



VOLUNTEERS...

...THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY



A montage of local heroes & details
on how you can make a difference too!



Counterpoint Community Services Incorporated
The Factory Community Centre
67 Raglan Street, Waterloo, NSW 2017
Facebook: Counterpoint Community Services
Phone: 02 9699 896

Counterpoint Multicultural Centre
73 Garden Street, Alexandria, NSW 2015
Facebook: Counterpoint Multicultural Services
Phone: 02 9319 4073

Counterpoint Poet's Corner Pre-School
55 Morehead Street, Redfern NSW 2016
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FOREWORD

AS AN EXECUTIVE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

for the Department of Family and Community Services, I am so lucky to work with the communities of Redfern and Waterloo. Without a doubt, volunteers are the heart and soul of these communities. They contribute their time and skills across so many areas; mentoring young people, providing support and friendship to our elderly residents, encouraging participation in arts and culture, running cooking classes, fixing and reusing broken furniture and cleaning up local spaces.

These volunteers come from all areas of life. They are students, professionals, retirees and workers. They know that contributing their time to improve the quality of life and community for the area they live in, only makes each day better for everyone. And we know that people who volunteer are happier, healthier, have better social networks and live longer! As you read through the stories in these pages about the amazing individuals in the Redfern, Waterloo and surrounding communities, I urge you to consider volunteering in your own life.

To the volunteers whose stories are featured in these pages; thank you for all that you do to make the communities around you brighter, more connected and happy places to live. We really couldn't do it without you!

Nicola Jeffers
Executive
District Director,
Sydney,
South Eastern
Sydney and
Northern Sydney
Districts
Department
of Family and
Community
Services



NICOLA

We would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people who are the traditional custodians of this land in which this publication has been produced. We would also like to pay respect to the elders both past and present of the Eora Nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginals.

CYCLE RE-CYCLE CLUB



THE CYCLE RE-CYCLE CLUB is a social enterprise located near the corner of Phillip and Cope Streets in the carpark of the Turanga Public Housing Building in Waterloo. Bicycles that would typically end up as landfill are repaired, rebuilt and sold on at affordable prices to low-income residents.

Their opening hours are Monday 5pm to 8.30pm and Wednesday 5pm to 8.30pm. The club was formed in Newtown by a group of activists before moving to their current location. David has been a volunteer for the past ten years. He says the only requirement for becoming a member is to have a curiosity to learn and to bring their bike in where they can be shown how to repair it.

It takes six months for an absolute beginner to become a volunteer to learn the basics of bike repair work. "We only make a difference if people learn from watching us, they learn something for themselves."

"Sam has been a volunteer for the past year he comes in for four to five hours a week on Mondays and Wednesdays. He works with young adults with Autism to integrate into their communities."

"I've got a lot of vintage bikes, I used to own a cycling business in the UK. I came in to fix a couple of them, then decided

to give back, because there was a nice community vibe here."

For Sam and Rob, it is the community vibe that they enjoy most about coming each week as well as learning something new about bikes.

"I learnt about a BMX hub last week, I don't know much about modern bikes. I've been able to pass on knowledge to other people about vintage bikes. I've asked Rob about things, he learnt from others, it's an excellent way to share knowledge. Sam's thoughts on making a difference are, helping people in the community, saving bikes from going to landfill."

Rob has been volunteering since the start of the year. He is a photographer and works at a college with young people. I got involved with Cycle Recycle as a way to be involved with the community around Redfern/Waterloo.

"I love hearing people's stories and finding out more about them. Every week we meet someone from a different part of the world with a different story. So often we move through life so fast that we don't get to know our neighbours. But here, you're forced to slow down as you fix bikes so you can take the time to talk with people. You hear all sorts of stories here, some are sad, some are crazy, and some are inspiring."

Rob's thoughts on making a difference, Depends on what metric you're using, whether you're making a difference, 1. Environmental, 2. Build a community for people on the margins. What Sam and I do here is trying to have a conversation with people and foster a bit of community.



**Website: <https://bikeclub.wordpress>
 Facebook: Cycle Re-Cycle Club, Ph.0296989569**

FAVOURS TENANT SUPPORT GROUP

GERARD HAD LIVED in the Waterloo area for ten years before moving into the Marton Building with his partner. It was his partners' idea to start a tenant support group. So began the Favours Tenant Support Group. "I helped him out thinking it would blow over in a month or two". A decade on and the group has grown from a drop-in group on a Wednesday where they distributed bread and had a coffee. To a lunchtime meal with food provided from Oz harvest and take home food packs as well. Free bread is distributed seven nights a week to the Waterloo Public Housing Buildings. Favours Tenant Support Group also puts on a free barbecue on a Saturday starting from 11 am once every three months on Waterloo Green.

"Attendance for the Wednesday lunch meals has increased, we have no way of knowing how many people are going to turn up for the lunch it could be up to 25 people, the most we've ever had was 56, and that was on an overcast day. That's why we have tables outside because we can't fit them in the community room. Housing insists on us having comprehensive public liability insurance; we are under the auspice of a registered charity".

It's expensive for his group to cover the monthly insurance payments. "The insurance covers us for up to \$10 million if ever there's an accident, food poisoning or someone wants to sue us. I can't offset the costs against the people who come in, because they're elderly or have disabilities they need it to survive."

"I used to get bread from a local bakery, but then they stopped and then another bakery offered, but only if we take it seven nights a week. So each night around 8 pm I pick up the bread

and repack it and leave it outside the building. Each building gets a bread delivery once a week except for this one because I live here."

"We had a building manager who was a nice man he arranged for the new kitchen for us; it is the biggest kitchen of any of the community rooms.

