



Newtown Neighbourhood Centre Newsletter

CENTRE NEWS

February 2008 / March 2008

Hello All,

Welcome to a brand new year. The Newtown Neighbourhood Centre has turned 30! It all seems to have gone so fast. We're looking forward to another thirty years, and start this year with some really good news.

We're going to get a lift! This is fantastic news for all the Centre's users and groups, it will allow the building to be more accessible and user friendly, and truly open to the whole community. We've long been embarrassed by our poor access, and have lobbied Marrickville council to install a lift over a long period. Now at the start of 2008, it's going to happen.

We still have to work through some of the finer details and the possible loss of some facilities. As with any major works such as this there is bound to be some disruption during the works period. Nevertheless it's a really good start to the year. We have to thank Marrickville Council and in particular Michael Wilson and Gary Moore. This illustrates that Marrickville Council is really committed to principles equality and accessibility, and prepared to invest in the community facilities.

We're hoping 2008 will bring about more positive changes for the community. High on our wish list is to get homelessness and housing affordability higher on the political agenda. At the end of last year we begun the Housing Assistance and Referral Service and this has got off to a really good start, helping a number of people to navigate the complexities of the social housing system, and find secure housing. Out thanks to the Inner City Homelessness Outreach and

Support Service and we look forward to an ongoing partnership.

We're also looking at other ways we can have a positive impact on the housing issues in Newtown, and plan to hold a housing conference later in the year and publish a housing options directory. We'll continue to work with Homeless Persons Legal Service (HPLS), and hope to network with other organizations that want to focus on the housing issues facing Newtown.

Our other services and programs continue on a secure footing. The centre based day care services for the Greek and communities from the former Yugoslavia continue, as does the shopping service for the frail elderly, as well as the centre based groups such as the monthly barbeques, tai chi and bingo. One of the highlights of our activities every year is of course the Newtown festival, which goes from strength to strength each year, and after last years *Dreamfest*, we all eager to see the plans for 2008.

The Boarding house project and its services to residents of boarding houses remains a central part of our work, and with a strong team in place this looks set to have another good year. One of the many highlights of 2008 was the association with Sydney Street Choir. Over 14 clients have joined the choir, and last year performed at the Opera House with Jimmy Barnes and Jonathan Walsh. They also performed in Victoria Park at the Christmas carols concert as well as many other venues around the city.

As reported in the last newsletter, the coordinator, Lisa Burns, is on an extended break and will return in March. In the meantime, I'm covering Lisa's role, my name is Paul Adabie, and I'm looking forward to

meeting more of the centre's users as well as working with the fantastic staff team, volunteers and board that NNC enjoys. Please feel free to let any of us know if there is something we could be doing better!

So we start the New Year with good news and a positive perspective. There are still challenges and lots of work to be done. But we are still here, have a proven track record for innovation and service delivery, and look forward to building on this in 2008. A peaceful and successful 2008 to you all.

Paul Adabie
Acting Executive Officer

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Newtown Neighbourhood Centres 30th Birthday

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre turned 30 in 2007. We celebrated with a big party and Christmas BBQ out the front of NNC on Monday the 17th of December. The Mayor of Marrickville Dimitrios Thanos attended and announced the very exciting news that the Town Hall is going to receive a lift and essential maintenance work for the building.

There were plenty of sausages, cakes and lolly bags to go round. There was also a history display about NNC.

NNC was established by workers and local residents of the Newtown area in November 1977 to serve as a focal point for Newtown. The Newtown Neighbourhood Centre was jointly funded by the Department of Youth and Community Services and the Ethnic Affairs Commission (two State Government Departments). NNC was originally housed in shop-front premises at 343 King Street, Newtown. The opening of the Centre in December 1977 was highlighted by a week of display and events called FOCUS 77: NEWTOWN. The aim was to relate the new Centre to the Newtown area - its past, present, positive and negative characteristics and its diverse 'multicultural' population.

