

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

## AGENDA

3pm, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022, Tintenbar Hall



### 1. Welcome to members and apologies

- 1.1 Acknowledgment to Country
- 1.2 BR4R vision and goals
- 1.3 Apologies

### 2. Approval of 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes as circulated to Members

**Motion:** Moved by XXXX Seconded by YYYY, that the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting be approved as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

### 3. 2022 Reports

- 3.1.1 President's Report 2021-22
- 3.1.2 Treasurer's Report 2021-22
- 3.2.0 BR4R Coordinator Reports

- 3.2.1 Membership
- 3.2.2 Settlement Support
- 3.2.3 Publicity
- 3.2.4 Poetry Prize
- 3.2.5 Volunteer Activity
- 3.2.6 Homestay

- 3.3.0 Reports from partner organisations

### 4. Positions for election: Committee Member Nominations

#### Positions continuing until 2023

Treasurer-Richard Dillon

Secretary-Betty Weiler

Ordinary Member -Lisa Dillon

#### Positions open:

President

Vice President:

Ordinary members (2)

Additional non-financial members (up to 2)

#### Election of Office Bearers for 2022-2023

## **5. Motions necessary for the operation of Ballina Region for Refugees**

### **5.1**

**Motion:** Proposed by xxx and seconded by xxx

that the above members be elected to the BR4R Committee.

**Discussion:**

**Outcome:**

## **6. Community Settlement nationally and locally**

- The national picture, Lisa Button, CEO, Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia (via video link)
- The local picture, BR4R and the Ocean Shores group
- Q&A

## **7. Presentation of certificates of appreciation**

**Close and social-all welcome**

**If you are coming, no need to RSVP. Please bring a plate of savoury food to share.**

**We would really appreciate membership renewals being done online prior to the meeting.**

**Members: Apologies to [minutesSecretary@br4r.org.au](mailto:minutesSecretary@br4r.org.au)**



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021**

### **DRAFT MINUTES TO BE APPROVED**

**3pm, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 3 Grandview Apartments, East Ballina**

#### **1. Welcome to members and apologies**

1.1 Acknowledgment to Country

1.2 BR4R vision and goals

1.3 Apologies received

Robyn Hannah, Oliver Millington, K. Lavender, Julia Hall, Janet Wilson. Gillian Welstead, Hazel Davidson, Maureen Fletcher, Tre Rawstorne. Jane Elliot, Gunela Astbrink, Bayla Nerden, Ross Munro

#### **2. Approval of 2020 Annual General Meeting Minutes as circulated to Members**

**Motion:** Moved by Margaret Pickup, seconded by Lesley Wilkins, that the minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting be approved as a true and accurate record of that meeting.  
**Carried.**

#### **3. 2020-2021 Reports**

##### **3.1 President's Report 2020-2021**

**Motion:** Moved by Ruth Henderson, seconded by Lesley Wilkins, that the President's Report be accepted.

**Carried**

##### **3.2 Treasurer's Report 2020-2021**

**Motion:** Moved by Rik, seconded by Cheryl Malloy, that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

**Carried**

All other reports tabled and available to members through the BR4R website.

3.3 Refugee Settlement Support Group

3.4 Volunteer Activity

3.5 Publicity

3.6 Membership

3.7 Homestay

3.8 Letter Writing

3.9 Markets

3.10 Rallies

3.11 Reports from partner organisations

#### **4. Positions for election: Committee Member Nominations**

##### **Election of Office Bearers for 2021-2022**

**Returning Officer:** Bill Boyd

The President (Ruth Henderson), the Vice President (Stanley Yeo) and are remaining for the second part of their tenure.

The following positions were declared open.

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Two Ordinary members
- Public Officer

**Secretary:** Nominations were called for the position of Secretary

- Nomination 1: Betty Weiler
  - Moved: Ruth Henderson
  - Seconded: Stanley Yeo
  - Nominee happy to stand? Yes
- Voting:
  - One nominee:
- **Betty Weiler declared to be elected by popular acclamation**

**Treasurer.** Nominations were called for the position of Treasurer

- Nomination 1: Richard Dillon
  - Moved: Meg Pickup
  - Seconded: Lesley Wilkins
  - Nominee happy to stand? Yes
- Voting:
  - One nominee:
- **Richard Dillon declared to be elected by popular acclamation**

**Ordinary (non-executive) member (1 of 2).** Nominations were called for the position of Ordinary Member.

- Nomination 1: Lisa Dillon
  - Moved: Ruth Henderson
  - Seconded: Lesley Wilkins
  - Nominee happy to stand? Ye
- Voting:

- One nominee:
- **Lisa Dillon declared to be elected by popular acclamation**

**Ordinary (non-executive) member (2 of 2).** Nominations were called for the position of Ordinary (non-executive) member.

- Nomination 1: Megan Jennaway
  - Moved: Ruth Henderson
  - Seconded: Marilyn Leeks
  - Nominee happy to stand? Yes
- Voting:
  - One nominee:
- **Megan Jennaway declared to be elected by popular acclamation**

**Public Officer.** Nominations were called for the position of Public Officer.

- Nomination 1: Rhonda Ansiewicz
  - Moved: Cheryl Malloy
  - Seconded: Kia Trainer
  - Nominee happy to stand? Yes
- Voting:
  - One nominee:
- **Rhonda Ansiewicz declared to be elected by popular acclamation**

## **5. Motions necessary for the operation of Ballina Region for Refugees**

### **5.1 Confirmation of Public Officer**

Special resolution requiring approval by 75% of members at meeting.

**Motion:** Moved by Cheryl Malloy Seconded by Kia Trainer, that Rhonda Ansiewicz take up the role of Public Officer of Ballina Region for Refugees Inc., as required by NSW Fair Trading.

**Carried**

### **5.2 Confirmation of the official address of Ballina Region for Refugees**

**Motion:** Moved Betty Weiler, seconded Martina Pattinson that: the official address of Ballina Region for Refugees be the residential address of Rhonda Ansiewicz of the Public Officer.

**Carried**

### **5.3 Confirmation of signatories and any one to sign for the Ballina Region for Refugees Inc. working account until next Annual General Meeting.**

**Motion:** Moved Meg Pickup, seconded Bill Boyd, that:

- i. The Savings account, called Ballina Region for Refugees Working account, be confirmed as the working account until the next Annual General Meeting.

- ii. Ruth Henderson (President), Stanley Yeo, (Vice President), Richard Dillon, (Treasurer) and Gunela Astbrink (Homestay Program Committee) be signatories on this Working account opened at the Ballina branch of Southern Cross Credit Union.
- iii. Any one signatory has the authority to make changes to this account either in person at the bank or via Internet banking with any one signatory to use the account as set out in Motion 5.4 below.

**Carried**

#### **4. Management of single signatory Working account:**

**Motion:** Moved Lesley Wilkins, seconded Diana Bruce, that the Ballina Region for Refugees Working account be used solely for the following purposes:

- iv. Paying for any expenses as necessary for the running of BR4R or any other item approved of by the BR4R Committee.
- v. Paying expenses in line with the BR4R Expenses Policy.

**Carried**

#### **5.5 Confirmation of signatories and any two to sign for the Ballina Region for Refugees Inc. Savings account until the next Annual General Meeting**

**Motion:** Moved Patricia Antonioni, seconded Margaret Pickup, that:

- ii. Until the next Annual General Meeting Ruth Henderson (President), Stanley Yeo (Vice President), Betty Weiler (Secretary) and Richard Dillon (Treasurer) be signatories on this account held at the Ballina branch of Southern Cross Credit Union.
- iii. Two of these signatories are required to operate and make changes to the accounts either in person at the bank or via Internet banking.

**Carried**

#### **5.6 Removal of non-current signatories on accounts**

**Motion:** Moved by Sandra Mondange, seconded Bill Boyd, that Sandra Mondange be removed as an official signatory on BR4R accounts held at the Ballina branch of Southern Cross Credit Union Bank.

**Carried**

#### **5.7 Confirmation of authorised signatories**

**Motion:** Moved Martina Pattinson, seconded Betty Weiler, that Rhonda Ansiewicz (Public Officer), Ruth Henderson (President) and Richard Dillon (Treasurer) be confirmed as the authorised signatories for Ballina Region for Refugees Inc., as required by NSW Fair Trading.

