

The History of Victorian Council of Deaf People

1982 – 1983

The 1st Annual General Meeting was held at the John Pierce Centre where sixteen people attended. Guest Speaker was Mr John Lovett “Evolution of the Victorian Council of the Deaf”.

Executive Committee

President: Malcolm Shannon
Vice President: Ann Darwin
Secretary: Chris Dunn
Treasurer: Robert Stewart

Highlights

- Adoption of the first Constitution of VCOD
- VCOD had \$273.76 in the bank

1983 – 1984

Executive Committee

President: Phil Harper (resigned due to relocation to America)
Vice President: Ann Darwin
Secretary: Myles Lauritz
Treasurer: David Peters

Subcommittees

Closed Captions: Andrew Bloom, Robert Adam, John Lovett, Andrew Swann

TTY Subcommittee: David Peters and Barry Darwin

Representation on Groups

Deafness Foundation Social Employment and Education Subcommittee: Phil Harper and David Peters

Australian Sign Language Development Working Party: David Peters

Highlights:

- Distributed over 1,000 pamphlets for Deaf people to write to television stations for more subtitled programs and to write to their local MPs asking them to support the abolition of sales Tax on television decoders.
- Establishment of policies relating to the demand and provision of TTYs in Victoria
- Met with the Victorian Association of teachers of hearing impaired Students (VATHIS). The aim of this meeting was to give VATHIS the opportunity to listen to the deaf community of about their experiences as students in mainstream education.

1984 – 1985

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
Secretary: Myles Lauritz
Treasurer: David Peters

Subcommittees

Closed Captions Subcommittee: Andrew Bloom (Chairperson), Mac Adam, John Lovett

TTY Subcommittee: David Peters and Barry Darwin

Representation on Groups:

Deafness Foundation Social Employment and Education Subcommittee

Highlights

- VCOD had \$174.69
- Guest Speaker was Annette Loader who spoke of Deaf Rights
- The Committee of VCOD was established for the first time at the AGM
- At the AGM it was discussed for VCOD to hold a workshop for Deaf people on Deaf Rights.

1985 – 1986

Executive Committee:

President: Frederick Beasley
Vice President: Allen Mann
Secretary: Annette Loader
Treasurer: Myles Lauritz
Committee: Irene Holub, Michael Uniacke

Sub Committees

TTY Users Group: Michael Uniacke (Chairperson), Andrew Bloom, Breda Carty, Karli Dettman, Tony Raynor, Pam Dethridge, Phil Harper

Telethon Subcommittee: Breda Carty (Chairperson)

Australian Sign Language Users Group

Highlights

- The Executive Committee applied for funding from the Department of Community Services: \$19,000 was awarded to VCOD and a part time Administrative Officer would be employed.
- The funding submission was prepared by Myles Lauritz, Treasurer of VCOD with the

Assistance of Michael Uniacke

- Vice President of VCOD, Allen Mann, in his report to the AGM states: "The sky is the limit."
- Assertiveness Workshop on Deaf Rights organised and held. Sixteen people attended. The convener was Irene Holub with the assistance of Annette Loader.
- VCOD was based at the Victorian Deaf Society.
- VCOD news was printed in "Deaf Talkabout"
- TTY User Group's purpose: "to promote the rights of Deaf people who use TTYs."
The aims of the TTY users group was to: write a Code of Ethics for people who use TTYs;
To examine the question of Telecom providing TTY at the same cost charged to hearing people with a standard phone; and to investigate the issue of deaf people having to pay more for TTY STD calls.
The channel 10 Telethon Sub-Committee conducted an evaluation of the telethon to be presented to the Deafness Foundation.
- VCOD had \$292.30 in the bank.

1986 – 1987

Executive Committee:

President: Breda Carty
Vice President: Phil Harper
Secretary: Annette Loader
Treasurer: Myles Lauritz

Committee: Wendy Vellere, Alf Sugden, Greg Culpitt, Carla Anderson

Staff: Diane Backholer (temporary), Michael Uniacke

Sub Committees

TTY Users Group: Phil Harper (Chairperson), John Zurek, Graeme Mills, John Eagle, Peter Mulham, Irene Holub, Breda Carty, Michael Uniacke, Andrew Bloom, Karli Dettman, Tony Raynor, Pam Dethridge

Telethon Subcommittee: Breda Carty (Chairperson), Janice Knuckey, Annette Loader

Closed Captions: Annette Loader (Chairperson)

Australian Sign Language Subcommittee: Greg Culpitt (Convenor), John McRae (Secretary), Breda Carty, Anne Culpitt (Bremner), Howard Ross, Mac Adam, Robert Nufer, Terry Childs

Two smaller sub committees were formed to review the constitution, prepare workshops and design pamphlets.

Representations on Groups

- Deafness Foundation
- Deaf services Network
- Richmond TAFE Advisory Group for Deaf Persons
- Ministerial Committee for Transport Needs of Disabled
- Australian Association of the Deaf (in future)

Highlights

Channel 10 Telethon Group

- The Telethon Subcommittee, together with a number of other groups such as Better Hearing, compiled a report on the 1985 Channel 10 Telethon. The report was presented to a wide variety of groups.
- Prepared a policy calling for the telethon to be abandoned.
- Met with the Deafness Foundation to discuss the report and the policy.
- Some organisations did not agree with VCOD that the Channel 10 Telethon be stopped.
- Prepared and distributed a pamphlet outlining VCOD's views on the Telethon.
- The Age newspaper printed two articles about VCOD's view on the Telethon.
- Breda Carty was interviewed on the ABC's 7.30 report about the Channel 10 Telethon

Closed Captions Sub Committee

- A forum on closed captions was held in conjunction with Victorian Daef Society. Ninety people attended.
- Developed communication with The Australian Caption Centre.

1986 - 1987

Highlights

TTY Users Group

- TTY campaign: Telephone Access for Deaf People
- Survey to Relay Service Operators and beginning of work to make a Code of Ethics for Relay Operators.
- Prepared a discussion paper to encourage the Australian Deafness Council to set up a TTY Working Party to lobby the Australian Government and Telecom to provide telephone access to Deaf People
The Australian deafness Council set up a working party: Phil Harper (Chairperson), Dot Shaw (AAD), Reg Armitage (BHA), Stan Batson (CADHIPA), Bob White (Australian Deafness Council), Alexandra Hynes (Australian Caption Centre)

Other Highlights

- A workshop was run on "Lobbying"
- Response letters were written to Mt Gravatt College of Advanced Education in Brisbane regarding funding cuts, support letters to parent Groups about planned closure of Monnington Centre (Early Intervention Service for Parents with young deaf children)
- Regular reports from VCOD in Deaf Talkabout
- Pamphlets about VCOD, Auslan and Channel 10 Telethon were distributed
- VCOD had \$10,423.63 in the bank

1987 – 1988

Executive Committee:

President: Breda Carty
Vice President: Michael Anderson
Secretary: Carla Anderson
Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Committee: Robert Adam, Annette Loader, George Walker, John Parsons

Staff: Diane Backholer, Administrative Officer

Sub Committees

TTY Users Group: Phil Harper (Chairperson), John Zurek, Graeme Mills, John Eagle, Peter Mulham, Irene Holub, Karli Dettman, Pam Dethridge, Michael Uniacke, Andrew Bloom.

