



# 2014

## Variety Annual Review



**variety.**  
the children's charity

Variety Victoria – Tent 77



# Variety Victoria - Tent 77 Board Members

Vito Interlandi (Chief Barker)

Richard Symon (Vice Chairman)

Patricia Burke (Secretary)

Geoff Parker (Treasurer)

Rodney Collins APM

Craig Dent

Steve Donnellon

Claire Heaney

Michael Kelly

Nicholas Pullen

Michael Randall OAM



# Chief Barker Message

As I write this report for the 2014 Annual Review, I look back on our achievements but even more important, I look forward.

The small team in the Variety office led by our CEO Janette Connolly, will continue to focus on our core activities, values and objectives. By going back to basics, we have seen a positive impact already and we will seek to improve on this in 2015.

Every page of this report showcases our work and I commend it to you.

The 2015 year of Variety- the Children's Charity sees us celebrate 40 years in Australia and the 25th Variety Bash in Victoria.

Why is this important? It simply recognises the dedication that Variety has to assisting children in need.

Forty years ago there were relatively few Charities dedicated to bringing relief to children who were sick, disabled or disadvantaged – with the parents and carers having very limited opportunities for support.

While there were Charities and Auxiliaries for Children's Hospitals and some organisations for children with physical and mental disabilities – there were none like Variety.

We often say we are an umbrella charity – an organisation that assists people who have nowhere else to turn.

Imagine being the parents of a young child who needs a wheelchair or a lifting frame – or simply some respite from a disadvantaged life.

This is where we, all of us at Variety shine. By providing hope and some joy – but even more important by providing possibilities through creating opportunity.

That's why 2015 is important – its where opportunities lie – where new partnerships will be formed – where new programs and projects will be devised and where more lives will be changed for the better.

**Variety in Victoria is a continuum its not one years work or two years it's the amassed work over years of solid commitment to a cause. The cause of helping children in need.**

If I could ask of you one thing for the future – become an Opportunity Maker and join with us in ensuring Variety keeps pace with the needs of the community.

The AGM will be the end of my term as the Chief Barker and I and the whole team have been challenged throughout this period. I wish to thank my fellow Board Members, Staff, Volunteers, Partners, Sponsors, Supporters and Friends who all make up the Variety family for their support and dedication over the last 2-years.

I wish you well for the future.

**Vito Interlandi**  
Chief Barker

Our mission is to empower Victorian children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs to live, laugh and learn.

## About Variety and How We Work

Variety – the Children’s Charity, is an international organisation with more than 50 chapters in 14 countries, helping millions of children with disabilities to lead more comfortable lives and grow to be productive and where possible self-sufficient adults.

In Australia, Variety operates as a federation – with each state operating as an individual entity, governed by a Board with Staff who carry out the day to day work of the Charity.

This model works on the premise that each state (Tent) has the flexibility to meet the needs of its local community – with some programs and needs being greater in one community and not so much in others.

While Variety has a very simple Charter – our methods of raising funds are varied – and each having a different financial implication.

Being mostly an events based Charity, it is important to note that each of our activities have commercial implications in terms of costs carried in the operation of those events – for example not all monies from the cost of ‘ticket’ goes to fundraising. However, we are scrupulous in apportioning all non-cost related revenue directly towards assisting children in need.

Perhaps a better and easier example of direct fundraising is our Top Hat Corner Street Collections – manned by our outstanding Motoring Entrants each year – with every cent going directly towards grants.

We have recently introduced Telemarketing into our fundraising mix – this year its objective is to raise funds in support of the Variety Children’s Christmas Party.

We often describe Variety as having an umbrella philosophy in that while we have various prescribed programs outlined on following pages– we also encourage parents, carers and friends of children in need to make an application to Variety when they need assistance.

Whilst this may seem somewhat altruistic and though we have clear guidelines as to what we will and won’t fund – we will offer assistance where we can.

As a specific principle, we don’t give grants of money – we do however provide goods in the form of equipment and items necessary to a child’s well-being, we also provide experiences – like the Variety Children’s Christmas Party. Another area of funding is through scholarships or bursaries.

In a world seemingly bound in red tape, Variety takes a much more personable, easy (though accountable) approach when dealing with parents in need, difficulty or simply having nowhere else to go.

We open two funding rounds per year in which funding recommendations are put to the Board for consideration and approval.

Before going to the Board for approval all grants go via our Grants Coordinator who reviews each application for compliance against our funding criteria. Often this is followed up with discussions with the applicant and maybe meetings or at least communication with the child’s health professional. From here it goes to the Grants Committee for review and endorsement – then to the Board.

Variety takes its responsibility to its supporters, sponsors and many other stakeholders very seriously – and ensures that as much of its funds goes directly to helping children in need.

# Charity - what does it mean?

We are often asked – what does Variety do?  
In fact the question is probably – what is Charity?

The answer, though relatively simple – being in a position to help someone else in need – without the need for reward or recognition.

As an organisation, we participate in the broad Not for Profit (NFP) sector, along with thousands of other Charities, Trusts and Foundations. Naturally where there are many organisations operating in the same space we compete for funds by way of donations, sponsorship, in kind support and pro bono work carried out by professional partners. We also compete to explain what we do.

There is no doubt the NFP sector is both crowded and at times confusing. Variety therefore tries to be a very simple organisation – one which directly helps individual children and also supports smaller organisations which deliver specific programs into the community.

To come back to the question – charity as it relates to Variety is assisting others by good deeds or goodwill – or in kind with material support.

Our form of charity comes very much through the collegiate activities of our various supporters and event participants.

Many are self-employed business people who know how hard it is in business to be successful – but when they are – they are the first to support others.

Variety is very much fraternal in its approach to charity – many hands make light work.

An example of our fraternal approach is our motoring events, which convene every year with the sole purpose of raising money to help children – who more often than not, will never be known to them.

And it's all done under the guise of Charity, particularly Variety – the Children's Charity. We stand tall amongst the rest as a trusted conduit between those in need - and those who can help.