He was working on putting in some doors and outside paving. It would've made a big difference, and maybe because of the cost; he was transferred out. He was even going to put in a toilet because apparently, it fitted with the plumbing. There is no toilet here, there have been some accidents from some of our guests who come here. We tell the elderly ladies to use the restroom at the hotel across the street. The Waterloo new development has made no allowance for community rooms I will be going to a service providers meeting this week, and I'll be pushing for it."

"I have two volunteers here who are on work for the dole; I signed them up, I won't take Centrelink volunteers who don't want to be here. The last barbecue many people turned up and wanted to help out, but I only had had enough work for half of them. I've been doing this for ten years, the people who come are very appreciative, I know everyone by face, but I'm terrible at remembering names."

When Gerard isn't busy working for his charity, he helps the Waterloo Residents Market and Garden Incorporation in setting up the market tables in the Turanga Building Resident's carpark and delivers small furniture items for another local social enterprise the Waterloo Recycle Workshop every Friday morning. He gets paid a small amount of money which goes towards his charity expenses.



You will find Gerard at the Marton Building Common Room every Wednesday from 12.00 pm, located on the corner of Cope and Raglan Street, Waterloo.

EORA MEN'S GROUP

WES PATTEN is the founder of the Eora Men's Group, the purpose behind his group is to help create positive pathways through physical and mental activities that instil strong values and a sense of cultural well-being. In the 1990s, Wes was an elite NRL player for the Balmain Tigers, South Sydney Rabbitohs, Gold Coast Chargers and Illawarra Dragons as well as acting roles in Home and Away and Heartland. Wes recruits young Aboriginal males from the ages of 13 – 17 from the streets of Redfern, Waterloo and Glebe and by word of mouth.

“Getting these young fellas 14, 15 and 16-year-olds to try to instil some good values in them like life skills, about growing up, roles and responsibilities as young men . . . being a man is going out and providing for the children and the women and the elders and providing for yourself lastly, that's just an example.”

To become a committed member of the group is not a smooth ride, quite the opposite in fact

“We have an intense eight-week training regime, it's like a pre-season training, we make sprints, and we do stairs, on Mount Carmel around Wentworth Park and run over the Harbour Bridge and back. We don't take you seriously unless you do the eight weeks training. Then we might consider you to be part of this

men's group. What it does, it stops people from blowing in and blowing out.”

Wes has been collaborating with key community people for support and backing for his Eora Men's Group.

“We're doing everything voluntary at the moment, it's about helping everyone out, and we're working through the Aboriginal Dance Theatre in Redfern. We've got a few people who have approached us for sponsorships, and other support. At the moment some people reckoned it's a pretty good idea, but we have been doing everything voluntary till now. So we're still haven't worked out where the money is coming from.”

“When they get to a particular stage, I'll take them down to the park, and I'll show them some stuff. Just fitness, in general, I've got a couple of mates that are personal trainers. They've got their tickets, one of them pretty well known Jeff Morgan he's a local boy I grew up with him. I've spoken to people from Clontarf Foundation NSW director Jeff Hardy he's over at Endeavour that's an elite sporting high school over in St Georges.”

The above organisations are offering to work with Eora Men's Group as they prepare their young members to participate sports at a higher level.



**The Eora Men's Group meets at the Aboriginal Dance Theatre
at 88 Renwick Street, Redfern from 4.30pm to 7.00pm
Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.**

IZOBELA KEVARK-OGLY HAS BEEN

volunteering for Jewish Care for three years. On Mondays, she helps with the Ukrainian Support Group at The Factory Community Centre in Waterloo. The group is mostly composed of senior Ukrainian Jewish women. Izobella shares a common ancestry as a Jewish born Ukrainian as well. She sets up tables for the day's activities, serving food and checks on the needs of the members.

Her work brings her a great sense of enjoyment when seeing their happy faces; it reminds her of her grandparents. For the rest of the week Tuesday to Thursday she volunteers at the Berger Centre which is another branch of Jewish Care in Randwick.

She immigrated to Australia 24 years ago, home is now the McKell Building in Redfern. Since living in Australia Izobella has worked in various customer focus jobs, post office, fruit market, recycling and sorting clothing for the Smith Family Factory for 13 years and seven years as a carer for Jewish Care and Catholic Community Services.



“since volunteering she has learnt to be patient and enjoys life more”

Before she started volunteering Izobela said she used to get a little depressed. However, since volunteering she has learnt to be patient and enjoys life more. She feels proud of her Ukrainian group because they regularly come to their meetings and they remain very active with their lives. On Fridays, she goes to the Montefiore Aged Centre in Randwick to visit a 99-year-old Jewish

Woman from the Ukraine City of Odesa. She is impressed by her independence and her active lifestyle. But what surprises her most about her senior compatriot is her ability to remember everything including phone numbers. Izobella says she struggles to remember a phone number. She enjoys what she is doing and hopes to continue doing it for as long as she can.

Jewish  Care

The Ukrainian Support Group is a Jewish Care outreach service for senior Russian and Ukraine ex-patriots. The group meets every Monday from 10.30 am to 2.00 pm at Counterpoint Community Centre, Corner of Raglan and Pitt Streets Waterloo. Website: www.jewishcare.com.au/, Facebook: JewishCare NSW, Twitter: JewishCare NSW, Instagram, JewishCare NSW, Ph. 02 9302 8000

CHARLOTTE & AMY

CHARLOTTE DOBROVITS

is a standout personality for the residents around the Poet's Corner Housing Precinct. Her signature pink hair and sunglasses set her apart from the crowd. However, glamour is not the purpose behind Charlotte's Friday Drop-In Social Group. Every Friday morning from 10 am you will find Charlotte busily serving up breakfast and morning tea for local residents in need of substance abuse support services and those who are socially isolated.

"It started with around 15 people now we can get up to 70 to 80 people every Friday. It's a way of giving back to the community, I suppose. RedLink pays for the food I order. We also facilitate the Oz Harvest delivery every Thursday from 4 pm from the community centre. Everyone can't go hungry around here anymore there's something on here every day. We get a lot of bread from Bakers Delight we give it out once a week on Fridays."