- Aim; to achieve telephone access through Telecom to provide TTYs to Deaf people at no extra cost than regular phone charges and to establish a TTY relay service.
- 150 letters sent to federal MPs and federal Ministers asking them to support telephone access to Deaf people. Many MPs said they would look into the issue.
- John Saunderson, MP: asked in Parliament why Telecom was not taking responsibility for providing telephone access for Deaf people.
- VCOD moved a motion for the Deafness Foundation to establish a statewide Access Committee
- The Hawke Government squashed a planned meeting between VCOD and Telecom about timed STD calls.
- Telephone access petition with 450 signatures sent to Canberra.
- Phil Harper attended Derryn Hinch's TV program "Hinch to highlight the issue of telephone access for Deaf people (on 19th February 1988)

Telethon Sub Committee: Breda Carty (Chairperson)

- Drafted a media Code of ethics for "Portrayal of Deaf People in the Media." This was presented to the Australian Association of the deaf for its approval for distribution.
- Contacted a number of current affairs television programs about the possibility of investigating the Telethon. Suggested to the Deafness Foundation that they continue to look for other sources of funding instead through telethon. The Deafness foundation invited a representative of VCOD onto their Fundraising Sub Committee.
- Continued to speak to interested organisations about the Telethon.

The Closed Captions Sub Committee: Annette loader (Convenor)

- Met twice a month
- Encouraged TV stations to provide more captioned programmes
- Campaigned a survey
- Visiting Auslan classes run by a Deaf person

The Auslan Sub Committee: John McRae (Convenor)

- Distributed Auslan pamphlet
- Planned a series of Auslan videos
- Met with Trevor Johnston to assist with his research for the Auslan dictionary

Subcommittee for planning of the Second Regional Conference of the World federation of the Deaf

Regional Secretariat: Asia Pacific Region

Short term committees and working parties for

- Revising the constitution
- Planning and reviewing budgets

- Preparing for workshops

Representation on Groups

- Deafness Foundation
- Deaf services Network
- Ministerial Transport Committee
- Richmond TAFE Advisory group for Deaf Persons
- “Deaf Deaf World” Unit Advisory Committee

Highlights

- Participated in Deafness Awareness Week
- Participated in the National Deafness Conference in Hobart
- Distributed a new magazine for deaf People, “Sound Off”
- Provided regular reports about VCOD in the Victorian deaf Society “Deaf Talkabout.”
- Development of affiliation with the Australian Association of the Deaf.
- Established an outreach program to expand membership to include country Deaf people
- Tasmanian Council of Deaf People requested support from VCOD and Carla Anderson from VCOD ran some workshops for TCOG.
- Pamphlets about VCOD and Auslan distributed.
- Prepared responses to the Australia’s Immigration Act, timed local telephone call proposal, cochlear implant, and deaf people’s classification in Government Superannuation Schemes

1988 – 1989

Executive Committee

President: Breda Carty (March - August 1988)
Carla Anderson (August, 1988 – March 1989)

Vice president: John Lovett

Secretary: Carla Anderson (March – August 1988)
Robert Adam (August 1988 – March 1989)

Treasurer: George Walker

Committee: Robert Adam (March – August 1988), Anne Bremner, Melissa Anderson, Kim Kavanagh, Graham Peters (October 1988 – March 1989)

Staff: Diane Backholer

Establishment of E (Elijah) R Noble Award

Eli Robert “Ern” Noble was a Deaf Leader and a wonderful role model for deaf people. An award by VCOD was established to recognize his contribution and of others who are leaders and positive role models in the deaf community. This is awarded annually.

Subcommittees:

TTY User Group:

- VCOD developed a public campaign for telephone access for Deaf people. It was hoped that the Australian Association of the Deaf would be at the front of this campaign with the support of the Australian Deafness Council.

- TTY rally held on 25th August
- Met with Norm Cameron (Telecom Disability Program Service) on 27th October 1989. His response was not in support for our rights. Telecom would not be lobbying on behalf of Deaf people.
- Workshop organised by VCOD, the Association of Victorian Interpreters with deaf People and the Victorian Deaf Society on “Everything you wanted to know about interpreters but were afraid to ask.” Presenters were Graham Peters, Marianne Bridge and John Lovett
- VCOD attended the launch of the TTY services at the Melbourne Town Hall with the Lord Mayor.

Telethon Subcommittee: met only a few times due to no Telethon being held in 1988. Meetings have been planned for 1998 when Telethon will be held.

Auslan Subcommittee: Greg Culpitt (Convenor)

- Conducted a workshop to obtain new signs
- Met with Trevor Johnston
- Investigated a pilot scheme to videotaping Melbourne Deaf people using Auslan.

Representation on Groups

- Richmond College of TAFE Advisory Committee for Hearing Impaired Persons: Phil Harper
- Deaf Services Network: Diane Backholer
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, Auslan Committee: Five members from VCOD are on this Board and are responsible for planning curriculum for teaching of Auslan at Years 11 and 12 level
- Victorian Deaf Society Board of management: VCOD nominated a member of Deaf Community to be on the VDS Board.
- Deafness Foundation Victorian Education Committee: Carla Anderson / Robert Adam
- Transport for people with disabilities Advisory Committee: Anne Bremner.

Highlights

- VCOD became an incorporated organisation
- The Department of Community Services continued to fund VCOD, including a small grant was given by the Dept of Community Services to buy a computer and printer
- Second Regional Conference of the World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat: Asia Pacific Region. The theme of the conference was “Deaf People Standing Up for Ourselves”. It was chaired by Dorothy Shaw from the Australian Association of the Deaf and held at the Melbourne Town Hall on 1st and 2nd April 1988
- Delegates from Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Kuwait, New Zealand and Australia
- Keynote address: Dr Anderson from Gallaudet University
- Phil Harper, Carla Anderson and Breda Garty all presented workshop papers
- VCOD developed an Education Policy. This policy was adopted and issued by the Australian Association of the Deaf
- Cochlear Implant Forum held
- Subtitled video night: Crocodile Dundee was held and 40 people attended
- Communication Policy: first draft of policy written which included Deaf people’s rights to be taught in a bilingual environment
- Survey sent to regional groups asking how VCOD can better support them
- Increasing VCOD membership included Moomba Deaf Association, Frankston Deaf Regional Centre and Gippsland Regional Centre

1989 - 1990

Executive Committee

President: Anne Bremner

Vice President: John Lovett

Secretary: Robert Adam

Treasurer: George Walker (March-June), Jill Lovett (June-March)

