



The Centre: Connecting Community in North and West Melbourne Inc. ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

VISION AND PURPOSE

OUR VISION IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO A CONNECTED, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BY PROMOTING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY BELONGING AND PROVIDING RESOURCES, TOOLS AND SPACE IN RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY ISSUES.

The purposes¹ of the association are—

1. To facilitate an environment in which community members are able to develop responses to their own needs.
2. To facilitate the development of programs that are responsive to the needs of local residents.
3. To function as a resource, information and referral focus within the local community and, subject to the resources being available, to support the production of a community newspaper.
4. To address social inequalities and increase life opportunities for people who are disadvantaged, by encouraging the development of self-help and skills development activities, social interaction and participation.
5. To foster community development programs which involve active participation initiatives of the members themselves in addressing issues of the wider community.
6. To encourage and promote the development of community networks.
7. To provide educational, social, cultural, environmental and support activities.

¹ Rules of the Incorporated Association | The Centre, 2013

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In accordance with the Constitution of the association notice is hereby given that the 38th Annual General Meeting of The Centre will be held at 6 pm Monday 29 September 2014 at the club rooms Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women North and West Melbourne Branch 16 Little Errol Street North Melbourne.

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Attendance and Apologies
3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2012-13 AGM
4. Receive the Management Committee Annual Report 2013-2014
5. Election of 9 persons to be members of the Management Committee.
 - 5.1. Three members for a one year term (2015)
 - 5.2. Three members for a two year term (2015 & 2016)
 - 5.3. Three members for a three year term (2015 to 2017)

Nominations for membership of the Management Committee close at 5 pm Monday 29 September 2014.

6. Annual Financial Report year ended 30 June 2014 in accordance with Section 30 of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.
7. Determine the annual subscription and date for payment thereof.
8. Appointment of an Auditor or Auditors
Our long-standing auditor (Sean Denham) had given us notice during the 2012-13 audit that he would likely not be available for another term and he confirmed that in March 2014. The provisions of the Act allow for our accounts to be reviewed rather than audited however it is

RECOMMENDED:

THAT Mr. Eugene Odachowski of J.P. Hardwick & Associates, Unit 7, 617-643 Spencer Street West Melbourne be appointed independent auditors for The Centre for the period 2014-15.

9. General Business
- 9.1. Honorary Life Membership
The following resolution will be **RECOMMENDED** as a special resolution:

THAT the person proposed by the Management Committee at the AGM be appointed an honorary life member of the Association in terms of clause 14 of the Constitution.

Provision is made for members to appoint a proxy for the meeting and the special resolution.

Members of the public are invited to attend as observers subject to the direction of the Chairperson.

The reports will be publicly available on our website www.centre.org.au progressively from 2 September.

Michael J Halls
Director and Returning Officer

2 September 2013

MINUTES

Minutes of the 37th Annual General Meeting of The Centre: Connecting Community in North and West Melbourne Inc. held at 6 pm on Monday 30 September 2013 in the Australian Legion of Ex Servicemen and Women club room George Johnson Lane North Melbourne

1. Welcome

The meeting opened at 6:09 pm with welcomes by the Chairperson and the Director.

2. Attendance and Apologies

The following apologies were received and accepted:

Fiona Baranowski
Gary Hansen
Gary Heard
Maria Interdonato
Frances McMillan
Mary Parfrey
Malcolm Peacock
Margaret Wood

The following members of the Management Committee were present:

Doone Clifton
Lorna Hannan
Karl Hessian
Nancy Lane
Bill Liddy
Kay Oke

The Constitution of The Centre requires that the quorum for an AGM must be five or more current members. There were 22 members and 3 visitors present. (Refer the attached attendance sheets.)

3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2011-12 AGM

The minutes of the 2011-12 AGM held on 29 October 2012 had been circulated. A hard copy version of the Minutes was available to all members present and in electronic form at www.centre.org.au as a part of the Annual Report. It was **RESOLVED**:

THAT the minutes of the 2011-12 Annual General Meeting of The Centre be confirmed as a correct record.

The members thanked the Director and the staff of The Centre for their work and the preparations and material for the evening.

4. Receive the Management Committee Annual Report 2012-2013

A hard copy version of the Annual Report was available to all members present and in electronic form on The Centre website.

The *Chairperson*, Mr Karl Hessian indicated that the Annual report had been well received by members prior to the meeting. He thanked and acknowledged the efforts of the staff and volunteers and that the Management Committee has been impressed by their ability to rise to the challenge.

Mr Hessian indicated that it had been very rewarding to see the increased engagement by The Centre in the community and by the community with us. He also thanked the Management Committee members who he described as a diverse and collegiate group who had addressed the need to consolidate our organisation, attend constitutional matters and develop a new strategic direction for the organisation.

On behalf of the committee Karl also recorded The Centre's gratitude to Mrs Kay Oke on her retirement as a member of the committee and for her service to the community.

The Chairperson concluded his address by reminding the members that a mere two years ago the City Council had commissioned a report (Jennings) with a series of 5 recommendations and this AGM would provide the opportunity to act on the final proposal which was for revisions to our Constitution.

The *Treasurer*, Ms Doone Clifton, presented the financial report and indicated that we had now finished a two-year plan. We had 'trimmed our sails' and through careful expenditure ended with a significant surplus in 2011-12, which we were able to use to build for the future. Though our 2012-13 deficit overshot our target we have increased our training and capacity building activity.

Ms Clifton advised that The Centre is finely balanced at the moment and we need to be careful the coming year and 2014-15.

The *Director*, Michael J Halls thanked the wide range of volunteers who support The Centre and praised the supportive and dedicated staff of The Centre.

Members and visitors asked some questions including

- The complexity of the relocatable Book Pedlar project
- The progress of the revised strategic plan (2014-18)
- Plans for the development of new income sources.

It was **RESOLVED**:

THAT the Annual Report 2012-2013 as presented be received.

5. Election of up to 11 persons to be members of the Management Committee

The Returning Officer declared the following persons elected unopposed:

Fiona Baranowski
Doone Clifton
Lorna Hannan
Karl Hessian
Nancy Lane
Bill Liddy
Kathleen McPherson
Malcolm Peacock
Margaret Wood

As the Constitution provides for a Management Committee to consist of up to 11 persons, the Returning Officer declared two casual vacancies remain to be filled by the Management Committee in due course.