**Carried**

#### **5.8 Confirmation of Ballina Region for Refugees Inc. Committee Authority**

**Motion:** Moved Cheryl Malloy, seconded Anne Shay, that until the next Annual General Meeting of Ballina Region for Refugees Inc. the duly elected Committee has the authority within the framework of the Constitution to:

- i. Change any signatories on accounts and authorised signatories required by NSW Fair Trading.
- ii. Make any other changes deemed necessary for the effective operation of Ballina Region for Refugees Inc., notifying financial members of any changes referred to in clauses (1) and (2) within two business days of making them.

**Carried**

#### **6. Guest Speakers, Dawn Barrington (by Zoom)**

#### **7. Presentation of certificates of appreciation**

**Close and social**

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### **List of Reports for BR4R AGM 2021-2022**

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#### **1.0 Presented at the AGM**

- 1.1 President's Report - Ruth Henderson
- 1.2 Treasurer's Report - Richard Dillon

#### **2.0 Tabled at the AGM - BR4R Coordinators' Reports**

- 2.1 Membership Report - Bayla Nerden
- 2.2 Settlement Coordinator's Report - Stanley Yeo
- 2.3 Publicity Coordinator's Report - Lisa Dillon
- 2.4 Poetry Prize Report - Bill Boyd
- 2.5 Volunteer Coordinator's Report - Marilyn Leeks
- 2.6 Homestay Coordinator's Report - Gunela Astbrink

#### **3.0 Tabled at the AGM - Reports from partners**

- 3.1 Report from Ben Gilmour, Project 50 (Afghanistan)
- 3.2 Report from Brisbane Onshore Arrivals Group
- 3.3 Report from Jane Keogh, Manus Lives Matter
- 3.4 Report from Dawn Barrington

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## 1.0 Reports presented at the AGM

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### 1.1 President's Report - Ruth Henderson

What a year!

I think we can honestly say that this past year, more than any other year, our BR4R Team have delivered on our vision and goal to *welcome, support and respect refugees and people seeking asylum and to think globally and act locally*. We have had another remarkable year, raising more than \$80,000 up to June 2022, with more events held, from July to December 2022. We dispersed \$ 28,000 of these funds through continued regular payments to a number of partner organisations\*.

This year we also began to prepare financially for what was to become our participation in the Community Refuge Sponsorship Scheme where the sum of \$18,000 is needed to support each incoming family through that programme.

In the first part of the year, we focused much of our activity on the situation in Afghanistan, and the then upcoming election, moving our focus into the last six months being among the very first groups in Australia to welcome families settling through the new Federal government's CRISP programme.

**Highlights of our year 2010/2022** at BR4R include here activities July 2021 to June 2022 as well as some activities which took place from July to December 2022.

#### Awareness raising

- We launched Refugee Week in June 2022 with a great open event at the Ballina branch of the Richmond Tweed library and continued our donation of books to the library to in our role of broadening public knowledge about refugees and people seeking asylum. Thanks especially to Lisa Dillon for work on this-perhaps an annual event Lisa?
- We held our fourth annual BR4R annual poetry competition with an increased number of entries, including receiving more poems where the writers identified themselves as refugees. This Prize is part of our awareness raising activities. A number of the poems will be published in the literary journal ***Social Alternatives***. Prize-winning poems will also be found on our BR4R website. Thanks to our judge, Juan Garrido Salgado, Former Political Prisoner from Chile, Poet, Translator and Activist.

This year we opened up the competition to under 18s thanks to the generous additional donation of prize money by two donors, one in NSW and one in WA, The first prize and third prize winners also donated their prize money back .We acknowledge here the legacy left by the family of Louise Griffiths which made the monetary prizes possible. Thanks to Bill Boyd for the coordination of the Prize.

- We have held, when possible, fortnightly roadside rallies in Central Ballina. Thanks to Meg and the volunteer banner wavers.
- As part of a national effort to bring issues facing refugees and people seeking asylum to attention of the voting public, BR4R had a small-scale campaign for the Federal election earlier this year. Thanks to Marilyn and volunteers for work on this.



- In November 2021 we participated for the first time in a Kilometres of Compassion event coordinated by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. We had over 40 registered walkers and raised almost \$8000 for ASRC. We have once again registered a team for this event in November 2022. Thanks to Ross Munro for taking the coordination of this event on this year.
- In 2022 we moved away from our quarterly newsletter and to more regular short bulletins. We kept our Facebook page live and saw a significant increase in our print media profile. We dabbled in Twitter and Instagram. We sorted out our contact lists (thanks to Betty) and we are embarking on a new look website (thanks to Howard). Massive thanks to our Publicity Coordinator Lisa Dillon for her tireless work on ensuring our profile is kept high.

## **Settlement**

- We held one open meeting for members and volunteers focusing on the experiences in settlement work and on our own BR4R Settlement Support activities. Thanks to all who organised this successful event and especially to Marilyn for her coordination of Volunteers across all our events.
- Stanley Yeo, our Vice President has led our Settlement work and his report is included in the AGM papers. Huge thanks to Stanley. As part of this settlement work, BR4R directly sponsored three Afghan families. All are sadly, anxiously awaiting the outcome of their visa applications. We are in touch with the families and still hopeful that one or more will settle in our area.
- We expanded our settlement activities to support two Community Support Groups (CSGs) one in Ocean Shores and one in Ballina, now each supporting a Syrian family through a model of Community Support. Thanks to our Coordinators, Sara, Vicky and Sue and their two wonderful teams of volunteers tackling everything from finding accommodation, to dealing with Centrelink, to organising English classes, sourcing furniture and supporting our families become part of their communities. Our SCU Social Work student Levi Everest deserves first class honours for his behind the scenes work and his direct support of our Ballina based family. We will hear more about this work later this afternoon.

## **Afghanistan**

- Over this year, we also supported Project 50 coordinated by Ben Gilmour. This offered volunteer support to assist with humanitarian visas for more than 50 creatives in Afghanistan. Several volunteers are still in touch with those they assisted. BR4R dispersed over \$8000 to some on the list for financial support over last year's harsh winter. Thanks to our Treasurer Rik Dillon for a huge effort in getting the funds to the right people.
- We continued our successful film screenings with a showing of JIRGA in Byron directed by Benjamin Gilmour in December 2022 followed by the screening of Limbo later in the year. The showing of both films has given us opportunities for a greater public profile, especially in the Byron Shire. Thanks to Rose Fox for coordinating these screenings.
- Based on the work of the Uki Refugee Project, in November 2021, we launched the Ballina Byron Declaration with the aim to get 100 signatures in support of highlighting the lack of government action on the situation in Afghanistan, in particular flagging the urgent need for increased visas for those wishing to exit Afghanistan. We reached 200 signatures.

- We held a sell-out lunch on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in Lennox to focus on the situation in Afghanistan resulting in a full-page advert in the Byron Echo to promote the Declaration. Thanks to Jo and Marilyn especially for coordinating this.

### **Fundraising and publicity**

- We applied for a grant from the Northern Rivers Community Foundation to support our settlement work. We were successful in our application, receiving a \$5000 grant on December 1<sup>st</sup>. 2021. We applied again this year and received \$10,000 on November 8<sup>th</sup>.
- We have held, when possible, monthly markets in Ballina and then laterally in Lennox. Thanks to Trish, Meg and your band of volunteers for all your efforts.
- We were invited to be the charity of the night for two Tintenbar Upfront evenings, and this evening of course we are looking forward to jiving to the music of Acid Bleed. We sizzled sausages at Bunnings and shook buckets at the Lennox Markets. As our Treasurer has mentioned, we received several large financial donations from individuals, for which we are very grateful. We are dipping our toe in crowd funding and looking forward to a concert in December by the Brunswick Choir, led by Janet Swain. Thanks to all who coordinated and volunteered at these fundraising events.

**None** of the above, of course, would have been possible without effort, time and commitment from the BR4R 2020/21 Committee, Stanley, Rik, Betty, Lisa, and Marilyn. Trish R joined us part way through the year to become our Minutes Secretary. Thanks to Trish! In fact, thank you all, we have been an amazing team.

There are many others who have contributed to this year's work for BR4R: Trish, and Meg our market leads, ably assisted by team of other volunteers; Gunela maintained contacts as our Homestay Coordinator, Bayla continued as our efficient Membership Coordinator and Meg coordinated a merry band for the fortnightly rallies. Bill enthusiastically took on the role of Poetry Coordinator and Rose Fox's work on the film showings has been invaluable. Members will be aware that most of the Committee wear more than one hat/carry more than one job. Marilyn was also Volunteer Coordinator, Lisa held publicity role and Rik managed the website.