## **So what is Charity?**

**Just simply helping  
someone else because  
you want to and you can!**

# Variety Programs



## Variety Freedom

Variety helps thousands of children each year gain mobility by granting them their freedom, independence and the chance to join in with other children in the community.

The Variety Freedom Program provides funding for mobility equipment like wheelchairs, walking frames and customised tricycles so children can get out and about. Under this program we also fund Sunshine Coaches and Liberty Swings for the wider community.



## Variety Future

Children are our future and with the Variety Future Program we help children achieve their full potential, regardless of ability or background.

Variety Future Kids Program provides children with intellectual or physical disability access to equipment to positively transform their classroom experience and academic performance. We also help with sporting trips, musical equipment, scholarships and other items that help children with various special needs improve their potential to learn, participate in the community and enjoy life!



## Variety Caring

The Variety Caring for Kids Program supports children's health services providing medical equipment to individuals, hospitals and organisations. Variety consults with professionals prior to purchasing the equipment, ensuring that the most adequate support is offered and that one hundred percent of every dollar we provide goes where it is most needed.

Variety helps provide a wide range of equipment including sensory equipment, nebulisers, oxygen pumps and more. As part of the Caring for Kids Program, two other Programs are included:

- Princess Charlotte Alopecia Program – Assisting children with alopecia
- Smile Program – Assisting children with rare diseases and conditions.

# \$200.00

To attend the Variety Children's  
Christmas Party with my Carer



**Cooper**

## VIC KIDS

### Variety @ Work

This special program really should be called Variety @ Play because it's truly the fun side of Variety!

Variety @ Work brings laughter into the lives of children who sometimes have little to smile about.

Variety @ Work is a program aimed at giving children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs the opportunity to take part in an activity or outing that they may not otherwise have the chance to experience.

Throughout the year we have had the opportunity to send children to special events – a special thanks to the companies that supported the Variety @ Work program throughout 2014.

### Variety VICKIDS

Families that have experienced a natural disaster are facing ongoing financial and emotional struggles and require support for essentials for their children. Natural disasters occur regularly across our continent, and cause more than \$1.14 billion worth of damage each year to homes, businesses and the nation's infrastructure, as well as causing severe disruption to communities (em.gov.au, 2004). Research indicates that extreme weather events may well increase in the future.

That's why, in 2014, on the fifth anniversary of Black Saturday Variety launched VICKIDS, a program developed in response to these findings, to seek and address the ongoing disadvantage that children experience in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Through VICKIDS we provide children who have been affected by a natural disaster with basics their families are unable to provide – such as school supplies, medical expenses, school camps & excursions or other costs that support a child's health, wellbeing and education.

**Berry Street researchers found that "when assistance is provided to support children this is best designed and implemented in a manner which underpins the recovery trajectory of the individual themselves..."**

In 2013 Variety – the Children's Charity commissioned a research project by Berry Street, a leading children's support agency in Victoria, to test the hypothesis that there are children living in areas affected by floods/drought/bushfire who are not thriving and continue to suffer post-traumatically. Berry Street researchers found that "when assistance is provided to support children this is best designed and implemented in a manner which underpins the recovery trajectory of the individual themselves, specifically the movement from victim to survivor to active community citizen" (Berry Street, 2013).

Our pilot phase has supported 60 children in regional Victoria and with strong support from these communities who are witnessing the benefits of the program in action – we are looking to expand VICKIDS into a scholarship program that will support children with an existing talent to achieve their full potential and to follow their dreams in 2015 and beyond.



**variety**  
the children's charity

# Grant Highlights





# Meet Jasmyn

Nine year old Jasmyn has Cerebral Palsy and is restricted to a wheelchair. Jasmyn's mum Daniella says "Jassie's strength is what gives us strength. She rolls with the punches."

Although Jasmyn is non-verbal and unable to communicate without assistance from her Carers, she always wakes up with a smile on her face and goes to bed smiling.

As Jasmyn grows she is getting heavier. Jasmyn is unable to support herself in a seated position without assistance and requires full postural support. It is getting difficult for mum, Daniella to carry and lift 25 kilogram Jasmyn from the bathroom to bedroom and around the house daily.

Jasmyn tends to be restricted to a wheelchair most of the time. The assistance of a ceiling hoist in her living space will allow her to be more mobile around the house and make sure that she receives the exercise she needs to grow, freeing her to stand up.

The bedroom ceiling hoist will free her caregivers from straining and lifting her up onto a high special-purpose bed.

Jasmyn shows that no matter what difficulties she is faced with, she is able to give it a go. Her mother describes Jasmyn as someone with "Great inner strength – that blows us all away. It doesn't matter what disability she may have – Jasmyn's personality shines through."

Variety is proud to support Jasmyn and her family in her journey to independence.

## \$16,483.00

For ceiling hoists and  
a shower commode



**Jasmyn**



# Meet Nakul

Meeting inspiring children is something we do every day. We were thrilled to meet Nakul this August who, at eleven years old, has a rare disease called Congenital Fibre Type Disproportion.

This disorder primarily affects skeletal muscles – the muscles the body uses to move. Nakul struggles to walk distances longer than 20 metres due to his condition and when we met him he was unable to access areas outside his home, including school.

Unable, until Variety stepped in to assist with the gift of independence.

On Thursday August 14, the loud and proud 2014 Victorian Variety Bash set off north towards Noosa from the Variety funded all abilities playscape at Brimbank Park in Keilor East. Ahead of them were ten days of fun and fundraising. As part of the official start, Variety presented Nakul with a brand new lightweight wheelchair. This replaced his old chair which was heavy and hard for him to adequately manoeuvre. To top off his life changing day, Nakul was thrilled to be asked to wave the official starter's flag to send Bashers off on their journey.

Nakul's Mum, Shruti, is his primary carer, and although it can be hard at times, she is adamant that she wouldn't do anything else.

"I would never switch for anything else in my life than caring for my son. He has such great joy and has been a constant inspiration in our lives. We love him to bits."