At its first meeting the Management Committee will elect from amongst its members persons to fill the office bearer positions of

- Chairperson
- Secretary and Public Officer and
- Treasurer.

6. Annual Financial Report year ended 30 June 2013 in accordance with Section 30 of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012

The Treasurer presented the financial overview contained in the Annual Report. A hard copy version of the fully audited Annual Financial Report was available to all members present and in electronic form at www.centre.org.au.

The Treasurer also recorded thanks to the external Finance Consultant Mr R Pisano for his assistance during this reporting period.

The financial results for 2012-13 reflected the expenditure “catch up” with a correspondingly abnormal annual deficit, offsetting the large surplus recorded for the previous year.

The Chairperson thanked the Treasurer for presenting the report complexities in plain English.

It was **RESOLVED**:

THAT the Annual Financial Report year ended 30 June 2013 be received and accepted.

7. Appointment of an Auditor or Auditors

On the advice of the Management Committee it was **RESOLVED**:

THAT Sean Denham and Associates Accountants and Auditors, Suite 1, 707 Mt Alexander Road Moonee Ponds Victoria be reappointed independent auditors for The Centre for the period 2013-14.

8. Special Resolution: Adoption of Model Rules (as adapted for The Centre)

In 2012 the State Government instituted legislative changes that required incorporated associations needed to modernise their constitutions. The Management Committee established a working party consisting of Mr Hessian and Mrs M Wood to review the 2005 Constitution against the “model rules” established under the new legislation. The meeting thanked them for their report.

Some changes were made to the model rules such as the introduction of an honorary membership provision and rolling terms for the management committee for example. A hard copy version of the draft constitution was available to all members present and had been in electronic form on The Centre website for 28 days prior to the meeting.

The Director reported the proxy votes that had been submitted and the Chairperson asked for a show of hands on the published motion. The necessary 75% of members present and by proxy **RESOLVED**:

That the 2005 rules and statement of purpose of The Centre: Connecting Community in North and West Melbourne Inc. be altered in accordance with the Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 model rules with those amendment recommended by the management committee (attached).

The members recorded their thanks to The Legion through their President Mr Barry Slocombe for making their facility available for the meeting.

The Chairperson invited members and guests to stay and join in the social and hospitality of The Centre.

The meeting closed at 6:58 pm

Chairperson

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Centre is a community based Incorporated Association governed by a Management Committee composed of nine elected members.

At the 2012-13 Annual General Meeting in September 2013 the following members were elected and the committee elected the office bearers at its October 2013 meeting

Fiona Baranowski
Doone Clifton (Treasurer)
Lorna Hannan
Karl Hessian (Chairperson)
Nancy Lane
Bill Liddy
Kathleen McPherson
Malcolm Peacock
Margaret Wood (Secretary)

The combined number of hours spent by all committee members on governing The Centre in an average month including time spent completing minutes, preparing reports, attending meetings, working group or subcommittee meetings, and so on but excluding time spent by committee members volunteering in the day to day running of The Centre totaled 217 hours.

One member of the committee, Fiona Baranowski, resigned (April 2014) during the period of this report.

Following the approval of the new *Rules of the Incorporated Association* at the last AGM and its endorsement by Consumer Affairs Victoria the committee conducted elections for the new offices and the members so elected are:

Doone Clifton (Treasurer)
Lorna Hannan (Vice Chairman)
Karl Hessian (Chairman)
Margaret Wood (Secretary)

This year was the end of the three-year funding agreement with the City of Melbourne and the first year of operation at the reduced levels for community services and festival funding from the City.

About 66% (last year 72%) of our participants are female and 34% (last year 28%) male and they cover a full range of age groups:

| Builders | Boomers | Gen X | Gen Y | Gen Z |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1925 - 1945 | 1946 - 1964 | 1965 - 1979 | 1980 - 1994 | 1995 - present |
| 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2014 | 2014 |
| 16% | 13.6% | 37% | 19% | 8% |
| | | 35.2% | 19.9% | 14.6% |
| | | | 20% | 15.3% |

We continued to receive the equivalent of 20 hours of coordination funding through the Department of Human Services neighbourhood house coordination funding agreement. We therefore support the ANHLC in its campaign for the introduction of a simple transparent needs based formula for future funding allocations.

Our other principal funding source is for the delivery of adult community and further education. In 2012 we delivered more than 23 separate courses or programs that had nearly 300 participants. In 2013 we delivered 28 courses and programs to more than 695 people. To date in 2014 we have offered 27 courses and programs to 430 participants.

Our analysis shows that these people come primarily from Docklands (1%), Melbourne (6.79%), Kensington (4.22%), West Melbourne (13.12%), North Melbourne (45.4%), Inner City (4.98%), and Outer West (including St Albans – 12%). Another 1.06% came from any number of farther home locations.

For several years we have also been a partner in the Inner North Cluster of ACE providers—INC—shared services partnership, which has been investigating alternative models of governance to increase our capacity and sustainability. The Centre has been the lead agent in the latest stage of this project and has made significant progress this year with the formation of the ‘INC Education Advisory & Support Service Co-op Ltd’ in April 2014

We continue to meet our purpose and to engage more people in learning and the civic life of our communities despite funding levels.

Karl Hessian
CHAIRMAN

TREASURER'S REPORT

Information used in the financial overview is extracted from the full financial report of The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne Inc. ("The Centre") for the year ended 30 June 2014.

For a complete understanding of the financial performance, financial position and activities of The Centre, the full financial report should be referred to. The full financial report also includes a full description of the accounting policies adopted by The Centre, and explanatory notes to the financial statements.

The full financial report, including the independent auditor's report, is available free of charge at www.centre.org.au or on request from The Centre by calling 03-9328 1126 or emailing finance@centre.org.au

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FOR THE YEAR ENDING

The financial reports for the period 2013-14 show a net loss of \$35124. This is a significant advance on the end of the previous financial year. Net assets / members' funds at 30 June 2014 reduced to \$32873. This amount included equity invested in equipment assets, funds designated for specific-purposes and general funds set aside for operational stability. The annual reduction in net assets reflected the annual deficit. Cash held at year-end increased to \$119215.

While we maintained a discipline of reducing expenses for the year it was not enough to offset our decrease in revenue from the City and other Government grants.