Bayla is stepping down this year from her role as Membership Coordinator after several years in the role. We are so grateful to Bayla for meticulous record keeping! Stanley has been with BR4R for many years, covering many different roles. This year of course he has done a tremendous job with our Settlement programme. As the Vice President, he has been an enormous support to me personally. I offer massive thanks to Stanley.

Finally, I would like to thank you, our members, for your continued support of our efforts. This will end my fourth year as President as I step down today after two terms in the role. When I joined the organisation in 2018, the key goals in our strategic plan were to increase our profile, increase our membership, volunteers and our activities, continue to advocate for refugees and people seeking asylum, keep our fundraising activities up and ultimately, see settlement here in Ballina Shire. I hope, with the support of all mentioned above, I have delivered on all of those.

*\*Direct payments again this year went monthly to the Brigidine Sisters (work on Manus), the Refugee Medical Transfer Group (renamed Brisbane On-arrival Support Group) supporting those currently being moved off community detention onto final departure bridging visas, and Dawn Barrington, WA based activist supporting those detained in hotel and other detention centre.*

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## 1.2 Treasurer's Report - Richard Dillon

### Financial year ending June 2022

Due to reporting requirements this report covers the financial year ending June 2022.

What a great year 2021-22 was financially speaking

- The previous year we had an income of \$32,000.
- The year 2021-22 we more than doubled our income to over \$80,000.

This is absolutely astounding considering the restrictions on our fundraising due to Covid and the floods.

It's interesting that most of this exponential growth in the financial year was due to donations. We were hamstrung and limited in fundraising, but obviously our advocacy was bearing fruit. Over \$40,000 in donations was testament to this effectiveness.

### Fundraising

- The Ballina markets still managed to raise over \$8,000 despite the limited number that were run. Again, this is an amazing effort as almost all of it was from small sales of under \$5. Special thanks To Trish, Meg and their team. The market was also an important exposure point for us and attracted donations especially some big ones which I'll mention later.
- Bunnings Sausage Sizzle also raised over \$2,000 – again thanks to our team of volunteers and a big 'thank you' to Bunnings for their community support.
- Tintenbar Up Front continues to be a strong supporter and I thank Peter Lino and his team of volunteers.
- Jo & Alessandro Matricardi, owners of Quattro at Lennox, have been great supporters and raised over \$2,000 at a fundraiser at their restaurant.
- Rose Fox from Byron has been organising some movie nights at Byron theatre. These movie events have brought in over \$6,000.

We now also have a very enthusiastic group in Ocean Shores being led by Sara Gloede.

They raised over \$4,000 at a Trivia night. Most of this went towards the translation of a Visa application form and the rest has been used in our resettlement program – of which I'll talk later.

# Financials for year ended June 2022



	Jul '21	Aug '21	Sep '21	Oct '21	Nov '21	Dec '21	Jan '22	Feb '22	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22	Jun '22	Totals
<b>Funds In</b>													
Donations - In													
Fundraising - Burnings's BBQ	\$12,570.00	\$670.00	\$1,515.00	\$154.99	\$2,186.00	\$5,840.00	\$180.00	\$8,756.00	\$420.00	\$689.95	\$7,700.00	\$2,855.00	\$43,536.94
Fundraising - Markets										\$2,008.30	<i>candlesticks</i>		\$2,008.30
Special Nights		<i>movie Sc People</i>	\$1,767.10			\$1,698.60	\$1,947.55	\$1,275.00		\$930.45	\$340.00	\$50.00	\$8,008.70
Raffle	\$193.00	\$1,625.50		\$1,062.35		\$4,000.00					<i>Limbos movie</i>	\$3,149.50	\$9,837.35
Sale of Shirts		\$95.00		<i>TUF</i>									\$288.00
Membership			\$20.00										
Miscellaneous	\$20.00				\$830.00	\$870.00	\$30.00	\$190.00				\$110.00	\$2,070.00
Miscellaneous	<i>theatre refund</i>	\$1,056.00			<i>NKCF Grant</i>	\$5,000.00					<i>Ocean Stores</i>	\$4,580.00	\$10,636.00
Miscellaneous					<i>Jirga movie</i>	\$3,645.50							\$3,645.50
Miscellaneous						\$650.00							\$650.00
Interest						<i>book sales</i>				\$0.11			\$0.11
<b>Total Income</b>	\$12,783.00	\$3,446.50	\$3,302.10	\$1,217.34	\$3,016.00	\$21,704.10	\$2,157.55	\$10,221.00	\$420.00	\$3,678.81	\$8,040.00	\$10,744.50	\$80,680.90
<b>Funds Out</b>													
Donations out (Brigitine)													
Donations (BMTG now BOASG)	\$600.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$500.00	\$3,100.00
Donations out (Dawn B)	\$800.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$500.00	\$4,900.00
Donations out (Solmaz)	\$200.00	\$2,500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$2,000.00	\$11,200.00
Donations out (other)	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$49.90	\$598.80
to Afghanistan	\$5,000.00	<i>BCoA</i>											\$5,000.00
Homestay								\$866.37	\$5,091.07	\$545.98	\$282.99	\$1,407.77	\$8,194.18
Miscellaneous	<i>Theatre ex</i>	\$1,056.00						<i>Insurance</i>		<i>BAR</i>	<i>Alli (car)</i>	<i>Hall hire</i>	\$8,264.13
Miscellaneous					\$1,155.50	\$266.69	\$1,859.00	\$1,876.94		\$200.00	\$1,000.00	\$200.00	\$3,246.38
Miscellaneous						<i>Intern fees</i>	\$200.00	\$2,629.00	<i>form transdate</i>	<i>postcards</i>	\$382.39	<i>BBO &amp; book</i>	\$2,920.53
Miscellaneous					<i>Declaire Echo</i>	\$1,333.00	\$47.98	<i>cash box</i>		\$39.55	\$1,500.00	<i>Lisimore flood</i>	\$953.30
Miscellaneous						<i>books</i>	\$150.00	<i>Zoom discount</i>		\$100.00	\$77.00	<i>web cost</i>	\$1,858.00
Web costs		\$126.50					<i>cash float</i>	<i>Zoom discount</i>		<i>float top up</i>	\$1,731.50	<i>movie ex</i>	\$159.54
Financial fees	\$14.21	\$2.67	\$45.43	\$4.87	\$5.49	\$4.47	\$20.41	\$28.46	\$7.98	\$4.45	\$16.65	\$4.45	\$59.86
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	\$6,920.11	\$3,679.07	\$1,195.33	\$1,839.76	\$2,310.89	\$3,289.06	\$3,427.29	\$6,641.97	\$6,248.95	\$3,039.88	\$7,140.43	\$4,662.12	\$50,394.86
<b>Surplus/(Shortfall)</b>	\$5,862.89	<i>-\$232.57</i>	\$2,106.77	<i>-\$622.42</i>	\$705.11	\$18,415.04	<i>-\$1,269.74</i>	\$3,579.03	<i>-\$5,828.95</i>	\$588.93	\$899.57	\$6,082.38	\$30,286.04
<b>Bank Balance b/f</b>	\$13,638.95	\$19,491.84	\$19,259.27	\$21,366.04	\$20,743.62	\$21,448.73	\$39,863.77	\$38,594.03	\$42,173.06	\$36,344.11	\$36,933.04	\$37,832.61	
<b>Bank Balance c/f</b>	\$19,491.84	\$19,259.27	\$21,366.04	\$20,743.62	\$21,448.73	\$39,863.77	\$38,594.03	\$42,173.06	\$36,344.11	\$36,933.04	\$37,832.61	\$43,914.99	
<b>Made up of :-</b>													
<b>SAVER Account</b>	\$18,535.18	\$16,979.01	\$20,235.68	\$19,413.16	\$20,423.67	\$39,400.70	\$34,537.84	\$39,730.38	\$35,642.51	\$36,666.76	\$35,690.11	\$42,430.16	
<b>WORKING Account</b>	\$956.66	\$2,280.26	\$1,130.36	\$1,330.46	\$1,025.06	\$463.07	\$4,056.19	\$2,442.68	\$701.60	\$266.28	\$2,142.50	\$1,484.83	
<b>Total Of Bank Accounts</b>	\$19,491.84	\$19,259.27	\$21,366.04	\$20,743.62	\$21,448.73	\$39,863.77	\$38,594.03	\$42,173.06	\$36,344.11	\$36,933.04	\$37,832.61	\$43,914.99	
Reserved funds for CFSI	\$4,500.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$8,000.00	\$8,500.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,500.00	\$11,000.00	\$11,500.00	\$12,000.00	
Reserved funds for Poetry	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	\$1,850.00	

