



# Newtown Neighbourhood Centre Newsletter

## Centre News

April / May 2009

Hi All

Well its certainly beginning to feel as if autumn is approaching and we hope everybody had a great summer. Sydney always feels like a great place to be in the summer. There's a whole string of community and local festivals, which just seem to get bigger and better each year and this summer has been no exception. We had a great kick off to the summer with the Newtown Festival. The summer of festivals ended of course with Mardi Gras, which again demonstrated the city's ability to celebrate the diversity and difference of the peoples that live here – long may this continue!

Autumn is of course a sign of good things coming to an end – and the start of new things, which is how it feels at the Neighbourhood Centre this time of year. One of the good things that has come to an end has been the Presidency of James Thomas, who recently resigned his position. James has been involved in NNC for many years and remains very committed to the Centre and will still be assisting us with new projects in the future.



James first came on the board as a request of the then staff team. His experience with business

and especially the human resources side of business has been of great assistance to NNC. He has shown the greatest leadership, expertise and support with regard to the Newtown Festival. The Festival has really changed over the last few years especially in terms of making it even more of an inclusive community event. James was a driving force in making the Festival the success it is today. He has been of great assistance and support to the previous Coordinator as well as Lisa, who on a personal note would like to thank James for all the assistance and guidance he has shown. He always made himself available when needed. He generously shared his time, expertise and skills. One of the main things that was always impressive was how he could find the simplest solution to an issue. Thank you James and know that we appreciate all that you have given to the Centre.

Our next Autumn farewell is to our Community Development Worker – Rebecca Dudding – who after two and a half years of hard work, and some fantastic community events and projects, that will continue for many seasons to come, has sadly left NNC for pastures new.



Rebecca's position is made possible due to the funds we raise at the Newtown Festival. Within a

designated community development position Beck has greatly increased the number of people we can support at the front counter. Previously when people came to us for support our only option was to give them information on where they could go to for assistance. Since Beck started we have been able to develop more meaningful ways we can support people.

Beck developed many new groups such as Tai Chi, Housing Assistance and Referral Service and Street Soccer. She also facilitated some very successful forums such as the “Reconciliation after the Apology” and “Refugee Awareness” forums. Our volunteer program has been greatly enhanced since Beck’s arrival. The volunteer manual was reproduced; volunteers have been offered more training to support them in their role at the Centre.

Beck was a very hard worker who was never afraid to try something new to improve NNC. She always showed a great commitment to this community and was very much part of the community and was always looking at ways she could improve it. I believe many people would agree that Beck has provided much support and assistance to many people over the years. Beck, I know all of us at NNC will greatly miss your commitment, skills, kindness, sense of humour, dedication and your work ethic. I believe the community will also miss you very much.

We’re currently in the middle of the recruitment process to appoint a new Community Development Coordinator, and look forward to introducing them to you over the coming period. In the meantime, there may be a few occasions when we are not able to open due to the lack of staff members at the front counter.

We would also like to welcome some new people to our board, David McGuire and Amalina Wallace. They both come with a wealth of experience and knowledge, please see page 3 of this newsletter for more information. With the resignation of James we welcome Karen Walsh to the position of President. Karen previously held the position of Treasurer of NNC. New Board member David has now taken on the Treasurer position.

Recently NNC received some funding from the Mental Health Coordinating Council to look at ways NNC could better support people in this community living with a mental illness. One in five people will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives. Here at NNC we see many people who have been affected by mental illness. NNC will be running surveys and various focus groups to try and find out how their needs could best be met by us and the wider community. If you would like to have input into this project please contact Lisa on 9516 4755.

Other changes in our activities include the start of a new Thursday Day Care Centre for Greek speaking people – this will be held at the Herb Greedy hall and commenced Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March.

Our new Counsellor, Darren, has settled into the role – and offering a fantastic service that is free of charge to people seeking both short and medium term counselling. He is available on Monday mornings, and sessions need to be booked in advance.

*Lisa Burns & Paul Adabie*  
Executive Officer & Acting Executive Officer

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# Welcome to our new Board Members

## Amalina Wallace - Ordinary

I have a commitment to social justice and have worked with people of diverse backgrounds for over twenty years, including prisoners, refugees and people in need of housing. I currently work in the Multicultural Services Branch Centrelink, in their Prisons Servicing team. I have many years experience working with refugees and humanitarian entrants to Australia, both as a refugee assessing officer, and in the provision of settlement services as a Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Officer for DIAC with the CSSS program, helping community organisations funded to deliver settlement services to migrants and refugees. I assisted with the Muslim Community Reference Group and the Conference of Australian Imams.

In 1987 I worked as assistant to Aldo Gennaro, the occupational therapist, helping with art and drama therapy workshops for people with a range of disabilities. As a housing worker at ARCH I helped develop co-ops for Vietnamese, Arabic, Tongan, Filipino, and Chilean tenants, co-ops for people with disabilities and for single mothers and their children. Previously co-ops had only been set up for city residents of Anglo-Australian background.

