

CASTLEMAINE FRINGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Our 2025 Board of Directors

Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns, Chair
Bridget Haylock, Secretary
Madeline Leahy, Treasurer
Liz McCoy, Deputy Chair
Karen Bodin
Sally Guildford
Richard McLeish
Sean Soroghan
Kat Turner

Our staff

Azzy Jay, Festival Director
Fionna Allan, Operations Manager

Our funders

Community Bank Maldon & District
Festivals Australia: Federal Government
Visit Victoria: State Government
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Regional Arts Victoria
Rotary Castlemaine

Acknowledgement of Country

The Fringe Thing Inc acknowledges that we meet, work and perform on Djaara Country where the traditional custodians, the Dja Dja Wurrung people, have been creating and preserving culture for tens of thousands of years. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging. Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Chairperson's Report

I am so proud of Fringe's achievements in 2025. Without the usual concurrent Castlemaine State Festival, we were very unsure of what our stand alone festival would look like. It is no exaggeration to say we exceeded all expectations. Guided by the dynamic duo of Azzy Jay and Fionna Allan, with support from the board and an extraordinary team of volunteers, the 2025 Fringe Festival was an absolute success.

Thanks to funding support we were able to invest in a comprehensive marketing campaign and a fabulous opening night street party. The 2025 Fringe Festival went off with a bang, and continued for an extraordinary 15 days of fun, festivities, creativity and celebration. Amongst a sea of sensational volunteers, I want to acknowledge the roles undertaken by Dave Relf, Scott Sanders and Peter Bodin leading key festival elements including our magnificent Monster Mash and the hugely successful Flamin' Galah. I can't wait to see the return of these in 2027.

Outside of the festival, a great deal of energy goes into fundraising and community engagement because the action doesn't end when the festival concludes. In 2025 we hosted a Halloween event at the Old Castlemaine Gaol, a singalong Blues Brothers extravaganza at the Theatre Royal and ran a community kitchen at the Town Folk Festival. Thanks to everyone involved in organising and running these events. Fringe recruited a new board of directors and undertook a strategic planning process. With input from our members and our community we have crafted a guiding document to inform our direction and decision-making to ensure a sustainable organisation that reflects our community's hopes, dreams and aspirations.

A super successful festival in 2025 means we've set a very high bar for ourselves for 2027! We need to continue engaging our community and growing our Fringe family. We are grateful for the support of members and volunteers and encourage you to provide us feedback and input at all stages of our journey. There are many opportunities to be involved and they don't all require tending sausage sizzles. We have numerous working groups and subcommittees progressing various elements of the organisation and our events. If you have an interest, passion or skill, we will have a role for you! And if you have an idea, project or event you think aligns with Fringe please do reach out - we are nothing without our creative and connected community.

Massive thanks to my fellow board members and to Fringe's staff members, our festival director Azzy Jay, our previous Operations Manager Fionna Allan and our newly appointed Operations Manager Caz West. Here's to the 2027 Fringe Festival!

Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns
Chair

Festival Director's Report

Fringe 2025 was HUGE with an incredible line up of more than 60 shows, performances and events and over 60 arts studios and exhibitions all wrapped up in a gorgeous Fringe program! We really did ourselves proud, with sold out shows, high vibes around town and lots of positive energy. From deep Greek tragedy via the cosmos to the edge of the Chewton bushlands the program wove in giant murals and late night dancing, comedy, cabaret alongside tearful and joyful storytelling. There were surprising journeys through known and unknown, Frida in all of her glorious colours in an exhibition in the Market Building, all the kids dancing in their costumes, and – of course - that street party! The Town Hall all lit up in pink and projections, more than 120 performers in 20 amazing acts over 3 stages with roving robots, teenagers with guitars, and Castlemaine's finest dancing in the street: just the way we like it!

Lots of my time is spent connecting artists to venues and artists to artists and ideas to activators. It's such a great way to get to know people and engage with diverse and interesting ideas. I continue to feel incredibly privileged to do work I love in a town I love, alongside a whole bunch of amazing creatives who work so hard to create and present their works.

I love how Fringe contributes to the cultural fabric of our lives and every time I hear the piano on the Market building stairs or see Ned and Tobias's mural in the garden at the Theatre I'm reminded of the lasting impact that we can have as creatives, and that with a little love, and encouragement little ideas grow into big impactful ones that leave their mark on us all.