With escalating rent and overcrowding the Centre was forced to seek new premises. A team of volunteers and staff cleaned and painted the Town Hall building so the Centre could move on the 10th November 1981.

One of the first major issues that the Centre was involved in was a campaign to raise local awareness of the issues involved in aircraft noise and the proposal for a new runway at Sydney Airport. NNC now employs 24 people and has around 38 volunteers, we run five different projects, the Boarding House Project, the Shopping Service, the Greek Neighbour Aid Project, the Communities from Former Yugoslav Neighbour Aid Project and Community Development as well as running campaigns and forums for the general community.

A lift for Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

At our 30th Birthday celebrations on Monday the 17th of December 2007 the Mayor of Marrickville Dimitrios Thanos announced the exciting news that Newtown Neighbourhood Centre was to receive funding for a lift and essential maintenance work to the building. Newtown Neighbourhood Centre sent a funding proposal with 1000 signatures from the community to Marrickville Council in early 2007 and we are very happy that this funding has been approved. This will mean that the centre will be more widely utilised by the community, particularly the aged and frail, parents with prams and the physically disabled.

NNC would like to thank and congratulate Marrickville Council on making the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre an equitable and accessible community space for all members of the community. We would particularly like to thank Michael Wilson and Gary Moore for their hard work and commitment to this process. We believe this is a real achievement and highlights how important accessibility and equality is to Marrickville Council.

NNC is very appreciative and supports the renovations here at the Newtown Town Hall and we look forward to hosting activities in the future that are accessible to all.



Disability Access and Public Transport

Disability access in Newtown should improve in the next year or so. We've mentioned the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre is getting a lift installed and improved disabled access. And we reported last year that the NSW government has budgeted for improvement works at Newtown Station including a lift, ramps and new station layout. A call to the station confirmed these works are still going ahead, and they are currently drawing up plans and looking at different proposals for the station layout.

But there is still a lot more to be done to improve disability access to public transport services. The (new) Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Anthony Albanese, has issued a media statement inviting members of the public to comment and have input on a draft report on Transport for people with disabilities. The aim of which is to further remove discrimination from public transport services for people with disabilities.

The draft report can be viewed at www.ddatransportreview.com.au.

Submissions and observations should be made to the independent consultants engaged to carry out the review, Allen Consulting Group, at the same website.

People have until 31st March 2008 to make submissions, after which a final report will go to the Government for consideration.

New Information Booklet

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre has published an information handbook. This booklet is available for all new clients, volunteers, students and staff of NNC.

The booklet details information about the history of NNC, the types of services we provide and what they involve, rights and responsibilities, how to give feedback and make a complaint as well as contact details for other agencies and services in and around the Marrickville Local Government Area.

The aim of the booklet is to keep our staff and clients informed about and actively involved in our organisation and those surrounding us.

If you are interested in looking over this handbook and learning more about NNC please visit our website at http://www.newtowncentre.org/_pdfs/info-handbook.pdf

Also please be aware that you can leave NNC feedback about this booklet and our other services via the 'send NNC your feedback' button located on the bottom right hand side corner of the homepage.

NNC welcomes your feedback and suggestions.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Mens Support Group

Multicultural Neighbour Aid Projects – Greek and Communities from Former Yugoslavia have received funding from Marrickville Council under the community grants program for a culturally and linguistically diverse men's support group. The aim of this service is to reduce social isolation for older men in the community by establishing a social support group and promoting existing services in the Marrickville LGA. Check out our next newsletter for further details.

What's On at the Centre

Join in the fun of



at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre's fortnightly Bingo Group.

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

When: Every second Friday. It will restart for 2008 on Friday the 8th of February, and will then be on the 22/2, 7/3, and the 21/3

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 much, much more.

So come on down to the Neighbourhood Centre and join in the fortnightly fun!

All ages allowed.

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

GENTLE EXERCISE CLASSES

Open to Men and Women over the age of 55



When: Thursdays 9:30am – 10:30am

Where: Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
Opposite Newtown Station
1 Bedford Street Newtown

Cost: \$3 per session

Gentle Exercise can help you with problem joints, arthritis, or just increase your overall wellbeing while meeting new people. Classes are conducted by a trained instructor.

