



Eesti Kultuuri Sihtasutus Austraalias

**Estonian Cultural Foundation in
Australia Limited**

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The Chairman's Report ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

12th January, 2021

Dear Member

Re: Summary of Activities of the Estonian Cultural Foundation in Australia 2019 – 2020

The Estonian Cultural Foundation in Australia is pleased to provide a summary of events and activities undertaken during the 2019-2020 Financial Year.

Probably the most significant matter dealt with by the organisation was to change its name from the Estonian Relief Committee to its newly adopted name (ECFA). It was felt by the Board that 2019 marked a significant turning point for the Company's future and it was strongly felt that if Estonian culture in Australia is to survive, it must look to our youth to engage with and promote the Estonian "story". The change of name was verified by members at the October 2019 Annual General Meeting. In line with the Company's updated corporate strategy, it was decided to update its image including its logo. A competition for the design of a new logo was announced at the start of 2020 resulting in over 60 entries being received. The winner of the logo competition was Lachlan Bell, a young Estonian from Sydney. The new logo combines items from Estonian heritage, being a *sõlg* (brooch) and a *kilp* (shield) and incorporates 8 stars from the Southern Cross to represent the states and territories of Australia. Using the colours from the Estonian flag, the letters from the ECFA acronym are imprinted on the circles of this *sõlg*. For designing the winning logo, Lachlan received a prize of \$500.

During the course of the year, it was also decided to reassess the Company's investment strategy. Given the low rates of return from existing term deposits, it was decided to seek the assistance of a financial planner to review and rationalize our existing cash assets. Accordingly, the services of Common Cents Financial Services Pty Ltd (CCFS) were engaged to advise the ECFA on an appropriate investment strategy going forward.

As a result of this strategy, and with the assistance of CCFS, the ECFA has invested its liquid assets in a range of funds that will deliver returns in the range of 4% to 12% per annum. The purpose of this strategy was to increase ECFA's annual income significantly from existing levels, enabling it to fund a greater range of individuals and organisations that promote Estonian culture in Australia. Details of the Company's financial position for the period ending June 30, 2020 are attached and can also be found on our website www.estoniancfa.org.au.

In July 2020, the ECFA Board was pleased to announce a number of funding awards to promote Estonian culture in Australia. A total of \$20,250 was awarded and included the following organisations and individuals:

Sõrve – awarded \$7500. To directly assist the National Estonian Summer Camp continue and strengthen the bonds within the Australian-Estonian community. This will be achieved through camp activities including:

- Australian-Estonian language teachers involved in the kindergarten groups around Australia;
- Music including singing to show an insight to the Estonian Song Festivals;
- Dancing to showcase and promote participation in the Estonian Dance groups in Australia
- Participation in creation of traditional Estonian Art and Craft;
- Providing our young adults with opportunities to develop youth leadership; and
- mentoring skills that will flow on to a wider Australian-Estonian community or even Estonian communities abroad.

Hans Ots Annual Award – awarded \$4000

This is an annual award to support youth from interstate mainly and from outside of Sydney to attend Sõrve Camp.

Sydney Estonian Handicraft Association – awarded \$1750

The Sydney Estonian Handicraft Association would like to develop a digital archive to display the Estonian folk costumes that have been worn by people with Estonian heritage in Australia.

Estonian Archives in Australia – awarded \$1000

Digitisation and conversion to a text document of the manuscript of “The Mahatma of the Baltics” by Friedrich Lustig.

Sydney Estonian House Co-operative Society Limited – awarded \$5000

To assist in the cost of preparation and lodgement of Development Application plans for the refurbishment of the Sydney Estonian House.

Virralised – awarded \$1000

For the purchase of pastlad for the Virralised dance group, which can be lent out to members for performances (pastlad are traditional, lightweight and flat (heel-less) Estonian footwear made of tan leather and fastened with leather laces. They are worn with pride by many dance groups in Estonia).

It was also agreed that the **Eesti Päevad** (Cultural Festival) is an important event for promoting and fostering Estonian culture in Australia, and the ECFA will endeavour to provide some funding towards that event on each occasion.

The Board also announced its intention to change the membership fee policy to a flat \$5.00 for all members (other than those already granted honorary Life Membership). As required by ECFA’s constitution, this proposal will be put to the Annual General Meeting for ratification.

The full implications of the COVID crisis became evident during the course of the year. All Board Meetings since March 2020 have been held by remote teleconferencing facilities and will remain the norm until further notice. A further consequence of this pandemic is that the Annual General Meeting for 2020 has now been postponed until February 14th 2021. It is hope that by this time, restrictions will be eased enough to allow for members to participate in the proceedings to be held at Estonian House in Sydney.

Other activities of note included the ECFA’s participation in various meetings to assist with the AESL’s efforts to determine its future. Two ECFA delegates were sent to the AESL Meeting held in Melbourne on 26th January, 2020. In addition, a number of teleconferences have also been held.

Efforts by ECFA Board members have also commenced with the objective of reviewing the Company's constitution. It was agreed that the existing ERC Limited Constitution should be updated to reflect recent changes to its corporate state and reflect more closely its current operating mode. To that end, the Board is hoping to present the results of its review to the members during the course of 2021, with the aim of adopting a new constitution either at or prior to the next Annual General Meeting.

Finally, the Board would like to acknowledge the contribution by Tony Moll, who stepped down as a Director of the Company during the course of the year. Tony had been a Director since 2003 and provided valuable input to the smooth running of the Company during his period of tenure.

At the time of writing, our AGM is to be held at Sydney Estonian House on Sunday, 14th February, 2021. This is subject however to there being little or no COVID-19 related restrictions at that time.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mart Rampe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Mart Rampe
Chairman