I have been a Director of the Board, Association to Resource Co-operative Housing, 1989, and at various times during the 90s. I was Project Director of "Daughters of Fearlessness", a book produced for UNICEF, 1989 by Floating Eaglefeather, a native American Storyteller. I wrote three successful housing submissions, for Warilla, Aboriginal Co-op subsequently built in the Wollongong area, Emoh Ruo Housing Co-op, for a community for artists subsequently built in Erskineville, and for Extended Family Co-op, a housing project for women built in Petersham and Marrickville.

I was a union workplace delegate for some years and worked as a cartoonist and illustrator in the late 80s, for a number of unions and community organisation, through Breakout Press.

## David McGuire - Treasurer

I am currently a Redfern resident and have lived in the Newtown/Erskineville/Redfern area since 2003. Newtown however has felt like my spiritual centre of Sydney since I 'discovered' it in 1996, shortly after arriving from North Queensland where I grew up.

My background is in teaching and learning and I have worked in the community sector for about 12 years - in both NGO and also Government Roles. The roles include as a Youth Worker co-located in a Neighbourhood Centre through to ones focused on funding administration and capacity building with community services.

My interest in joining the NNC Board stems from a desire to build some stronger connections with where I live and also wanting to stay grounded with the realities and challenges of strong community organisations like NNC. The thing that excites me most about NNC is its commitment to marginalised and forgotten groups and taking real actions towards creating a just community that includes and acts.

## NAG: Newtown Agencies Group

A new group representing community agencies in Newtown is taking off and agreed to meet on a regular basis. Following some ad-hoc meetings with a number of community agencies including the Newtown Mission, Our Place, Community Restorative Council and ofcourse NNC, we've agreed to formalise and set ourselves up as the 'NAG' group – Newtown Agencies Group.

The group aims to bring agencies working in the Newtown area closer together, to share and exchange information, identify common problems and concerns and develop ways of working together more closely. In the future we hope to be in a position to advocate and lobby as a joint body on issues that affect the community in Newtown.

The next meeting has been set for Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 10am at NNC so if you represent an agency working in Newtown come along! Meetings thereafter will be on the first Thursday of the month every other month (July, September etc). For more information contact Paul at the Centre.

## Mental Health in the Area

NNC has been successful in obtaining funds to research mental health needs of people using the neighbourhood centre and local people.

The research aims to gather information in three main areas:

- To get a picture of what issues individuals have around their own mental health
- To identify what and how NNC currently goes about supporting people with mental health issues.
- What mental health supports are in the local area

This information will be used to inform needs in the area, what and how NNC can best meet these needs, such as seeking funding for specific services, support other agencies or to develop partnerships to do this.

Consultations will be carried out over the next few months, so look out for various consultations that will be undertaken via paper & computer based questionnaires and focus groups.

Results of the consultancy will be launched at the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre's Annual General Meeting in September and as part of Mental Health week in October.

For more info contact Leigh Connell at NNC on 9516 4755.

## Client and Carer Forum

The Department of Ageing and Disability and Home Care are holding an information exchange for clients, families and carers. The forum is an opportunity for you to discuss your experiences and express your ideas about delivery of services to older people, people with disabilities, their families and carers.

**When:** Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 11am-2pm

**Where:** Marrickville Town Hall  
303 Marrickville Rd Marrickville.

Light refreshments will be provided



## A service of Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc.

Trained respite mental health staff can provide a variety of services specifically to meet the needs of mental health consumers, their carers, family and friends.

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc. is funded to offer new innovative and flexible respite services and/or expand on existing mental health respite programs. This means providing activities for people with mental illness so that their families/carers can have a much needed break. Some examples of respite models that are being offered include:

- In home respite – where respite is provided by a respite worker in the carer/care recipient's home.
- Centre-based respite – where multiple care recipients with similar care needs are engaged in supervised activities in a building leased or owned by the service.
- Flexible respite - services that offer any combination of own home and/or centre-based.
- Cottage day and/or overnight respite - where multiple care recipients with similar care needs are cared for in a building leased or owned by the service that simulates a home-like environment.
- Recreational respite – where services focus on involving the care recipient in community activities including one-on-one respite.

### How to access Respite Services?

Respite Services are offered, in most cases, at no charge to the carer or the care recipient. Very occasionally (for example on a holiday away) there may be a small contribution to be made. Anyone can make a referral to Respite Services. Just contact them by telephone on 9747 8616 Or by email: [Respite-admin@sfnsw.org.au](mailto:Respite-admin@sfnsw.org.au)

Respite Services of the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc. is funded by the Australian Government under the Mental Health Respite Program.

## NNC Events and Activities

### ★ NNC Community BBQ's

#### February BBQ

Our first community BBQ for the year saw everyone enjoying a BBQ lunch and the community atmosphere. Representatives from Petersham Tafe, and the Redfern Waterloo Authority came along to let us know about some of the different courses that they run in the area.