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

Summer BBQs 2008

Our monthly summer BBQ's are a great opportunity to raise awareness of different issues and services that may be helpful for the community to know about.

We hope you can come and join us for our monthly BBQ's in 2008.

If you have any ideas for a BBQ, maybe some helpful services or issues facing this community, please come and let us know.

When: Monday the 18th of Feb 11:30- 1:30pm
Monday the 17th of Mar 11:30-1:30pm

Where: Out the Front of the
Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
(opposite Newtown Station)

Tai Chi



Newtown Neighbourhood Centre is holding tai chi classes on Tuesdays, so come along and feel better, look better, think better and relax from the inside out.

Where: Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
(Opposite Newtown Train Station)

When: Tuesday 1-2pm

Tai chi will restart again for the on the 5th February 2008

What to wear: Comfortable clothes and comfortable flat-soled shoes

Cost: \$2.50 unwaged and \$5 waged

The classes will be taught by Master Sue Chang B.A. BJ Uni. M. TCAA. Registered Fitness professional, Fitness Australia

Bookings are essential so please call Beck on 9516 4755

Please note that an enrolment form needs to be filled out prior to attending classes. These can be collected over the counter at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre or call Beck on 9516 4755.



Wrap With Love



The Newtown Neighbourhood Centre runs a weekly group making wraps and blankets for people in need in both Australia and overseas.

Are you a knitting expert?

A knitting novice?

Or just not a knitter?

Well it doesn't matter what your level of skill is.

Come and join:

Wrap with Love

A social group of knitters who get together to make wraps for those in trauma both here and overseas.

When: Thursdays
10.45am to 12noon

WWL will restart on the 7th February 2008

Where: Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
Newtown Town Hall,
1 Bedford St. Newtown
(Opposite Newtown Train Station)

If you want to come along, have any spare wool (ply 8, 5, 3) or knitting needles (size 8) or just want more information please contact Beck on 9516 4755.

Newtown Shopping Project



What's In A Name?

The name of the service is the 'Newtown Shopping Service' but we do more than take you shopping.

Shopping:

Yes we do take you shopping by bus or car. We go all over the Marrickville Council area; Newtown to Dulwich Hill, Tempe to Stanmore, Newtown and Lewisham. You can find the shopping bus and car out and about picking people up right from their front door, and taking them to the Marrickville Metro.

Service:

We here at Newtown Shopping Service are working to meet our client's needs. We do more than take people shopping! If you need another kind of service, for instance Transport to your Doctor, Home maintenance, Garden or Home Care, Meals on Wheels or Home Visiting we can assist you in obtaining these services. If you are a Carer needing information on respite, we can help you find the service that best suits your needs.

If you feel this service may be of use to you, or someone you know, please call the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre on 9516 4755 ask for Gavin from the Shopping Service.

More than just shopping!

Happy and safe shopping in 2008.

Gavin Cane

Multicultural Neighbour Aid Greek Update

Welcome to a new and exciting year!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a Happy and Healthy 2008. Hoping to see you all soon in one of our group gatherings.

Restart dates for 2008:

***The Marrickville Greek speaking Day Care Centre and the Home Library Service** is up and running for 2008.

***The HACC Speaking Group** will restart on the 6/2/08.

The Men's Group has restarted for 2008

Transport outings and lunchtime gatherings will commence the first week in February and are as follows:

- **Door to door pick up service***: Tuesday the 6/2/08
- **Lunchtime gatherings at the Cyprus Community Club**: Tuesday 12/2/2008

*Please note a waiting list applies to the above services, persons must register prior to attending any groups or classes. Registration is free, although a small contribution is requested towards some of the services provided.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

If you would like to attend the Multicultural **Gentle Exercises Classes** at Marrickville Town Hall on Mondays or Wednesdays or the **Greek Speaking Marrickville Seniors Group that meets every Thursday**, please ring Marrickville Community Health Centre on 9562-0511 and ask to speak to Freeda Economidis. The Gentle exercises class will restart on Monday 4/2/2008 at Marrickville Town Hall, classes are conducted by a trained instructor.