Since Variety granted Nakul the new lightweight wheelchair, he has gained a lot more independence, and is able move around more easily.

"The wheelchair has made such a big difference in his life. He is able to move around independently at school and when out in the community. Having control of his wheelchair is like he has his life back. We can't express our gratitude enough towards Variety for getting back Nakul's mobility."

Lana said, 'My holiday to Goanna Park Camp NT was awesome. I got to travel with my Carer Meaghan; it's something I'll never forget. I've made friends for life and got to experience things I never thought possible. Overall it was a really great experience and I'm probably going to treasure it for the rest of my life'.

# Goanna Park Camp

Variety understands the impact a positive experience can have on the future of a child's life.

That's why we fund experiences like a trip to Goanna Park Camp in the Northern Territory, where children like Lana can learn and grow and apply these lessons to their daily life at home and school. Lessons that impact not only their lives but that of their family and friends.

Lana's mother explains:

Words cannot adequately express what we as parents feel about the opportunity Lana has been given by Variety Victoria. Our journey over the past 6-7 years with two children with ASD has been difficult (to put mildly), but also incredibly rewarding and life changing (both

positive & negative). Often we have been alone in our caring for Lana & Flynn and the isolation and anxiety that this has caused was profound. Then we started to receive support and assistance from Variety and we were thrilled.

This short letter cannot fully articulate our gratitude and thanks for providing Lana the chance to learn new skills and experiences that we cannot currently give her. As parents we're grateful for Lana to have the opportunity to help foster independence, confidence, self esteem and also the attitude that no matter what challenges are put in her path, she can do anything.





# Swan Hill School

Swan Hill Specialist School is a coeducational specialist school catering for students aged between 5–18 years. The school provides specialist education for students with mild to severe intellectual disabilities, associated disabilities and for students with autism. Students come from a wide surrounding rural area, some travelling large distances with many families significantly disadvantaged.

Swan Hill Specialist School is committed to respecting the dignity of the individual and aims to enable their students to reach their full potential academically, physically, socially and emotionally in a safe, happy and positive environment. To do this the school needs special equipment which can often come at a cost that far outstrips their budget. Variety was happy to support the school in providing theraplay shapes and equipment to set up their motor skills program. This equipment, used by occupational therapists, not only provides the students with fun playtime activities but assists in muscle development and sensory experiences. The Variety 4WD Trek commenced at the school, allowing our supporters to see their hard work in action and meet the excited children enjoying their new play equipment.



# Brimbank All Abilities Playscape

This playground is a collaboration between Variety – the Children’s Charity, Parks Victoria, the People and Parks Foundation and John T. Reid Charitable Trusts and is designed to encourage children of all abilities to explore the outdoors, with flying foxes and slides set in native parkland. The centrepiece is a spectacular giant lookout featuring a bird’s nest complete with eggs.

The park features decorated ceramic tiles by students from Keilor Primary School and is marked with Auslan and Braille signs.

Variety – the Children’s Charity Chief Barker, Vito Interlandi said the park would be a fantastic place for children with special needs and their families to visit.

“In many playgrounds children with disabilities just have to watch, but this gives those children a chance to join in and have fun,” he said.

The park features special equipment for children with special needs such as a wheelchair accessible sandpit.

**“During my involvement with Variety I have been privileged to watch children, who have had to sit on the sidelines, be able to join their able bodied friends when these sorts of facilities are provided,” he said.**

“For children, there are few things as joyful as being able to go to a playground. Brimbank Playscape will be warmly welcomed by all”.



# Where are they now?

Variety has been lucky to help many special children throughout the years and we are fortunate to keep in touch with these children and their families.



## Meet Dylan Alcott OAM

We're in the business of changing young people's futures and we love hearing updates from past Variety grant recipients who continue to inspire and achieve. One of those recipients Dylan Alcott OAM, has become a great friend of Variety, visiting us regularly at events such as the Great Grand Final Lunch to share his story with the extended Variety family. This year Dylan, wheelchair tennis ace and Paralympic Gold medallist, is preparing for the longest tennis match of his career.

"I've decided to go for a 24 hour world record of wheelchair tennis. It's a pretty ridiculous idea to be honest," laughs Dylan.

The 23 year old will commence his 24 hour attempt at Melbourne Park with a line up of celebrities – including Nick Kyrgios, Elizabeth Cambage, Olympia Valance, Jack Watts and Tom Hawkins amongst others, as well as family members and fans set to join him on court to complete the challenge.

In his effort, Dylan hopes to raise awareness for Variety after we supported him as a child.

"Variety saw me using a borrowed tennis wheelchair that didn't fit me, so they raised the money to get me a new one.

Without Variety I don't think I would be the Paralympic gold medallist that I am today." The wheelchair tennis ace, who remains passionate about Variety, came up with the idea for the 24-hour charity tennis challenge whilst driving past Melbourne's National Tennis Centre one night and set himself a goal to raise \$100,000 for Variety and Starlight Foundation

"Having a disability can be very hard, especially for kids growing up as I experienced firsthand. The donations will assist in granting wishes for sick children and purchasing equipment such as wheelchairs to enable them to live better lives."

"24 hours, I don't know how I'm going to do it, but I've always wanted to give back to these charities that helped my family and me so much when I was a kid."

A member of Australia's gold medal winning 'Rollers' wheelchair basketball team at the Beijing Paralympic Games in 2008, Alcott has since returned his focus to his first love of tennis. Currently ranked No.4 in the world for wheelchair tennis, Alcott has had a stellar year on the world tour with title wins at both the British and Belgium Opens. Thank you Dylan, you are an inspiration.

**"I really hope that one day I might be able to follow Cindy-Lu Fitzpatrick and swim at the Commonwealth Games, but that is a very big dream"**

**MONIQUE BECKWITH**



**\$7,297.00**

For a Mobility Manual Wheelchair



**Austin**

## Meet Monique

Many of you will remember the inspiring story of Monique Beckwith, winner of our 2013 Young Sports Achiever Award.