#### Petersham Tafe

Petersham Tafe provides many vocational courses and services including literacy and numeracy, a disability consultant, counselling service and Aboriginal education.

For more information please call 9335 2500 or Outreach on 9335 2548.

#### Redfern and Waterloo Authority

This organization offers several courses including:

- Koori Construction Course
- Hospitality Course
- Forklift and warehouse training

For more information please call 9202 9100



#### March BBQ

Our March BBQ was an opportunity for members of the community to farewell Beck our Community Development Officer. Many showed up on the day to offer their thanks and appreciation to Beck for her valuable assistance and efforts for the local community. Members of the community and NNC staff, students and volunteers wished Beck well for the future

### ★ Hepatitis Awareness BBQ

Hepatitis Awareness Week falls between May 18-23<sup>rd</sup>. In an effort to support this worthy aim our last community BBQ for the 2009 summer will be focussed on Hepatitis Awareness.

Hepatitis means liver inflammation (bruised and swollen). It can be caused by drinking too much alcohol, by different viruses or toxic chemicals and drugs.

There are a number of different viruses, e.g. A, B & C. Although they all affect the liver they are all quite different. They are transmitted differently and do not cause the same level of illness and may require different treatment.

If you want to know more about Hepatitis, its causes, effects and treatments, come to the NNC BBQ where we will have a Hep C Health Promotion Officer and a Hepatitis nurse available to offer advice and information about Hepatitis. So please come along and have a good feed and get some valuable information.

**When:** Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 12noon-1:30pm

**Where:** Out the front of NNC



What a great way to have some fun, maybe win a prize and make some new friends!

**Where:** Newtown Neighbourhood Centre,  
In the Hall  
(opposite Newtown train station).

**When:** Every second Friday  
3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> April  
1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> May

**Time:** Starts 10am, finishes 1pm.  
**Cost:** \$2.50 for 1 booklet (10 games)  
or \$2 for more than one

**Prizes:** Include groceries and household goods, chocolates, toasters, kettles, towels, watches, CDs and more.

All ages allowed. We regret that there is limited access for those with mobility difficulty.

## ★ Street Soccer



### Marrickville Street Socceros Vs Marrickville Council: The Re-match

On Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> February our Street Socceros lined up for the re-match against Marrickville Council after finishing at 6-6 in the first game. It was a fantastic match, the Socceros displayed great skill, sportsmanship and teamwork after leading by 2 at half time. Marrickville Council played a very strong game and brought it home winning at final time.

We hope that the Marrickville Street Socceros will be playing against Housing NSW Broadway at the end of April and if so we look forward to another exciting match.



## ★ Gentle Exercise Classes

Open to Men and Women over the age of 55



**When:** Thursdays 10am – 11am  
**Where:** Newtown Neighbourhood Centre  
**Cost:** \$3 per session regulars  
\$4 per session casual

Call Dushanka at NNC on **9516 4755** if you would like to book into the class or for further information.

## ★ Tai Chi

Feel Better, Look Better, Think Better, Relax from the inside out

**Where:** Newtown Neighbourhood Centre  
**When:** Tuesdays 1-2pm  
**Cost:** \$2.50 unwaged and \$5 waged  
**Wear:** Comfortable clothes & flat shoes

An enrolment form needs to be filled out prior to class; these can be collected from NNC or completed on the day.

## ★ Homeless Persons Legal Service (HPLS)

NNC in partnership with HPLS and Newtown Mission Church run a free weekly legal service where people can receive advice and assistance on issues such as housing, employment, Centrelink and Mental Health. The service is for anyone who is homeless, in insecure or short-term housing.

**When:** Fridays 1:30 - 2:30pm  
**Where:** The Drop In Centre  
Newtown Mission Church  
280a King Street, Newtown.

So if you need legal advice, please come down and chat to our friendly lawyers.

## ★ Housing Assistance & Referral Service (HARS)

Assisting people to find secure, affordable and appropriate housing

- This is a free service
- You do not need an appointment

**Where:** Newtown Neighbourhood Centre,  
**When:** Mondays 2:00-3:30pm  
Wednesdays 2:00 - 3:30pm

HARS is a joint initiative of NNC and the Inner City Homelessness Outreach and Support Service (ICHOSS). For more info call Paul or Marianne on 9516 4755.



## ★ Housing NSW Outreach Service

- Living in, or trying to get into, public housing with Housing NSW?
- Need help filling out forms?
- Is it difficult to get to Broadway?

Then come along to the Housing NSW Outreach Service at NNC. Workers from Housing NSW Broadway branch will be available to assist you with your housing needs.

**When:** Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> April

Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> May

**Where:** NNC (opp Newtown Station)

## ★ Wrap With Love

Women from the “Wrap with Love” Multicultural Women’s Group participated at the International Women’s Day celebrations in Marrickville by holding a knitting workshop. The ladies knit squares and create wonderful rugs that are distributed to those experiencing trauma both here in Australia and overseas.