Charlotte has been putting in around ten hours a week for the Friday Drop-in Group and the Oz Harvest bread distribution for the past three years. When she is not volunteering her time, Charlotte works on standby as a drug and alcohol counsellor for a local youth refuge.

"It helps with understanding the issues here; I can direct them to where they can go, if they ask for advice I'll give it to them. It takes a long time to get them into programs, got to earn their trust and to want to be helped to get off the drugs and alcohol. It took me two and a half years to be accepted by the indigenous folk."

Charlotte used to get volunteers on work development orders referred to her group to sign off on their volunteer hours.

"They'd sent them over to me, and I'd let them know how many hours they'd done, I believe its \$30 off their fine per hour, which does help with the strain of not having money that's where domestic violence happens. They can pay off their debt doing something for the community it gives them a sense of worth. But they have to do it, but I haven't had any recently. In the



beginning, I used to get a lot of volunteers, but then it dropped off now they come for the food and the company. I have one Chinese lady (Amy)."

Charlotte has lived in the Redfern area for ten years she is also a tenant representative for the McKell Building. When asked if the community has changed much during her time in the area she says.

"It has got better, a few years ago . . . with the murder [involving] the former Premier's daughter . . . Back then the place was an (expletive) syringes everywhere, faeces in the stairwell. The media pounced on us opened the whole thing up for the public to see how bad it was. I think it must have shamed housing into doing something about it. We got a \$2million upgrade in here, 24/7 security in all of the building, entry by fob. We got RedLink in; things got cleaned up. The barbecues got put in its all-electric we don't have to pay free for anyone to use as long as they clean it. We have had a wonderful update here; it took a murder to get it. "

Volunteering taught me to be more empathic and compassionate, I really mean it. I've been doing it for three years, I haven't dropped it and walked away. I am most grateful every day because I've finally been able to find my niche in life I've got a big enough voice for the community.

THE FRIDAY DROP-IN SOCIAL GROUP

AMY has been volunteering for the Friday Social Drop in Group with Charlotte for two years. She is also one of Kerry Fabian's students attending her English language classes at Counterpoint Multicultural Centre on Tuesdays.

Amy跟着Charlotte Dobrovits在Friday Drop In Social Group当志愿者已经有两年时间了，同时Amy也是多元文化中心的英语老师Kerry Fabian的学生。

What made you volunteer for the Friday Social Drop In Group?

你在志愿者工作中，有学到什么技能或者得到了什么经验吗？

At the beginning, she wanted to learn English by communicating with native speakers, and she thought being a volunteer could actually help her improve her English.

她在做志愿者的过程中获得了一种满足感，因为她觉得自己融入了当地社会，不再感到自己对澳洲社会没有贡献。

What skills and experience have you learnt from volunteering?

你在志愿者工作中，有学到什么技能或者得到了什么经验吗？

She has gained a sense of satisfaction as well because she felt like she belonged and she would no longer see herself as a useless person.

她在做志愿者的过程中还学会了做一些西餐，英语水平也相对提高了。

She has learnt how to cook western food, and she has also learnt (improved) how to communicate in English.

How hours a week do you volunteer?

做志愿者一般需要做多长时间呢？

Three hours , Cooking, setting up tables, cleaning. She used to help the group with cooking Chinese dumplings.

3小时左右，通常情况下，Amy的工作是做菜，协助布置场地和清洁。她还帮忙做过中国饺子。

Do you think you are making a difference?

你认为你有改变什么吗？

Yes. People who received food were really happy. Providing a better environment for the community. She thinks what they have been doing for the community is already enough. It depends on the government. (funding)

Amy认为有。因为收到食物的当地居民都很高兴，这种行为也为社区提供了一个更好的环境。不过，Amy认为她们目前为止为社区所做的已经够了，如果需要做更多的话，可能得看政府给多少资金了。

Do you do other volunteer work?

你除了在Friday Drop In Social Group做志愿者外，还有在其他地方做志愿者吗？

Yes, sometimes, she would be volunteering for the churches at Surry Hills and Redfern on Saturday and Sunday.

也有，Amy有时候在周末也会去Surry Hills 和 Redfern的教堂里帮忙

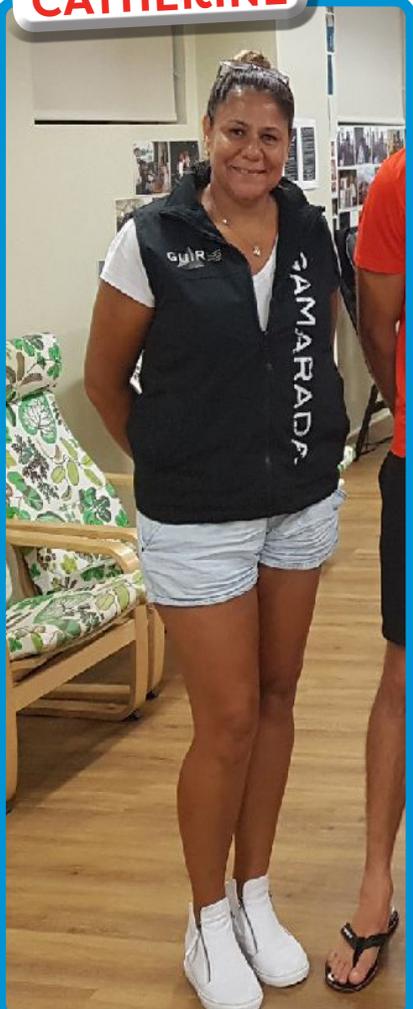
Amy's interview has been conducted with the assistance of Richelle Huang social work student from the University of Sydney on student placement at the Counterpoint Multicultural Centre. 负责翻译这篇采访的是来自新南威尔士大学的Richelle Huang，其同时也在多元文化中心的实习学生。

**Address: Poets Corner Community Centre,
1 Morehead Avenue, Redfern, RedLink Ph.02 8303 5958
RedLink McKell Office Address, 55 Walker St, Redfern**

GAMARADA INDIGENOUS HEALING & LIFE TRAINING

CATHERINE JACKSON has been a group leader for Gamarada for eight years. Gamarada is an indigenous lifestyle healing program to support its members address issues with mental health, youth suicide, and substance abuse. They meet every Monday evening from 7.00pm at the Redfern Community Centre.