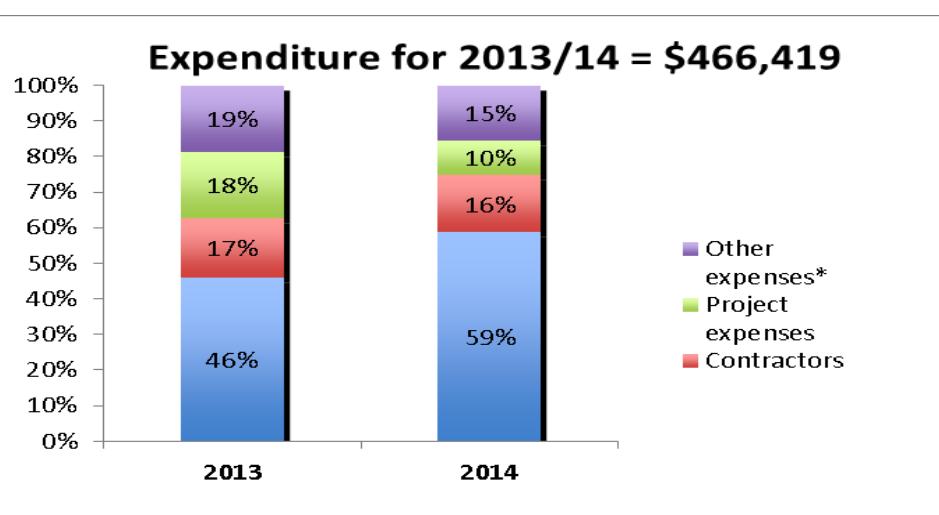
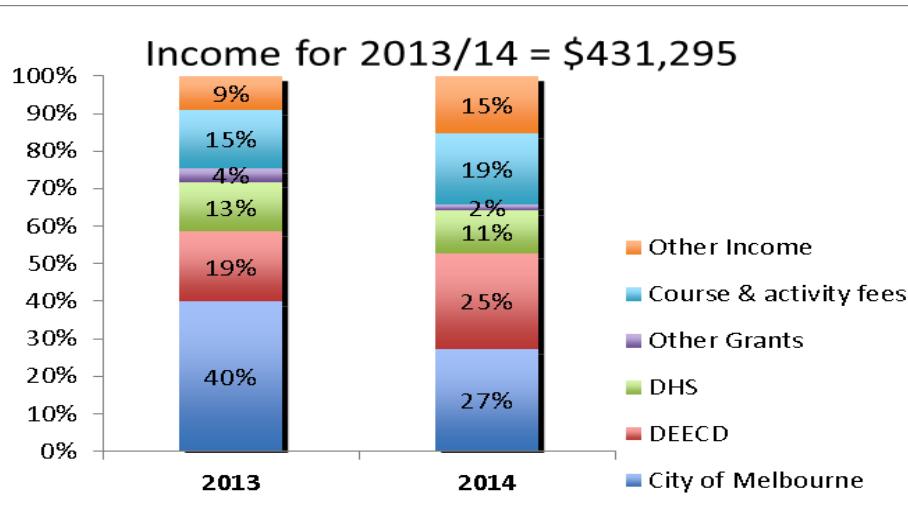
Course fees have increased, as have participations so we know that more people have engaged in our programs.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN

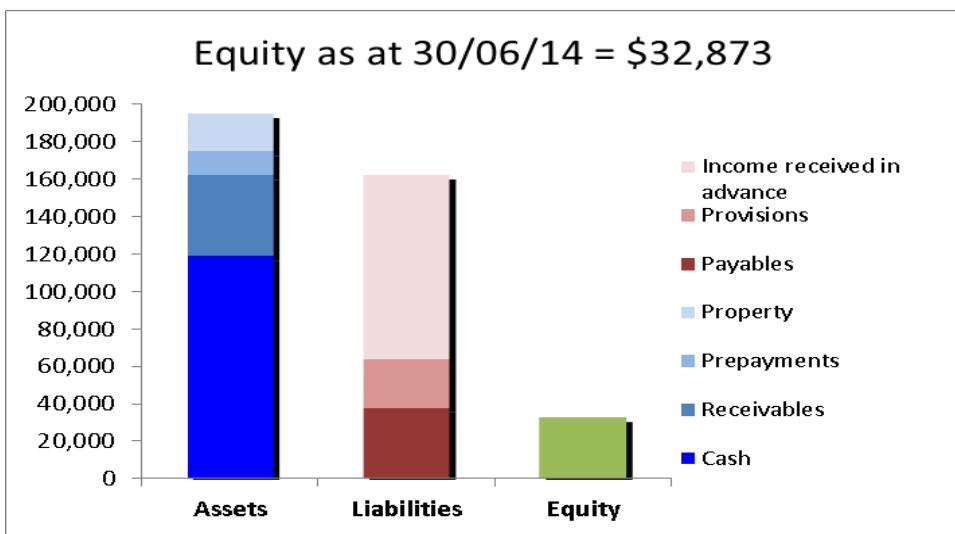
| Top-line Results | 2010/11* | 2011/12 | 2012/13* | 2013/14 |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------|-----------|----------|
| | AUD | AUD | AUD | AUD |
| Total Income | 427,246 | 380,349 | 351,192 | 431,295 |
| Total Expenditure | 419,666 | 274,139 | 482,760 | 466,419 |
| Net surplus (deficit) | 7,580 | 106,210 | (131,568) | (35,124) |
| Net assets at end [#] | 100,944 | 207,154 | 75,586 | 32,873 |
| Cash held at end [#] | 175,866 | 248,681 | 98,742 | 119,215 |

* Includes delivery of Spring Fling Street Festival during the period

May include committed funds held for future use



*Other Expenses include Advertising, Depreciation, Office and Program costs



The Centre acknowledges and is grateful for the continued support from all our funding partners.

We also acknowledge the efforts and commitment of The Centre's workforce, paid and volunteer, in helping to implement change and ultimately in serving the North & West Melbourne community. We are all integral to The Centre's transition and its future.

Our concentration for the coming financial year will be to increase revenue streams for specific programs and to ensure that projects are contained within program budgets

There are several agencies, sponsors and donors without whom we simply would not be able to continue as a charitable institution.

Doone Clifton
TREASURER

FINANCE

AUDITOR

In March 2014 our long standing auditor Sean Denham and Associates advised that due to increasing client demands combined with changes in auditing standards and auditing requirements they would be unable to continue to conduct our audits, wishing us all the best for the future.