*Wrap with Love ladies taking pride in their craft.*

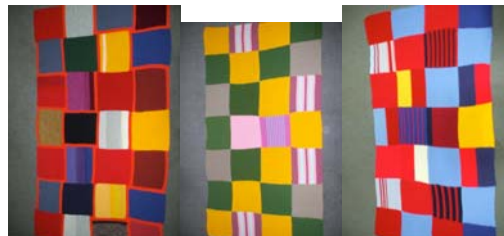
The Wrap with Love group encouraged other women to join in and try their hand at knitting and to support this cause by joining knitting groups or knitting squares at home and donating them to Wrap with Love knitting groups.

NNC has two ‘Wrap with Love’ knitting groups, one that meets on Thursdays and is open to the general community, and the other is on Mondays and is part of the Day Care Centre for Communities of Former Yugoslavia.

All are welcome at our Thursday group. If you cannot attend and would like to contribute you can knit squares at home. We can provide you with wool and specifications for knitting squares. We also need supplies so if you have spare wool (ply 8, 5, 3) or knitting needles (size 8) or want more info contact Dushanka on 9516 4755.

**When:** Thursdays 10.45am to 12 noon.

**Where:** NNC - 1 Bedford St. Newtown



*Recent creations of the Wrap With Love Groups*

## NNC Welcomes All

NNC is a Neighbourhood Centre for all members of the community. Set in the very diverse and active Newtown we see and celebrate all shapes and sizes. Even so we would like to show our appreciation for the more intriguing and unusual.

Last month NNC received a visit from one of its most unique and interesting community members yet. Late on a busy Tuesday afternoon NNC workers were delightfully surprised to see a goat in our foyer area.

The very attentive and inquisitive fellow didn’t require any information or referrals but was happy to climb up onto one of the foyer desks and generally charm everyone with his billy-goatedness.

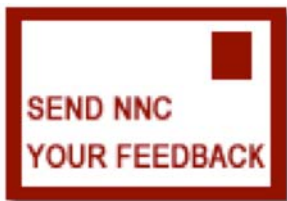


[www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org)

The Newtown Neighbourhood Centre makes changes and updates to our website regularly, however of late we have added some new features that we think will be of use to members of the community or other services who utilise and visit our website.

We have recently included a search engine function that will allow users the ability to easily access the information on the 120 pages of our site. Simply type in a key word or search term and any information we have on that particular area will be displayed with a link to the appropriate page. All you need to do then is click on the link. It is a quick and easy way of accessing information.

We have also added a newer easy-to-use feedback form on our homepage. Just click on our "Feedback" button and tell us what you think of our site and our services.



We are constantly updating our Information Sheets pages with a recent addition being the Family Services section. Please feel free to browse through the Information Sheets and find out more about the services and resources in our local community.

We have also added new Community Links on our Links page. This page provides a quick reference to external organisations and resources regarding Aged, Care related, Community, Family, Government and Housing.

In the next few months, please stay tuned, as we will start to update our site with information for the 2009 Newtown Festival!

## Join Us In Making Newtown A Fairtrade Town



Newtown Neighbourhood Centre is in the process of becoming Fairtrade friendly and we hope you will join us, by telling your local café or supermarket that if they sold Fairtrade coffee and other products you would buy them.

Fairtrade is a certification and labeling system that ensures that the product being traded is traded ethically. When you buy Fairtrade coffee, tea and chocolate you know that the farmer who grew it is earning enough for the basics of life – food, shelter, healthcare and education for their children. The number of Fairtrade products available is growing, and many are of high quality and value.

Over the last few weeks one of our fantastic volunteers Miriam has been calling and sending letters to the Supermarkets around the area asking them to stock Fairtrade products. We have also sent Marrickville Council and City of Sydney council letters and information asking them to consider the possibility of becoming a Fairtrade council- meaning that all the council offices would serve Fairtrade coffee and tea in their staff rooms.

If you would like to do more about making trade fair you can visit: [www.fairtrade.com.au](http://www.fairtrade.com.au). You can also write letters to your local supermarket and encourage your workplace to stock Fairtrade products.

## Cycling: Build it into your life

Cycling will help you keep fit and healthy. Everyone can experience significant health benefits by doing 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day. An easy way of achieving this level of activity is to build it into your lifestyle, through activities like cycling to Uni, work or to social and sporting events.

### Cycling Safety and Tips

#### Avoiding Road Hazards

- Be seen – wear bright visible clothing
- Be predictable
- Assertively take your space on the road
- Watch out for opening car doors

#### Your rights as a cyclist

- Occupy a whole lane
- Ride 2 abreast no more than 1.5 meters apart
- Travel on footpath where indicated by signage
- Travel in Bus Lanes and Transit Lanes, except for Bus Only lanes
- Ride on the footpath if you are less than 12 years old (or an adult with a child less than 12 years old)
- Travel to the front of a line of traffic on the left hand side
- Turn right from the left hand lane of a multi-lane roundabout

#### Things to Remember

- Wear an approved bike helmet
- A bike must have at least one working brake and either a bell or a horn
- At night, a bike must have a steady or flashing white light at the front and a steady or flashing red light at the rear of the bike.