Committee: Melissa Anderson, Rebecca Adam, Jill Lovett (March-June), Carmel Phillips (July-March), Malcolm Peters (March-December)

Staff: Diane Backholer, Administrative Assistant

ER Noble Award recipient : Deaf Services Network

Subcommittees:

Auslan Subcommittee

- Auslan Committee held a general meeting to establish an independent group of Deaf people to share concerns and monitor how Auslan is taught. It was agreed that there is a need for Auslan research and to decide which university would be appropriate for this purpose.
- Held two Auslan workshops

Finance Committee

- Jill Lovett (Chairperson,) John Lovett, Melissa Anderson and Diane Backholer

Newsletter Editorial Committee

- Three newsletters produced: Spring, Summer and Autumn. Due to budget restrictions, this was discontinued and a full report was printed in the Victorian deaf Society newsletter

Representation on Groups

Decoder Liaison Officer: Robert Adam

Richmond College of TAFE Advisory Committee for Hearing Impaired Persons: Robert Adam

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB): Anne Bremner and Robert Adam

Victorian Deaf Society Board of Management: Anne Bremner

Ministerial Advisory Council on Disabilities: Anne Bremner

National Conference on Deafness: Robert Adam

National Deaf Youth Conference

Was held in Canberra on 22nd – 26th April 1990. On behalf of VCOD, John Lovett, Jill Lovett and Anne Bremner selected five young Deaf people to represent Victoria at NDYC

Highlights

- A workshop provided by the Association of Victorian Interpreters, VCOD and the Victorian Deaf Society with focus on the “Role of Welfare Workers, the Role of Interpreters and the Rights and responsibilities of Deaf Clients” and How to Book an Auslan Interpreter”
- Joan Kirner, Minister for Education, conducted a “Review into the Education of Students who are Deaf in Victorian Government Schools”. Anne Bremner and Robert Adam met with Joan Kirner in August 1990 to discuss concerns

- Implementation Taskforce Review established: Mac Adam, Rod Chapman, Jan Branson and Phil Harper represented VCOD on four different taskforces for this review
- Victorian premiere of “Signs of Life: The Australian Deaf Community” video produced by The Brisbane College of Advanced Education
- Cochlear Implant policy written by Michael Uniacke
- VCOD participated in Deafness Awareness Week at Southland Shopping Centre
- Phil Harper hosted a slide night of his trip to China

Executive Committee

President: Anne Bremner
 Vice President: John Lovett
 Secretary: Robert Adam
 Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Rebecca Adam, Berna Hutchins, Robert Lee, Carmel Phillips (March-July),
 Rod Chapman (October-March)

Staff: Diane Backholer, Administrative Assistant

ER Noble Award recipient : Earforce Companion Group

Representation on Groups

- Victorian Deaf Society Board of Management: Anne Bremner
- National Conferences on Deafness: Rebecca Adam
- Accessible Transport Consultative Council: Robert Adam
- State Training Board: Graham Peters
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board: Anne Bremner
- Richmond College of TAFE Advisory Committee for Hearing Impaired Persons: Robert Adam
- Implementation Taskforce for the Review into the Education of Students with Disabilities in Victorian Government Schools: Jan Branson, Phil Harper, Mac Adam and Rod Chapman represented VCOD on four different taskforces

Highlights

- Future funding of VCOD was uncertain
- Three editions of the newsletter were produced but due to budget problems, a full report was published in the Victorian Deaf Society newsletter
- Met with Donovan Cresdee from South Australian Deaf Society, who conducted a research project into the literacy of Deaf people
- How to Use an Interpreter Workshop on 3rd November 1990 and was attended by 35 people
- **Sign of the Times I:** A review of “Seeing Voices,” written by Oliver Sacks and was chaired by Graham Peters, Jan Branson, Tim Moore, John Flynn and John Lovett. A record of 140 people attended
- **Sign of the Times II:** Dr Carol Padden and Dr Tom Humphries. In the afternoon there was a workshop on “Deaf Pride – Its Effects on Community, Education, Rights and Deaf Sign Language”
- Deaf Womens Group – Set up by Kathy Fitzmaurice, Carla Anderson, Diane Backholer and Loretta baker (Juers) for VCOD

1991 – 1992

Executive Committee

President: Robert Adam

Vice President: Rod Chapman (March-October), Rebecca Adam (October-March)

Secretary: Robert Lee

Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Barry Darwin, Berna Hutchins, Chris Dunn, Rebecca Adam (March-October),
Robyn May (November-March)

Staff: Diane Bachholer, Administrative Assistant

ER Noble Award recipient: John W Flynn

Representations on Groups

- Education Implementation Taskforce: Deaf: Jan Branson, Rod Chapman, Robert Adam, Phil Harper
- RMIT Advisory Group
- Accessible Transport Consultative Council (ATCC): Robert Adam
- Victorian School for Deaf Children School Council: Robert Lee and Rebecca Adam

Highlights

- The Code of Ethics for the Portrayal of Deaf People in the Media, the Communication Policy, the Auslan Policy and the Education Policy were adopted on 31st May 1991
- **Sign of the Times III:** Linda Warby (NSW,) Carol Chittleborough (WA) and Donovan Cresdee (SA) presented "Auslan Teaching" Followed by a short session by Carla Anderson and Kim Kavanagh who spoke about the "Deaf Deaf World" program
- Victorian Premiere of video "Signs of language"
- Robert Adam, Rod Chapman, Mac Adam, John Lovett and Chris Dunn met with the Minister of Education, the Hon Barry Pullen to discuss concerns on the future of education of Deaf children in Victoria
- Women's Health Day Workshops held on 25th May 1991, 21st August, 1991, 9th November 1991, 22nd February 1992 and 21st March. These were held in conjunction with the Victorian Deaf Society and the Deaf Parents Group.
Breda Carty presented Deaf Studies III Workshop held on 15th and 16th June 1991, which was organised by the Victorian Deaf Society and supported by VCOD.
- Deaf Pride Week held on 24th August to 31st August 1991: Deaf Women's Health Day, Family Fun Day at Lake Park, Deaf Film Festival Sign of the Times III, John Flynn presented "No Longer by Gaslight", Open Days, Deaf Pride Show, 125th Reunion of Victorian school for Deaf Children and Deaf Pride Dinner Dance

1992 – 1993

Executive Committee

President: Robert Adam

Vice President: Barry Darwin

Secretary: Rebecca Adam

Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Robyn May, Berna Hutchins, Chris Dunn

Staff: Diane Backholer

ER Noble Award Recipient – The Deaf Women’s Guide in recognition of over 90 years of service to the Deaf Community