We sought advice from our colleagues in the other neighbourhood houses and Learn Local centres as well as undertaking our own research and considered a select few auditors as a replacement.

We are pleased to advise that Mr Eugene Odachowski of J.P. Hardwick & Associates of Unit 7, 617-643 Spencer Street West Melbourne agreed to become our auditor in April 2014.

AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT FOR PROFITS COMMISSION

We have received advice that our status as a charitable institution (not entitled to receive tax deductible gifts) has been registered with the ACNC.

We are now required to complete an Annual Information Statement.

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE COORDINATION PROGRAM

The Centre is both a Learn Local adult education centre and a *Neighbourhood House*. Neighbourhood houses are funded by the Department of Human Services to support the engagement of a coordinator. They can also use the funds for community programs.



"Neighbourhood houses are not-for-profit centres where people of all abilities, backgrounds and ages come to:

- Meet, talk and make friends
- Develop new skills
- Transition to work and further study
- Volunteer
- Become involved in community events
- Find out about other services or activities in the area
- Join a class or support group
- Take up an activity for fun and enjoyment."

Last year, DHS and the Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres – ANHLC, partnered to reduce the reporting burden on neighbourhood houses by combining their annual reporting requirements into one annual survey.

During the census week beginning 2 September we asked as many people as possible who come to our programs and venues to complete the Participant Survey online, or fill in a simple survey. More than 170 hard copy forms were submitted and we have not yet been advised how many surveys were completed electronically.

How many hours per week of NHCP funding did we receive from DHS for the financial year? 20

How many people volunteer at The Centre in an average week (NOT including Management Committee members in their governance roles)? 21

With an estimated total number of volunteer hours in an average week of 63

Estimate of the total number of people who USE The Centre in an average week (including volunteers, students, children in care, people from other organisations who meet at The Centre and drop-ins): 101

How many hours of outreach does The Centre provide to another location/s in an average week?

Hours of outreach per week 9

In the 2013 calendar year we delivered 2270 community sessions

CITY OF MELBOURNE COMMUNITY SERVICES FUNDING (CSFA)

The funding we receive from the City is determined by a policy, which has been under review for quite some time (mid 2013). The updated Community Funding Policy 2013-2017 and the draft Neighbourhood House Policy, including the principle that neighbourhood houses are funded under a Strategic Partnership was approved in November 2013. Council has identified Neighbourhood Houses as a strategic partnership under the Community Funding Policy 2013 and provides annual funding to us to support the outcomes and deliver activities, initiatives and programs within the following objectives:



People are healthy

- Provide opportunities for people to access information and participate in activities that will improve their health & wellbeing.

People have knowledge and skills

- Provide leadership and capacity building for new and existing community organisations (may include training, mentoring, governance and auspice support).
- Provide affordable training for community needs, unmet through existing training structures (i.e. ACFE).
- Build upon existing NH training and support pathways to further employment / volunteering and education opportunities.

People are connected and participate

- Support and deliver community development programs and initiatives that respond to identified community needs and aspirations.
- Encourage community participation in civic and social activities (including local leadership, advocacy and participation in decision making processes).

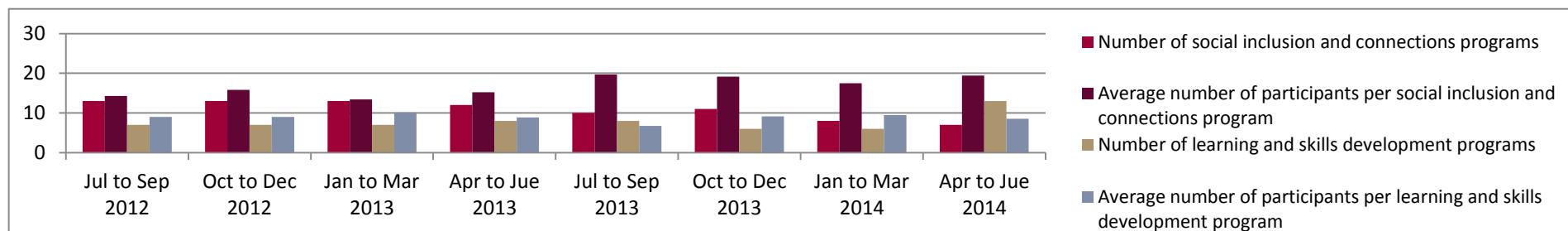
People feel they belong

- Create an environment that is inclusive, accessible and encourages participation.

Whilst Council acknowledged that neighbourhood houses provide a broad-based universal service with an aim to improve the quality of life of all people, this funding places an emphasis on sectors of the community that face barriers and are excluded from participating, with a focus on addressing disadvantage.

From November 2013 we were in discussion with the City representatives as to detail of the agreement as it applied to The Centre. The revised agreement was signed in August 2014 for the period 2014-2018. Funds are allocated based on an historical formula, which provides base funding and adjustments for disadvantage (based on the district SEIFA Index), and an adjustment for neighbourhood population. The new policy is a good one providing a two-year renewable funding cycle over the four-year period.

| | Jul to Sep 2012 | Oct to Dec 2012 | Jan to Mar 2013 | Apr to Jun 2013 | Jul to Sep 2013 | Oct to Dec 2013 | Jan to Mar 2014 | Apr to Jun 2014 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Data per quarter | | | | | | | | |
| Social inclusion and connections programs | | | | | | | | |
| Number of social inclusion and connections programs | 13 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 7 |
| Number of participants in social inclusion and connections programs | 186 | 206 | 175 | 183 | 197 | 211 | 140 | 136 |
| Average number of participants per social inclusion and connections program | 14.3 | 15.8 | 13.5 | 15.3 | 19.7 | 19.2 | 17.5 | 19.4 |
| Number of volunteers | 73 | 168 | 175 | 87 | 79 | 173 | 49 | 63 |
| Number concession card holders | 43 | 62 | | 55 | 57 | 61 | 62 | 39 |
| Number new enrolments | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 54 | 49 | 32 |
| Learning and skills development - pathways to employment programs | | | | | | | | |
| Number of learning and skills development programs | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 13 |
| Number of enrolments per learning and skills development programs | 63 | 63 | 71 | 71 | 54 | 55 | 57 | 111 |
| Average number of participants per learning and skills development program | 9.0 | 9.0 | 10.1 | 8.9 | 6.8 | 9.2 | 9.5 | 8.5 |
| New enrolments - learning and skills development programs | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 5 | 13 |



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In 2012 I initiated a five-year financial plan that was based on a stimulus plan for the redevelopment of The Centre. During the 2012-13 year we expended funds granted for specific purposes on those purposes. In the 2013-14 year just past we planned a more austere program hoping to end the year with a balanced budget. I regret that this was not achieved. The coming year must rein in the deficits from 2010.