Although AGM's are a recap of the year before I can't finish without a little nod to what has thus far been an epic 2026. It was incredible to witness all the costumes parading the stage at IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC and the super cute festival baton handover and stage takeover at the State Festival Garden Party. The events team's incredible transformation of the Castlemaine Town Hall for David Attenborough's 100th birthday party. Our Variety Show was a fitting celebration with great performances making for a wonderful event and a marker of many more amazing fundraisers and events to come. Thank you for your support as members, volunteers, artists and performers and appreciative ticket buying audiences! We couldn't do it without our fabulous Fringe family.

Azzy Jay

Festival Director

Profit and Loss

The Fringe Thing Inc
For the 12 months ended 31 December 2025

JAN-DEC 2025	
Trading Income	
Art Auction - Sales	345.00
Donations Received	4,805.90
Exhibits & Vendors Revenue	320.00
Food & Beverage Sales	198.00
Fringe Festival - Bar Sales	32,572.94
Fringe Festival - Program Inclusion	4,084.60
Fringe Festival - Social Media Boosting	35.00
Fringe Festival - Sponsorship	1,000.00
Fringe Festival - Theatre and Technician Hire	3,023.16
Fringe Festival - Ticket Sales	352.92
Fundraising Revenue	24,052.36
Grants	64,380.00
Interest Income	275.87
Membership Revenue	3,441.87
Merchandise Sales	2,437.86
Partnerships Revenue	10,000.00
Ticket Sales	6,296.22
Total Trading Income	157,621.70
Gross Profit	157,621.70
Operating Expenses	
Advertising & Marketing	24,025.58
Art Auction - Artist's Commissions	150.00
Bank Fees	81.24
Bookkeeping & Accounting	125.00
Fringe Festival - Bar Expense	14,883.41
Fringe Festival - Director Fees	20,198.92
Fringe Festival - Documentation (photography)	800.00
Fringe Festival - Merchandise Expense	3,008.00
Fringe Festival - Monster Mash	5,959.06
Fringe Festival - Performer's Fees	1,050.00
Fringe Festival - Production expense	580.10
Fringe Festival - Program Expenses	24,409.00
Fringe Festival - Street Party	22,155.41
Fundraising Expenses	9,179.71
General - Director Fees	8,665.00
General - Operations Manager Fees	21,105.02
General Expenses	80.42
Insurance	2,730.00
Legal & Compliance expenses	159.75
Office & Admin Expenses	49.00
Performers Fees	1,100.00
Printing & Stationery	23.25
Production Expenses	8,653.69
Rent	3,919.00
Social Media Boosting Expense	1,903.12
Stripe and Square Fees	687.91
Subscriptions	645.59
Superannuation	6,194.63
Travel Expenses	422.40
Venue Hire	600.90
Volunteer Expenses	477.08
Total Operating Expenses	184,022.19
Net Profit	(26,400.49)

Balance Sheet

The Fringe Thing Inc
As at 31 December 2025

31 DEC 2025	
Assets	
Bank	
Expenses account	339.90
Savings Account	23,038.22
Statement account	10,470.21
Total Bank	33,848.33
Fixed Assets	
Office Equipment	623.14
Total Fixed Assets	623.14
Total Assets	34,471.47
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
GST	(95.77)
Historical Adjustment	2,537.18
Rounding	11.30
Superannuation Payable	(310.50)
Total Current Liabilities	2,142.21
Total Liabilities	2,142.21
Net Assets	32,329.26
Equity	
Current Year Earnings	18,790.59
Retained Earnings	13,538.67
Total Equity	32,329.26

Treasurer's Report

Since joining the Fringe board one year ago, I have strived to implement consistent financial controls and develop transparent reporting processes to enable a clear view of how we spend and receive funds, enabling informed decision-making.

Our Balance Sheet attests that The Fringe Thing Inc. remains in a sound financial position with adequate cash reserves to meet ongoing obligations.

As a not-for-profit community organisation, our goal is to reinvest surpluses into community and cultural initiatives. Surpluses in fundraising years help us to offset deficits in Festival years, supporting long-term sustainability.

The Fringe Thing Inc. relies on steady income sources like grants, donations, and regular fundraising events during Fundraising years (2024) to enable our Director, Operations Manager, board and volunteers to deliver our major program in Festival years (2025). We have several grants in the pipeline and are on track to deliver another spectacular event in 2027.

Madeleine Leahy
Treasurer