Highlights

- TTY Campaign held by the Australian Association of the Deaf on 24th June 1992. Deaf people rang Federal parliamentarians on TTY and then sent them a fax asking why they had no TTY to talk to Deaf people.
- A trial TTY relay service was set up in Sydney and Adelaide
- Deaf Pride Week was organised with Deaf Services Network and special guest of honour was Mr Clark Denmark presented the **Sign of the Times Workshop IV**
- Special Deaf Pride Dinner Dance held on Saturday 28th August 1998. Ex-Presidents of VCOD cut the cake in front of 110 people
- Discussions were held with deaf Services Network (DNS) and VCOD about possible merging the two organisations. This was due to changes in the funding formula used by Community Services, Victoria.
- Individual members were welcome to join VCOD for the first time. In the past, only organisations could become members of VCOD
- Victorian Women’s Health Days continued to be held
- Jill Lovett represented VCOD at the National Conference
- AAD received a grant to set up a National Advocacy Service and has a new constitution which allows members from all state branches in Australia to vote at meetings
- Time limitation prevented VCOD board members to attend all community meetings as a representative. There was a need for paid staff to overcome this issue.
- Deaf Pride Week and organised with DSN and the Victorian Deaf Society. Clarke Denmark from England was interviewed by John Lovett
- VCOD’s policies were published in a book format
- VCOD met with the Minister of Education, Mr Don Hayward to discuss how education of the Deaf will be different in the future
- Deaf Film Festival, organised by DSN, Victorian Deaf Society and VCOD held on 25nd August 1992
- Youth Rally organised by DSN, Victorian Deaf Society and VCOD held on 22nd August 1992

1993 – 1994

Deaf Services Network Committee 1993

President: Gary Holmfield

Secretary: Tony Raynor

Treasurer: Chris Dunn

Committee: Graham Johnston, Fiona McDonald, Heather Lawson, Carole Wagner, Graham Knight

Staff: Phil Harper (Coordinator)
David Gabelich (Administrative Assistant)
Ashleigh Hatley (Program Coordinator Deaf Deaf World)

VCOD Committee

President: Robert Adam
Vice President: Barry Darwin
Secretary: Rebecca Adam
Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Chris Dunn, Robyn May, Berna Hutchins, Lance Hatley

Staff: Diane Backholer, Administrative Assistant

Steering Committee organising merger

Tony Raynor, Robert Adam, David Peters, Chris Dunn, Carole Wagner, Robyn May

Victorian Council of Deaf People Interim Committee 1993 / 1994

President: Robert Adam (October 1993 – February 1994)
Ann Darwin (February 1994 -)
Secretary: Ann Darwin (October 1993 – February 1994)
Gary Holmfield (February 1994 -)
Treasurer: Chris Dunn

Committee: Jill Lovett, Terry Childs, John Hunt, Barry Darwin, Graham Johnston
Carole Wagner (resigned June 1994)

Staff: Phil Harper, Coordinator
David Gabelich, Administrative Assistant
Ashleigh Hatley, Program Coordinator Deaf Deaf World

ER Noble Award Recipient Father Peter Robinson

Merger Highlights

- The Deaf Services Network and VCOD merged. The two organisations convened an extraordinary general meeting on 17th September 1993 and both DSN and VCOD passed motions to agree to a merger. A transitional constitution and the merger effectively began on 1st October 1993
- The name VCOD was kept because it was a well known name and easily recognised by Deaf people.
- The new VCOD became a statewide advocacy and information service
- Health and Community Services funded the equivalent of one and a half staff, which meant that one staff place was lost. The Deaf Deaf World Program Coordinator position was made redundant

Representation on Groups

- Victorian Deaf Aids Taskforce
- Victorian School for Deaf Children
- RMIT Advisory Committee on Interpreter Training Course
- Richmond TAFE Advisory Committee on Advanced Certificate in Applied Language
- Monnington Parents and Friends Committee
- Monnington Deaf Involvement Program
- State Reference group: Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE

Highlights

- **Signs of the Times V** presented by Dan Langholtz (USA) “Deaf Esteem and Self Esteem”
- Deaf Pride Week coordinated by Barry Darwin and included a Theatre Night, Film Night, Open Day and Lakeside Lodge (Blackburn) and Family gathering at Luna Park.
- Christmas Rally held
- VCOD offered advocacy support to the Victorian Ushers Social Group
- Chris Dunn and Phil Harper attended the National Deafness Conference in Sydney
- Deaf Services Re-Development Plan: VCOD involved in meetings between service agencies, parent group and Health and Community Service to investigate how “Community Consultation” program could work for us
- Negotiations between Victorian Deaf Society and VCOD for relocation from the DSN old office at Ross House, 249 Flinders Lane, Melbourne to East Melbourne
- Seven Deafness and Mental Health workshops held to over 270 people. Workshops facilitated by Dan Langholtz, Deaf from University of California.
- Sign of the Time VI Forum held and presented by Breda Carty: “Deaf People in History, Learning from the Pass.” She also facilitated a Deaf Studies I workshop which was very successful
- Over 250 newsletters were distributed
- 40 Deaf Deaf World Workshops held
- Ushers Awareness Weekend Workshop: organised in partnership with the Victorian Deaf Society
- VCOD received over 600 phone calls and 900 letters

1994 – 1995

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin

Vice President: Barry Darwin (to February 1995)
Chris Dunn (from February 1995)

Secretary: Gary Holmfield

Treasurer: Chris Dunn (to February 1995)
Barry Darwin (from February 1995)

Committee: Andrew Wiltshire, Pat Counsel (resigned July 1995), Alison Schmidt, Alan Stewart, Terry Childs

Staff: Phil Harper (Coordinator), Ashleigh Hatley, (Deaf Deaf World Program Coordinator), David Gabelich (to February 1995), Irena Farinacci (from February 1995)

- 73 full members
- 2 associate members

ER Noble Award Recipient – Mac Adam

Highlights

- Received a grant from Vic Arts for \$1,500 for a Deaf Festival to be held in October 1995
- Moved from Ross house in Flinders Lane, Melbourne to the Upper Hall of the Deaf Community Centre, East Melbourne on 2nd May 1995.
- VCOD sharing office space with Victorian Sports Association of the Deaf and Australian deaf Sports Federation

- VCOD supported AAD to successfully lobby for a National Relay Service and access to TTYs.
- Phil Harper was a member of the steering committee that worked on the Statewide Consultation on Disability Support Program Service for Deaf and Hearing Impaired People in Victoria.
- Brockhoff Foundations provided VCOD \$5,000 to produce a brochure and information package on Deaf Deaf World (DDW) and to provide free workshops to community groups and schools. Twenty six programs were provided for 730 participants
- VCOD provided training and assistance to help set up DDW programs in Queensland, NSW, South Australia and ACT.
- **Sign of the Times VII** was presented by Jerald Jordan, President of CISS (USA) “Personal Experiences and Perspective in International Administration of Deaf Sports”
- **Sign of the Times VIII** was presented by Dr Albert Pimental from North Western Community College in Connecticut, America
- Disability Discrimination Act workshop facilitated by Phil Harper
- Deaf Pride Week was provided
- VCOD organised a Cochlear Implant Rally outside the Regency Hotel in November 1994. This was coordinated by Chris Dunn
- Simon Andersson was funded by VCOD to attend the International Cochlear Symposium
- VCOD produced a newsletter four times and distributed this to 250 people and organisations. Numerous bulletins were also sent out.
- VCOD Executive Committee worked on completing legal matters relating to the merger of VCOD and DSN. Rebecca Adam assisted in this merger and the incorporation and constitution issues.
- Breda Carty presented a weekend workshop on deaf Studies I weekend.

