

Our Vision

A spiritually inspired Quaker community called to lead faithful lives with courage & purpose. The Essence of our work is to provide a powerful Quaker witness to the world, to share our gifts, to care for the earth and to nurture this blessed community.

Our Mission

To bring healing & inspiration into this difficult & precious world by sharing Quaker tradition, contemplative practices & supporting prophetic witness in seekers of all faiths & none.

Our Current Calling

To nurture our gifts & assets in these fallow times to secure a peaceful & sustainable future.

2020 summary

The Silver Wattle Quaker Centre was established in 2010 as an Australian Quaker study & retreat centre. In this first decade:



- ✂ The Silver Wattle property at Bungendore was purchased
- ✂ Courses, retreats & venue hire use of the property have expanded
- ✂ An Elders pool to support course staff & volunteers has been established
- ✂ Assets have been improved including a new kitchen, vehicles & water tanks with purification systems
- ✂ Photovoltaic solar power systems have been installed
- ✂ Energy-efficient heating & cooling has been fitted
- ✂ A substantial library collection has been developed
- ✂ Orchards & productive food gardens have been rejuvenated
- ✂ Degraded land has been extensively revegetated.



Felicity Rose has lovingly served as Centre Director throughout 2020, drawing on deep spiritual & practical experience. Before joining Silver Wattle, Felicity served Australian Quakers in many roles including as Tasmania Regional Meeting Clerk & was a L'Arche community leader in Australia and overseas. During 2020 Felicity upheld the spiritual presence at Silver Wattle, attending to countless tasks & caring for visitors in a constantly changing & challenging environment.

*"How lucky we are!
The COVID19 lockdown
now means that you
don't need to wait for a
course ... You can come
anytime for personal
retreat or sojourn
... and just be."*

The year in review

Silver Wattle's normal business was abruptly halted in early 2020 by the COVID19 pandemic. While 'normalcy' may not be re-established until 2022, the Board has used this time to make improvements & develop a strategy for Silver Wattle 'towards 2030'.

During the year, Silver Wattle:

- Partnered with Australian Yearly Meeting to develop training for online (Zoom) participation in Worship & courses;
- Continued the Wednesday online Meeting for Worship;
- Hosted a Webinar by Paul Buckley, an American Quaker & specialist on William Penn;
- Offered a series of Friday evening online Epilogues attended by registrants from Australia & around the world;
- Initiated the Silver Wattle Elders Enrichment Program (SWEEP)

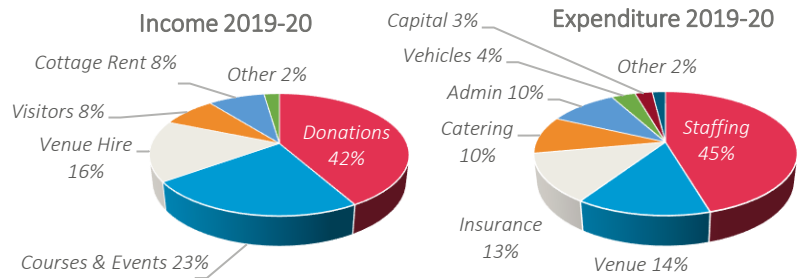
Making the most of the COVID19 'fallow-time', other work included:

- Commissioning an architect to oversee building an 'Access Unit' to provide disability-friendly & energy efficient accommodation;
- Installation of climate controlled systems in the dining, kitchen & office areas;
- Re-covering of the 'tunnels' for vegetable production;
- Re-painting of external wood work;
- Building a stone well & benches adjacent to the lake, arising from the leadings of a generous donor.

Our finances

Despite the drop-off in revenue-raising activity, Silver Wattle remains financially solvent with adequate reserves & reduced costs thanks to a number of changes including the upgrade of Silver Wattle's solar-power capacity.

Silver Wattle income has been sustained by some early NSW & Australian government COVID19 assistance, occasional visitors & retreatants underpinned by the loving generosity of donors & volunteers.



Where to next ...

Our current focus is on supporting future courses & events, improving the Silver Wattle website & social media platforms & finding information technology systems plus people to manage document storage, donations & finances. We have also used this 'fallow' time to search for a new Centre Co-ordinator & to build a resident community.

Towards 2030

The plan towards 2030 will help Silver Wattle move from the establishment phase of the first decade to a consolidation phase in 2020-2030.

With prayerful discernment, the priorities for the next 10 years will be:

1. Sharing wisdom & experience to help respond to the promptings of the Spirit, through learning courses, retreats, community life, sharing gifts & connecting with country

2. Fostering an accessible, diverse & resilient community
3. Care for the land & property entrusted to us
4. Developing sustainable human, organisational, technological & financial resources.

This will be a time during which we expect climate change to bite more seriously & Silver Wattle will offer both onsite & online programs.

Sanctuaries have historically withstood the tests of time & turmoil. Retreat centres & monasteries have existed from the subarctic of northern Russia to the chilly windswept coasts of England to sunny Mediterranean lands, in tropical jungles of southeast Asia & in the Egyptian deserts. *Silver Wattle will continue to nurture its vision, whatever climate change brings, as a place of spiritual inspiration & transformation.*

The new solar panel 'array' nestled on the accommodation wing roof has significantly reduced Silver Wattle energy emissions & costs.



David Liversidge has been a Board member since 2017 with responsibility for property & assets over many years. David was born in the UK & spent time with his family on a Quaker Aid project in central Africa. Before retirement, David helped with the establishment of the *Clean Energy Act* & carbon pricing. David has led the work to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels including the installation of climate control systems powered by solar photo-voltaic cells. David's photo was taken at the Pease/Backhouse-Hodgkin family home 'Elm Ridge' when David & his wife Liz were wardens at Darlington Meeting House in 2017.

"Heat pumps work in the reverse to refrigerators - they gather rather than remove heat making them four times more efficient than older air conditioners."