Monique Beckwith who is profound hearing loss, was inspired to take up swimming competitively at the age of 8 years old after watching the 2005 Deaflympics held in Melbourne.

Monique Beckwith, fifteen years old, had a horrendous run of incidents and injuries in the 12 months lead up to the Deaflympics.

"The last 12 months have been challenging with injuries," she says. "With my balance issue, I unfortunately seem to fall and hurt myself at the wrong times. In June 2012 I had an accident on school camp; I hit my head so hard that it broke my cochlear implant".

"Then in February this year I had another fall and broke my right leg. In my effort to make up for lost time in the pool I probably pushed myself too much so now I have shoulder issue. But my (swimming) times are looking okay, so I am hopeful that I can swim well at the games."

Showing true determination, Monique soldiered on to fulfil her dream to swim at the Deaflympics.

Tackling the 800m Freestyle with a severe shoulder injury she was thrilled to make her first Deaflympics final where she finished 7th overall and ranked number one in the under 18's. Since the event Monique has won numerous events and awards including being nominated for the Deaf Sports Australia Awards. She now aspires to swim at the Commonwealth Games.

"I really hope that one day I might be able to follow Cindy-Lu Fitzpatrick and swim at the Commonwealth Games, but that is a very big dream" she said.

With Monique recently being selected for the 2014 Victorian Swimming Team to compete at the School Sport Australia Swimming Championships in Melbourne and her strength of spirit, this dream is well on its way.

## Meet Austin

Earlier this year, Variety was proud to present four year old Austin, who has Cerebral Palsy, a brand new wheelchair to bring in 2014 in style.

Austin braved the heat to join us and our charity partner, Melbourne Renegades, at Etihad Stadium with the important job of tossing the pre-match coin!

Austin loves his new chair and tells everybody to "look at my fancy new wheels!" Austin has already mastered using his chair quite well and loves to zoom around when he can.

His mum says, "We thank all Variety's supporters and the staff at Variety as this would not have been made possible without you!!"

The heart of Variety is powered by our volunteers and fundraisers who work incredibly hard to support children in need. It warms us to see some of these champions recognised for their dedication in the past 12 months.

## Volunteers and Awards

### Variety International Presidential Citation – Lachie Pitman



One of the most visible cars on the Variety Bash contains one of our most energetic and passionate supporters, Lachie Pitman.

Whether in his iconic sheep outfit which he is seen out and about in each year for the Bash or in a suit and tie at one of our special events,

Lachie's presence as well as his heart and soul and never far from Variety!

After twelve years on the Bash, Lachie is a veteran and works hard to assist first time 'rookie' entrants in their understanding of what we do, what the Bash is all about and to help them raise maximum funds possible for the kids. Since his first Bash, Lachie's famous sheep mobile has raised in excess of \$150,000 for children in need.

On an organisational level, Lachie has volunteered his time and expertise on Motoring Events committees and working groups as well as taking part in pre-event route surveys and introducing ongoing fundraising activities such as the annual Bash painting and entrant fun stops.

Well liked and well connected, Lachie actively promotes Variety to his vast network of contacts and has introduced a number of new entrants and guests to our events. He has been instrumental in procuring celebrity involvement for all of our motoring events and our largest special event, the Great Grand Final Luncheon. These connections not only bring funds in for kids in need but raise valuable awareness for our cause.

In 2014 Lachie was honoured with the highest commendation from Variety International – the Presidential Citation.

### Variety International Mort Sunshine Award

Variety Victoria prides ourselves in continuing to be innovative and cutting edge as we raise awareness for our organisation. In 2013 we transitioned to monthly electronic news from our longstanding quarterly print news - Variety Heartbeat.

This provided us with significant saving on print, design and mailing costs. In addition to this the increased frequency means we can now get news to our members and donors in a timely manner and increase the impact of our direct mail campaign by telling personal impact stories in our newsletters. The electronic format drives traffic and engagement with our website, social media channels. This leads to fundraising via online donations.

The Heartbeat e-News was recognised as best globally at the Variety International Convention and received the Mort Sunshine Award for excellence in marketing and communication. Our ability to adapt to the latest trends and technologies means Variety continues to grow into the future, allowing us to provide maximum support to children in need.

Sign up today to receive our monthly Heartbeat e-News at [variety.org.au/vic](http://variety.org.au/vic)

## Variety International Corporate Award — Fox FM

In late 2012 Variety Victoria received a call Fox FM. The radio station had an idea, let's raise \$100,000 for 100 kids! Little did we know, Fox FM's commitment would equate to over a half a million dollars supporting disadvantaged families at Christmas time!

Through their incredible determination and commitment Fox FM raised over \$425,000 in its first year for Variety, more than quadrupling their original fundraising goal. Staff and presenters went above and beyond to promote Variety on air, online and through their popular social media channels and put themselves on the line to raise as much money for disadvantaged kids as possible.

Fox FM partnered with Variety Victoria once again in November 2013 to ask Melbourne to dig deep to help children in need. Over the years Fox FM listeners raised \$723,000 through their K's for Kids drive, supporting thousands of children in need.

Congratulations to Fox FM and their listeners who together won the Variety International Corporate Award for their efforts.



**Variety Victoria Board Member Michael Randall OAM was honoured with an Order of Australia Medal.**

## Outstanding Achievements

- Derryn Hinch was inducted to Variety Australia's Honor Roll
- Board Member Rod Collins received the Variety National Chairman's Citation Award and was nominated for the Pride of Australia Award alongside Pam Shephard, Helen Hoppner, Johnny 'Cowboy' Paydon and Life Member Maureen Hafey.
- Supporter, fundraiser and volunteer Paul Herbert was named City of Whittlesea Citizen of the Year
- Former Variety Victoria Chief Barker and Seekers superstar, Bruce Woodley AO, has been inducted as an Officer of the Order of Australia.
- Variety recognised Norm Gibbs aka Zodo the clown at our July Thank You Event. Zodo has entertained the crowds and brought the smile to children's faces every year at our Variety Children's Christmas Party. This year Zodo will celebrate his 28th Party.