Marie Kostov

Boarding House Project News from Leigh Connell

New year greetings and blessings to all and cheers for a happy and peaceful 2008.

The end of year rush has gone and many of the team here have taken a breather, spent some time with their families and recharged the batteries for another year of adventure.

The Boarding House Project Christmas party was a fun event; lots of singing with the choir, the karaoke and for some there was joy just humming their own tunes. The hot Christmas lunch and a piñata made by the KITES group were also both successes. The women's group saw the year out with a low-key Christmas gathering and reflection on the year's events and some keen activity planning for 2008. December we also welcomed back Michelle from her travel around the globe. At the moment she is taking on some travel training and support for LRC residents.

The ROOMIES exhibition held at the Addison Road gallery was well attended, sales were great and the 'meet the artist' event on the closing day saw about 200 drop by. This last day BBQ was supported by International Day of Disability and was enjoyed by more than 40 of the residents. On the annual exhibition front we have been very pleased to get confirmation that the 2009 exhibition is to take place in the fountain court space at NSW Parliament House in Macquarie Street.

Morning teas, weekly BBQ & games, women's group and Kites have all started back for the new year and other start dates are as follows:

Bowling @ Steel Park – Monday February 4th
ROOMIES art group – Tuesday February 5th
Tae Kwondo – Thursday February 7th
Bingo @NNC – Friday February 8th

Clients Speak on:

Singing & travelling with Sydney Street Choir



Hi I'm Anthony Radicic. I have been singing with the Sydney Street Choir since April 2007. The members of our choir are disadvantaged or homeless people. Last November I went to Bathurst to sing with the Choir at the Bathurst Entertainment Centre. There was a big concert with an anti domestic violence message. We also sang at the Uniting Church.

After an early morning start we arrived by train in Bathurst. We stayed for 3 days and were taken on a bus trip and got driven around Bathurst racetrack. Some of the other highlights were seeing horses and wild kangaroos, the great food (bacon and eggs every morning!), singing silent night at the uniting church and meeting lots of nice people. We got healthy applause at both performances.

A storm came through just before we left. Maybe our singing of 'The Storm is Coming Over' was a good omen and brought the rain. The hosts of our stay were very happy. I really enjoyed the whole trip.

Tae Kwon Do

"My name is Paul. I am 44 and I live in a licensed boarding house. Last February, I asked my ALI worker if I could start participating in Tae Kwon Do. My ALI worker organised a private Tae Kwon Do lesson for myself and other people from my boarding house. I still attend these lessons but I also participate in lessons with the general community. I enjoy community lessons because it is a huge challenge and I like socialising with the mainstream community.

Since starting Tae Kwon Do I have become fitter, lost weight, stopped drinking soft drink, cut back on cigarettes, become more alert and most importantly my mental health has improved and I am no longer paranoid. I have also recently received my green belt. I enjoy Tae Kwon Do so much that I have not missed a lesson yet and that says a lot because I do not usually like to go out!

In the future, I would like to participate in a tournament and receive my black belt. If I was younger I would like to try out for the next Olympics but that won't happen because I am definitely not getting any younger!"

"I am Bill and although I am 55 I feel like I am 41. I reckon I am as good as a 41 year old when it comes to Tae Kwon Do. I have also been attending lessons since February last year and I am now a yellow belt. Tae Kwon Do has given me more confidence within the community and I am now aiming for a black belt. I find community lessons help me with speed and balance and private lessons help me with my technique. The instructor, Sarah is very good. I think Tae Kwon Do lessons are good for me."



Bill and Paul show their technique.



ROOMIES ARTSPACE

art by boarding house residents

ROOMIES ARTSPACE is a non-profit community art studio where boarding house residents and artists with mental illness or disabilities are able to attend workshops, work individually or work with volunteer mentors to develop as practicing artists.