## SUMMARY

### Financial year 2021-2022

<b>Income</b>		<b>Outgoings</b>	
Donations	\$ 43,536.94	Donation (BOASG)	\$ 4,900.00
Memberships	\$ 2,070.00	Donation (Brigidine)	\$ 3,100.00
Raffle	\$ 288.00	Donation (Dawn B	\$ 11,200.00
NRCF Grant	\$ 5,000.00	Donation (Solmaz)	\$ 598.00
Markets	\$ 8,008.70	Donation (RAR)	\$ 200.00
Refund db interest	\$ 0.11	Donation (RCoA)	\$ 5,000.00
TUF	\$ 1,062.35	Donation (Ali - car)	\$ 1,000.00
Book sales	\$ 650.00	Donation (local flood)	\$ 1,500.00
Bunningg BBQ	\$ 2,008.30	BBQ expense	\$ 308.89
Quattro lunch	\$ 4,000.00	Quattro expense	\$ 1,859.00
Theatre dep refund	\$ 1,056.00	Theatre deposit	\$ 1,056.00
Movie 'Limbo'	\$ 3,149.50	Theatre deposit	\$ 1,155.50
Movie 'Jirga'	\$ 3,645.50	Theatre costs	\$ 1,731.50
Movie 'Scattered People'	\$ 1,625.50	Tintenbar hall hire	\$ 200.00
Ocean Shores Trivia	\$ 4,580.00	Translation	\$ 2,629.00
		Insurance	\$ 1,876.94
		Zoom	\$ 91.30
		Postcards for election	\$ 39.55
		Money to Afghanistan	\$ 8,194.18
		Books	\$ 643.49
		Poetry prize	\$ 650.00
		Intern expenses	\$ 200.00
		Printing	\$ 266.69
		Advertising (declaration)	\$ 1,333.00
		Web	\$ 203.50
		Cash box & extra float	\$ 297.98
		Fees on donations	\$ 159.54
			movement
Total income	<u>\$ 80,680.90</u>	Total outgoings	<u>\$ 50,394.06</u>
			<u>\$ 30,286.84</u>
			<i>increase in fund.</i>

### Cash at bank

as of start of Financial year 2021-2022

Business Working Account	\$ 5,362.56
Business Saver Account	\$ 8,266.39
total	<u>\$ 13,628.95</u>

as of end of Financial year 2021-2022

Business Work Account	\$1,484.83
Business Saver Account	\$42,430.16
total	<u>\$43,914.99</u>
	<u>\$ 30,286.04</u>
	<i>increase in fund.</i>

Note: BR4R holds no assets nor has any liabilities

## **Donations**

In talking about donations, I must give special mention to Kate Doyle who gave a whopping \$20,000 last financial year. This follows on from \$10,000 the year before. We've also had \$5,000 this financial year. Kate found us through the work done at the markets.

We've also had substantial donations from several sources, both private and commercial indicating that our efforts and advocacy are being recognised, appreciated and supported. This is great credit to all those who have helped over the years – in both large and small ways – your labours are now bearing fruit.

We are getting several regular, monthly donations which really help to keep the finances healthy.

## **Outgoings**

That's a bit about our income – now for how we've been spending it.

Remember, all these figures are available on our website and here on the table.

Apart from a little bit of printing, our only administration expense was our insurance premium of \$1,900.

Despite the tough time of fundraising, we were pleased to be able to continue supporting those working at the coalface as it were.

- We gave over \$3,000 to the Brigidine Sisters to continue their support for those in Papua New Guinea
- The Brisbane Support Group has been grateful to receive regular payments totalling nearly \$5,000 which has given them some security in uncertain times.
- I must give special mention to Dawn Barrington who has provided tremendous support and contact for refugees through many years. Her energy, compassion and commitment is exemplary. We've sent her over \$12,000 during the financial year which she's distributed for us.
- We also donated \$5,000 to a legal firm doing pro bono and discounted legal work for refugees and those seeking asylum.
- An unusual donation by us was \$1,500 to the local flood relief fund. Although such a donation was outside our remit, we felt this was a way to give back to the local community who had supported us through the markets.
- I mentioned the Ocean Shores group and the funds raised for a translation. That translation cost \$2,600 to translate the Visa application into Dari (an Afghan language).
- Ben Gilmour, author and film-maker of 'Jirga', has a list of 50 artists trying to escape Afghanistan. His report on 'Project 50' is with the other AGM documents. These are actors and musicians who can't work and are in hiding. We've been sending some funds to help support these people as they try to escape. We sent just over \$8,000 to them during the financial year.

At the end of the financial year, we had \$43,000 in the bank which was an increase of \$30,000.

In the past we have distributed almost all that we have raised. However, our direction has changed and we are more focussed on resettlement. We are part of a program to resettle families

and we need \$18,000 per family in reserve to ensure that we can support them for 6 months. The aim is to enable them to be self-sufficient by this time.

At the end of the financial year, we were in a strong financial position to provide this support.



Treasurer

Ballina Region for Refugees



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## 2.0 Reports tabled at the AGM - BR4R Coordinators' Reports

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### 2.1 Membership Report - Bayla Nerden

#### November 2021 to October 2022 Coordination Activity

Membership coordination during 2022 has taken place remotely as I have been overseas and in Tasmania for most of the year. I attended the February committee meeting and had a productive meeting with the Admin Coordinator in September regarding the handover of membership duties. Currently, Ballina Region for Refugees has 76 financial members.

#### Regular Activities

- Processing new memberships and renewals
- Sending welcome emails and payment receipts
- Updating, maintaining and uploading membership register in BR4R fileshare system
- Checking and adding new names to the MailChimp mailing list
- Updating membership procedures
- Communicating membership information to members and committee
- Communicating with Treasurer re payments

#### Renewals

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the volunteers who administered renewals at the 2021 AGM, processing and recording 13 renewals and also the contribution of the Treasurer who received and invoiced a further 45 online and EFT payments.

15 members did not renew for 2022. Memberships lapse three months after the AGM renewal date, which, this year coincided with the Ballina and Lismore floods. Renewals were not chased at this time. Lapsed members were contacted for renewing prior to AGM 2022, 1 has so far rejoined.

## New Members

Owing to and coinciding with effective and successful events and campaigns organized during the year there was a steady influx of new members with 17 new members joining. Reasons prompting membership application as provided on the online forms:

Word of mouth or personal connection to member	5
Media campaign Byron Echo and ABC	3
Events: Talks, workshops, rallies, films, shows	2
Newsletter/Facebook	2
RAR Listing	1
Market stall	1
Other/Unknown	3
<b>Total New Members 2022</b>	<b>17</b>

## Membership History

At Incorporation 26/11/2016	17
AGM 2017	41
AGM 2018	63
AGM 2019	56
AGM 2020	60
AGM 2021	73
<b>Current Members</b>	<b>76</b>

## Home Locations

Ballina	29
Lennox	12



Byron Shire	16
Alstonville	12
Lismore Area	2
Other NSW	4
Other QLD	1

### Membership Status

Full	57
Concession	16
Student	3

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## 2.2 Settlement Coordinator's Report - Stanley Yeo

This year began with the promising news that the Federal Government had agreed to expand its Community Sponsorship Programme with input from Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia (CRSA). As reported last year, a group of BR4R members residing in the Ballina region had been trained by CRSA to help refugees successfully settle locally. In March this year, another group based in Ocean Shores were also trained by CRSA. These groups are called "Community Support Groups" (CSGs) by CRSA and will be referred to as such in this report.

In May 2022, the two BR4R CSGs were advised by CRSA of the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP). This was a new initiative of the Federal government in collaboration with CRSA, which would enable 1500 places for UNHCR processed refugees to settle in Australia over the next four years, commencing in the second half of 2022. Our two CSGs underwent further preparatory workshops in June, and BR4R had to then provide documentary evidence that it had secured sufficient funds to support the family assigned to each group during the first few months.