There is nothing better than seeing the absolute joy on a child's face when they are presented with their much needed equipment. With no government funding we rely heavily on the kindness and generosity of the community to make moments like these possible. By raising funds for Variety our community fundraisers transform the lives of children in need.

# Community Fundraising

## Mothers Day Lunch

Passionate supporters Kerry Nette and Caz Decent AKA "The Hula Girls" held their inaugural Mother's Day Lunch in 2014, raising funds for Variety.

Guest speaker and Variety grant recipient Zoe Skjellerup inspired guests by generously sharing her story about living with the rare condition "CDG syndrome Type 1A" which affects her mobility. Zoe received support from Variety to obtain a scooter and moved us to understand how despite her difficulties, she is excelling in her studies, gaining some top marks in science, maths and English literature. It was a privilege to be able to meet and get to know such an extraordinary individual.



## Gloria Jean's

Australian coffee lovers drank more than 65,000 cappuccinos in just two days to help raise \$175,000 for Variety – the Children's Charity!

A nation of coffee drinkers, Australians drink over one million cappuccinos outside the home every day. Variety – the Children's Charity called on our growing nation of coffee drinkers to have a Cappuccino for a Cause by visiting their local Gloria Jean's coffee house in 2013.

Donation boxes in all Gloria Jean's coffee houses nationally were dedicated to raising funds for Variety throughout September and October. A percentage of profits were also donated through the sale of specially designed travel mugs, shortbread heart cookies and heart chocolates. The fundraiser culminated in a two day major Cappuccino for a Cause event on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th October when 50 cents from every cappuccino sold went directly to Variety. The baristas at over 400 Gloria Jean's Coffee houses served more than 65,000 cappuccinos in just two days.

This year, through Cappuccino for a Cause, Gloria Jean's Coffees are helping children who are economically disadvantaged or have special needs, by granting scholarships through Variety Future Kids Program.

Special thanks to the team at Gloria Jean's in Burwood and the staff from the Gloria Jean's Melbourne head office who joined us at the Variety Children's Christmas Party in 2013 and provided coffee to parents, carers, staff, volunteers throughout the day.



## Kennards for Kids

Variety continued our fantastic relationship with Kennards this year with their annual charity initiative Kennards for Kids.

Kennards philosophy is to 'make your job easy', and each year they make life a little easier for sick, injured or disadvantaged children around Australia. For every hire made during September and October, Kennards donates \$2 to selected organisation's to assist the kids who need it most.

As a family-owned business, Kennards are passionate about providing children with the best start to life possible. It is this belief in the potential of our children that led the company to donate over a quarter of a million dollars to various children's charities and organisations in last year's campaign alone.



## Top Hat Appeal

The Variety Top Hat Appeal ran hot this year with corner collections at a massive 27 corners over 8 weekends with over 150 volunteers raising \$76,276.93!

As always, Variety volunteers fundraised in style, decked out in our iconic Variety top hats. Thousands of Victorian drivers tipped their hats, tooted their horns and dropped a gold coin to our roadside volunteers. Huge thanks goes to all the Motoring Event Entrants and volunteers for achieving this outstanding result.

## Race Day & Golf Day

In February and March two fun days out were organised by our supporters - Kilmore Race Day and the Variety Golf Day.

The race day was aligned with the Kilmore Turf Cup and show cased country racing at its best! Kilmore Racing Club generously supported us with our own Variety area in the JK Pavilion for a great day of racing and fun.

The Variety Golf Day was held on the beautiful Craigieburn Golf Course where guests enjoyed 18 holes of golf, a BBQ breakfast and a delicious two course lunch. This event was generously sponsored by Bob Burton and the crew at Craigieburn Sporting Club and the Craigieburn Willmont Golf Club.

## Australian Toy Association – A Toy Fair to Make Kids Dreams Come True

Variety is fortunate to have the support of the Australian Toy Association (ATA) who organise for exhibitors at the annual Australian Toy Association Toy Fair to donate toys to Variety.

ATA has again partnered with Variety for the 6th consecutive year as the charity of choice. Special thanks to all the companies involved who donated a whopping \$10,000 in toys!

Looking forward to...

20

# 15

... a year to celebrate



## Message from the CEO

In July, I was delighted to be appointed CEO of Variety Victoria – an organisation that I feel passionate about.

It's an organisation of dedicated, hard working people – most of whom I know personally – and they are just as passionate about helping children in need as I am.

People are the lifeblood of our organisation whether they are sponsors, corporate partners, Board Members, volunteers or friends who attend our events and functions – I can't thank you enough for supporting us throughout the year. Perhaps I can simply say, 'you're the best'.

Like all CEO's in the not-for-profit sectors, I am constantly mindful of the need to look forward – to make new contacts, to introduce new people and ideas. We also need to find efficiencies and better ways to do what we do.

One of the platforms for growth for 2015 is building our supporter base. A recent planning day highlighted the fact that we have been a little too inward looking – we need to broaden our reach by talking to and involving new people who want to help children in need.

Another objective in our plan for growth shows a need to increase our female supporter base via introductions from existing male supporters – while also seeking younger people to become involved.

We are also looking to expand our sponsorship, and partnership portfolio. A significant opportunity for growth also lies in Variety becoming the 'Charity of Choice' for organisations wanting to add a charitable contribution to their function or event.

Our plan for 2015 is very much centred on the philosophy of 'NOW' – No Opportunity Wasted – which will help us in building for the future.

**Janette Connolly**  
Chief Executive Officer

# 2015 Initiatives

## The Australian Motoring Festival

The Australian Motoring Festival will take place in March 2015 and will connect car lovers, manufacturers and families like never before. We look forward to being part of this exciting festival and the opportunity to showcase some amazing Bash and 4WD cars.