CATHERINE



Catherine was addicted to ice, before becoming involved with the group more than ten years ago. Since her involvement with the Gamarada healing program she has become a better version of herself. Reconnecting with her culture with the passing of ancient knowledge to her from tribal elders are a constant source of strength and support for her to cope with the rigours and challenges as an Aboriginal mother and grandmother in the community.

"I got off everything . . . turned my life around and became a better family person . . . I gave back to my community and my culture and I've kept on the right track. I started meeting traditional elders talking to them about . . . what they want done in their community."

"Ken always told me that was my purpose the community thinks it's better if I'm there . . . our tribal elder's council believe I do great work there. It's something I'm very passionate about helping our brothers and sisters rise up and just see them become better versions of themselves is the greatest gift of all for me."

"Yeah helping other members of the group . . . I am very strong and very wise it's a female balance too like my energy been the calmness that's very rare. A lot of people suffer from anxiety, panic attacks coming off the drugs you know it just makes you worse."

"I talk to them daily I Mother / father creator I asked them, I would never disrespect mother/father creator I know who I am. I know who they are, I know where I'm going, I know they are the protector guides on my journey."

"Leadership skills have given me courage, strength and wisdom and ancient knowledge, there's a lot I've learnt a lot I've gained not just the one thing. A whole range of things it's made me more aware of my bad behavioural baggage how better . . . become a better version of myself."

Ken Zulumovski is a descendent of the Kabi Kabi Nation he is the creator and founder of the not for profit Gamarada Indigenous Healing and Life Skills Program based in Redfern NSW. This organisation delivers healing and life skills programs to Indigenous men, youth and children.

Website: www.guir.com.au
Facebook: Gamarada indigenous healing & life training limited
Twitter: Gamarada



COUNTERPOINT MULTICULTURAL CENTRE

KERRY FABIAN HAS BEEN A VOLUNTEER

at the Counterpoint Multicultural Centre and the Factory Community Centre for three years. She is a volunteer English Language tutor, her work history has included working as a peer trainer for a Telco Company, a brief stint for a printing company and working for a large licensed club for many years. "Ethnic diversity was a feature in all three work environments, so all three were diverse communities even the staff were diverse. It's not something that I even notice, what they look like, what they wear and how they sound."

"Bill (manager for Counterpoint Multicultural Centre) suggested I should take up the English tutor role because one I'm a native English speaker and two I'm patient which is easy for me. I worked for a phone company for 18 ½ years which was mostly call centre and customer complaints."



The English classes are free with a regular attendance of 10 to 12 students. Kerry has no formal qualifications, but her experience as a peer trainer and patience play an essential part in the way she teaches.

"I'm not orthodox in how I teach or tutor to be correct . . . It starts out with the basic plan and the class lead it, if they have questions we then take that . . . Because it's loosely structured . . . it's not for me; it's for them".

Teaching brings her a great sense of satisfaction when, "every week there's an, I like to call it a eureka moment I look across at one of the students and you see the light bulb going off in their head, and this big smile like I get I, me I just want to yell hooray."

"I'm not the best at time management I've learnt pace, as to things will happen when they happen. I understood that people learn at different rates but also built their confidence at different rates; some need a little nudge; some you let them step forward."

"The group actually work as a team which I find is an amazing dynamic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Korean they will all communicate and go, I think it's this . . . It will take a team to solve the problem."

What aspirations does Kerry have for their students, "I can't predict the future I hope that the students become more confident more proficient and I suppose they don't come back because they don't need it . . . but some come for the social interaction."



English Language Classes are held every
Tuesday afternoons starting from 2.00 to 3.30pm

Website: www.counterpointcs.org.au

Facebook: counterpoint multicultural services, Ph. 02 9319 4073

Address: 73 Garden St, Alexandria.

REGINA CANA COMMUNITIES



REGINA is the coordinator for the Garden Shelter based in Waterloo one of several emergency accommodation services provided by Cana Communities.

Their mission is to provide, "relief from poverty, suffering, destitution and helplessness for people struggling with mental illness, substance abuse, homelessness, loneliness and factors that alienate them from society.

"I've been here for five years; the shelter has been around for about fifteen years. We're all volunteers here, two kitchen staff and two sleepovers. We have twelve guests max; we know how many are coming. We get our volunteers from the Cana Communities website and word of mouth. Volunteering here is not about serving food or making themselves [the volunteer] feel good. It's about listening to restore respect and dignity for the person who finds themselves homeless. The shelter is open every Wednesday and Thursday, but Thursday's is subject to volunteer availability if there isn't enough staff, we don't open. We are desperate for male sleepover staff for Thursday nights

I had a man who came in he had a very bad stutter; he was so self-conscious about his speech he didn't want to talk and kept to himself. He kept coming in and slowly he began to speak, he started to grow, I arranged for him to see a speech therapist, he was able to improve his speech, and his dignity restored. He has a social housing apartment now, that he's very proud of and still drops in for visits."

Mealtime is around 8.00 pm staff share a meal with their guests. Dinner is usually donated compliments of Two Wolves Cantina a Jesuit Priest social enterprise in Glebe. Sometimes dinner is home cooked from volunteer staff, dinner is time for guests to talk about their day enjoy their meal or they may ask for a private conversation.