ROOMIES ARTSPACE is an initiative of Newtown Neighbourhood Centre's Boarding House Project and relies heavily on donations, volunteers and fundraising.

ROOMIES ARTSPACE and NNC would like to say a big **thankyou to The Spirit of Soul Festival** for their support and fundraising activity.

The Spirit of Soul Festival (S.O.S) was a community event that had been organised to raise funds and awareness for Mental Illness.

S.O.S was a comprehensive 'live' soul music festival that was hosted from 18th to 20th of January 2008. Its main events were held at The Factory Theatre in Marrickville over 3 nights. There were other smaller events in the S.O.S. festival one of which was **'What has touched your SOUL?'** photography competition held at Mad Gallery in Enmore. The S.O.S. kindly forwarded the proceeds from this event to Roomies Artspace!

To arrange viewing of artworks or for more information about ROOMIES ARTSPACE please contact Andra at the following:

Ph: 9516 4755

E: info@roomies.org.au



Homeless Persons Legal Service (HPLS)

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre in partnership with HPLS and Newtown Mission Church have opened a legal service where people can receive free legal 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: Every Friday from 1:30-2:30pm

Where: Drop In Centre Newtown Mission Church 280a King Street, Newtown.

If you need legal advice, come down and chat to our friendly lawyers. Joel and Rebecca from NNC will also be there to assist you.

Housing Assistance and Referral Service (HARS)

Assisting people to find secure, affordable and appropriate housing.

Where: Newtown Neighbourhood Centre opposite Newtown Train Station in the downstairs meeting room

When: Mondays 3:30-4:30pm

This is a free service

You do not need an appointment



HARS is a joint initiative of Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and the Inner City Homelessness Outreach and Support Service (ICHOSS)

Gambling Treatment Clinic

The Gambling Treatment Clinic (GTC) is a free face-to-face counselling service for any person whose life is affected by gambling. GTC provides confidential specialist gambling counseling to people with gambling issues or information and supportive counselling to their family and friends.

The Clinic is open to the general public. They accept any person who has excessive gambling as their primary problem.

The service is completely free.

GTC encourage clients to call directly. This helps assess client goals and motivation to change, as well as the nature and severity of the clients gambling difficulties.

All counsellors are Registered Psychologists or clinical psychologists.

There are several clinic locations throughout NSW. The Clinic nearest the city is the Darlington Clinic, located on the Darlington Campus at the University of Sydney.

The GTC has three aims:

- to provide a range of appropriate treatment approaches to help excessive gamblers cut back or stop gambling;
- to provide support for individuals in addressing the problems associated with excessive gambling;
- to evaluate the extent to which individuals are helped by the counselling they receive.

We provide:

- clinical assessment and referral
- evidence-based treatment
- supportive counselling
- counselling for family and friends.

If you have any further enquiries about this service, please contact:

GTC's Intake Line on 9351 6346
or visit www.psych.usyd.edu.au/gtc

For urgent assistance or assistance outside service hours, please contact the G-line (NSW) problem gambling information, counselling and referral help line on 1800 633 635 which operates 24 hours 7 days per week.

People With Disability (PWD)

People with Disability Australia Incorporated (PWD) is a national peak disability rights and advocacy organisation. PWD was started for the purpose of providing people with disability with a voice of their own. PWD represents the interests of people with all kinds of disability. PWD is a non-profit, non-government organisation.

PWD provides the following services to people with disability and their associates:

- Rights-related information, advice and referral
- Short-term individual and group advocacy
- Advocacy for reform around issues that adversely affect people with disability
- Representation to government, industry and the non-government sector
- Disability rights-related research and development
- Disability rights-related training and education

PWD's programs include:

- information services
- individual and group advocacy
- systemic advocacy
- education and training.

Information services

PWD informs its members and the public about disability rights and issues via websites, email updates, newsletters and other publications.