### Useful cycling information

- Bicycle NSW [www.bicyclensw.org.au](http://www.bicyclensw.org.au)  
Ph: 9218 5400
- Bike-it Sydney [www.bike-it.com.au](http://www.bike-it.com.au)  
Purchase from Bicycles NSW or bike shops
- Bike Rides Around Sydney [www.osp.com.au](http://www.osp.com.au)  
Open Spaces Publishing
- RTA Cycling maps: 1800 060 607  
[www.rta.nsw.gov.au/bicycles.htm](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/bicycles.htm)
- Calender of SOCIAL RIDES of all levels:  
[www.pushon.com](http://www.pushon.com)

### Cycling skills Courses

If you're new to cycling or want to improve your skills, why not join a cycling course? Practice stopping and starting, riding through narrow spaces, manoeuvring and taking tight turns, using gears and cycling in traffic. Beginner and intermediate levels are available for adults aged 17 and over.

For more information contact:

Sydney Community College Ph: 8752 7555  
[www.sydneycommunitycollege.com.au](http://www.sydneycommunitycollege.com.au)

*Information courtesy of 'Cycling Around' The University of Sydney and the Sydney South West Area Health Service*

### Free Marrickville Council Waste Service

Marrickville Council offers residents a free waste collection service throughout the year for items totalling up to 2 cubic metres. There are 3 separate collection services available:

- General Cleanup service picks up furniture, floor coverings, and small appliances.
- Bulk Green Waste service takes away prunings and tree branches up to 1m long and 15cm diameter bundled neatly on curbside. All other green waste including lawn clippings, leaves, flowers and weeds should be placed in curbside green waste bin.
- Whitegoods/Metal Goods service collects stoves, washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers, hot water systems, guttering up to 1.8m long and metal goods. Due to safety requirements, all fridges and freezers must have their doors removed before being placed for collection.

These services aim to prevent illegal dumping of household rubbish, garden waste, building and commercial waste or other materials in and around street litter bins in the Marrickville local government area, which is a serious concern for the community and a key priority for Council.

To book Marrickville Council's free waste collection service phone 9335 2137 or visit [www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au)

*The above article was taken from Marrickville Matters Feb 2009 vol 25 no.1*

## Accessible Transport in Marrickville

Marrickville Council has put together an Accessible Public Transport Information Kit and factsheets about issues around accessible transport in the Marrickville area and how limited accessible transport affects our community. For more info or to download the Kit or fact sheets please visit:

[www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/accessibletransport.htm](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/accessibletransport.htm)

### Do you know:

- Anyone with young kids
- Someone with a disability
- An aged pensioner

If yes, then this concerns you.

Did you know that 1 in 5 people have a disability? Every Australian (including you) now spends an average of 20 years of their life with a disabling condition. Therefore access affects everyone.

### Some statistics:

72,000 people live in Marrickville  
12,000 of these people live with a disability  
7,500 of these people are over 65  
4,000 of these people are under 5

Of the 9 train stations in the Marrickville area (including Newtown) NONE have lifts or ramps to reach the platform meaning that anyone with reduced mobility including older people, people with shopping and parents/carers with prams are unable to easily access the train, if at all.

Newtown and Sydenham stations have been included in the State's Easy Access Program with proposed upgrades happening in 2011 and 2012 respectively. None of Marrickville's other 7 stations have been earmarked for an upgrade. In 4 years time Marrickville will still have the least accessible rail transport in southern Sydney region.

Commonwealth and States agreed to a 20-year timeframe in which to upgrade all public transport, under the Disability Discrimination Act Standards. By 2012 Marrickville will have 12.5% of its stations upgraded compared to other local government areas in the region, which have, on average, 70%. This will continue to disadvantage residents and businesses in Marrickville.

*The above information is taken from fact sheet #1 prepared by Marrickville Council.*

The Cooks River is a precious cultural, environmental and geographical icon of the Marrickville area and will be celebrated at the interactive SUSTAIN – Cooks River Eco Fest on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

The Eco Fest will be held at Steel Park, Marrickville South, from 11am-4pm and will feature an eco-friendly entertainment line-up plus a fun, interactive sustainable arts program, all aimed at boosting awareness of the local environment and the impact we have on it.

There will be an entertainment and arts program, a range of stalls showcasing sustainable living products, organic and natural foods plus information on how we can all do our bit for the environment.

The Sustainable Water Showcase is a key feature of the event, bringing together information and displays on ways to reduce our impact on our critical water shortage through rainwater harvesting, safe greywater and other means. There will be demonstrations, workshops, tours and talks, aimed at providing visitors with practical skills and inspiration to use water carefully at work and at home.