JOHN is a retired doctor he has been at the shelter for two months. He was asked to come along to the shelter from a colleague from a ministry of a healing group he attends. "The experience was life changing for me, I've kept coming. I manage the rosters for the volunteer staff and the guests. I do five to ten hours I often come on Wednesday and Thursdays; I like to put names to faces. We celebrate the intrinsic value of people; the volunteers have a healing influence. The homeless are real people to befriend and respect... you give them time, they are not worthless the presence of the homeless changes the volunteer"



JOHN

JONO has been working the sleepovers for three years. "I use to volunteer for Matthew Talbot at the kiosk; I went sailing with another volunteer from there, he told me they were looking



JONO

for volunteers I came one night and ended up staying. I used to work in pubs; I've learnt to be aware of people and to be helpful. I'm retired now I do some volunteering at the blood bank on Hunter Street at Circular Quay. I belong to a street choir we do gigs and get standing ovations. I'm a people person all the way through, makes me feel connected to the community."



Access to the Waterloo Garden Shelter, Contact Link to Home Ph. 1800 152 152, To volunteer, visit their website: www.cana.org.au, Facebook: cana communities

MILK CRATE THEATRE



ETTORE [pronounced Et-tor-rei] has been a volunteer with The Milk Crate Theatre for a week, although he has been on their books for a while. He was introduced to the Milk Crate Theatre through his wife who is a friend of one of the directors Margo. The treatment of refugees and migrants in Australia and homelessness are two social issues that Ettore feels strongly about. When he heard about what work the Milk Crate Theatre does to address homelessness, their purpose aligned with his personal values so he offered to volunteer for them as he had taken early retirement and has the time to contribute his skills and business experience.

Ettore has 4 ½ years volunteering for Oz Harvest it was while he was there that he was exposed to the magnitude of homelessness.

My latest role for them was a community ambassador doing talks all over Sydney spreading

the word of Oz Harvest to schools and community groups. I choose to take a different path as the organisation was focussing on other areas.

I learnt that society from all the community from an individual basis is much more opened than would appear there are an amazing number of people who volunteer I didn't know quite frankly and above all I am astonished and delighted and comforting to see how many people even young people giving up their time . . . possibly of earning income to volunteer I think that's fantastic.

Ettore also volunteers as a business mentor for Thrive an organisation that provides micro funding to small business owners. He advises his clients on all matters of running a small business they are mostly Middle Eastern and Iranian Refugees from the North West Suburbs. He has thirty years' experience as a manager director for an Australian Branch of an Italian Company that manufactures building products. He built the business up from a small office to a large distribution organisation. He volunteers 16 to 20 hours of his time working in general admin.

I would love opportunities where I can have a more creative and constructive role if you like rather than pure admin things like that and then make a bigger contribution if you like.

I'm fascinated about Milk Crate and I'm wanting to learn more and see if I can help in other areas because just the idea of supporting vulnerable people in a very constructive fashion I think is commendable and it's fantastic.



website: www.milkcratetheatre.com

Email: mail@milkcratetheatre.com

Address: 73 Garden St, Alexandria NSW 2015,

THE CANTONESE OPERA & DANCING GROUP



ANNA

ANNA HAS BEEN TEACHING

Cantonese Opera to her group of twenty Chinese students for the past 11 years. Most of them are in their seventies the oldest member of the group is Wan-Ying at 92. Anna does not speak English,

Karen and Stella act as interpreters on behalf of the others.

Anna started performing from the age of six, she is now in her seventies. Chinese Opera is a family tradition; she has performed all her life, as well as being a professional performer. Her capacity to pass on her knowledge of Chinese Opera hasn't diminished she has two groups one at the Counterpoint Multicultural Centre in Alexandria and the other at the Ultimo Community Centre.

Karen and Stella have much to say about Anna; she showed us how to make jewellery and how to put on makeup for the performance,

she teaches us traditional Cantonese folk songs, a song can take half an hour to sing, we learn half the song today and the other half next week. We are very fortunate for her to teach us for free, no charge. Sometimes she works until midnight choosing songs for a performance and who will sing what song. We have two performances for this group, and Anna also works on three performances for the Ultimo Community Centre Group.

The Cantonese Opera group receive invitations to perform at nursing homes, "most of the people in the nursing home are Chinese, sometimes foreign people . . . it depends on the nursing home . . . but mostly Chinese because Chinese Opera is very hard to understand . . . there are people interested . . . it will take them a long time to understand". As pensioners, we contribute a lot to make it happen . . . to make the best performance. We are a jack of all trades we are the singers, organisers, cleaners; we prepare the food for the old ladies when it comes to make tea time, everything. We move all of the equipment to



The Cantonese Opera and Dancing Group meets Monday mornings 10am to 2.00pm at Counterpoint Multicultural Centre
For more information please call 93194073
Website: www.counterpointcs.org.au,
Facebook: counterpoint multicultural services, Ph. 02 9319 4073
Address: 73 Garden St, Alexandria

downstairs; we need a couple of young fellas, normally the guys are pretty good. The community do their best to support, but it's not enough for the whole group. They come to our performance and donate very little. Mind you they are very old pensioners.

The group are getting old and getting around can be difficult, if they had access to a bus with a driver it would be easier for them. But that's not their priority; they have an antiquated PA system assembled from an old amplifier/cdplayer/digital tv, ingenious but outdated. They would like to find funding assistance to replace it with a better system. It is an important musical resource for their learning.

The happiest thing for Anna is spreading Chinese Opera as far from China to here. She wants to continue as long as she can, to impart her knowledge to her students so they can be the best they can be. So they may continue to spread Chinese Opera to the wider community and hopefully to a younger generation.