## Sofitel's Eat Street

Variety is excited to have been chosen for the Sofitel's Eat Street which will be held in May 2015. We are very excited to be part of this event which showcases top Melbourne chefs creating a menu of delectable entrée-sized signature dishes from their own mini marquees and over 25 wine and beverage companies providing refreshments. It's an event not to be missed.

## Areyouselling.com.au

Areyouselling.com.au who will be supporting Variety throughout the year by making a donation for every car sold. It's great to have our Port Melbourne neighbours jumping on board to help kids in need.

## The Variety Foundation

Variety Victoria is excited to have established its own Foundation in June 2014 that will help secure our long term sustainability. The Foundation offers the opportunity for donors and bequesters to contribute to the Foundation whilst having the comfort that they are leaving a lasting legacy. We aim to have funds earned from the Foundation investments to be distributed through our funding programs.

## Ryco Filters

Ryco Filters who have joined forces with Chisholm Dandenong to complete a classic car restoration project throughout 2015 with the car auctioned at the end of the year with proceeds going to Variety. It's going to be a fun and exciting project for everyone involved.



In August 2014 \$1.2 Million was raised for sick, disadvantaged and special needs children thanks to the efforts of over 260 entrants and officials on the 2014 Victorian Variety Bash.

The colourful and loud Variety Bash set off north towards Noosa, from the all abilities playground at Brimbank Park, Keilor East for ten days of fun and fundraising.

This year's annual road event involved outrageously themed cars and crew including Sesame Street characters, Smurfs, hippies, fairies, Mounties, Toy Story characters, Elvis's and many more.

Travelling over 3,000km the Victorian Variety Bash visited schools, filled towns and celebrated their year long fundraising achievements, whilst travelling through outback Australia – all in the spirit of raising funds for children in need.

Beginning in Melbourne the 2014 Variety Bash travelled to Wangaratta, then onto Corryong and Bowral before arriving in Sydney New South Wales for the National Bash get together. Following on from Sydney the Bash travelled to Singleton, Armidale and Tenterfield before driving into Queensland and

Kingaroy. Finally the Bash arrived in beautiful Noosa Heads on Saturday August 23.

On the final evening of the Bash, Variety Bash Event and Development Manager, Julie Baxter, announced that this year's final fundraising total was an extraordinary \$1.2 Million.

Julie said "Congratulations to our passionate, dedicated and devoted Bashers on raising an incredible \$1.2 Million for children in need. This amazing result will ensure many more children will receive the crucial equipment and support that they need to live life to the fullest. The 2014 Variety Bash has been commented as 'one of the best yet'."

**Congratulations to our passionate, dedicated and devoted Bashers on raising an incredible \$1.2 Million for children in need.**

# MELBOURNE TO N'OOSAH HEADS VIA SYDNEY

Throughout the Bash, entrants visited local towns, stopped at schools (one of which only had six students!) and awarded grants to communities and individuals in need. In Wangaratta (VIC) the Variety Bash provided the local community with a wheelchair accessible Liberty Swing and in Emmaville and Blackville (NSW) Variety made generous donations to local schools. For a more detailed list of donations made on the 2014 Bash, visit: [variety.org.au/vic](http://variety.org.au/vic)

Variety Victoria CEO, Janette Connolly said "It fills me with pride to see our Variety Bash impact the lives of children in need as well as the communities they visit along route. I congratulate all of our 2014 Bashers on an incredible effort raising \$1.2 Million for children who need it most."

This year was a National Bash year which involved all of the Variety Tents joining together in Sydney on Sunday August 17. It was a sight to see as over 600 cars and crews crossing the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge in convoy.

The Variety Bash is always an entertaining event, focused on raising funds to help children, who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs. Over the years, the iconic Victorian Variety Bash has covered almost 100,000km's, raising more than \$19 million for children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs in Victoria and since 1985 over \$170 million has been raised through the Variety Bash Australia wide.



We look forward to a massive celebration for our 25th Victorian Variety Bash in 2015 as we travel to beautiful Port Douglas. To recognise this incredible milestone we are taking our Bashers to one of the few towns in Australia that has never been visited in our 25 year history – Cooktown.

The longevity of this event is a testament to our dedicated and passionate volunteers and Bash entrants who through their love of Variety and determination to change the lives of children in need continue to keep the Bash spirit alive.



# Motoring Events

## 4WD Trek

The 2014 4WD Trek was another terrific motoring event on the Variety calendar. We were fortunate to experience every condition, from cloudless skies and dusty tracks, to pouring rain and ankle deep mud.

The Trek began on a brisk morning in Swan Hill where Trekkers kick started it all with a visit to the Swan Hill Specialist School. The 'Who's Who in the Zoo' theme was alive and well as kids of all ages dressed up and put on a performance for the Trekkers to remember.

From here we slipped and slid our way towards South Australia before turning north onto the dusty road into Birdsville, where we had a scrumptious meal at the foot of 'Big Red' and took in the breathtaking views of the Simpson Desert's red sands.

From animal onesies to gorillas in the mist, our fun loving entrants embraced our theme on The Trek – delighting children across the country. We had golf on dried river beds, trivia on breakfast benches, driving skill challenges, three-legged races, idol games and much more. Each day was packed full of fun and was made even more special thanks to the amazing sights that only trekking off road can provide.

We're looking forward to another great Trek in 2015.

Thank you again to all involved especially our sponsors Roof Extenda and Prestige Off-Road.





## In a huge anniversary year for our motoring events, in 2015 we celebrate the Variety Brats Bash 10th Birthday!

### Brats Bash

The Variety Brats Bash gives Variety Motoring Event entrants the opportunity to take their families to many wonderful places experiencing and creating adventures of their own whilst raising funds for Variety. This unique journey provides parents and children the experience of spending quality time exploring the farthest reaches of our country.

Each year entrants of the Variety Brats Bash present on route grants to children or organisations to allow younger generations to experience the joy of giving. Each entrant car must have at least one adult and travel with a crew of children aged 17 and under. In 2014 twenty-five cars and one hundred people left Healesville to journey to picturesque Victor Harbour in South Australia.