In July, our Ocean Shores CSG was matched with the Mahmoud family, who comprise parents with a 4-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son. They are Kurdish Syrians who came from a Syrian village but had been displaced in Iraq for the past two years. The Oceans Shores CSG welcomed the family in August. They were among the very first families to arrive in Australia under the CRISP programme and received much local and national media coverage. The Ocean Shores CSG had worked very hard to prepare for their coming, and continues to provide social, mental, emotional and financial support to the family, who are settling slowly. but well in Brunswick Heads.

In September, the Ballina CSG was matched with the Farhat family who are also Syrians and comprise a widowed mother and her two young adult children. They fled Syria, in 2018 and have been refugees in Iraq since then. The Ballina CSG diligently prepared for their arrival, drawing from

the experience of the Ocean Shores CSG. The family arrived on 19<sup>th</sup> October and early indications are that they are going well.

The wider local community has been very positive about this community sponsorship initiative, as instanced by cash donations, gifts in kind and offers of help including temporary accommodation, teaching of English and driving lessons. BR4R is well aware of the scarcity of rental accommodation in our region due to the catastrophic floods.

This year saw BR4R sponsoring another Afghan family for special humanitarian visas issued by the Government. They are an Afghan couple with four children. The husband was a civil rights activist and community worker for Hazara people, and the Taliban have issued a warrant for his arrest. This brings BR4R's visa sponsorship of Afghan families to a total of three families. If successful, BR4R will be responsible for arranging and paying for all three families' travel to Australia, and to assist in their settlement in our region.

The Ocean Shores CSG, along with many other BR4R volunteers, have also been busy helping Ben Gilmour, the film director of JIRGA and who lives locally, to complete special humanitarian visa applications for some Afghans in the creative industries. The CSG organised a highly successful Trivia Night in Ocean Shores to raise funds to cover the cost of having the humanitarian visa form professionally translated into Dari (the language used by the Hazara who have been subjected to longstanding persecution by the Taliban). Many of the people being helped by Ben Gilmour are Hazaras. The translated visa form has been shared with other refugee support organisations such as the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) and the Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR),

This year also saw an Iranian woman and SHEV holder move from Brisbane to settle permanently in Murwillumbah. The woman had previously approached BR4R which recommended her to the Uki Refugee Project (URP). The URP was a great help in supporting her decision to move, and to settle in the Tweed area, including enrolment in TAFE, and finding permanent accommodation and a car for her.

Since August, there have been several opportunities to inform the local community about our refugee settlement initiatives, as well as encourage the formation of new CSGs in our region. The first of these was the BR4R Volunteer Appreciation event in August, where Isabelle Borelli, an Ocean Shores CSG member, and I shared about CRSA/CRISP and preparations to welcome the Mahmoud family. This was followed by an information session with a group from Amnesty International Lismore. As a result of that meeting, the group is preparing to set up a CSG of their own. Similar information sessions were conducted for Sanctuary Northern Rivers in Lismore, and the Uniting Church in Ballina.

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## **2.3 Publicity Coordinator's Report - Lisa Dillon**

I see my role as being multi-faceted

- to publicise and promote BR4R and related events
- to report on refugee issues
- to report on BR4R events
- to raise awareness of refugee issues in a way that will create empathy for refugees and help build support for BR4R.

But I can't take all the credit for publicity and promotion, as Ruth and Stanley have taken on many speaking engagements during the year and have been excellent ambassadors for BR4R and advocates for refugees.

The social media posts and print media articles and photos that have been published during the last financial year, provide a history of the many and varied issues, events and campaigns that BR4R has tackled. With help from one of our SCU Welfare students Selena Whittaker, I have been able to increase our presence on Twitter and Instagram a little, but not as much as I'd have liked to. I believe there is great potential there for reaching a younger demographic, but I don't have the time or knowledge to do it. Instagram requires a fairly constant feed of good quality photos, and Twitter also needs frequent posts that make people sit up and take notice. Several efforts by our Volunteer Coordinator, Marilyn, to find someone to take over Instagram and Twitter, have been unsuccessful. For 5 minutes we had a young person who seemed to be very enthusiastic, but she dissolved into the ether when I asked her to help with a particular task. I hope that someone might come forward soon to take on the challenge.

Some of the issues and events covered in the 69 Facebook posts were Refugee Week, the BR4R Poetry Prize, pre-election lobbying, hotel detention, the Afghanistan situation, family reunification, book donations to the library, the release of some refugees from detention, the Ballina-Byron Declaration, the Back to Bilo campaign, the campaign to end Temporary Protection Visas, Run4Refugees, and fundraising events such as the four film screenings. I have also experimented with Facebook Crowdfunding and raised over \$800 over several months. Although one try is not a real test, this one was a slow but steady way to gain funds. Ocean Shores group currently trying another Crowd-funding platform called GiveNow, to raise money for the family they have resettled.

There have also been reports on the market stall, Meg's garage sale, the flood appeal donation, Bunnings Sausage Sizzle and more. Lately there have been posts about our Resettlement program and our two families.

Press Releases and photos about many of these issues and events have also been published regularly, especially and very willingly by The Echo and The Ballina Wave. The Ballina Wave, just a year old, has been a very useful addition to the local media scene; although printed only monthly, it's a high- quality magazine that's read widely. I have sent a couple of articles to the Northern Rivers Times, but have had no response. Paradise FM has been used several times – a good way to promote events and perhaps reach a different audience.

Ballina Library has been extremely supportive and helpful, especially with the Refugee Week display and Poetry Prize launch.

I look forward to another year of promoting and publicizing the activities of this wonderful organisation.

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## 2.4 Poetry Prize Report - Bill Boyd

### Background to the 2022 Poetry Prize

The 2022 BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize theme was *A Turning Point*. The Prize was supported by the journal *Social Alternatives*. This is the fourth year the Prize has run. Opening during Refugee

Week, the Prize closed on Sunday 21st August 2022 (extended by one week from the original advertised date).

Entrants were invited to submit up to three poems of up to 50 lines. They were informed that the BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize celebrates the positive contributions that refugees make to our communities and acknowledges the circumstances that forced them to flee their homelands and request refuge in Australia.

Entry was free and was open to anyone living in Australia.

BR4R especially welcomed poems from refugees and those seeking asylum in Australia. In the event, we received many more entries from asylum seekers and refugees than in previous years — 26 entries in the Asylum Seeker & Refugee category — in large part due to the efforts of our social work placement student, Levi Everest.

BR4R also received a cluster of poems from young people, after Stanley gave a talk to a local school. This inspired BR4R to create an Under-18 category, which resulted in 27 entries in the Under-18 category. We received a total of 129 entries from 88 individual poets, exceeding the previous year's 104 entries significantly.

Entrants were provided the following background information:

We welcome poems, from anyone in the community, that consider the experiences, aspirations and hopes of refugees and asylums seeking a home in which they can build new, meaningful and safe lives. Poems from refugees and asylum seekers themselves are especially welcome. The 2022 BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize celebrates refugees and asylum seekers reaching significant **turning points** in their lives. The Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize acknowledges that refugees and asylum seekers have encountered important **turning points** throughout their journeys to safety, from the moment they decided to flee their home, through the many **turning points** they navigate during their journey across a dangerous world, until the time they become established in their new country, community and home. The Poetry Prize especially celebrates the point at which refugees and asylum seekers can settle in a new community and renew their lives after years of uncertainty.

The poems were judged by poet **Juan Garrido-Salgado**. Juan is a poet, translator and human rights activist. He immigrated to Australia from Chile in 1990, fleeing the regime that burned his poetry and imprisoned and tortured him for his political activism. He has published eight books of poetry, and his poems have been widely translated.

Cash prizes were awarded to first, second, and third overall winners. There is also a cash prize for a poem from a refugee or asylum seeker, and a cash prize for a poem from someone under 18 years old. The BR4R committee agreed to issue Certificate of Participation to all the Under-18 entrants.

All advertising material contained the statement: *The BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize is run in memory of member Louise Griffith.*

### Statistics on entries

- 129 entries, 88 individual poets
- 26 entries in the Asylum Seeker & Refugee category

- 27 entries in the Under-18 category

### **The judge's recommendation and commentary**

From the judge, Juan Garrido Salgado, Former Political Prisoner from Chile. 1985 Poet, Translator and Activist.

I felt it was an award to be part of this great event of poetry in Australia. My gratitude and friendship to all the organizers and the poets and to Aidan Coleman for suggesting my name.