上排从左到右: Stella Low, Gui Sheng, Karen, Peggy

下排从左至右: Jiduan, Wan-Ying, Hui Yan Liu, Chon Ian (安娜老师)

过去十一年里, 安娜一直在粤剧课里教授着二十个中国学生。他们的年龄段大多数是在七十岁左右, 最年长的Wan-Ying 已经92岁了。安娜不说英语, Karen和Stella便作为其他人的翻译员。

七十岁高龄的安娜从六岁开始学习粤剧。她出生在一个粤剧世家, 这一生都在演绎粤剧, 直到她退休她终于成为了一名专业的粤语演员。作为一名在亚历山大Counterpoint 多元文化中心和 Ultimo社区中心的一名志愿者, 这十一年间, 尽管有时只有两个学生, 她没有因为自己的专业性而削弱了作为粤剧老师的责任。

Karen 和Stella 作为她的两个学生, 她们说: “安娜老师向我们展示了怎样制作表演需要的首饰和妆发, 她教给我们广东的传统戏剧。一首歌可以唱半个小时。我们今天学一半, 下周在学一半。” “我们感到非常幸运因为她免费教我们。” “有时候为了选曲和选人她会工作到午夜才睡觉。” “在亚历山大的多元社区, 我们有两个节目, 同是她也为Ultimo社区排练了三个节目。”

广东粤剧社接受了护理之家的演出邀请, 大多数住在护理之家的人是中国人, 有时也会有一些外国人。“这个是取决于护理之家的, 但是因为粤剧对于大多数中国人来说也比较难理解, 人们也因此更感兴趣想去听明白歌曲的意思。” 作为一位领取津贴的人, 我们想做更多的事去为观众呈现最好的表演。我们每个人身居数职, 是演唱者, 是组织者, 是清洁员, 还为老年人在喝茶的时候准备水和食物, 还有很多很多。我们也需要一些年轻人帮助我们搬运东西, 他们通常也都很好。社区尽可能得给予我们支持, 但是对于整个团队来说, 还不够。很少的演出捐款和那些事情提醒着我们还是一帮领着津贴的老年人。

社团年纪偏大, 运行整个社团也比较困难。如果社团可以拥有一名司机和一辆车的话, 情况会容易很多。但是这个不是他们优先考虑的。PA程序的组合从扩音器, CD机到电视快过时了。他们希望有预算去升级这些设备, 这些音乐资源对社员学习来说是至关重要的。

对于安娜老师来说, 最开心的事情莫过于把中国的戏剧带到澳洲来。她会尽她所能得继续教授下去, 争取有机会传播到年轻人的群体里去。

每周一的早上10点到下午2点粤剧及舞蹈社团都会在Counterpoint 多元文化社区举办, 想要咨询更多信息, 请致电: 93194073。

(负责翻译这篇文章的是来自新南威尔士大学的毛鑫岚, 是在多元文化中心实习的社会工作专业的实习生)

This Interview has been translated from English to Chinese with the assistance of Xinlan Mao social work student from the University of New South Wales on student placement at Counterpoint Multicultural Centre.

SHIRLEY HAS BEEN VOLUNTEERING

at Redfern Legal Centre for eighteen months. She initially volunteered for the RLC when she was starting out as a young lawyer. Her law firm had a pro bono program at RLC.

They would roster a couple of their young lawyers in the evenings. I did it a few times and found it interesting.

Shirley is now a stay-at-home mum with three school-aged children, she stopped her job as a corporate lawyer. When her children were in school, she wanted something to do. Someone suggested doing volunteer work. She remembered her RLC experience and decided to give them a call.

Redfern Legal Centre has evening solicitors who come in after work to give advice at RLC's evening clinics. They asked if I wanted to volunteer in the evenings but given I could

only do school hours, they put me through to Finn who is the volunteer manager here. The Principal Solicitor at the time rang me back and said they didn't like to turn down people who have capacity to help, so I came in and started volunteering here in May last year.

What skills have you learnt from volunteering here?

Updating some of my computer skills. We have a volunteer management system which I haven't used before. Working in our compliance and risk management which are new areas for me. I'm also learning about the community law sector and the important work done by community legal centres like RLC.

Do you think you're making a difference?

I try to do two mornings a week. I'm helping the staff here who are making a difference to the community, so I hope I'm helping where I'm needed. I also try to help at our Front Desk, taking calls from people in our local communities who need to talk to someone about getting legal help.

The most memorable thing?

Being part of the RLC team in the Blackmores Running Festival and helping to raise much needed funds for the Centre and therefore the communities that it supports.

SHIRLEY



ELLE HAS BEEN TRAINING as a law graduate with the Redfern Legal Centre since July this year.

I saw the role come up, the police powers clinic. I'm really interested in criminal justice, throughout my studies, ideas of bringing police to account, the abolition of prisons. It seemed like the perfect fit, and I was eager to learn from experienced solicitors in a community setting. I wanted to get a little more experience and give back to the community with all the skills that I've acquired so far.

Elle provides assistance and support for the solicitor who runs the Police Powers Practice, the only legal practice of its kind in NSW.

We have an evening advice session on Monday nights. My role is to do some research around the files for the client that has booked the appointment and to help my supervisor to

Website: www.rlc.org.au

Facebook: Redfern Legal Centre Ph.0296987277

...ideas of bringing police to account, the abolition of prisons. It seemed like the perfect fit, and I was eager to learn from experienced solicitors in a community setting.

see a client if there are not enough volunteers on the night.

Elle works Mondays and Tuesdays. Her Tuesday workload is following up on clients from the Monday sessions.

We're seeing people with really complex needs in complex situations, often quite systemic and ongoing stuff, and people have had years and years of harassment from the police. Kind of institutionalised, as the criminal justice system is in some way. When you dig a little bit you can tell people are grateful to tell their story and have it taken to a higher level as well.

What satisfaction do you get from your volunteer role?

When a client gets an apology, the officer disciplined, compensation that's fantastic but on a more basic level, being able to provide support. Knowing that people know there's somewhere they can go.