1995 – 1996

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
 Vice President: Barry Darwin
 Secretary: Andrew Wiltshire
 Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Tamara Doyle, Terry Childs, John Hunt, Marnie Francis, Gary Holmfield

Staff: Phil Harper (Coordinator), Ashleigh Hatley (Programme Coordinator, Deaf Deaf World), Irena Farinacci (Administrative Assistant)

- 62 Individual members
- 5 Associate members
- 23 Organisational members

ER Noble Award Recipient – Nanne Stubbs

Highlights

- Campaign for free TTY access for Deaf people has been won
- Assisted the National Working Party on captioning – VCOD presented a survey to find out how the deaf community in Melbourne and country Victoria access television
- 19 Deaf Deaf World workshops held to over 490 people
- A new brochure of VCOD made and a reprint of the VCOD poster is available

- Distributed a “Deaf version” of the Department of Human Service “Out of the Maze” report. Almost 1,000 copies were sent out
- Deaf Festival held on the grounds of Victorian College for the Deaf. Over 30 stalls were on show and 750 people attended.

1996 – 1997

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
 Vice President: Barry Darwin
 Secretary: Andrew Wiltshire
 Treasurer: Jill Lovett

Committee: Brendon Langhorne, Terry Childs, Peter Stanhope, Peter Bond

Staff: Phil Harper (Coordinator), Irena Farinacci (Administrative Assistant)

- 82 Full members
- 7 Associate
- 23 Associate Organisational members

ER Noble Award Recipient – Anne Bremner

Highlights

- VCOD received a grant from VSDC Services for Deaf Children to develop a model program in leadership training for Deaf people
- Staff received training in office management, computer skills and training programme through funding from the State government
- **Signs of the Times IX:** Raymond Lee from the British Deaf History Society
- Although the Deaf Deaf World workshops were popular and in demand, which provided to 179 people. The coordinator position was made redundant as VCOD did not have the staff resource and funding
- First State Deaf Conference held in April 1997 at the Deaf Community Centre. Over 175 people attended. Melissa Anderson presented the inaugural Daisy Damman Muir oration
- VCOD creates its own webpage with a grant from the Department of Human Services

1997 – 1998

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
 Vice President: Jill Lovett
 Secretary: Janice Knuckey
 Treasurer: Barry Darwin

Committee: Brent Phillips, Aland Stewart, Trudy Fraser, Philip Casperson (later Waters)

Staff: Phil Harper (Coordinator until 31st January 1998),
 John Lovett (Corrdinator from 1st February 1998),

Annette Fogarty (Administrative Assistant)

ER Noble Award Recipient – David Peters

Highlights

- VCOD's new Mission Statement written by Executive Committee:

The Victorian Council of Deaf People (VCOD) is a non-profit, consumer driven organisation led and controlled by Deaf Victorians to provide a voice for Deaf people. We aim to empower Deaf Victorians by lobbying, advocating and sharing information to ensure that full access is achieved.

- New logo adopted

Advocacy work involvement

- Deaf education services
- Access to tertiary education
- Interpreter services
- Access to general or specific services
- Country services
- Services for young deaf people
- Access to employment support services
- Deafblind services and access
- Legislation reviews
- Acknowledgement of Auslan as an acceptable communication and teaching tool

Other Highlights

- Four newsletters produced and distributed to over 300 people. Regular update bulletins also distributed
- Deaf Quiz of the Century held between schools and facilities for the Deaf
- Republic Vs Monarchy Forum held with Phil Cleary and Bruce Ruxton
- **Signs of the Times X:** Robert Adam. Held in September 1997
- **Sign of the Times XI:** Lisa Kauppinen, President of the World Federation of the Deaf shared her experiences which was held in March 1998
- Theatre night performed by ATOD: "Signed, Sealed and Delivered". Over 500 people attended
- International Week of Deaf People
- VCOD website launch
- Co-ordination of Leadership Coalition meetings

1998 – 1999

Board of management Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
Vice President: Brent Phillips
Secretary: Janice Knuckey
Treasurer: Barry Darwin
Assistant Treasurer: Philip Waters

Board of Management: Grant Roberts, Brena Hutchins, Alan Stewart, Meg Aumann, Kim Beasley

Staff: John Lovett, (Coordinator until October 1998)
Phil Harper (Coordinator October 1998 onwards)
Brent Phillips, Coordinator after Phil's resignation,
Annette Forgarty, Administrative Assistant

ER Noble Award Recipient – Stan Baston

Highlights

- International Week of Deaf People held and was convened by Jill Lovett. Funding was received from the Australian Association of the Deaf and the Australian Communication Exchange.
- Deaf Culture Night II included presentations by Colin Allen and Robert Adam. This was organised by Brent Phillips and Philip Waters.
- VCOD Board of Management attended the World Federation of the Deaf Congress in Brisbane
- VCOD involved in leadership coalition with John Pierce Centre, Vicdeaf and VSDC Services for Deaf Children together sent six young Deaf people to the Congress and five young Deaf Victorian to the World Federation of the Deaf Youth Camp held before the Congress
- VCOD lobbied for visual smoke detectors for Deaf people
- VCOD was involved in meetings with Vicdeaf and Mental Health service agencies to discuss access for Deaf people
- Transport access meeting between VCOD, Vicdeaf and Deaf Blind Association to improve transport access for Deaf Blind people.
- VCOD had meetings with State Managers of CentreLink regarding access issues for Deaf people. The outcome was a trial visit to Vicdeaf every Thursday afternoon
- Meetings with the education Department were held regarding policy issues and development of a State Plan for deaf Children
- VCOD responded to a number of State and federal inquiries – captioning on TV, a review of national and state advocacy services
- In 1998 – 1999 VCOD dealt with numerous individual advocacy cases
- VCOD hosted ATOD performances “Masks are Barking” at MLC in front of 100 people
- VCOD, Monnington, VSDC Services for Deaf Children and Vicdeaf liaised together in the development of a Deaf Support Register
- VCOD sought fund from the Department of Human Services to develop a strategic plan
- VCOD has been negotiating with Village Roadshow to provide captioned films
- VCOD attended meetings with Parent Federation and VSDC Services for Deaf Children
- VCOD sent a submission about deaf children attending country schools.

