

## Chair's address AGM 2015

- 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
- In the 2015 financial year the **Community Bank®** network opened its 310<sup>th</sup> branch and community contributions since the model's inception now exceeds \$130 million
- We are very proud to be part of that network and are very excited to be celebrating the fact that we have now returned \$500,000 to our communities. What an amazing achievement and I am certain that those here who were part of that wonderful decision to engage with our community and build the support and raise the capital to establish this **Community Bank®** could not have envisaged this happening so quickly.
- Of this half a million dollars, \$130,200 has been paid to shareholders as dividends and the remainder has gone to 86 community groups and organisations across our district, predominantly as sponsorships but with some grants and donations. This is a significant injection of funds into our local economy already, so just imagine the impact we will have if we can continue our current rate of success
- We are very pleased that we have been able to make a modest increase in the dividend payment to shareholders again this year. Given the difficult economic circumstances in which all businesses have been operating, your Board decided that we should be prudent to ensure that adequate capital reserves continue to be in place
- As detailed in the Annual Report, the full year operating profit for 2014/15 before tax and community contributions was \$198,415. Total business growth was \$12.6 million, against a budgeted growth of \$10 million, which is an absolutely wonderful result and understandably, we are the envy of many.
- I will not go further into the ongoing success of our business and will instead leave that to Jason, as it is he and his team which has achieved so much
- On that note, I would like to thank those who have worked so hard to make it happen. Firstly, I must thank Jason and Glenys, Sue, Mel, Kathryn and Tracey 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 nine fellow Directors and our Administration Officer Melinda Symes, 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 Shareholders will be pleased to note that the role of Company Secretary is now filled by one of our Directors, Rod Slater, fulfilling a commitment that we gave to Shareholders back in 2012
- However, given the increasing complexity of governance and compliance and our commitment to the being voluntary Directors, the Board has decided that we will, as indicated earlier, employ an Administration Officer to assist with the administrative duties of the Board and the company's Low Volume Market to ensure excellence in governance and a vital capacity for continuity of performance and knowledge
- Be assured that we continue to be acutely 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 like to thank our Regional Manager, Simon Sponza and the many 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
- The **Community Bank®** model continues to be 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 to grow our business by acting as advocates for our **Community Bank®** - tell your family and friends what an amazing thing community banking is and encourage them to join us
- Remember, our **Community Bank®** is about the difference a bank can make in this community of which you have chosen to be part. Our one key difference and one that makes us bigger, is that we invest our profits back into the community because we think that banking is about more than just money. We're about the good that money can bring and we need to encourage all who are not yet part of this model to join us and also be part of something bigger.
- I said this last year and I am going to say it again because it is the basis of why we do what we do - whatever the question, community is the answer

Heather Goddard

Chair

Balnarring & District Community Services Limited