Part of a lawyer's role can be to advocate on broader issues, a practical way to achieve law reform is by gathering people's experiences who come to the clinic. Finding where the problems and the gaps are, where the law is not complied with or where the law is failing them. Taking those issues to somewhere bigger, to government and policymakers.

The skill set I've learnt here I would not have been able to understand in a private firm. I wouldn't be doing that sort of work, I wouldn't be able to see how on the ground-work can transfer



to a broader sense of justice in society. But law reform and change take a long time, I don't think I been here long enough to know.

Do you think you are making a difference?

I think the clinic is making a difference definitely, I mean there are so many people that come through every week. With different issues we put them on the right track and link them up and take on their matter, that's assistance they would not get anywhere else.

The most memorable thing?

I guess lots of little wins. Having a client who talked about being knocked about and harassed at a train station. Being able to get the CCTV footage for that event, sounds like a small thing but that sort of evidence and proof is pretty big and pretty hard to get.



Twitter: Redfern Legal Centre
Address: 73 Pitt St, Redfern

REDFERN MEN'S CAVE



ANDREW HERNE

lives in the McKell Building where he has been a tenant for the last twenty years. The Men's Cave meeting room at Poets Corner

Community Centre is across the street from where he lives. He has been a volunteer at the Men's Cave since it started four years ago. Andrew helps out in the kitchen and provides moral support and social interaction with the members. The group began as the Redfern Men's Aboriginal Cooking Group, teaching basic cooking. But it has since been opened up to men from all backgrounds; the group is still well supported with Aboriginal men.

Men who owe money for fines can be referred to the group and have money deducted for the time they attend. "We have people coming from government bodies, Aboriginal advocacy, partners in recovery and parole officers, who come and speak to you if you have a problem, I come here to eat and help, but if I needed to use these services, I know there's a lot of government bodies that come here".

The Men's Cave has t-shirts and coffee cups as a means of promoting the group to the community. "When I see people outside who have the men's cave t-shirts on, and I speak to them, I know they've been here, and they know who I am, it's gotten people from the community who don't know each other to get to know each other."

The members are taken on excursions when there is funding available to pay for it; they may go to Taronga Zoo or the Oz Harvest Cook-off in January. One year the group went on a fishing excursion that travelled out past North Head. The group were made up of tough guys with criminal backgrounds, Andrew was trying to instruct the guys how not to get seasickness, but they all became violently ill and had to be taken home individually as they were too sick to walk. He recalls it fondly as a particularly memorable experience.

Andrew has been a hairdresser for thirty years, every second Tuesday morning you can find him cutting hair for the homeless. "I am the only hairdresser in Australia cutting hair for the homeless for free, under the bridge in Woolloomooloo every second Tuesday for 23 years. So, if you're unemployed and don't have anywhere to live come under the bridge, and I'll cut your hair, and that's me volunteering."

CHRIS WILSON

has been volunteering for the Men's Cave for eight weeks. As a TAFE requirement to maintain

his teaching currency, he needs to put in twenty hours of community work. He teaches community service work with TAFE units in mental health, alcohol and other drug diversity. Chris has qualifications in counselling and communications.

"What I get out of this, is a real connection with the community here, and I enjoy it, it helps me for what I do, and engaging with the community."

"I guess I got the theoretical knowledge ... volunteering here gives me the practical engagement of those skills."

What skills has Chris learnt from volunteering, "Just be patient let things happen let things flow as they need to flow, not to have control of everything you have to achieve, things can take their time, other things achieve quickly."

When asked if he is making a difference:

"Perhaps in a small way it's about contributing to the greater whole, the group it's successful so about its doing my part in making it more successful."

"The numbers have increased since the last two times I've been here which is a good thing, means we're engaging the community ... I am sure it's more the word of mouth that people come along."

I think (the group) will continue; it's a way the members in the group can support each other as well as gaining their skills and encourage other members to do their thinking and to participate actively in the group, so I think that's a useful skill for them.

The Men's Cave is RedLink Hub (FACs) supported service located in the McKell Building 55 Walker St Redfern. The Men's Cave meeting is held at the Poet Corner Community Centre every Tuesday from 10 am, the group is open to men residing within Redfern Public Housing Precinct.





KERRIE ALLOTT MANAGES the Steel Level Café on the corner of Phillip and Cope Streets in Waterloo. The Café hours are open from 9.30 am to 2.00 pm Monday to Wednesday. Café food and barista coffee are available at affordable prices as well as access to community computers. On Tuesday there are English classes from 10 am to 12pm, Wednesdays there is a low-cost food market for local residents from opening hours. On the second Wednesday of each month, Café Cinema screens a series of short films.

If you wanted to add retail shopping to your post coffee break, walk through to the Salvo street wear Op Shop, this is where you're likely to meet a couple of friendly volunteer retail staff June and Robin.

Robin works at the front counter; she was asked to volunteer by her late friend Mavis who was a volunteer for many years.

"Mavis, she thought it was a good idea, and I came, because I was cut-off, I wasn't talking to the community, she was an inspiration for me because she was here, she taught me everything I know. The people that come in here, I would probably be the only person they talk to in a day ... To be kind to them make them feel welcome. I get a lot of satisfaction when I see someone smile. The community is changing in Waterloo; people who come in are anxious, I say to them it's a day at a time, and they're alright today."

Robin has done the hard yards as a self-employed business woman.

"I had my own business, I was an industrial cleaner I worked all over the North Shore. I built it up as a young widow with a young child I had to get on with it. I came here when my son was nine he's 48 now, I've been here for nearly 40 years now."

Robin enjoys her work, "I meet so many different people they teach me, I've learnt heaps. We work here as a team; there's nobody special we're all the same. A lot of people know me they think I'm part of the fixture."

June works behind the scenes sorting through donations for resalable items that are in good condition. "I enjoy the break from every day things, company, workmates and different people who come into the shop. I've been volunteering here for about four years. I used to volunteer for Vinnies in Queensland, and when I moved here four years ago, I decided to do the same here."