We committed to stimulate our programs, activities and courses to rebuild the capability of The Centre's community development program, adult, community and further education provision and the delivery of community and social services. Through this strategy, we:

- delivered a record level of pre-accredited training,
- Boosted digital literacy content
- Secured Capacity and Innovation Funding to promote partnerships;
- enabled us to equitably support learners impeded by a lack of affordable childcare through the re-designed Family Learning Support Program.
- focused on participants facing barriers to participation and attainment.

As the Docklands precinct developed we rejuvenated our programming in that location. There was not enough engagement to develop viable and sustainable presence without the support of the City. In the process of the resigning of the new CSFA it was made clear that we were not to use City funding for the provision of services to that precinct. Yet our constitution directs us to undertake community capacity building initiatives and deliver programs and services for West Melbourne, which clearly has an equal focus towards both North Melbourne and Docklands.

Our flagship children's program, the Global Homework Program – GHP, has been deemed to be exemplary and it is particularly satisfying to expand it to the City of Hobsons Bay. But it forms only part of our overall foundation skills program, which also includes the creative arts skills through the Art Warriors and Art Heroes activities, and vocational preparation through *Workout*.

We extended the health and well being program to meet the needs the Builders and Boomers generations particularly those from a CALD background in the "Active at Any Age" initiative.

During the year we redesigned and reconfigured agreements with other organisations to support the establishment of durable partnerships, networks and organisational consolidation. The stronger relationship with the Errol's Angels Community Choir Inc., the Australian Legion of Ex-servicemen and Women and the INC are examples.

Maintaining our focus and refining our role to meet local community needs will continue to be our objective for the coming year. We will engage in and promote durable networks and co-location of services to improve pathways, service levels and sustainability within the role of 'Community Services Centre' and of course we intend to build the Learn Local capability to deliver high quality education and training services.



Michael J Halls
DIRECTOR

ACTIVITIES COURSES AND PROGRAMS

ART

The creative arts program is aimed at several audiences.

The *Art Institute* has not been well attended this year and it has not been delivered in the first two terms of 2014. We are revamping this long standing adult education and training initiative and looking to separate the art therapy component and the employability skills element.

After many years we discontinued our *Calligraphy* program due to waning demand. The *Blokes and Books* communication skills program at the Melbourne Remand Centre was also discontinued in the absence of funding from that agency.

Creative writing opportunities continue to be available for those who wish to participate in the *North and West Melbourne News*.

Children's art skills development is delivered through the *Art Warriors* and *Art Heroes* after school classes. The end of year *Art Heroes* celebration in December 2013 was well received by parents and participants alike. We were particularly sorry that the early childhood pilot program did not attract sufficient numbers to make it cost recovery and we had to suspend its availability for the time being.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CENTRE ADVENTURES AND BUS TRIPS:

The Centre Adventure occurs every third Tuesday of the month.

The bus trips are enormous fun, with lots of funny stories and unexpected comments. This year we visited Malmsbury and Tarradale, which were very pretty, but not much happening in terms of things to see or do. The Op Shop tour, which we do annually, is always popular. Last year we toured the 'posher' areas of Melbourne in search of treasures, this year we visited the St Kilda, Albert Park, South Melbourne area.

Market bus trips are also well attended. Mornington Market in March was coupled with a quick visit to see our former volunteer Val, who now lives in that area.

The first half of the 2013-14 year I worked as the community development coordinator. I spent time planning, organising and taking bus trips all over the outer Melbourne metropolitan area, running morning teas, a walking group, helping on the front desk every Tuesday morning, attending community groups meetings and co-writing funding submissions (some of which have been successful). I also took on the job of coordinating the delivery of the newspaper, which was no mean feat and my hat goes off to Helen Lew Ton for the great work she did over many years, stacking newspapers in piles for her volunteers to deliver to many parts of North Melbourne. I loved doing this part of my job and only wished I could have continued it. My daughter giving birth to twins in January prompted me to resign to help her, but felt it to be too much of a wrench to not be here so offered to volunteer to continue to organise and take the bus trips and morning teas from February to May. Community Development is such a vital part of The Centre. We want to offer people in the local area activities that make them feel included and are part of their community. We welcome everyone who wishes to join in. Robbie Cottrill

With the departure of our coordinator the new driver (the Director) and his off sider (the intern placement) took the group to Dandenong - Sky High Observatory and Gardens, sightseeing of the Dandenong Ranges and the sculptures and gardens, lunch at Grants on Sherbrooke and cockatoo and parrot feeding. Everyone had a disposable camera to capture the trip and they managed to take pictures of all the exciting things they saw.

The adventures give our participants a day away from their normal daily activities and gave them a day filled with excitement and surprises as well as enhancing or teaching them a skill like photography.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

In October 2013 our communities were invited to a workshop in George Johnson Lane; a sensory world of objects, books, photos, music and smells that evoked the past and triggered memories in an interactive and playful way. Under the guidance of art teachers participants were able to record their special memories in a variety of ways that were then shared with the wider community.

FOUNDATION SKILLS

WORKOUT PROGRAM (JOB READINESS)



The Workout Program is constantly evolving as it strives to best meet the needs of the residents of Judy Lazarus Transition Centre.

This year has seen the engagement of two organisations that are strategically placed to support the men in their job searches and the introduction of a digital literacy element.

Firstly in each 10 - week program we have a scheduled visit from a representative of WISE Employment, a job services agency with a program for ex-offenders which has the mission and the funds to meet the needs of these men to seek employment when they are released. WISE Employment has an excellent record of finding permanent work for the men on their books and they have a thorough understanding of all the support and training available to them. The input in to the Workout Program has been invaluable.

Secondly we have a representative from the TOLL Group Second-Step Program (a supported employment program for ex –offenders) visiting each cohort of men. The men can apply to the TOLL Group for a job through this program, or to TOLL directly for a position. The visiting representative offers insights and advice about the job search process and guides the men through successful job interview techniques. This latter element commenced in June 2014 and already one of the men has gained a place in the Second Step Program. This is a great achievement as there are currently only 40-50 places available across the country.