It has been intense reading of each single poem. I feel there are so much quality, intimacy and feeling to share its own personal, family, communities journal within the frame of poetry. I can hear their voice, cry and pain to remember the past and present.

Refugees as a personal or subject of writing are still open wounds on this country. I feel, as a poet, a responsibility to give this opportunity for Australian people in our society and the Australian poets community. We should hear, understand and value these poems as a great contribution to our literature.

Here are few lines to listen from the winners' poems:

Our languages tastes / of black ink and wire

Now no land in sight / just an endless watery grave / Losing hope quickly / Only trying not to drown

My name is Nadya, listen to my song / what didn't kill me has made me strong.

As a former political refugees from my mother land (Chile), I feel a responsibility to listen, value and share these voices as the poets in Chile did to us when we sent our poems to participate on a Poetry Prize in Chile for the political prisoners. I was young in prison when I sent two poems. The final results, as a final recommendation from Raul Zurita, was that all the poems selected should share the prize as we shared our own time in prison.

My congratulations to the all winners and to all the commended poems. They are very moving, strong, painful and beautiful expression of personal stories. Here are the new voices of our poetical lives and writing in Australia.

### **The results**

- Overall category: first, second and third prize awarded, plus eight commended entries
- Asylum Seeker and Refugee category: one prize winner plus six commended entries
- Under-18 category: two prizes awarded (first prize approved by the Committee; second prize donated from the overall third place winner), plus six commended entries.

**Prize moneys awarded:** First overall, \$300; second overall, \$150; third overall, \$50, donated back to the Prize for a second Under-18 prize; First Asylum Seeker & Refugee category, \$150; first under-18 category, \$50; second Under-18 category, \$50 (donated prize). The moneys are in part from BR4R funds, along with two donations (total \$250) specified for poetry prizes.

## The following announcement will appear in a Bulletin

### The 2022 BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize winners!

The 2022 BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry prize has now closed, and the judging has been finalised.

BR4R is pleased to announce that six prizes have been awarded, and twenty-one other poems have been commended. The first prize winners are:

Under 18-year old: Rose Mealing, *A Sea of Pain*

Asylum Seeker or Refugee: Afeif Ismail, *My Name is Nadya*

Overall: Paul Hetherington, *Oranges and Bell Tower*

The full list of winning and commended poems will be published on the web site and in our partner journal, *Social Alternatives*, by the end of this year.

BR4R extends a warm thank you to our judge this year, Juan Garrido Salgado, former political prisoner from Chile (1985), Poet, Translator and Activist.

BR4R joins Juan's congratulations to the winners and commended poets. He describes the poems as being very moving, strong, painful and beautiful expressions of personal stories, and he notes that he is seeing new voices in our poetical lives and writing in Australia.

### Publication of the results

- The winners and commended poets have all been individually informed of their achievement. Winners have been asked to forward bank details to the Treasurer for payment of their prize.
- All the Under-18 winners and commended poets will receive a Certificate of Participation (thank you, Levi, for designing this). Bill will mail these out shortly.
- Howard or Rik will post a notice on the BR4R website announcing that the Prize is closed for this year, that judging has been completed, and that the winning and commended poems will be published on the web site in due course.
- BR4R have again partnered with the journal *Social Alternatives*. Bill is discussing publication of the result and the winning and commended poems in an issue of the journal. Publication date is anticipated in November 2022.

### Feedback on the Poetry Prize

Over the course of running this prize, I received various encouraging emails from across the country. However, I wish to share with the committee, feedback received from winners and commended poets, following being informed of their achievements.

- **From Afeif Ismail, prize winner in the Asylum Seeker and Refugee category:** That's great, thank you so much! You made my the rest of the year. Stay safe.
- **Sandeep Kumar Mishra, commended in the Asylum Seeker and Refugee category:** I am so happy and feel honoured to be commended for my poem. Thanks.

- **From Ndina Fromm, commended in the Asylum Seeker and Refugee category:** I am so excited and delighted to be recommended by Mr. Juan. I heard about him and he had been my inspiration. I am also a child of war. I was separated from my family for 30 years. This is a great encouragement beyond measure. And thank you to you as you kept on contacting me and encouraged me to enter this competition. This is indeed unexpected to me. I am lost for words. Once more, many thanks.
- **From Tara Vera, commended in the Under-18 category (actually the message is from Tara's mother):** Thank you so much for this initiative. It's really a great way to bring awareness on the issue and also involve the community in thinking about the serious struggles that some of us have to face while the others are living their normal life. Also, thank you for including Juan's note in your message. That was so inspiring! Tara is so excited about the results of the competition. She has shared the results with her school. Her school principal has asked her to recite her poem at the school assembly and I guess that's a great way to share and bring further awareness about the issue amongst younger generation and develop an open and welcoming mindset towards people who have faced these hardships. The school will most likely also publish Tara's poem in their school magazine and I think it will be a great channel to spread the message to the wider school community as well. So thank you so much for opening up that channel for Tara.
- **From Paul Hetherington, overall winner:** Thanks for getting in touch. That's absolutely wonderful news. I'm really delighted! Please pass on my thanks to Juan Garrido Salgado, and thanks also to you for everything you've done for the prize and the writers who submitted.
- **From Michiyo Miyake, overall second prize winner:** Thanks very much for the great news! I haven't showed my work to anyone before and this is my first time to enter to a competition. I'm so excited to the fact that someone not only read it but actually liked it. The long term detention and maltreatment of asylum seekers and refugees have also been an issue in Japan (where I'm originally from). Since my arrival in Australia in 2016, I have been watching the situation developing in both countries, which made me write this poem. I sincerely hope for the end of their suffering.
- **Tammy Coad, commended in the overall prize:** I want to thank you for taking the time to read my own poetry expression of an outsiders perception of the treatment of my fellow humans. I hope to be an advocate for the injustice we have going on in this world. I am deeply honoured to have been commended for my spoken word that lives deep within my heart.

### **Acknowledgement of those assisting in running the Poetry Prize**

The coordinator, Bill Boyd, extends warm thanks to all those who have assisted in the smooth running of this Poetry Prize. Our partner, Aidan Coleman, Co-Editor, *Social Alternatives*, has advertised the Prize, and will oversee publication of the winning and commended poems. Thank you, Aidan, for recommending our marvellous judge, Juan Garrido Salgado. Juan is a former political prisoner, now poet, translator and activist, did a great job of reading and reviewing every entry, and recommending the winners and commended entries. Bill has been most ably assisted by Levi Everest, BR4R's current social work placement student, and Howard for dealing with website matters.

### **Administrative matters**

During the course of running the 2022 Poetry Prize, Bill refreshed the rules (now called Information), as follows:

## **The 2022 BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize**

### ***A Turning Point***

**Proudly supported by the journal *Social Alternatives***

#### **Information about entering this Poetry Prize**

##### **Who can enter?**

- Entry is free and open to anyone living in Australia.
- BR4R especially welcomes poems from refugees and those seeking asylum in Australia.

##### **What can be entered?**

- You may submit up to three poems on the theme of 'A Turning Point'.
- Your poem or poems should be your own work, but have not be previously published.
- Each poem should be no more than 50 lines.
- Poems should be mostly in English. You can use words in other languages, but the judge must be able to understand the poem.

##### **How to enter**

- Download the entry form from the BR4R website, complete your answers, and copy and paste your poem or poems onto the entry form.
- Email your entry to [poetryprize@br4r.org.au](mailto:poetryprize@br4r.org.au).
- Entries can be sent in until the closing date of Sunday 21st August 2022.

##### **The prize**

- The first-place winning entry will receive a \$300 prize, the second-place entry a \$150 prize, and the third-place entry a \$50 prize. A refugee or asylum seeker will receive a \$150 prize, and an entrant under 18 years old will receive a \$50 prize.
- BR4R may decide to award additional prizes.
- The three winning poems and some runners-up will be published on the BR4R website and social media pages, in other places to raise awareness of issues facing refugees, and in the print journal *Social Alternatives*. Important: By entering you are agreeing to us publishing your work.
- The judging is anonymous.
- The winners will be notified by email before September 30th 2022.

##### **Privacy**

Personal information provided to BR4R is only used to run the Poetry Prize and notify the winner. Personal information will be kept strictly confidential, and will not be sold, reused, rented, loaned or otherwise disclosed



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## 2.5 Volunteer Coordinator's Report - Marilyn Leeks

Ballina Region for Refugees has 138 registered volunteers.