A Sustainable Artists Gallery will feature art using found objects, with local artists creating art from recycled and sustainable materials.

**When:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2009

**Time:** 11am – 4pm

**Where:** Steel Park

Illawarra Road Marrickville

For more information please visit [www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au) or phone Marrickville Council's Events Coordinator on 9335 2222.

*The above article was taken from Marrickville Matters Feb 2009 vol 25 no.1*

# Victorian Bushfire Appeal

NNC would like to applaud all those members of the Australian community who contributed to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal. We would also like to thank all those locally who donated, whether it be independently or as part of one of our projects. The generosity and compassion shown by the Australian public was a true testament to the life and spark of 'community spirit'. Lending a hand in a time of need is a wonderful deed and even more so when you may not know the individuals involved. How remarkable and inspiring it was to witness such generosity, especially at the forefront of a financial crisis!

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre passed around the hat in traditional Aussie fashion and raised funds for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal by collecting money at many of its regular project events as well as at our Community BBQ. Staff members dug deep and donated funds as well. NNC also allowed staff members to donate blood during their working hours.

Funds raised for the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Appeal will be used to provide assistance to individuals and communities in towns and suburbs affected by the bushfires. An independent panel made up of community leaders is overseeing the Appeal Fund's operation. The Victorian Government will manage distribution of the funds. Red Cross will not deduct any costs from public donations to cover Appeal costs and all interest earned on donations will be invested back into the Appeal.

## Community minded seniors in Newtown show their support

The Multicultural Neighbour Aid – CFF Yugoslavia group took part in fundraising to support the victims of the Victorian bushfires during the group's weekly gathering at the day care centre on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February.

Group members made cash donations and donated items for bingo prizes, with all proceeds going to the appeal. It did not take long to collect \$120 on the day.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all our group members for being so generous.



*Members of the Monday CFF Yugoslavia Group*

The Greek Pensioners Group Marrickville and the Tuesday Seniors HACC Group participated in a fundraising event in order to support the victims of the devastating bushfires in Victoria. The event took place at our local day care centre during our weekly meeting on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Group members donated old and new items for the raffles and also purchased raffle tickets with all proceeds going to the appeal.

Even though these are difficult financial times for many people including our seniors their generosity was overwhelming. Some of the items that were donated ranged from children's teddy bears to kitchen items, shoes and clothing.

The event was followed by a light lunch. \$200 was collected on the day. Thank you and well done to all our members for participating and supporting another fundraising community event.



*Members of the Greek group and their donated items*

## Greek Multicultural Neighbour Aid

NNC is pleased to announce that there will be an ADDITIONAL SERVICE for the Greek speaking frail, elderly and their carers in Marrickville. This service is funded by the Australian Government and the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care under the Home and Community Care Program.

This service will be another day of The Greek Speaking Day Care Centre and will be held every Thursday.

The Group will meet on Thursday mornings, on a weekly basis for social interaction, information sessions and games. In order to maintain and enhance the quality of life and independence of clients within the HACC target language group living in Marrickville Local Government Area.

Day Care Centre activities will commence on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009 and will be held at:

HERBERT GREEDY HALL  
79 Petersham Rd  
Marrickville

For further information about the Greek Speaking Day Care Centre please contact Marie Kostov or Paul Adabie at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre on 9516 4755 or via email: [greek@newtowncentre.org](mailto:greek@newtowncentre.org)

## Boarding House Project News

2009 had got off to a flying start, the Christmas cards are long gone, the regular activities are back up and running and the summer games and BBQs are finished until spring.

### Activities & Links

Every Thursday we have the sounds of Sydney Street Choir filling the hall at NNC. The venue change is proving successful with having a bigger space, close access to public transport and the monthly NNC BBQ being a hit.

Alternating Fridays NNC bingo and our women's group is doing well, especially for those who get torn between which to attend!

The weekly street soccer is gearing up for another challenge match against Marrickville Council workers. Several boarding house residents really have their eye on the ball and developing great goal-keeping skills. Well done John & Anthony.

### Financial Management

Changes with the Office of the Protective Commissioner (OPC) has resulted in the ALI program assisting residents with a financial guardianship order in licensed boarding houses to participate in reviews of their finances. The current trial is with one LRC and the feedback so far has been positive. Many residents have a clearer idea of their financial situation, and particularly in line with the Federal bonus money late last year can make plans to purchase specific things. The ALI program assistance was via helping those that needed to attend the meeting, setting up bank accounts and facilitating shopping trips as need be. It is envisaged that this trial will be evaluated by the OPC for further expansion to other LRCs.

### Ali Review

Active Linking Initiative programs across NSW are currently being looked at in view of the programs objectives. The NNC program was one that was chosen for face-to-face interviews, this included two LRC residents and a manager being interviewed along with myself. There is no doubt that this program gets positive and meaningful outcome for residents in social and independent skill development. Of a greater challenge is for educational and vocational linkages particularly in line with the ageing residents, individual's health issues and financial disadvantage.