We are pleased to report that the program has just secured funding for the next two years. A significant grant from the R.E. Ross Trust Grants Program and a contribution from the JLTC Education Fund will ensure its sustainability into the immediate future.

The success of the Workout Program comes from its customisation; it is designed specifically for the men who attend and it is run in settings within the

community that foster a sense of belonging and connection.

The origins of this program come from a group of Somali mothers who formed a group for their children over ten years ago as a means of helping their children adjust to their new lives here in Australia having fled as refugees from Somalia. After their children had grown up they let the group come to an end and it was then picked up by The Centre.

The Coordinator extends the thanks

and respect of The Centre to the other teachers and staff of The Centre, the City Library and the workers at JLTC.

GLOBAL HOMEWORK PROGRAM

We report that it has again been a very successful past year and our program is expanding.

The program runs two sessions per week in 2014 (one primary and one secondary session) at the North Melbourne Library. Thirty-two students from nine different nationalities are currently enrolled and we are enrolling new students, as this report is prepared.

The strength of the program rests on a strong core group of 20 volunteer tutors whose consistency and dedication means that the students are well supported and feel very connected to the group. This has an extremely beneficial impact on their learning, self confidence and personal resilience. The students thrive in a group where the ratio of tutors to students is 1:2.

Student Comment

I said to one teenage student who has a sister in the program "Your sister loves coming to the homework program." He replied

"Everyone loves coming miss. The teachers are really nice"

Additionally, the program maintains sound structured sessions where students are focused on their tasks and encouraged to be responsible for their own learning, and routines. A "positive discipline approach" ensures the harmony of the groups and students continue to

enjoy the healthy snack program, learning challenges and the time set aside for experiential learning play and games with their tutors. Students' work appears regularly in the *North and West Melbourne News*.

The Global Homework Program has grown even further and spread to City of Hobsons Bay. We are an expanding universe. Thea Bates (former director of The Centre and staunch supporter of the Global Homework Program) in her new role as Coordinator Community Engagement and Partnerships, Hobsons Bay Libraries, observed that no such program existed in that area despite the

large number of refugee and migrant children in the school populations. She approached The Centre and discussions and consultations with schools and the Library resulted in The Centre agreeing to a contract to set up and run the GHP there.

The Centre provides the Coordinator and all administrative support. It recruits and trains volunteer tutors and implements the weekly program. The Library provides the venue, access to laptop computers and all printing and photocopying. A new initiative of the Hobsons Bay Libraries is the "Shared energy contribution scheme" which enables two Council staff members to volunteer in The Global Homework Program". This scheme has helped forge a deeper and more strongly connected relationship between the staff of the program and the staff of the library/council and helps students feel the same strong sense of belonging. The program flourishes with the full support of all the library staff.

The Altona location offers a session for 16 students from year 4 to year 9 out of the Altona North Community Library and we plan to extend that further to include a group of eight year 6 students as they transition to secondary school. (This focused group is generously funded by a grant from the Victorian Multicultural Commission.)

The children have taken to the program 'like ducks to water'. They rush in and get started on their tasks immediately and have embraced fully the principles and practices of the program right down to the Healthy Snack element and the learning challenge activities and raffle. The tutors are consistent, dedicated, very attentive and engage beautifully with the students.

The Altona North Program is fully funded by the Hobsons Bay City Council Libraries until July 2015.

The North Melbourne Program, however, is not fully funded. The Centre has introduced a small fee for participants. This was embraced and the program did not suffer a drop in enrolments Sustainable funding has yet to be found but staff are currently working on creating a Sponsorship Proposal to present to businesses. The Director has also spoken to two Rotary Clubs to seek support during the year past.

The Centre is pleased to acknowledge all those who make it what it is; dedicated staff, exceptional volunteers, the supportive staff in the libraries and the children and their families. We will always move and grow to meet the learning needs of children in North Melbourne and beyond.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

MORNING TEAS: HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Morning Teas are held monthly and are often very noisy, crowded affairs, which are enjoyed by all. We have great conversations, good food and coffee. It is a very comfortable atmosphere where old friends and new mix.



Christmas in July was a wonderful celebration. Sharon Orbell the Executive Director for the 2013 Spring Fling planned, shopped and cooked for this, aided by her sous chef. We had yummy food and it was a very convivial atmosphere.

ACTIVE SENIORS

During the year, the Centre made a number of grant applications to try to expand its health and wellness program. One proposal to the State of Victoria's CALD Seniors program was successful, and the program will commence in July 2014. The program, called *Active at Any Age*, will encourage seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds living in North and West Melbourne to participate in an activity program aimed at improving their health. It will offer information about nutrition, gentle exercise classes and healthy snacks, and will run on Tuesdays. It is based on the course called 'Introduction to Health' (originally known as 'Simple Steps to Better Health') that is offered through The Centre as part of its regular non-accredited course program.

READY STEADY WALK

We were lucky to have the benefit three Federation University students who undertook a project focusing on the development of a walking tour to create a sense of community within Docklands, bringing together groups of people, exposing the participants to using technology, and also providing the participants with a day of exercise.

The walking tour targets people of all ages, with different clues and locations for different age groups. It will foster effective learning as it will teach the community and residents of Docklands about their local area and uncover history that they may not have previously known. The participants will be using technology to guide them in their discovery process with the help of a team leader who can aid them if they get stuck and lead them in the right direction. Assessment can be achieved by seeing which group completes the trail the fastest or who finds the most correct history sights.

There are four different types of learning that this project addresses, that are civic learning, adult learning, social learning and learning by doing.

INFORMATION, DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

We implemented the Intel® Learn Easy Steps program which is a basic digital literacy course made available to Learn Local providers in 2013. It was a unique opportunity for Learn Local providers to access an internationally recognised digital literacy

I must admit I enjoy my time at the Centre delivering the above courses and find it most rewarding. I have the privilege to teach computer skills to some of the more marginalised groups of our community. I get real job satisfaction knowing that I have made a difference to someone's life, by helping them towards getting their life back on track, through teaching computer skills. It is heart-warming to see students who have never used a computer before, to be able to use their new found skills after they have completed the course.