1999 – 2000

Board of Management Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
Vice President: Alan Stewart (resigned January 2000)
Secretary: Janice Knuckey
Treasurer: Barry Darwin

Board of Management: Kim Beasley, Berna Hutchins, Meg Aumann, Mark Gravolin, Pat Dethridge

Staff: Brent Phillips, (Manager September 1999 – September 2000)
Grant Roberts, (Manager September 2000 -)
Annette Forgarty, (Administrative Assistant resigned July 2000)

Jill Lovett, Hilary Fisher and Leisa Francis, (Temporary Administrative Assistants) Melaine Wells, (Administrative Assistant October -)

ER Noble Award Recipient – Ann Darwin

Highlights

- VCOD employed Mr John Lovett from Lovett Education and Training to write the first VCOD Strategic Plan. John was assisted by Meg Aumann and Bryn Davies. Janice Knuckey provided strong assistance in the writing of this plan.
- The Queens trust provided a grant to VCOD to develop a Deaf Youth Online webpage. The committee to develop this page was convened by Meg Aumann and the webpage was launched on 21st June 1999
- Membership stood at 240
- **Sign of the Times XIII:** Laurene Gallimore from America
- Interpreter workshop held
- Regular email news updates to members
- Four newsletters produced
- GST/Health insurance update
- Visits to deaf facilities and schools to inform students about VCOD
- Jean O'Connor launched the International Week of Deaf People with funding support from ACE and AAD. This was held on 12th October to 15th October 2000 and included a Deaf Theatre, family fund day at Lake Park, and Open Days at some services for Deaf people.
- Ann Darwin won the AAD Deaf Australian of the Year Award
- Meg Aumann won the Young Australian of the Year Award

2000 – 2001

Board of Management Executive Committee

President: Janice Knuckey
Vice President: Barry Darwin
Secretary: Mark Gravolin (resigned April 2001)
Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Board of Management: Shelly Stevens, Kim Beasley, Hilary Fisher,
Meg Aumann (resigned December 2001),
Ross Onlet-Zerkel, Berna Hutchins,
Anthony Young, Brian Bernal, Medina Sumovic

Staff: Grant Roberts, (Manger) Melanie Wells (Administrative Officer)

ER Noble Award Recipient – Jean O'Connor

Committees

History: Berna Hutchins, Kim Beasley, Brian Bernal, Janice Knuckey
Youth: Hilary Fisher (convenor), Anthony Young, Meg Aumann, Shelly Stevens
Executive/Finance: Janice Knuckey, Barry Darwin, Pam Dethridge
Policy: Janice Knuckey, Mark Gravolin

Highlights

- VCOD turned 20 years old
- Planning for the State Deaf Conference on 4th and 5th May 2002 commenced with Carla Anderson (convenor), Grant Roberts, Janice Knuckey, Barry Darwin, Jennifer Bernal and Trudy Fraser (resigned)
- Planning for the 20th year anniversary dinner on 4th May commenced with Barry Darwin (convenor), Diane Backholer and Melanie Wells
- VCOD organized interpreters for the at Commonwealth Bank home loan interviews and the RVIB Carols by Candlelight
- Board of Management implementing a range of cost cutting measures, including reducing the Administrative Assistant's time from full time to part time
- VCOD seeking outside funding for project work. Three projects were successful as listed in the following:
 - *A National Deaf Youth Leadership Camp* funded by the Foundation for Young Australians. VCOD employed Andrew Welshe to organise this camp and Andrew was strongly supported by VCOD Youth Committee members, Hilary Fisher and Shelly Stevens. The camp was held at Bacchus Marsh for 15 young Deaf Australians.
 - *A National Deaf Youth Website* funded by the Friends of the Australian Communication Exchange. VCOD employed Andrew Welshe and Craig Jaradine to develop this page, and they were strongly supported by Anthony Young from the VCOD Youth Committee
 - *A Resource Kit on Deafness* for the Department of Human Services, funded by the Department of human Services. VCOD employed Carla Anderson to write this book
- VCOD held a Drug and Alcohol Workshop, A Being Deaf Workshop and a Disability Discrimination Workshop
- VCOD held a History Night and a fund raising luncheon
- National Week of Deaf People Activities organised by Grant Roberts, and included for the first time, activities aimed at hearing people
- VCOD newsletter sent out four times
- VCOD email news sent out weekly
- 11,000 people looked at the VCOD website
- VCOD held a number of forums for Deaf people on behalf of the Department of human Services on the draft state DisAbility Plan. These were led by Grant Roberts
- Deaf World workshops continue to be held and number has increased due to increased advertising
- VCOD employed Fiona Goldbab to teach Auslan in the workplace on a fee for service basis
- VCOD worked with CityLink to improve the accessibility of the CityLink tollway
- **Sign of the Times XIII** Forum held: Dr Paddy Ladd from England
- Information provided to regional centres: Ballarat, Aarat, Stawell, Gippsland, Wodonga
- VCOD established an Advisory Group to inform VCOD of work that needs to happen
- VCOD worked with RACV to establish a system for Deaf people to use SMS to call for emergency road side assistance

2001 – 2002

Board of Management Executive Committee

President: Janice Knuckey
 Vice President: Barry Darwin
 Secretary: Mark Gravolin
 Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Board of Management: Medina Sumovic, Anthony Young, Berna Hutchins
Meg Aumann, Hilary Fisher, Brian Bernal, Kim Beasley,
Rachelle Stevens, Michelle Wust (resigned)

Staff: Grant Roberts (Manager)
Melaine Wells (Administrative Assistant)

ER Noble Award Recipient – Marg Van Lueewen

Committees:

Youth Committee: Rachelle Stevens, Meg Aumann, Anthony Young and Hilary Fisher

Volunteers: Jill Lovett, John Hunt, Simon Andersson and Rachel Judelson

Volunteer of the Year Award – Jill Lovett

Highlights:

- National week of Deaf People – Deaf History Night, Auslan Storytelling at borders, Auslan at Melbourne Museum, MCG Museum, Fancy Dress Party
- May 4th/5th – 2nd State Conference, CATO Conference Centre, Melbourne
- Information on Deafness Kit, funded by DHS – Project Worker Carla Anderson
- National Youth Camp, funded by Foundation for Young Australians – Project Worker Andrew Welshe
- Deaf Youth Online Webpage, funded by FACES – Project Worker Andrew Welshe
- Auslan In The Workplace The Disability Discrimination Workshop
- Deaf Deaf World Workshops (15 workshops)
- Newsletters via Mail/Electronic
- Provided information to regional centres
- The Drug and Alcohol Workshop, presented by Ross Onley Zerkel
- Being Deaf Workshop, organised by the VCOD Youth Committee
- VCOD Picnic Day
- Lobbied for provision of interpreting support such as at Carols by Candlelight, housing loan interviews at Commonwealth Bank and Melbourne Cricket Ground and at the Melbourne Aquarium
- Assisted in lobbying for captioned movies, interpreted theatre events and for medical services hearing aid costs and hotel accessibility
- Worked with RACV to develop a system where Deaf people can call for roadside assistance using SMS on mobile phones
- Worked closely with Transurban to ensure Deaf people have equal access to using Citylink
- Established an advisory group of people with expertise in various aspects of deafness to provide expert advice to VCOD and issues that need to be addressed
- Participated in State Disability Plan Forum, education forums, Deaf mentor Project and Disability Discrimination Legal Service.