A celebration to thank BR4R volunteers was held on 14 August at Tintenbar Hall. 50 volunteers and friends attended, and we enjoyed meeting other members of the BR4R community. The afternoon included a presentation about the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot. BR4R has 2 groups, Ocean Shores and Ballina who are part of this Pilot. The 'Back to Bilo' campaigners provided practical information about supporting refugees and we were entertained by the music of Chris Mallory.

I have been the Volunteers Coordinator over the past 15 months, and I look forward to supporting and working with a new coordinator.

Over the past year, the following events and activities were run by volunteers to raise funds to support asylum seekers and refugees and raise awareness about punitive government policies such as the Temporary Protection Visa and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa.

Tintenbar Up Front (TUF)	8 Oct 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Coordinator – Lisa Dillon</li><li>• 13 volunteers who helped on the night and/or provided baked goods for supper</li></ul>
Run for Refugees	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Coordinator Ruth Henderson</li><li>• 4 volunteers</li><li>• 38 runners/walkers registered as part of our team with many others taking part and we raised an astounding \$8000 for ARSC</li></ul>
Lunch at Quatro Restaurant and Ballina Byron Declaration	30 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Coordinator - Jo Matricardi</li><li>• 3 volunteers</li><li>• A fantastic effort from Jo, Ali and family and the staff at Quatro Restaurant</li><li>• Speaker Mark Isaacs</li><li>• All in attendance were invited to be part of a full page ad in the Echo newspaper with our Ballina Byron declaration of support for those wishing to leave Afghanistan</li></ul>
Byron Bay Film Events Jirga Limbo	1 December 2021 2 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Coordinator – Rose Fox</li><li>• 2 or 3 volunteers at each event</li><li>• Panel of speakers including Ben Gilmore who wrote and directed the film</li></ul>

Bunnings BBQ in Ballina	23 April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Coordinators – Claire Goodwill and Lou Miller</li> <li>• 16 volunteers</li> <li>• Next Bunnings Barbeque in on Saturday 26 November</li> </ul> <p>(Special thanks to Meg Pickup for her experience and support in April. It was an exceptionally busy barbeque and Meg's efforts ensured we didn't run out of supplies)</p>
Federal election campaign	April and May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 volunteers in the BR4R working party. Our campaign focused on informing and lobbying candidates about Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas and the need to remove them to give refugees a safe home. We <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ distributed 500 postcards via a network of 13 volunteers</li> <li>○ met with Justine Elliott</li> <li>○ Sent out Call to Action Bulletin with resources for community members to use (draft letter to send to candidates, tips for phoning candidates, list of candidates for Richmond with contact details and background information).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Lennox Heads Market - Charity Bucket Collection	10 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Coordinator position is vacant</li> <li>• 8 volunteers</li> <li>• Next Bucket collection is on 11 December</li> </ul>
Lennox Heads markets (held monthly)	14 Aug 2022 first market in Lennox Heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Coordinators – Trish Antoniacomi and Meg Pickup</li> <li>• Currently 10 volunteers</li> </ul> <p>Ideally Trish and Meg would like 12 volunteers.</p> <p>The markets are a regular fundraising activity as well as an opportunity to talk to the wider community about BR4R and the work we are doing.</p>
Tintenbar Upfront (TUF)	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Coordinator Ruth Henderson and Bill Boyd</li> <li>• 6 volunteers</li> <li>• We held a successful fundraiser as part of Tintenbar Upfront where we were nominated charity of the night. TUF has given us many such opportunities over the last 4 years and has invited us to be one of few regular charities they support.</li> </ul>

Roadside Rallies (held fortnightly)	The details of when and where the rallies are on the BR4R website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Coordinator - Meg Pickup</li> <li>• Up to 4 volunteers attend each rally.</li> </ul> <p><i>While most drivers make no response, we receive significantly more positive responses to our messages - 'Seeking asylum is a human right', 'Justice for refugees', 'End detention now' and 'Toot for tolerance' - than we receive negative responses. On average we receive at least 80 positive replies to less than 5 negative replies. We hold up a maximum of three placards to increase the opportunity for drivers to read the messages as they pass by. More people to help are always welcome.</i></p>
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Up and coming events for the remainder of the year are our Acid Bleed fundraiser on 12<sup>th</sup> November and a concert by the Brunswick Heads based choir led by Janet Swain in early December.

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## 2.6 Homestay Coordinator's Report - Gunela Astbrink

Our Homestay Program has been in recess over the last year with State borders being closed. This has given us a chance to review the future of this program and to make the following changes into 2023:

- the Homestay Program will not at this stage be closed, but not actively promoted either.
- hosting will concentrate on incoming refugees through the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP), on arrival, or in transition between accommodation. An example of this is the successful hosting by Mary and Jane O'Brien of the second Syrian family being settled by BR4R.
- BR4R will remain open to any requests for Homestay for those on temporary visas.
- All current hosts will remain on our volunteer register.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the tremendous effort put in by Gunela Astbrink into making our Homestay program the success it has been in offering such rich experiences to hosts and guests.

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## 3.0 Tabled at the AGM - Reports from partners

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### 3.1 Ben Gilmour: PROJECT 50, ASSISTANCE TO AFGHAN ARTISTS AT RISK

After the 'fall of Kabul' to the regime of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban) in August 2021, I launched PROJECT 50, an endeavour to assist Afghan filmmakers at risk of persecution and assassination in Afghanistan. A special group of fifty Afghan filmmakers, musicians and visual artists were identified with the assistance of Afghan music societies and the former Afghan film commission. These individuals were vetted and proof of their talents, public profile and risks were identified.

#### Aim

The aim of PROJECT 50 has been to assist these artists in gaining refugee visas for Australia. A secondary objective has been to assist them in staying safe and well until (if and when) their visas are approved.

#### Partners

Project 50 is a collaboration between Afghan artists, local refugee advocacy groups such as BR4R in Ballina and other small groups in Federal, Ocean Shores and Uki. Project 50 is supported by Refugee Legal, a leading law firm in Sydney managing humanitarian visas, along with their partners Holding Redlich, a second law firm assisting the project.

#### Time-line

It was always envisaged that this project would take some time to complete. This has been true, mainly due to difficulty in communication with Afghans at risk and in hiding, language barriers, the lengthy and complex application forms and gathering of other documents and IDs etc, and the time constraints and varying technical demands on volunteers from refugee groups assisting. UPDATE on the application process for this special group as of OCT 2022 is that all 50 applications have now been submitted by Refugee Legal.

#### Financial assistance

Over the past year there has been tremendous strain on the Afghan artists, some of whom are in extreme danger. Even from the point of view of livelihoods, which have been impacted by them not being able to create or perform. For this reason, and with our desire that these applicants survive while awaiting outcome of their applications, BR4R has held several fundraising events, including a film screening of JIRGA at the Byron Theatre and generously donated the sum of \$13,000 to the project. This has been used to provide small payments of \$200 USD to 30 of these artists at risk. Several, mainly single women with families, have received additional payments. These have been extremely welcome and have been enormously beneficial to the applicants of PROJECT 50.

#### Next steps

A letter to the Immigration Minister Andrew Giles has been drafted and is currently being sent to 12 leading Australian figures in the arts for their signatures in support of PROJECT 50. Once this is completed, I will personally be meeting with the Minister, which has been arranged via Mandy Nolan and Greens Senator David Shoebridge. In this meeting I will present the letter to the

minister and request that these artists are given priority in the visa process due to the particular risks to this cohort.

#### Letter

A copy of the Letter to the Minister has been attached to this report. As has a list of the applicants of PROJECT 50.

#### Future

If these applicants are given priority and if they are successful in their applications, there is a possibility that, in collaboration with local refugee advocacy groups, we will assist these applicants in coming to Australia and settling here. In this case I we will work a media campaign to raise the money to assist these applicants, first priority being the applicants who local volunteers are acting as Proposers for.

I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work of BR4R in supporting this project so generously.