### Students

We welcome two new OT students, Semray and Erin are with the team for 7 seven weeks. They are attending various groups, going out with Joel to learn about unlicensed boarding houses and will be out and about with walking groups from the houses.

## International Women's Day & Seniors Week

Various celebrations for these have taken place in the community. The Marrickville IWD event had a few changes this year including trying a dinner rather than a breakfast but for the BHP women it was the range of activities and entertainment that was most enjoyable.

The Premiers seniors concert at the Entertainment centre was lots of fun for a handful of the older residents. With a theme of "Black and white piano" a broad range of musical styles from jazz, contemporary, rock and light classical repertoires were enjoyed.

## Boarding House Assistance Group (Bhag)

This group made up of services that support people living in unlicensed boarding houses are just about to hold their first forum for the year. The first one on March eighteenth is for managers of unlicensed boarding houses to learn of supports available to residents and the following week is one for residents. To learn more about this group call Joel at NNC on 9516 4755.

*Leigh Connell*

*Boarding House Project Manager*

## Auction funds for Sydney Street Choir

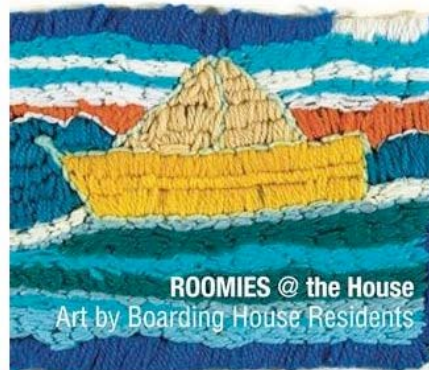
Last year "the works" an advertising agency based in North Sydney held an art auction with funds raised going to Sydney Street Choir.

The agencies artistic talents were put to work on various pieces and at a night of fun and frivolity \$8,237 was raised.

The choir performed and charmed the ambitious team at "the works" with some of their wonderful renditions and personal stories.

A big thank you to "the works" and those that bought art works, the funds will go to keeping the Choir operating and being able to bring some light to the lives of others.

## ROOMIES @ The House



For the month of February ROOMIES art works were on exhibition at the fountain court space at NSW Parliament House in Macquarie Street. This was quite a different venue for the group to exhibit. One wonderful plus was having enough space for the mentor artists that work alongside ROOMIES to show their works. Seraphina had her delicate print making, Marlysse had her portraits sitting next to Marks "boys at the beach", Natalie took us to central Australia with a wonderful landscape whilst Anne had her "Alice in wonderland" characters keeping watch over the exhibition and lastly the guerrilla knitter Denise had photos of her street art and a delightful shot of Clarrice with a milkshake.

We were honoured to have the Hon Penny Sharpe be our parliamentary host for the exhibition and thank her for her support and kind works in opening the show. About 50 people attended the opening, which was followed by afternoon tea in the "strangers" room overlooking the Domain.

The variety of works for sale can be viewed at <http://www.artwhatson.com.au/> then go to galleries then ROOMIES artspace.



*The Hon. Penny Sharpe opening the exhibition*

Old Town Hall, Corner King & Australia Street, PO Box 19 Newtown 2042

Ph: 9516 4755 Fax: 9519 2509 Email: [admin@newtowncentre.org](mailto:admin@newtowncentre.org) [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org)

*A just community that includes and acts*

## Shopping Service News



*Trent the Shopping Bus Assistant*

I've been working on the bus service almost a year now and so far it's been a great and fun experience.

Coming straight from a typical school environment where every day is dreaded, to being able to wake up in the morning for a job you actually look forward to, is a dream come true for me.

Three days a week we pick up two groups of people and take them to the Marrickville Metro so they can do their fortnightly shopping. The journey to get them and bring them back home is always fun.

With my Co-worker Robin, we always get the job done right on time and are always reliable but at the same time have a great deal of fun laughing and joking around with the 'ladies' on board as I like to call them. Also learning Greek from our Greek ladies is hilarious when every time you say a word, the whole bus claps and cheers.

You can define the best job where your work doesn't feel like work to you, and mine doesn't. I take enjoyment from seeing their smiling faces in the morning and knowing I can help make their day a little easier and in turn they see my smiling face right back at them.

So far the job has been a great experience and you could see me here for some years to come.

*Trent Thomas*  
*Shopping Bus Assistant*

## Community Development Report



*Beck at her farewell afternoon tea*

I would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to the Newtown Community as I leave the Community Development Officer position. It has been a privilege to work in the community over the last two and a half years and get to know and work with many fantastic community minded and caring people, both professionals and members of the general public. Thank you to all those who have shared their lives with me, whether over the front counter or through the many groups that we run out of NNC. I also want to say a huge thank you to the volunteers and students that have worked alongside me and continue to do such a fantastic job, thank you for your commitment to the Newtown community. Of course I want to say a huge thank you to all the staff at NNC and our fantastic Board.