Part of an email from one of my students:

'im just letting you know that im still useing what ya tought us and to say hello and thank you' (sic)

I look forward to continue providing these courses through The Centre. Hopefully, we will be able to expand our reach to include Ozanam House and other like Centres.

Tutor: Louise Cindric

program with associated training and curriculum supports.

The program was offered as an option for pre-accredited digital literacy delivery in Semester II - 2013. The course includes customised curriculum and support materials, a sample A-Frame and session plan, marketing materials to assist with promotion, and includes personalised training from an e-Mentor or e-Champion in how to deliver the program.

We offered three Pre-Accredited digital literacy courses this reporting period

- *Open Door* Job Search and Training: at Flagstaff Crisis Accommodation, for their clients,
- *Workout* Program: at The Centre, for Judy Lazarus Transition Centre participants
- Computers, One Step Further: at The Centre, for the general public.

NEWS

The Centre publishes the *North and West Melbourne News* quarterly and under the new editorship of Raphaelle Race has continued this long and enviable tradition. The editor is ably supported by the Production Coordinator Peter Alsen and a solid team of volunteers who undertake the entire development and delivery of each addition under the leadership of Adam Falloon deputy editor and Janet Graham business development coordinator.

Volunteers develop a variety of skills including printing and graphic arts, journalism, publication production and enterprise development.

SPRING FLING

The 2013 Spring Fling Street Festival marked the 36th year since the festival commenced. The Centre's key goals for the year sustainability of the festival and growth and engagement of the together with local traders, Melbourne and community

The 2013 Festival was held on along Errol Street and King and Victoria Street car park extension of the site was a huge an ideal location for a stage and vendors.

Spring Fling 2013 focused on interactive activities that fitted theme "Urban Village", exploring that define North and West Melbourne as such a desirable place to live and work. We felt it was important to highlight to the wider community, our attractive and liveable urban lifestyle and our diverse and rich heritage.



were to build on the increase community precinct by working sponsors, City of agencies.

Sunday 20 October, encompassed the for the first time. This success and proved a number of food

participative and with the festival the many aspects

COMMENTS FROM VOLUNTEERS:

The first time I had volunteered so I didn't know what to expect, though having great team leaders it was just a breeze the whole day. I had a fantastic experience!"

"The volunteer experience was absolutely wonderful. We were treated with the utmost respect and looked after in every sense of the phrase."

"It was great, the festival catered really well for volunteers. There was plenty of info, food and breaks provided. I honestly can't think how to improve it!"

"It was great for me to hold responsibility within the role and have a specific task to manage and oversee; I feel that I have really gained a great deal from volunteering with Spring Fling"

stallholders, resulting in stronger community support for the festival. It was calculated that we had over 80 stalls (not including those within the North Melbourne Markets) at the 2013 Spring Fling.

Critical to the success of the Spring Fling Festival was the contribution from volunteers. Over 120 volunteers took on roles leading up to and on the festival day resulting in 1931 hours contributed and around \$61000 value added to the Spring Fling Festival project in 2013. Volunteers gained sound foundation event management skills during their internship.

The estimated attendance at the 2013 Spring Fling Festival was approximately 16,000 people. Given that the weather was very windy and hot this was considered a good outcome. Over 200 festival attendees were surveyed at the festival. The results of the survey showed that:

- 63.4% of people surveyed were attending their first Spring Fling Festival.
- 46.5% travelled to the festival by walking.
- 74.6% of people surveyed thought the Spring Fling was one of the best when compared to other street festivals.

Some of the key interactive activities that took place at the 2013 Festival were the Queen Victoria Market Healthy Sandwich Making Competition, Spring Up Urban Forest, the Spring Fling Dog Show, Rotary's Bling Your Bicycle workshop, Your Story Photo Booth and The Centre's Hanging Urban Garden Workshop. All were considered hugely successful.

Local residents, traders and community agencies were prioritised when selecting successful applicants for

STALLHOLDERS SAID:

Happy Gelati: "Thank you for organising a wonderful event. You are such an excellent, responsible and reliable coordinator. The advertising before the event was attractive, the site map, the layout, the set up, the stage program and staff's help during the event was outstanding. Especially the communication, I really appreciate that you keep everyone up to date with the information and respond to emails quickly."

MelMade: "Thank you for allowing me to be a part of it all! I would love to come back again next year if the opportunity is there."

City of Melbourne Animal Management: "Our team attended your wonderful event yesterday. Well done on the day, it was truly marvelous and the best local event we have attended so far! We tagged along with our Urban Landscapes team and we were wondering if next year we could be invited and have our own tent to accommodate ourselves and other members of our branch, parking and local laws."

- 31.5% learnt a little more about their community at the Spring Fling Festival.

Through sponsorship and community support, Spring Fling brought in a total of nearly \$48000 in 2013. This figure includes grant allocations from City of Melbourne and City West Water, as well as sponsorship agreements with local traders and stallholder income. The festival did however make a loss due to high logistical costs and predominantly free programming resulting in very little event day income generated from activities. The aim moving forward is to continue working towards a sustainable annual event that promotes free community participation and attracts greater financial support from local agencies.

HUMAN RESOURCES

STAFFING

It was a year of many changes. Our long standing Community Development Coordinator Robbie Cottrill decided to retire to become a full time grandmother to twins. We are so very grateful that she has continued her involvement with us in a voluntary capacity. The Management Committee celebrated Robbie's contribution at a special meeting in December.

Our Administrative Assistant Ava Macmaster left to pursue her career with full time work but maintains her involvement as a News volunteer. Ava's replacement was another of our volunteers Bernadette Galbally.

It was a surprise arrival of Murray at 4:30 am Wednesday 21 May five weeks early to our Administration and Information Officer Perla Gerlic and dad Mike Collins. Perla is on maternity leave until May 2015 and has been replaced by Michele Clifton.

VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS AND PLACEMENT STUDENTS

We have reported above on the many volunteers, which make The Centre the success it is. We are blessed by their community spirit and commitment and we are truly awed by the large numbers that we have the privilege to work with.

This year we also seemed to attract a number of highly talented tertiary students who saw time with The Centre as a valuable learning experience. We thank

Munashe Zishiri: As a part of his Masters in International Community Development during his time with The Centre he took on a diverse set of responsibilities such as taking on the community group engagement program, tutoring in the Global Homework Program, helping out with the Morning Tea's and arranging a Bus Trip for the Seniors.