**Benjamin Gilmour**, Author / Filmmaker / PROJECT 50 lead

#### **PROJECT 50 APPLICANTS for AUSTRALIAN HUMANITARIAN VISAS, OCT 2022**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Family members</b>
M	FILMMAKER (Dir/Actor)	4
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	7
M	FILMMAKER (Actor)	2
M	FILMMAKER (Actor/Director)	8
F	MUSICIAN (singer)	5
M	FILMMAKER (Actor/DoP)	3
M	MUSICIAN (saxophone)	9
M	MUSICIAN (Tabla player)	2
M	FILMMAKER (Actor)	1
M	MUSICIAN (Singer/TV host)	5
F	FILMMAKER (Actress/model)	3
F	FILMMAKER (Actress/Model)	11

M	FILMMAKER (Actor)	9
F	FILMMAKER (Actress)	2
M	ARTISTS (Sculptor)	3
M	FILMMAKER (Actor)	9
F	MOTHER of SABZ husband	
M	MUSICIAN (tabla 'ustad')	8
M	MUSICIAN (Singer/tabla)	3
F	MUSICIAN (Singer)	7
F	FILMMAKER (Actress)	0
M	MUSICIAN (rabab player)	3
M	FILMMAKER (Sound/Actor)	3
F	FILMMAKER (Actress)	1
F	FILMMAKER (Actress/model)	2
M	FILMMAKER (Actor/Head of Af Film Jalalabad)	4
M	FILMMAKER (Actor/Director)	10
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	12
M	FILMMAKER (Film director)	8
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	6
M	MUSICIAN (Tabla player)	2
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	7
F	MUSICIAN (Singer)	
M	MUSICIAN (Rabab + Rabab maker)	8
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	13

M	MUSICIAN Arranger/Drummer	4
M	SAXAPHONE / CLARINET PLAYER	
M	MUSICIAN (Rabab)	
M	FILMMAKER (writer/producer)	5
M	MUSICIAN (Mandolin)	
M	FILMMAKER (and Actor)	4
M	FILMMAKER (Actor)	1
F	FILMMAKER (Director)	2
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	8
M	FILMMAKER (actor/producer)	3
M	MUSICIAN (singer)	11
F	FILMMAKER (Actress)	8
M	FILMMAKER (cinematographer)	3
F	MUSICIAN (Singer)	

### LETTER TO THE IMMIGRATION MINISTER

To the Honorable Andrew Giles MP,

25 September 2022

#### **Special Request - Project 50 - Afghan Artists**

As a group of leading Australian filmmakers, artists and musicians, we request consideration of the attached list of **50 Afghan Artists** who have submitted applications for humanitarian visas due to their heightened and imminent risk of serious and significant harm in Afghanistan on account of their significant profiles in the arts. Since the fall of Kabul, these artists have been forced to destroy their art and instruments and many are living in hiding or have been forced to flee. On account of the grave risk to this high-profile group, we request their applications be prioritised.

The 50 applicants listed have strong connections to Australia including through their work with Australian film directors Benjamin Gilmour, George Gittoes AM and Granaz Moussavi. Through their talents and skills, these applicants will make a valuable contribution to Australia's vibrant cultural and arts sector.

These applicants already have significant support networks in Australia, including prominent Australians working in the arts, who will assist with settlement such as accommodation, connection with local services and communities and employment.

All applications have been submitted with the pro-bono assistance of **Refugee Legal** and **Holding Redlich** lawyers via the online portal or courier to Amman, Jordan.

Australia is renowned internationally for its vibrant cultural sector and Afghanistan's artists have an enormous amount to offer. Granting Humanitarian Visas would ensure their unique skills and traditions survive.

Yours sincerely,

Benjamin Gilmour Writer/Director of 'Jirga'	Paul Kelly Singer-Songwriter	Bernard Fanning Singer/Songwriter <i>Powderfinger</i>
Rachel Griffiths Actor 'Muriel's Wedding'	Brian Brown Actor 'Breaker Morant'	Philip Noyce Director 'The Quiet American'
Simon Baker Actor 'The Mentalist'	Harry James Angus Singer-Songwriter <i>The Cat Empire</i>	Clare Bowditch Musician, ARIA Winner '06
Guido Maestri Artist, Archibald Prize Winner 2009	Ben Quilty Artist, Archibald Prize Winner 2011	John Butler Front man, <i>John Butler Trio</i>
Angus McDonald Painter, Filmmaker	Christos Tsiolkas	Missy Higgins Singer-Songwriter

BENJAMIN GILMOUR, Project Lead  
Email: [contact@benjamingilmour.com](mailto:contact@benjamingilmour.com)  
Phone: +61 404789442

*BR4R put a call out for volunteers to assist with commencement of Humanitarian Visas and we had a great response. Many who volunteered are still in touch with those they were supporting. BR4R allocated over \$13,000 to those on the list to offer some small support over the winter of 2021-2022.*

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### 3.2 Report from Brisbane On-Shore Arrivals Group

Our group continues to provide material aid to people in immigration detention, community detention and people on bridging visas who are unable to work. This can include phone top-ups, replace phones as needed, financial support for drivers' licences and medication and referrals for mental health support. We have also in the past assisted to pay for a police check and training course.

*Over 2021-2022, BR4R donated a total of xx to support material aid as above for those in south east Queensland stuck in detention centres and hotels, as well as for those released on temporary community detention visas, often without the ability to work .*



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### 3.3 Report from Jane Keogh, Manus Lives Matter

Sincere thanks to all at Ballina Region for Refugees for your ongoing support for the refugees on Manus Island.

With Australia's current uncertain economy and the growing needs of so many already in Australia, both those with work rights but not well enough to work, and those without work rights, some of our earlier support has waned and we have relied heavily on the support of BR4R and one other small group plus about six individuals.

Our focus has extended in one way and narrowed in another. Mental health of the men remains our key focus. As you know, the situation of the men is dire and there are twelve we have been advocating for medivac to Australia, with little result. We speak regularly to several men to try to keep up their morale. There is hope for those who are on a pathway to Canada or the US or maybe NZ. For others the outlook is not so hopeful and we are just trying to keep them going.

An offshoot of our group has been a few people who now focus on providing money to keep alive the families of seven men, six in Moresby and one in Nauru who have families in Afghanistan without safety or food. We have held market stalls and a trivia night to help, and the small group looking after this aspect of our work is currently sending \$1,700 a month to Afghanistan and talking directly with the families there. This is separate from our regular Manus Lives Matter focus which BR4R funds go to, but it is related as the mental health of our refugees in Moresby is supported knowing their families are a little provided for.

BR4R funds have also helped these six Moresby refugees directly by providing two phones for damaged or stolen phones and an increased phone credit to enable more family communication. Your support has also paid for gym memberships for two (one Afghan and one other) over three months. We consulted with some of our contacts who provide phone counselling and they advised that it's good to support anything that gets the men out of their accommodation to a place they feel safe and has the potential to improve their mental and physical health.

Your donations have reached and supported a total of ten men in Moresby over these six months.

- Two mobile phones
- Increased phone credit for six men
- Four months gym membership for two men
- Money to upgrade a computer
- Extra finances for one man after a serious mental health episode
- Money for computer data to do online course in preparation for resettlement in a third country
- Two monthly parcels of ointments accompanied by spices and food items for one man in need
- Education and living expense support for the 11 year old daughter of one of the men who brought his wife and daughter to PNG and has since had another baby there.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Please feel welcome to ask any questions if you want more information.

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### 3.4 Report from Dawn Barrington, WA based National Advocate for those still on off and onshore detention

Here is an overview of how Ballina Region for Refugees has supported the refugees from Manus and Nauru in the past 12 months.

I first want to say a big thank you to Ballina Region for Refugees for their support over the past 12 months. The \$500 donated every month has consistently supported 5 separate refugees with their phone credit each month approx \$100 each. They are truly grateful. Ballina Region for Refugees also made some additional one off \$1000 payments which were a huge help towards the refugees when they were newly released from almost 4 yrs of hotel detention. These funds, together with many other donations from the general public, meant that on their release I was able to give each of the guys \$100 cash each as well as money towards warm jackets, rice cookers, electric fry pans and other essentials. I was also able to take a number of the guys food shopping for the first time in Australia and see the joy on their faces when they were allowed to choose what they wanted. I could never have done the work without the amazing support of you guys and as we all know it's not just about the money, it is about giving hope to people who have been rejected by the Australian government and by some members of Australian population in general. When people show kindness by donating, they are saying that the people are worth it which means a lot to those on the receiving end.

So a big thank you again. 🙏 Dawn

*Over 2021-2022, through Dawn, BR4R donated a total of xx to support those still in detention as well as those exiting detention onto temporary visas.*