

## Chair's address AGM 2014

- I would like to start by thanking our shareholders and customers for their ongoing support – without this, we would not be celebrating the success of our **Community Bank®** and the significant contribution it has made to communities from Somers through to Flinders
- Since 1998 the **Community Bank®** network has grown into a partnership that makes our communities even better places in which to live
- In June of this year, the 305<sup>th</sup> **Community Bank®** opened in Port Fairy, joining a robust banking network which takes the profits generated by its banking business and investing that funding into their communities. By the end of the 2013/14 financial year, \$122.2 million had been returned to communities across Australia.
- We are proud to be part of that network and to have invested in excess of \$370,000 in our communities, \$70,000 of that in the last financial year. We have now supported some 69 groups and have just paid shareholders their third dividend - 5 cents per share this year
- As we detailed in the Annual Report, the full year operating profit for 2013/14 before tax and community contributions was \$139,599. Total business growth was \$18.5 million, against a budget of \$10 million, which is an absolutely wonderful result and understandably, we are the envy of many. The leading branch in our Region for lending growth, with a branch manager recognised as the leader in being 'Committed to our Values'. What a year indeed!
- Reflecting on this success, I would like to thank those who have worked so hard to make it happen. Firstly, I must thank Jason and his team of Glenys, Mel, Kathryn and Sue for their commitment to our bank & our community - they are the face of our business and we could not ask for a more professional, hard-working and caring group of people
- I also thank my eight fellow Directors and our Company Secretary, who bring to our Board a range of experience and expertise which is being well-utilised as we plan and implement a broad range of strategic goals to allow us to work effectively with Jason and his team to build on our achievements and ensure that the business continues to grow
- Our standards of corporate governance are now second to none and all areas of legal and fiduciary compliance are completed to a high standard within required time frames. We are very aware of our responsibilities to our shareholders – those people who financed the establishment of our **Community Bank®** for the long-term benefit of our community and I assure you that this remains in the forefront of all that we do

- I would also like to thank our Regional Manager, Simon Sponza and other regional staff with whom we work and who go out of their way to assist and support our Board. Along with our responsibilities to shareholders and customers, we do have mutual responsibilities with Bendigo Bank and the broader Community Bank network and we believe that we acquit ourselves very well in this area
- Earlier in the year, along with representatives of many other **Community Banks®**, I attended a wonderful workshop titled 'Building Healthy Communities'. Amongst the many fascinating and inspiring things we heard about, I was introduced to the work of an Australian community enthusiast and activist, Peter Kenyon
- Exploring his website later, I came across a report from the 2013 'Power to the People' conference, which included a framework of eight characteristics that are recognised nationally and internationally as pillars of a healthy, vibrant, resilient community and local economy
- Let me quickly outline these characteristics:
  1. Behaviours that value and encourage resident participation and ownership of the future
  2. Behaviours that strengthen resident affinity to their community and local economy
  3. Behaviours that encourage collaborative planning and action, networking and strong relationships between residents, organisations, businesses and communities
  4. Behaviours that discover and map the capacities, passions, resources and connections of the community
  5. Behaviours that enable a shared community vision of the future, as reflected in practical action plans, with ranked priorities
  6. Behaviours that foster a never ending search for new and appropriate ideas, development possibilities and internal and external resources
  7. A mindset that focuses on optimism, belief, expectation, hope and 'we can do it'
  8. Behaviours that continuously grow, develop and renew the leadership capacity of the community
- It occurred to me that this framework could have been written about our **Community Bank®** - these eight characteristics underpin all that we do and explain why we do it. It is all about community investment in its many forms. We have put some copies of this around the tables, so take them away and think about them in relation to the many groups which many of you will be involved in, working to strengthen and support our community

- The **Community Bank®** model is a powerful way to build community connections and partnerships and enable our communities to develop a shared vision of their future, so I once again invite all shareholders and customers to continue to assist us by acting as advocates for your **Community Bank®** - tell your family and friends what an amazing thing community banking is and encourage them to join us
- We know that we are making a difference, so imagine how much more of a difference we will make if we can continue to build our business and make it even more profitable.
- Together we need to convince everyone that they can be part of realising the dreams of our communities, so thank you for what you have done so far and let's look forward to an even brighter future
- Remember - whatever the question, community is the answer