2002 – 2003

Executive Committee

President: Barry Darwin
Vice President: Anthony Young
Secretary: Simon Andersson (Resigned)
Assistant Secretary: Ross Onley Zerkel (Resigned)

Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Committee: Berna Hutchins, Brian Bernal, Trisha Dench, rachelle Stevens (resigned), Fiona Crisp (resigned), Medina Sumovic (resigned) and Hilary Fisher (resigned)

Staff: Grant Roberts (manager), Melaine Wells (Administrative Assistant), Fiona Goldab (Auslan Coordinator), Melissa Scacco (Bookkeeper), Simon Andersson and Karli Dettmann (Consultants) and Andrew Welshe (Youth Project worker)

Committees: 2nd State Conference – Carla Anderson (Convenor), Barry Darwin, Jennifer Bernal, Janice Knuckney, Grant Roberts

Volunteers: Melissa Scacco, Jill Lovett, John Lovett, Brent Phillips, Sarah Hatley, Bryn Davies and Fiona Goldab

ER Noble Award Recipient – Phil Harper

Highlights

- Successful VCOD 2nd State Conference – Keynote Speakers – Breda Carty and Dr Robert Sparrow
- Auslan in Workplace
- Step by Step Program – Simon Andersson and Karli Dettmann completed final report for evaluation
- 20 Deaf Deaf World Workshops were organised across the state, coordinated by Melaine wells. Many thanks to the volunteers for making the DDW a successful program
- Rob Roy show – performed by Robert Farmer, attended by over 100 people.
- Trivia Night
- National Week of Deaf People – Family Day at Emerald Lake, DAN Art Exhibition, Debate Night, Launch at Vicdeaf Chapel, 1st Anniversary at Young and Jackson Pub.
- TXT Radio For the Deaf via mobile phones
- Advocacy Worker to be located in Horsham once a month from February on a trial basis
- Federation Square accessibility for Deaf People
- Deaf Organisation weekend forum for all Deaf groups in Victoria
- Developing workshops for businesses with the Melbourne 2005 Deaflympics in mind
- Introduction of Auslan in the workplace to provide Auslan classes for businesses who may from time to time deal with deaf people, or who may have a deaf employee. Fiona Goldab was the coordinator of this program
- Appointed George Walker and Kerrie Cassera to run the “Auslan in the Workplace Program”

2003 - 2004

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
Vice President: Berna Hutchins
Treasurer: Barry Darwin
Committee: Annette Fogarty, Trisha Dench, Pam Dethridge, Brian Bernal, Kathy Fitmaurice, Matt Wright (resigned)

Staff: Grant Roberts (Manager)
Melaine Wells (Administrative Assistant)

Volunteers: Mandy Gay

ER Noble Award Recipient – Malcolm Stevenson

Highlights

- Sign of the Times XIV – Joe Murray (USA)
- No AGM held this year (18 months between AGMs)

A very sad year when one of our hardest working and dedicated member of the deaf community, John Lovett who passed away on 30th October 2003. John was very active in the Deaf Community for more than forty years and was one of the founding members of VCOD. A wonderful and inspirational leader of our deaf community, we miss him.

2004 – 2005

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin

Vice President: Trisha Dench / Brena Hutchins (Resigned Feb 2005)

Treasurer: Barry Darwin

Committee: Brian Bernal, Pam Dethridge, Irene Holub, Peter Adams,
Kathy Fitzmaurice, Di Hertmann (resigned)

Staff: Rachel Miers (Manager) / Grant Roberts (Resigned Oct 2004)
James Blyth (Administrative Officer)
Melaine Wells (Resigned March 2005)
Susan Bakrnchev (Book Keeper)
Lise Clews (Resigned Jan 2005)
Simon Glass (Resigned July 2005)

Committees:

- Financial – Pam Dethridge, Barry Darwin and Brian Bernal
- Events – Kathy Fitzmaurice, Trisha Dench, Irene Holub

VCOD AGM – In remembrance of John Lovett 1 minute silence was held at the AGM

ER Noble Award Recipient – M2005 Deaflympics Staff

Highlights:

- **Sign of the Times XV – Carol Lee Aquiline** “Raising Future Deaf Leaders”
- Melbourne 2005 Deaflympics – Workshops provided for volunteers and staffing on understanding about deaf culture and language preparation
- VCOD in partnership with DCA and AAD hosted the International New Year Eve, with sponsorship from the latter and VicDeaf.
- International Deaf Club were held over three nights at the Queensbridge Hotel, during the Deaflympics week. The last night were celebrated by over 2,200 people
- Series of workshops with Australian Association of the Deaf, NABS (National Auslan Booking and Interpreting Services) provided across the state.

- Involved in the steering committee for deaf access at St Vincent's hospital. VCOD also provided staff Deaf Training and Auslan classes to the hospital staff
- Auslan at Work and Deaf deaf world information sessions provided
- National Week of Deaf People: Awards were presented at the launch of NWDP for Deaf Australian, Deaf Australian Youth and Fair Go Award.
- Other events in NWDP provided were: Family Fun Day at DCA, Business Breakfast (Presenters: Ann Darwin, Reece Emerson Van Beek and Nelly Katsnelson of St Vincents) ; Women in Health Workshop on Pap Smear and Breast Care; Bunnings provided "Do It Yourself" interpreted workshops and interpreted tours were held at the Melbourne Musuem.
- Membership of VCOD has been modified to be part of AAD membership structure

2005 – 2006

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
 Vice President: Trisha Dench
 Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Board Committee: Brian Bernal, Pam Dethridge, Irene Holub, Peter Adams, Kathy Fitzmaurice, Gail Finn, Barry Darwin, Rachelle Stevens

Staff: Rachel Miers (Manager), James Blyth (Administrative Officer), Susan Bakrnchev (Bookkeeper), Loretta Baker (Auslan Tutor)

Committees:

- Audit Committees – Pam Dethridge, Barry Darwin and Brian Bernal
- Events – Kathy Fitzmaurice, Irene Holub, Shel Stevens, Gail Finn, Trisha Dench (Convenor)

ER Noble Award – St Anne Primary School, Seaford. Recognition given for the school community's effort to provide a deaf friendly educational environment.