Some of the highlights over my time here have included the 'Ask Kids' Art Exhibition, The 'Refugee Awareness and Cultural Event' and the 'Reconciliation After the Apology' event. Also a huge highlight has been establishing networks and partnership with other community organizations to develop much needed services such as the Homeless Persons' Legal Service, the Housing Assistance and Referral Service and the Marrickville Street Soccer program. It has been encouraging and exciting to see many of the services in the local area working together and sharing resources in order to provide quality services to meet the needs of the community.

Other highlights include our monthly community BBQs. It is always a lot of fun to get out from behind my desk and share a delicious BBQ lunch with you all. I also want to mention the fantastic volunteers that work on these BBQs and make them such a success.



*Volunteers and community members at an NNC BBQ*

The Festival is also an annual highlight. It has been great to see how it has grown and developed over the last three years. As a major fundraiser of my position I always feel indebted and grateful to all those who give so generously.



*Bingo at the Newtown Festival*

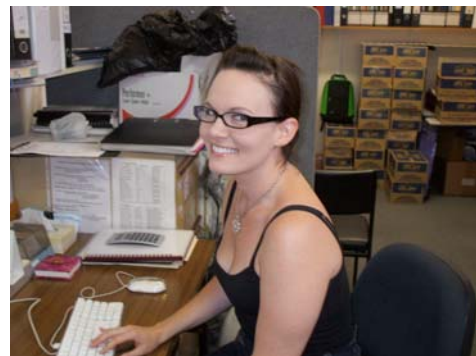
I would also like to briefly mention the many other on-going community groups that I have been a part of, the wrap with love knitting group, tai chi and Bingo, thank you to all those who are involved in these groups for always being so welcoming. It is with some sadness that I say goodbye, I know I will miss this vibrant and dynamic community, but I would also like to welcome the new Community Development Coordinator and know that they will bring new ideas, energy and skills to this role.

*Rebecca Dudding*  
*Community Development Officer*

## Volunteers

NNC relies on the good work of volunteers and students to assist the running of its services. We value volunteers and students and the contribution they make to NNC's programs and the broader community. If you would like more information about volunteering with NNC and its various projects please visit our website [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org)

We would like to farewell two of our valued volunteers Lisa and Miriam. Lisa was our Accommodation Board volunteer and each week gathered and collated the information for cheap accommodation in the area. Lisa also updated many of our information sheets.



*Lisa working on the Accommodation files*

Miriam has been volunteering at the Front Counter so many of you may recognise her face. She has also assisted with various other administrative tasks within the office. Many thanks to both of you, NNC and the community have benefited from your dedication and contributions.



*Miriam in the Front Office*

## Meet our volunteer Lucija



**How long have you been volunteering with the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre?** For about 15 years.

**What do you do as a volunteer at the Centre?** Assist with the preparation of the morning tea for the Multicultural Neighbour Aid day care centre. I also go and visit elderly that are in hospital or sick at home and unable to come to the day care centre.

**What do you like about volunteering for the Centre?** This is a way to forget about my own issues. I am a very sociable person and I like to socialise and have contact with other people. I can't just sit and not help with the dishes when I am at the day care centre it is just the way I was brought up.

**If you could go anywhere in the world where would it be and why?** I have been very fortunate and have travelled to many countries in the world, to Europe, America, Philippines, Thailand and Japan. I would still like to travel more to see how people around the world live, the poor or the rich, however my homeland of Croatia is my favourite place because that is where I was born. Australia is my second homeland, the country in which I now live and the country that has provided me with many opportunities for which I am very great full and the country in which I will die.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** I like gardening, which gives me a lot of pleasure, seeing my plants grow, and flower, sharing my plants with other people in the group, going to church every week and off course shopping.

**What is your favourite food?** I love home cooked food, pork, schnitzel and home made cakes.

**Where did you go for your last holiday?** To New Zealand, for Christmas this year, with my daughter, son in law, his parents and my granddaughter.

## Room Hire at NNC

NNC has rooms available for hire at reasonable rates for self-help groups, social justice organisations, classes, public meetings, rehearsals, employment groups, fundraisers, etc.

We have three rooms available:



*Main Hall / Meeting Room / Upstairs Room*

**Main Hall - 150 people capacity**  
**Meeting Room - 25 people capacity**  
**Upstairs Room - 60 people capacity**

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre has wheelchair access on the ground floor and a disabled toilet.

Please note that the flooring of this building is not 'sprung' and as a result we are unable to hire out or host events or activities that present a heavy impact on the floor. This includes, but is not restricted to activities/events that involve martial arts, dancing, jumping, running.

**Groups & Individuals Hiring Any Space Must Have Their Own Public Liability Insurance!!**

If you are interested in room hire or would like further information please contact our Financial Administrator, Shashanka on (02) 9516 4755 or email [accounts@newtowncentre.org](mailto:accounts@newtowncentre.org).

Please note that application forms, terms of condition and further information for room hirers are available on our website [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org).