Individual and group advocacy

PWD offers free individual and group advocacy for people with disability. The service provides non-legal advocacy to individuals and groups of people with disability who have serious and urgent problems. The service also provides information about how to advocate for yourself. This service is available to people with all kinds of disability in NSW.

Systemic advocacy

The goals of PWD's systemic advocacy program are:

- the promotion of social justice for people with disability
- the promotion of the contribution and potential of people with disability
- the achievement of positive changes to structures, policies and practices that exclude and discriminate against people with disability and put them at risk of abuse and neglect.

Education and training

PWD develops and conducts professional training including:

- disability awareness
- communication with people with disability
- developing information in alternative formats
- human rights and disability
- effective consultation with people with disability
- anti-discrimination
- diversity in the workplace and employment of people with disability
- creating flexible and accessible services for people with disability.

If you think that PWD can assist you in any way or if you are interested in getting more information please contact them via any of the following:

Phone: 02 9370 3100

Toll Free: 1800 422 015

Fax: 02 9318 1372

TTY: 02 9318 2138

TTY Toll Free: 1800 422 016

Email: pwd@pwd.org.au

PWD are also involved in the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service.

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

1800 880 052

The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline is an Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disabilities receiving government funded disability services. Allegations are referred to the appropriate authority for investigation.

The hotline is fully funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Anyone can call the Hotline to report cases of abuse or neglect or to find out more about the service. The Hotline is open from 8am to 8pm every day.

Cases of abuse and neglect can include physical, sexual, psychological, legal and civil abuse, restraint and restrictive practices, or financial abuse. It can also include the withholding of care and support, which exposes an individual to harm.



An Australian Government Initiative

Complaints Resolution and Referral Service

The Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) assists in the resolution of complaints from people using Government-funded disability employment and advocacy services.

To enquire or to make a complaint
Phone 02 9370 3174
Free call 1800 880 052
or Email crrs@pwd.org.au

VOLUNTEERS

Have you broken your New Years resolution already – well make a new one and get involved with the community through volunteering.

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre had some fantastic volunteers and students throughout 2007, without whom the Neighbourhood Centre would not be able to provide the services that it does.

We value volunteers and the contribution they make to the Neighbourhood Centre's programs and the community at large.

There are many volunteering opportunities available at NNC so if you are interested in volunteering with us for 2008 please contact Rebecca on 9516 4755.

Volunteer with the Shopping Service



We are currently looking for more volunteers for our Shopping Project. The Shopping Project runs a crucial service to the frail elderly and people with a disability.

‡ We need volunteers to meet shoppers from the Bus service at the Metro shopping centre and assist them with their shopping.

‡ The Shopping service runs on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

‡ The time commitment from volunteers is around 2 hours on any one of these days.

‡ The assisted shopping service is also in need of volunteers on Fridays. This service has a flexible time frame from a whole day down to a 2-hour session.

For more detailed information on the shopping service volunteer roles available please call Gavin (Shopping Service Coordinator) on 9516 4755.

Volunteer with the Boarding House Project



Do you have a few hours each week to contribute to the Community? If so then we want you!

Some ways you can get involved with the community:

➔ We are looking for people to assist with INDOOR BOWLING at South Marrickville every Monday morning from 10am – 12:30pm

➔ Every second Friday to help out with the fun and activity of BINGO at the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre between 9:30am – 1pm

➔ Visit a Boarding House Resident for a chat and coffee during the week at a time to suit

➔ Provide social support to walking groups. Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons for around an hour and a half.

➔ Volunteer with the womens group that meets every Friday to support each other and have fun.

For more information visit the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre web site www.newtowncentre.org or call 02 9516 4755 and ask to speak with Leigh.

If you are interested in volunteering with other organisations please check out the following website www.volunteering.com.au

International Womens Day



8th March 2008

Putting women and women's rights to equality on the global agenda is the moving force behind International Women's Day.

March 8th provides an opportunity to pay tribute to the achievements of women and to highlight the needs and concerns of women on national, regional and global agendas.

