with our welcome back BBQ in February. It was a lovely opportunity to reconnect after the break in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and to welcome everyone back for another year of singing together.

Throughout the year, the choir has continued to take opportunities to share our music and our message with the wider community.

We were delighted to be involved with the Festival of Voices, including being featured in the Festival's Pop-up Program at the Hobart City Mission Moonah Store. Bringing our music into an everyday public space was a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate exactly what community singing is about – connection, inclusion and joy.

We were also very proud to be invited to open the Festival of Voices Corporate Choir Challenge. Performing our joyful version of Sweet Caroline to kick off the evening was a wonderful opportunity for our choir to share our enthusiasm and energy with a wider audience.

Our choir was also featured in the Mercury, in an article about community connections across Hobart. I would particularly like to acknowledge our own Edwin Johnstone, who wrote the article and has been such a strong supporter of the Choir.

Edwin has contributed to the choir in many ways and has also been a great support to our volunteers. We are very grateful for the time, encouragement and advocacy he continues to give to the choir.

Our wonderful volunteer team

I want to give a very special and heartfelt thank you to our volunteer team. Karen, Carol, Pam, Greg and Edwin.

Of course, the choir wouldn't be the choir without Frankie who week in week out turns up early to help set up and pack down the space.

Every week, our volunteers turn up, often quietly and without any fuss, to help make the Choir of High Hopes Hobart happen. They are the silent contributors who keep everything moving behind the scenes, and we simply could not do this without them.

For our choir members, knowing that these familiar faces will be there each week provides a sense of consistency, welcome and security. Their commitment means that our members can arrive, sing, connect with each other and enjoy being part of the choir.

We would be lost without them. We are incredibly grateful for their commitment to our choir and to the people who call it home.

Of course, many of our choir members turn up each week early and stay after to help with what is needed, they really are a dedicated group that pitch in when needed.

Our musical team

Of course, our voices can't be heard without our amazingly talented musical team, Andy and Kieran. Thank you for all your hard work, commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year.

They bring energy and encouragement to rehearsals, help us prepare for performances and, most importantly, create an environment where our members can enjoy singing and feel comfortable being themselves.

I would also like to sincerely thank Johanna and Oliver, who have been there as our wonderful backups whenever we have needed them.

Their history with the choir means that whenever they step in, it is completely seamless for our choir members. They understand our choir, our members and the way we work, and their willingness to step in when needed has been incredibly valuable. We are very fortunate to have them as part of our wider musical team.

I would also like to give a special thank you to Darren Sangwell, who has become such an important part of our choir family.

Darren is our Christmas MC each year and does this completely voluntarily. He continues to turn up for us whenever we need him, bringing his warmth, humour and enthusiasm to our events. Darren is very much part of the choir family, and we are incredibly thankful for the support he continues to give us.

Support from our community

The Choir of High Hopes Hobart is incredibly fortunate to have the support of some wonderful organisations and individuals in our community.

Scot's Church

Our relationship with Scot's Church continues to be absolutely vital to the choir.

Scot's Church not only provides us with our rehearsal space each week free of charge but is also a major financial supporter of the choir, providing \$10,000 each year towards the cost of running the organisation.

It costs approximately \$13,000 each year to run the choir, so this contribution goes a very long way towards keeping our doors open and enabling us to continue doing what we do.

We are incredibly grateful for their ongoing generosity, support and belief in the choir and in the people who make it what it is.

Quite simply, we could not do this without Scot's Church.

Rotary Club of Hobart

We would also like to acknowledge the wonderful support of the Rotary Club of Hobart.

In October 2025, we were delighted to welcome Alison and Michael from the Rotary Club of Hobart to show off our brand-new choir t-shirts.

These shirts were made possible through a generous donation from the Rotary Club of Hobart, which allowed us to provide much needed new t-shirts for all of our choir members.

It was wonderful to see everyone proudly wearing them, and we think they look pretty awesome!

Banjo's Bakery Café

A very heartfelt thank you goes to Banjo's Bakery Cafe who are our most recent supporters. Each week they provide us with afternoon tea for our choir members.

We are incredibly grateful for their kindness and support of our choir community. This regular support means a great deal to our choir and helps make our rehearsals even more welcoming and enjoyable.

The Banjo's contribution would not be possible without Alderman Marti Zucco who, when hearing the Choir was struggling to provide afternoon tea, organising this wonderful ongoing contribution.

Alderman Zucco has a long history of supporting the choir and we are thankful he's never forgotten us and believes in the choir.

Looking towards 20 years

As we look towards the future, we have an exciting milestone ahead of us.

This year, the Choir of High Hopes Hobart turns 19. That means we are now looking ahead to our 20th year, and before too long we will be celebrating the choir's 21st birthday.

Twenty years is an incredible achievement and one that should make every member, past and present, incredibly proud.

As we prepare for this milestone, there will be plenty to think about, including how we celebrate our history, recognise the people who have helped shape the choir and look towards the next chapter.

The strength of this choir has always come from people being willing to contribute what they can. Whether that is through singing, volunteering, helping behind the scenes, serving on the Board or simply being there for one another, every contribution matters.

Thank you to the choir

Finally, I want to thank every member of the Choir of High Hopes Hobart.

Thank you for turning up, for singing, for encouraging each other, for sharing your stories and for helping create the wonderful atmosphere that makes this choir what it is.

There is something incredibly powerful about coming together through music. It can uplift us, connect us and remind us that we belong.

That is the heart of the Choir of High Hopes Hobart.

I have been a part of the choir family since 2009 and I am proud to have served as Chairperson this year. I may not always have had as much time as I would have liked, but I have been continually reminded that this choir is bigger than any one person. It is a community, and it is the people within that community who keep it going.

I hope we continue to grow, strengthen and, most importantly, continue providing people experiencing disadvantage in its many forms with the opportunity to sing in a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment.

Angela Percy

Chairperson

Choir of High Hopes Hobart