In a huge anniversary year for our motoring events, in 2015 we celebrate the Variety Brats Bash 10th Birthday! The Brats Bash has taken families to some of the most beautiful outback areas, and next year will be no exception – travelling from Bendigo to Warrnambool via Broken Hill.

### Variety Cycle

Variety are famous for the diversity of our events and 2014 was no exception. In our inaugural year, inspirational Australian Turia Pitt and professional cycling team Drapac joined with entrants from three states for a once in a lifetime challenge riding from Sydney to Uluru via Melbourne. Participants spread cheer as they travelled through Beaconsfield, presenting Mitchell and Laney, who have Cystic Fibrosis, two specialist nebulisers to help them with treatment. The cyclists then rolled into Warrnambool where they stopped at Mpower, a specialist disability service for kids, to present them with brand new multi-sensory play equipment.

Departing from Sydney on 22nd March, the event featured cyclists riding for 26 days covering 3,716km taking in Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide before finally arriving in Uluru on 16 April 2014. The event was a huge success, raising an incredible \$530,000 for Variety Australia – we look forward to another exciting and challenging event in 2015, where our cyclists will travel from Sydney all the way south to stunning Hobart via Melbourne.





# Variety AFL Great Grand Final Lunch

“How are you Tommy?” “Sensational, and getting better!” As always, Tommy was a ball of inspirational energy when he last visited Variety Victoria where he and wife Maureen were tireless workers for disadvantaged kids for many years.

Maureen, who is a Variety Life Member and past Board Member, is a founder of the Variety Great Grand Final Lunch, and with the help of Tommy and his footy contacts, it is now one of the key events of the Grand Final Week. Each year at the lunch, Tommy moved happily through the crowd, greeting people, posing for photographs and putting smiles on the faces of kids and adults alike.

Tommy worked side by side with Maureen to nurture and grow the event which has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help local children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs. It was a privilege, therefore, to honour Tommy at our 2014 Variety Great Grand Final Lunch with the newly named Tom Hafey Heart of Football Award, announced by Maureen. The Award recognises an AFL player who has inspired Variety through his selfless actions and dedication to children. Fittingly, the 2014 award winner was Richmond Football Club star Daniel Jackson.

Above and beyond his football career Daniel works tirelessly with children and young people in the area of youth homelessness, mental health, bullying and active lifestyles. Daniel is an Ambassador and Director of Ladder, a dedicated Ambassador for Headspace and Director of Big Brother, Big Sister Australia.

“Hearing about other people’s battles in life, whether that be living on the street, drug addiction or dealing with depression, has often put things into perspective for me, especially when I have been struggling with footy”, he said.

Previous Variety Young Sports Achiever Award recipient Monique Beckwith was also on hand to present the 2014 award to a special young person who has overcome adversity to achieve an outstanding level of success in the sporting arena. This year Variety was proud to present the Young Sports Achiever Award to wheelchair basketballer, Samuel Rizzo – an active 14 year-old who was born with Spina Bifida. Sam commenced wheelchair basketball



training at the age of 9 and has shown unwavering commitment and a love of sports, even when accessibility is not always easy.

Apart from his basketball, Sam has started training in a wheelchair racing chair, with Paralympic racing athlete Richard Coleman. He is making enormous progress and is very fast over short distances. At this stage both basketball and wheelchair racing are complementing each other nicely. Sam is keen to practice and develop his technique at home, on bike paths and on quieter country roads.

“I love sport. I play wheelchair basketball, train for track racing, do motocross racing on a quad bike and sometimes go to the gym. I got a basketball hoop for my birthday and once Dad puts it on the wall; I’ll be able to practice throwing hoops at home.”

Sam is determined to have a go at all events and is willing to take on new sporting challenges with great enthusiasm.

**"I love sport. I play wheelchair basketball, train for track racing, do motocross racing on a quad bike and sometimes go to the gym. I got a basketball hoop for my birthday and once Dad puts it on the wall, I'll be able to practice throwing hoops at home."**

**SAM RIZZO**



Our 1,100 guests recognised Sam for his boundless commitment and true passion for sport.

**Special thanks goes out to all of our incredible supporters, volunteers, partners and long term sponsors AFL, James Boag, Crown and Beloka Water who helped to make this year's Variety AFL Great Grand Final Lunch a huge success. We thank our wonderful MC Craig Willis, celebrity guest speakers Jonathan Brown, Peta Searl, Matthew Richardson, Josh Caddy, Susan Alberti, Mike Brady and new FOX8 The Recruit Johann Wagner - 'Yoey'.**

With a strong history of over thirty-years we look forward to presenting another successful Variety AFL Great Grand Final Lunch in 2015.



Each year Variety partners with the Financial Services Foundation to present *A Monetary Affair* – the key social date on the financial services industry calendar.

## Corporate Events



### Financial Services Ball

Bringing together Melbourne's financial industry elite, guests enjoy an evening of fine food and entertainment, whilst supporting some of Australia's most worthy charities through a live and silent auction and 'backing of the bourse.'

In 2014 guests were transported to Rio, Brazil, in a Carnivale themed event where they were wowed by Melbourne's best Brazilian dance troop alongside traditional drumline percussionists.

**MC Geoff "Coxy" Cox entertained the crowd with his comedic wit and soon, conga lines were formed on the dance floor and guests were letting their hair down and having a ball.**



Thanks to the support of the financial services industry, *A Monetary Affair* has raised an astonishing \$1 MILLION for children in need over the years.



**Each year Albert Park Melbourne becomes a sea of red and white as hundreds of aspiring Santa's make their way around the lake for the Variety Santa Fun Run.**

## Santa Fun Run

Entrants can choose to run or walk 2km, 5km or 10km in their very own official Variety Santa suit. The Variety Santa Fun Run is a family friendly national event promoting healthy lifestyle decisions and encourages inclusive participation from everyone, especially children with special needs.