March 8 is celebrated across the world as International Women's Day (IWD), and provides us with an opportunity to recognise the achievements of women and their contribution to society.

It is a day when women, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to look back to a tradition that represents a rich history of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

IWD is today regarded by many as the story of ordinary women as makers of history, and it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate with equality in society.

Governments around the world view International Women's Day as an important opportunity to address the social, economic and political barriers, as well as achievements, of women.

International Women's Day March

The IWD march will assemble at Sydney Town Hall at 11am and march to Hyde Park north via George and King Streets.

There will be many stalls in Hyde Park for community groups and women's services.

International Womens Day Festivities

On Friday 7th March Marrickville Council will be hosting an International Womens Day event full of festivities. There will be workshops, information stalls and activities focusing on social inclusion and the strong role of women in the community.

Where: Debbie and Abbey Borgia
Community Recreational Centre
531 Illawarra Road Marrickville

When: 7:30am - Breakfast
9:30am - Workshops
11:30am - free community BBQ

For more information please call Marrickville Council on 9335 2222 or visit www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au

Gear up Girl Challenge



Saturday 8 March 2008

Gear up Girl is about getting women of all ages and abilities on their bikes. So gear up and take part in NSW's first all-women's cycling event. What better way to celebrate **International Women's Day** than to take part in a unique all women's cycle ride.

For more information please visit www.gearupgirl.com.au

or call Bicycle NSW on 9218 5400



Friday 1st – Sunday 24th February

The City of Sydney's 2008 Chinese New Year Festival promises to be one of the largest celebrations outside of Asia with many events over the 3 week festival period.

The Launch Celebration in Belmore Park on Friday 1st February from 6:30 – 7:30pm, will be quite a spectacular and explosive start to the Year of the Rat, with firecrackers, lions, dragons and people aplenty.

The Festival program has something for everyone, from the famous Chinatown Markets, the Chinese New Year Parade, Dragon Boat races at Darling Harbour, tours, films, food and much more.

Chinatown Markets at Belmore Park

Chinese New Year Festival's famous Chinatown Markets will be held in Belmore Park opposite Central Station.

Fresh produce, Chinese New Year gifts and mouth-watering foods will transform Belmore Park into a colourful and exotic Asian market village over three days.

Test your skills at table tennis, relax and enjoy the daily entertainment or even learn Mandarin at the Karaoke booth.

When: 11am – 10pm, 1st-3rd February

Where: Belmore Park (across Eddy Avenue from Central Station)

Chinese New Year Parade

Celebrate the Year of the Rat at the Festival's spectacular Chinese New Year Parade.

This year's Parade will be one of the biggest yet, with more than 2,500 performers, including people from China's historic Shaanxi Province. There will be local Chinese community groups, dazzling costumes, colourful floats and giant zodiac lanterns.

The Parade will end in Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour, with a free concert.

When: 11am – 2pm, Sunday 10 February

Where: Starting at Park and George Streets and finishing at Tumbalong Park

For further information on these and other events over the Chinese New Year period please visit

www.sydneychinesenewyear.com.au

Chinese New Year @ your Library

Get the kids to celebrate the Chinese New Year with a Lucky Charm Craft Workshop.

This event is hosted in association with the Leisure Studio and Art & Craft Centre and will be held at local libraries across the city of Sydney.

When: Tuesday 12 February
3.30pm-4.45pm

Where: Newtown Library
Brown Street Newtown

Phone: 8512 4250



Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras 2008



Saturday 9 February – Sunday 2 March

New Mardi Gras is the organisation that runs the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras and many other events throughout the year. Their objective is to raise the profile of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer communities.

The Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras is a month long celebration that features live music, theatre, forums and workshops, sports, and film festivals, Fair Day and world famous Parade and Party on 1st March.

The Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras has grown from a local gay pride event to being one of the most spectacular gay and lesbian events in the world.

2008 marks its 30th anniversary and there is a huge program of events. This year could be the biggest and brightest yet!

