



DONOR FAMILIES AUSTRALIA
AGM 29TH OCTOBER 2018
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year 2018 will be remembered for its significant increase in membership. Membership numbers rose in that 12 month period by 59% and if we include that period up to the AGM the increase is 122%. DFA is growing at a very rapid rate.

What has caused this to happen?

Perhaps this demonstrates the need for a voice in the community to advocate on behalf of donor families.

Letter Writing – the most commented topic by members over the last 12 months

In response to its members concerns DFA organised a group of its committee to meet the CEO of the OTA, Lucinda Barry, and one of her staff in Sydney. We discussed our members' issues with how letters are handled at the moment.

Procedures and forms developed by DFA were presented. This issue is still ongoing with OTA and we are committed to finding a resolution for our members.

Establishment of the Contact Registry

DFA took it upon itself to establish a contact registry process. After being told by the OTA that laws are in place to prohibit such contact DFA have now set up a process for Donor Families and Recipient to give consent for their information to be used in finding their respective pairing. Thanks to Graham for his control of this sensitive data.

During the year DFA attended the conference titled Controversial Conversations at the Deakin University. Robyn McCanna attended, on our behalf, and spoke on the experience of meeting Sally's recipient. Robyn did a fantastic job at pointing out the positiveness of this meeting especially from a Donor Mum point of view.

DFA continues to challenge the OTA on its approach to blocking these meetings.

Kevin's facebook page has been responsible for 41 pairings to date. The happiness expressed on Kevin's facebook page by these individuals should be enough for anyone to realise that support should be given to those that want to meet.

New Webpage and Data Base

Our new Webpage was launched in September 2017 thanks to the combined efforts of Graham and Samantha Howkins, our DFA volunteer.

Graham has taken on the role of updating and maintaining the page. Comments back from outsiders have been positive.

Graham has also been very busy designing a new data base of our members to help cater for our ever growing organisation. The work done is invaluable for our organisation going forward.

Advocacy

Facebook page 'Donor and Recipients Group Australia' at the time of writing this report has grown to 1 821 member. This page has provided its members the best way to seek peer to peer support in Australia. It stands alone as to where its members can go to seek advice, comfort, information and advocacy. Well done to Kevin for its creation and management.

Going Forward

We want to maintain this momentum so I put out there the challenge to the new and old committee members to make 2019 an even bigger year for DFA.

Planning is well under way for our next Donor Family Dinner to be held in Newcastle in NSW. Research work on Donor Families and Recipients is being planned to be done by Holly. Probably the biggest single thing we have embarked on, a DFA colloquium, to be held next June, exciting times ahead for our members.

I would very much like to thank all the committee and our volunteer Sam for their efforts over the past year. In particular I would like to thank retiring member Graham Harrison. Graham is a founding committee member and his drive and passion will be sadly missed. We know he won't be far away as he has put his hand up to continue the work he does now with the web page and data base of contact registrations and membership.

Bruce Mc Dowell
Chairman

29/10/18