In November 2013 we partnered the event with the Variety Santa Selfie campaign – driving engagement and registrations through an interactive Twitter event on Federation Square's big screen, resulting in a record number of entries. This culminated in a record attempt for the world's biggest Santa Selfie on event day!

In 2014 we are extending the family love by welcoming dogs of all shapes and sizes, ensuring entrants are not just a "Claus for a Cause" but also "Paws for a Cause!"



# Variety Children's Christmas Party

Variety - the Children's Charity is dedicated to ensuring that as many children as possible have a Christmas to remember. In 2013 we welcomed another 5,200 children to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to enjoy a special day of celebration and fun, thanks to your amazing support and the support of our wonderful sponsors.

In the last 27 years over 130,000 children have attended the Variety Children's Christmas Party and we look forward to welcoming many more in the future.

It is a day of celebration with the children enjoying live entertainment, activities, carnival rides, interactive displays, all-ability rides, Santa and his helpers to ensure it's a Christmas to remember. EVERY child receives a present and show bag to take home on the day!

In 2014 we celebrate the 28th Variety Children's Christmas Party and a huge milestone in welcoming our 135,000th child to the event since its humble beginnings in 1986.

**Variety would like to thank the companies, business, volunteers and donors who support the Variety Children's Christmas Party each year. It is with your support this day is possible.**

Variety would especially like to thank Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre our major event sponsor of the annual Variety Children's Christmas Party. Each year they provide this amazing venue for us to hold the party, their support is valued at over \$200,000.





## Derryn Hinch – Ambassador for the 2014 Variety Children's Christmas Party

This year we celebrate the 28th Variety Children's Christmas Party and we welcome Derryn Hinch, previous chairman of Variety Victoria and well known media identity as the Ambassador for this year's event.

Part of his involvement is to spearhead our appeal to raise fund for the 2014 party. This included a direct mail campaign, telemarketing and featured Derryn in television and radio commercials.



Variety Victoria would like to thank some of our special sponsors and supporters for their generous contribution to assisting children who are sick, disadvantaged or who have special needs to live, laugh and learn.

# Corporate Supporters

## Variety Major Supporters



## Variety Bash

Kennards Hire  
Budget  
Isuzu Trucks  
Ambulance Victoria  
Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB)  
Sheen Panel Services  
WM Waste Management Services

## Variety 4WD Trek

Roof Extenda  
Prestige Off-Road

## Financial Services Ball

The Atlantic Group  
Pro Light and Sound  
Dromana Estate Wines  
Stockbroker Association

## Variety AFL Great Grand Final Luncheon

### Major sponsors:

AFL  
Crown  
James Boags  
Beloka Water

### Event Supporters:

Knox Jeep  
e One Entertainment  
Dromana Estate Wines  
Charity Bid  
Melbourne Mailing  
Sheen Group

## Variety Children's Christmas Party

### Major sponsors:

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre  
City of Melbourne  
Patties Pies  
DFO

### Event Supporters:

Toy Networkx  
Logistic Events Australia  
Lombard

## Variety Victorian Supporters

3AW  
Adrenalin  
Altis Consulting  
Anytime Fitness  
AP EAgers  
areyouselling.com.au  
Aroona Springs Water  
The Atlantic Group  
Australian Toy Association  
Cassandra Gantner Foundation  
CharityBid  
Charter Hall  
City of Melbourne  
Club Marine  
Cocobird  
Country Racing Victoria  
Craig Willis  
Craigieburn Sporting Club  
Craigieburn Willmont Golf Club  
Darren James  
David Mann OAM

**Variety would like to thank our team of volunteers and corporate volunteers that assist us throughout the year in the office and with our events.**

Derryn Hinch  
Dromana Estate Wines  
Dynamic Tyres  
Etihad Airways  
Federation Square  
Financial Services Foundation  
Foundation for Rural and Regional  
Renewal (FRRR) & The McEwen  
Foundation  
Fox FM  
Freemasons Victoria  
Gloria Jean's Coffees  
Grill'd South Melbourne  
Hayes Knight  
Huntingdale Sound & Lighting  
iSentia Media  
JC Quality Foods  
Joch Motors  
John "Cowboy" Paydon  
Kennards Hire  
Kilmore Turf Club  
Kmart Australia  
LeasePlan  
Lion  
Logistic Events Australia  
Melbourne City Toyota  
Melbourne Renegades  
Melbourne's Child  
Mike Brady  
Mike Larkan  
Miss World Australia  
NAB  
Norm Gibbs aka Zodo the Clown  
Peter Lazer  
Prolight and Sound

Queen Victoria Market  
Rebecca Maddern  
Rebel Sport  
Royal Tivoli Jewellers  
Runner World Magazine  
Ryco Filters  
SEN  
Sheen Group  
Signwave Campbellfield  
Sofitel Hotel Group  
State Trustees Australia Foundation  
The Australian Motoring Festival  
The Good Hurt  
Tint  
Trans Gears & Diff's  
Tyres4U  
Valley Maintenance Services  
Victoria Police  
Vodafone  
W&P Truck Services  
Wheulton Group  
Wilbur Wilde  
Wilson Security  
Wool Shed

**Special thanks also to all of the companies that contributed to the fit out of OVL, Variety's Official Event Vehicle.**

Airflow  
Ashdown Ingram  
Autosafe  
Blackmans  
Burg  
CRS  
ECB Bullbars  
Eclipse  
Exide  
Fyrlyt  
Ironman  
Patterson Cheney Spare Parts  
Piranha  
Powertech  
Prestige Offroad  
Rideprod  
Signwave Campbellfield  
Tanami Drawer Systems  
TC Cheapest Tyres  
Tradesman  
Uniden  
Warn



**variety**  
the children's charity

# 2014

Variety – The Children's Charity

H71 63–85 Turner Street Port Melbourne VIC 3207

Phone (03) 8698 3900 [www.variety.org.au/vic](http://www.variety.org.au/vic)



[facebook.com/varietyvic](https://facebook.com/varietyvic)



[twitter.com/varietyvic](https://twitter.com/varietyvic)