Dates and events for your diaries:

- [2008 Festival Season](#) – 9 Feb - 2 Mar
- [Launch](#) - 9 Feb
- [Pool Party](#) - 16 Feb
- [Fair Day](#) - 17 Feb
- [Harbour 2008 - Sol y Luna](#) - 24 Feb
- [Parade](#) - 1 Mar
- [Party](#) - Sat 1 Mar

Mardi Gras relies heavily on thousands of volunteers every year to help organise, run and make Mardi Gras the successful event that it is. So if you want to get involved or simply want more information please visit www.mardigras.org.au



Ecopella is an environmental choir. Ecopella sing about the beauty of the world as well as the struggles involved in protecting it.

The music has a strong environmental message and is aimed at encouraging positive change in people's thinking. It is also a way of increasing the political strength of a variety of green organisations.

Ecopella originated in Sydney in 1998 and now has branches in the Blue Mountains and the Illawarra. They are always looking for new members and opportunities to perform.

Ecopella often donate or discount their services for community organisations. In 2006 Ecopella raised funds for Tasmania's old-growth forests and for a medical clinic in East Timor.

Ecopella has performed at numerous environmental events, protests, community gatherings and folk festivals.

Recently they have been recording *Songs In The Key Of Green*, their second CD. This will be released at their 10th anniversary celebration at the National Folk Festival 2008, which will be held at Exhibition Park in Canberra this March. For information about this event please visit www.folkfestival.asn.au

For enquiries, bookings, or if you are interested in joining in singing please contact Ecopella on (02) 9810 4601 or email mheatwole@bigpond.com or visit www.ecopella.org

Safety/Crime Prevention in Marrickville

Marrickville Council has invited members of the community to comment and have input on a draft plan for crime prevention and improved safety in Marrickville. The idea being that local crime prevention activities are more likely to succeed when they are part of a united and coordinated approach within the community.

In February 2000 Marrickville Council decided to take the lead agency role in planning and coordinating the efforts of state and local agencies and the community to improve safety in the Marrickville area.

Council's Draft Safety in Marrickville (Crime Prevention) Plan 2008 – 2011 was drafted in 2007 by Council's Safety in Marrickville Committee.

Council is interested in suggestions and comments on the Draft Safety in Marrickville (Crime Prevention) Plan 2008 – 2011. Feedback may be provided on anything within the document. Council encourages feedback from citizens and groups about the proposed projects and strategies.

You can submit your feedback or comments online or download the draft plan by visiting www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au and follow the link.

If you would like a hard copy contact Council's Strategic Community Projects Officer (Crime Prevention) on 9335 2151 or scpol@marrickville.nsw.gov.au

People have until **Friday 29 February 2008** to make submissions.

About the Senate

The Senate is one of the two houses of the Australian Federal Parliament. It is often referred to as the Upper House, and consists of 76 Senators, 12 from each state and 2 each from the ACT and NT. The Senate shares the power to make laws with the other House of the Parliament, the House of Representatives.

The functions of the Senate are to represent the states equally and to review the proposals and decisions of the House of Representatives and the executive government. The Senate has a very active Committee system, which allows senators from different political parties and independents to work together.

Proposed laws (known as Bills) have to be passed by both Houses and be assented to by the Governor-General before they can become Acts of Parliament.

Senators play a vital role in the link between individual citizens, community and industry groups, political parties, parliament and government.

To participate in the process of making new laws and debating public policy, senators need to be well informed. To be effective representatives, senators must understand the opinions, needs and problems of the people of their state or territory.

In order to keep informed and in touch with the community, senators:

- attend to letters from individuals/organisations seeking information or expressing viewpoints
- visit community groups and receive petitions
- examine proposed new laws and regulations
- study parliamentary and government reports
- keep in touch with public opinion by reading newspapers and journals
- monitor current affairs programs

You can contact a Senator by phone, fax, post or email.

A list for the senators of NSW can be found at <http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/senators/>

or if you would like a hard copy please visit us here at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
1 Bedford Street Newtown
opposite Newtown Train Station