



August 2022

## Vale Darvell Hutchinson

# The Board and staff of The John Villiers Trust are saddened by the passing of Mr Darvell Hutchinson AM.

Darvell was the inaugural Trustee of The John Villiers Trust (JVT), which was established under the Will of the late John Villiers in 2002, and served passionately as its Chair for 17 years before his retirement in 2019. Darvell's demonstrated his belief in the importance of the JVT and its role in supporting country Queensland communities by being a personal donor to JVT even after his retirement.

He leaves behind a remarkable legacy as a passionate champion of the philanthropic sector. His contributions included acting as President of the Australian Association of Philanthropy (now Philanthropy Australia), Trustee and Treasurer of the National Gallery of Victoria, Vice-President of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund, Director of the Macpherson Smith Rural Foundation Ltd (now You thrive Victoria) and the National Institute of Circus Arts, and a member of the Patrons' Council of Royal District Nursing Service. He was also Chair of the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust for 50 years, a trustee of the L.E.W. Carty Charitable Fund and most recently a Director of the Brian M Davis Charitable Foundation.

He was honoured for his service to the community as a Member of the Order of Australia. In addition, Monash University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa for his contribution to the Victorian community and "to Melbourne's role as the major centre of philanthropy in Australia", and Central Queensland University Council bestowed an honorary degree of Doctor of the University in 2016, for "contributions to the philanthropic sector and various organisations including the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, Philanthropy Australia and The John Villiers Trust".

John Villiers was a client of Darvell's for many years, and John trusted Darvell to be his executor and inaugural trustee of the charitable trust he created for the benefit of Queensland. Darvell was dedicated to honouring John's wish to leave a lasting legacy that would continue to support the state he loved. Darvell brought great empathy, curiosity and business acumen to JVT's granting, and he delighted in engaging with grantees. Under his direct management, philanthropic vision, and leadership JVT's assets grew from \$6.75 million in 2002 to more than \$24 million by 2019, with more than \$9 million distributed in grants. One of Darvell's last legacy achievements for JVT was to see it become a Public Ancillary Fund, enabling it to act as a vehicle for others to leverage their donations contributing to transformative impact across rural, regional and remote Queensland for many years to come.

His belief in the power of philanthropy in helping build strong, resilient communities is an extraordinary legacy that he leaves in so many organisations, including ours.

Our thoughts and sincere condolences go out to his wife Barbara, his three children and extended family.

Darvell leaves an extraordinary legacy and will be greatly missed.

**When The John Villiers Trust informed a number of organisations that Mr Darvell Hutchinson AM passed away in February 2022, they sent through the following tributes:**

It's very sad to hear of the passing of Darvell Hutchinson AM, the founding chair of The John Villiers Trust. On behalf of the Winton community I would like to send our condolences to Darvell's family & friends. In his time as chair, Darvell took The John Villiers Trust from a fledgling philanthropic trust to the organisation it is today. The ongoing support of children and youth in rural, regional and remote areas of Queensland is very much appreciated. Darvell was a great supporter of the Waltzing Matilda Centre and The Outback Gallery with The John Villiers Trust Outback Art Prize entering its 10th year. Darvell will be sadly missed, may he rest in peace.

**Cr Gavin Baskett, Winton Shire Mayor and Waltzing Matilda Centre Board Member**

Darvell Hutchinson was a gentleman full of surprises. While he had a public leadership role in a number of philanthropic institutions, he also gave generously his time and experience to many other foundations, trusts and charities with few people knowing. During a conversation with Darvell he would tell you how he could help, and then you would later find out from someone else how Darvell helped you in other ways that he didn't tell you and you were hitherto unaware. He was wise, personable and modest.

You never rang Darvell if you only had five minutes, because a conversation with Darvell always took at least half an hour. He always wanted to hear about your plans, ask lots of questions and most of all to help.

His generosity was inspirational and he leaves a significant legacy through the ongoing works of many organisations, especially the John Villiers Trust.

**Marcus Godinho, Executive Director, Fareshare**

I first met Darvell Hutchinson in 2010 when he called into the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum during a visit to western Queensland. At this time the Museum had only been operating for about a year and, chatting to Darvell, I was surprised to learn that The John Villiers Trust was devoted specifically to the needs of regional Queensland. What surprised me even more, however, was that he had sought us out specifically to offer his help.

Darvell had the quietly-spoken, straight-to-the-point manner of a man of integrity and was one of those unique people that you immediately trust. I remember we discussed various things that the Museum needed (and couldn't afford) and one of these was a life-size bronze model of 'Banjo' aka Australovenator wintonensis. Banjo was the newly-described meat-eating dinosaur our museum had uncovered several years earlier and Darvell suggested it might be a project that The John Villiers Trust could support.

The thing that struck me most about Darvell was his no-nonsense approach to making something happen. No fuss and no red tape, just a down-to-earth practical process of making something happen. Today when I see the bronze statue of Banjo in front of the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Reception Centre, I see an icon that has been enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people from all over Australia. But I still wonder at Darvell's intuition, how he seemed to know instinctively that it was something that had to be done. I suspect that many people in organisations and not-for-profit charities right throughout the Outback have experienced something similar with Darvell and he will be missed by many people. Like Jack Villiers, Darvell was fair-dinkum and, like Jack, he was a tremendous advocate for the bush. Through his devotion to The John Villiers Trust, he has left a legacy that Jack would have been proud of.

**David Elliott, Executive Chairman, Australian Age of Dinosaurs, Museum Of Natural History**

The Board and staff of Autism Queensland fondly remember Darvell Hutchinson AM and acknowledge the significant role he played in The John Villiers Trust's support to Queenslanders on the autism spectrum and their families. While we will always remember him with great fondness, it is with sadness we extend our best wishes and sympathy to his family on their loss. Darvell found time in his busy schedule to attend our events, particularly those in Rockhampton and Mackay that so proudly carry the John Villiers name. His dedication to fulfilling John Villiers vision was evidenced through his close support and interest in Autism Queensland's projects, in line with the terms of the will. We remain indebted to Darvell and to John Villiers for their vision and dedication to philanthropy, bettering the life of regional Queenslanders living with autism.

#### **Autism Queensland**

All of us at BUSHkids were saddened to hear of the passing of Mr Darvell Hutchinson AM and wish to extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends. As Chair of the John Villiers Trust, Mr Hutchinson supported BUSHkids with a generous grant which helped establish our new service centre in Warwick and we were delighted when Mr Hutchinson agreed to be part of the official opening of the centre in 2015. Mr Hutchinson was the embodiment of Mr Villiers' charitable legacy and is a sad loss to everyone.

#### **Carlton Meyn, CEO, Bushkids**