Sarah Ng and Kim Ng: From Hong Kong Baptist University and Lingnan University respectively This internship program was an exciting new development for us and the contribution from Sarah and Kim was greatly appreciated. They assisted in marketing and promotion, client services, Centre Adventures and Spring Fling support. We held a small informal dinner to farewell them.

Kelly Vanderwert, Hannah Portelli, and Jacqueline Trawn. As part of their Bachelor of Education studies with Federation University they completed their community enterprise collaboration with a partner from the local community (The Centre).

Lauren Hopley: Is completing an internship opportunity with the Spring Fling Festival as part of her University of Melbourne Executive Master of Arts program.

FRIENDSHIPS PARTNERSHIPS AND MEMBERSHIPS

PRECINCT

The Management Committee considered its engagement with the Precinct Association and their role in the advancement of North and West Melbourne in light of the expectations of our funding agencies to leverage educational and business development opportunities by contact with the local business community.

The City of Melbourne Precinct Program 2013-17 Guidelines approved by Council in June 2013 determine that a precinct association should be attempting the following objectives:

- a. Marketing and promotional activities for the benefit of the broader precinct geographic area to turn target market groups (i.e. residents, shoppers, workers, visitors) into customers.
- b. Activation initiatives, such as public events and markets, to drive visitation to precinct areas.
- c. Represent the interests and views of precinct members and constituency.
- d. Communicate with precinct constituency.
- e. Increase membership to ensure adequate representation of the views of traders within the defined precinct.
- f. Increase uptake by members in City of Melbourne marketing campaigns and promotions
- g. Commit to standards of conduct as described within these guidelines.
- h. Where possible, seek opportunities for Recognised Associations to collaboratively with each other marketing, events and promotion initiatives.

The Centre has for many years been achieving most of these objectives and the Management Committee endorsed the election of the Director as Vice President of the Precinct Association.

ERROL'S ANGELS COMMUNITY CHOIR

In her report to the Choir AGM their President Kath McPherson stated:

“The past year has been one of implementation with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with The Centre and its gradual implementation over the next three years whilst at the same time maintaining our independence as an Incorporated Association. EACC is now represented on The Centre’s Committee of Management at monthly meetings ensuring the choir’s inclusion and participation locally. The partnership has provided publicity and support for the choir both from Centre staff and Michael directly. EACC is now a Centre program.

The choir delivered outstanding performances at the Benefit Concert, The Light in Winter Festival, Spring Fling Festival and Carols in Errol Street. As Musical Director, Emily Hayes has provided a challenging and thoroughly enjoyable repertoire delivered with understanding and humor. The Choir has especially enjoyed re-visiting and polishing old favorites to achieve performance standard.”

The Choir was established in 2002 by The Centre and subsequently became an independent incorporated entity in 2007. In 2012 the then new Director of The Centre and the Chairperson of the Choir contacted each other to renew our relationship. In 2013 the Choir undertook a major review of its operation. That review concluded among other things that there were increasing cost and resource pressures on community based organisations.

The purpose of the new agreement is to further the aims and purposes of both organisations through the development of mutual cooperation, support and economies of scale so that they may contribute to the growth and capacity of our communities.

Future directions under discussion at the time of signing this agreement are:

- Fundraising events and concerts
- Reciprocal membership provisions
- Increased access for marginalised and disadvantaged persons
- Programs targeting gender, age, ethnicity and social and cultural diversity.
- Links with music and music technology and other performing arts initiatives
- Subsidised membership fees and charges
- Language Literacy and Song programs.

The term of the agreement is 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017 renewable subject to mutual agreement.



LEGION OF AUSTRALIAN EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN: NORTH AND WEST MELBOURNE BRANCH

ANZAC DAY

The Centre invited the local communities of North and West Melbourne to join with the Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women to commemorate those who had died in the cause of freedom.



At 2pm on ANZAC Day a ceremony took place at the North Melbourne war memorial, located at the corner of King Street and Hawke Street in North Melbourne. The Legion also kindly invited the community to share with them in refreshments at the Legion's hall after the ceremony

INC.

The Inner North Cluster (INC.) is a partnership of six Learn Locals in the inner north and inner west of Melbourne that wish to increase staff efficiency and revenue to address:

- the increasingly competitive nature of the adult education and training sector,
- the increasing complexity of compliance requirements,
- limited staff resources and expertise, and
- limited visibility of Learn Locals and ability to reach beyond current learner cohorts.

Specifically the INC is looking to:

- develop strategies to increase diversification of funding sources to overcome funding uncertainty, and
- increase our ability to deliver a wider variety of courses through an increase in scope of registration.

The INC also wishes to work towards creating better economies of scale through a shared services partnership (SSP). This includes (but is not limited to) transitioning the following business areas to a shared agency:

- human resources management including volunteer management,
- administration including compliance requirements,
- bulk, green and ethical purchasing,
- database management for courses, participants and other relationships, and

- financial management.

The INC believes they need to develop and expand its business capacity to:

- raise the profile of INC through branding and marketing,
- attract new and repeat participants,
- build better relationships with participants and businesses,
- diversify income sources to include streams such as donations and sponsorship, and
- better respond to changes within the education sector.

The Centre became the lead agent for the Leading Learn Locals (LLL) project, which will allow the INC to begin the necessary work and provide appropriate resources for achieving the objectives, outlined above. As a result of the project significant progress has been made in terms of the governance of INC with the formation of the 'INC Education Advisory & Support Service Co-op Ltd' in April 2014.

Challenges faced in setting the agency up have largely centred on ensuring the right balance between centralised and localised services and ensuring financial savings through increased efficiencies and the removal of duplication. Realising financial savings has and continues to be a critical aspect of the project necessary for ensuring the continuation of the INC service agency and shared services models beyond the period of the project.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Volunteering Victoria
- APRA|AMCOS Australian Performing Right Association and Australasian Mechanical Copyright Society
- VCOSS
- ANHLC
- Network West Membership
- North Melbourne Agency Collective

DONATIONS

Laurie Young glass sculptor has donated a number of art consumables for the children's programs and some VHS videos for general users as a result of the Nudibranch Art Glass Workshop (Downing Place North Melbourne) closure.

Art supplies were also generously donated by Jocelyn Sellers

In particular we thank the manager at our partner North Melbourne Language and Learning who paid for a ticket for our Community Development Coordinator to attend the Pink Ribbon Breakfast for breast cancer in October 2013.