Highlights:

- Fire Alarm Subsidy Scheme – VCOD had been lobbying this for ten years and the Victorian Government has acknowledged this issue by providing up to 600 deaf people.
- Deaf Deaf World continues to be provided across the year,
- Involved with the celebration of the Australian Association of the Deaf 20th year through the National Picnic Day.
- Involved in several events – Expo; NABS workshops; Information seminars about VCOD
- National Week of deaf People: Launch of NWDP at Hotel Chancellor to witness awards of Deaf Australian – Julia Allen, Deaf Australian Youth – Melvlut Cet and FairGo Award – IBM Australia; Business Breakfast;; Movie Night; Family Festival Day.

2005 – 2006

Advocacy:

VCOD lobbied for :

- RSL Victoria to provide interpreted ANZAC day ceremonies
- Successful implementation of Auslan Fire Alarm Subsidy which is being managed by VicDeaf
- Submission to the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee to address the lack of captioning at venues throughout the Games

- Accessibility at public places e.g. court houses to ensure that the premises are accessible for the deaf
- Assisted employees to implement the MSN program which enables deaf people to increase communication efficiency at their workplace
- Submission to the Minister of Police and Emergency Services on issues of Emergency SMS System
- Raised concerns with RACV with slow responses to SMS calls
- Participated in a number of working groups. E.g. DHS Deaf Consultative Group, Disability Forums, Fire Alarm Subsidy Scheme and Deafness Expo.
- Responded favourably to Department of Justice's draft amendments of Equal Opportunity Act.

Information Services:

- Information has been distributed via e-news on a fortnightly basis, website and newsletters on a quarterly basis.
- President Ann Darwin gave presentation about VCOD to Casey Deaf Club and visited Werribee Deaf Club
- In collaboration with Rachel Byrnes from Australian Association of the Deaf, VCOD provided a number of workshops statewide on NABS
- VCOD sent twp youth leaders (James Blyth and Debbie Kennewell) to AAD Youth Camp
- VCOD welcomed visits by a medical representative from the Ministry of Health in Malaysia (on how VCOD works for the benefit of Malaysian Deaf Community)
- Presented a paper on VCOD in the first rural Deaf expo in Shepparton
- Provide advice to a number of TAFE students on issues around interpreting.

2006 – 2007

Executive Committee

President: Ann Darwin
 Vice President: Trisha Balharrie (Dench)
 Treasurer: Pam Dethridge

Board Committee: Brian Bernal, Pam Dethridge, Irene Holub, Peter Adams (Resigned),
 Kathy Fitzmaurice, Gail Finn, Barry Darwin, Rachelle Stevens

Staff: Rachel Miers (manager Feb 2007), Kyle Miers (Acting Manager July 2006 – Jan 07),
 Medina Sumovic (Administrative Officer), James Blyth (Resigned),
 Susan Bakrnchev (Bookkeeper)

Committees:

- Audit Committee – Pam Dethridge, Barry Darwin, Brian Bernal
- Events – Kathy Fitzmaurice, Irene Holub, Trisha Balharrie (Dench), Rachelle Stevens, Gail Finn, Ann Darwin (Convenor)
- State Conference Committee – Barry Darwin (Convenor), Rachel Miers, Irene Holub, Carla Anderson, Cathy Clarke and Janice Evans (Knuckey)

ER Noble Award – Bruno Broglio, the quiet achiever

Highlights:

- National Week of Deaf People: "Celebrating the Australian eaf Community"
- Launch of the NWDP at the Deaf Art / Film Day – Curated by Irene Holub and Kathy Fitzmaurice

- The Great Deaf Debate – Facilitated by Brian Bernal. “Is there a deaf culture?” which were debated by Breda Carty, Heather Mills, Irene Holub and Kim Beasley.
- Business Breakfast: Simon Andersson, Asphyxia and Mike Shipton
- Movie Night at Jam Factory / Interpreted tours held at the National Gallery of Victoria and the Melbourne Museum
- Learn to Sign Day at Hudson Cafe
- The Changing Role of Deaf Societies: Do they meet the needs of Deaf Professionals Today?” Presented by Dr Breda Carty
- Open Day at John Pierce Centre
- Pilates and Yoga Come n’Try out day

Other Achievements:

- Deaf Culture IV Night – Hosted by Brett Phillips and Phillip Waters
- International Sign Night in partnership with ASLIA Vic – A celebration of different sign languages used around the world
- Deaf Cafe – joint initiative with VicDeaf and Hudson Cafe which was held once a month
- In partnership with VicDeaf, Robert Adam was a guest presenter to talk about his current research projects in England.
- Kyle Miers talked about the world Federation of the deaf Conference in Spain which he attended as the AAD president for Australia.
- Christmas rally was held at Jells Park in partnership with VicDeaf and Deaf Sports and Recreation for the deaf community.

Advocacy:

VCOD lobbied for:

- Accessibility
- Captioning
- Interpreting
- SMS service in public transport
- Advocacy support for clients at a tribunal
- Baby Cry Alarm Scheme with DHS and Southern Health Service
- Liaised with interpreter agency on communication requirements for processing of interpreter booking by deaf people and organisations
- Developed principle guide on Accessibility to Arts for Deaf Patrons
- Developed information for employers of deaf employees
- Provided information to a deaf person summoned for jury duty

Information Services

- Presented papers at Gippsland Expo, Casey Deaf Club, VicDeaf School Leavers information Day, Werribee Deaf Club
- Distributed information through e-news on a fortnightly basis, website and newsletters on a quarterly basis.
- Rachel Miers presented a paper “Strengthening Partnerships between Government and Deaf Communities in Victoria” with Audrey Dropsey and Diane Eggins from DHS at AAD Conference in Adelaide.
- Printed brochures on accessibility for communication “Are you a deaf friendly employer?”
- Continued to provide Deaf World workshops
- Provided Community courses – Crochet and Knitting by deaf teachers

- Coordinated workshops with Australian Association of the Deaf (AAD) “ AAD Demand and Supply of Interpreting Demand Presentation” and “AAD Community Telecommunication Consultation Workshop”
- Worked in partnership with Deaf Children Australia with promotion on youth activities and “Y Camp”
- Welcomed visitors from New Zealand Association for the Deaf (DANZ) Rachel Noble and Tony Blackett
- Worked with other organisations in providing workshops e.g. Media Access Australia on captioning.
- Provided advice to a number of reviews in accessibility for example booklets by councils and departments
- In collaboration with VicDeaf and Able Australia in administrating the project and promotion of “Auslan Fire Alarm Subsidy” to Deaf Victorians
- Working with arts Access and provided guidelines on arts Access for Deaf People.
- Presented VCOD in a number of committee groups which include: Able Australia Consumer Advocacy Committee; DHS Deaf Issues Consultative Group; Deafness expo at Melbourne Town Hall; DCA – Parent to Parent Program Steering Committee; ASLIA Vic Award Dinner Organising Committee; Department of Education and early Childhood – Deaf Education Review.