Back in the day, June worked with first generation computers, Burroughs mechanical accounting machines in Auckland, New Zealand.

"Volunteering takes up a few hours of my time; sometimes I go help behind the counter, I've never worked in retail before. We get people in for all manner of things as far as the community goes. It makes me feel good; no one day is the same, every day is different."

Kerrie explains, "we have a number of keen volunteer staff who work in the Café making coffee or sandwiches, washing dishes and offloading heavy items for the food market. We also have two program volunteers who run the English Language class and Mini Music Group for 0-5 years on Fridays."



JUNE

ROBIN

Opening hours: Monday to Wednesday 9.45am – 2 pm
Website: www.salvationarmy.org.au/sydneystreetlevel/
Address: Corner of Cope and Phillip Streets, Waterloo

REDFERN WOMAN'S CRAFT GROUP

THE REDFERN WOMAN'S CRAFT GROUP

started in 2011 at the Poet's Corner Community Centre. The group activities were knitting in the morning and bingo in the afternoon. Some years back the group moved into the community room of the Betty Makin Building on the corner of Kettle and Morehead Streets. They meet every Monday morning from 9.30am to 2pm. They still do what they've always done and bingo is now on Thursdays. Social cohesion and collegial support for each other is what binds the group together. Their handcrafted blankets are donated to the women's and girls' of domestic violence a WEAVE support service and the Cat Protection Society.

The group's core members are Jill, Darlene, Val, Linda, Virginia and floaters who come on alternate weeks or when they can. The group is culturally and linguistically diverse. They exchange words from each other's' language so they may better understand each other's' culture.

JILL is of Aboriginal descent; she has lived her whole life on Walker Street.

"I grew up here at 2/57 Walker, and I'm now living at 5/57 Walker. I went to school, worked and married here, lived my whole life here, most of my grandchildren have been born in Redfern over three generations.

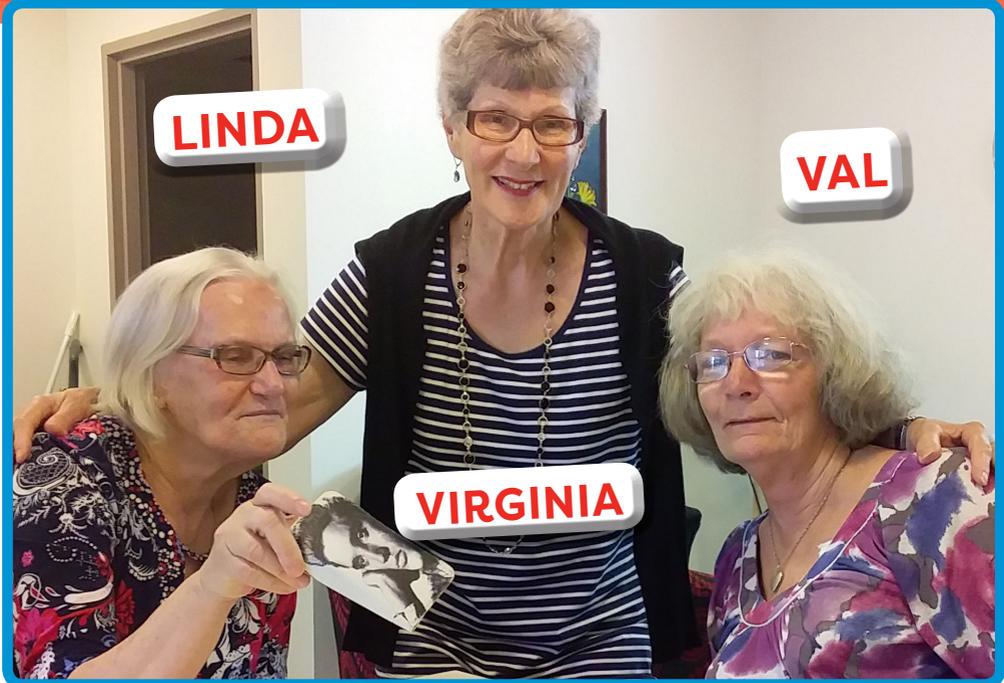
My mother set up a number of community agencies around the area. The Betty Makin Community Room, the City of Sydney Council, donates \$500 to different community groups during youth week, under her name. She sat on the board of the Youth Factory Service; she was one of the first people to set up the South Sydney Regional Council and the South Sydney Community Aid.

I was the President of the Poets Corner Kindergarten and PC president of Bourke Street Kindergarten and PC president of Bourke Street Public School, I run the breakfast programme at Bourke Street for the underprivileged. I trained and coached athletics and netball in the area. The agencies thrive as long as the staff have the right thought for the community, and that they are approachable for the community."

DARLENE is a Wiradjuri woman from Dubbo," through my friendship with Val, she asked me to come along to this group. The group was welcoming, I fitted in well; I felt like I'd known these people for ages. I made this a regular appointment for me on Mondays.

I Volunteer for Oz harvest on Monday and Thursdays, the seventh day Adventist church and Poets Corner on Thursdays and Wednesdays I help out with the lunch at the Marton Building and also the Salvation Army on Phillip and Cope Streets. That's just my way of giving back to the community."





The group was welcoming, I fitted in well; I felt like I'd known these people for ages. I made this a regular appointment for me on Mondays

LINDA AND VIRGINIA moved from Portugal to Australia in 1974. Linda has lived mostly in Paddington and now lives at Bondi Junction. Linda was a nurse working at St Vincent's Hospital. She never married and has done all her socialising in Redfern over the past forty years where her sister Virginia lived with her husband and son.

Val has been living in the area for around 35 years her community volunteering is a non-recognised role. People go to her for help; she given them food when they have been sick, she

does their shopping if they are too ill, she goes visiting residents who are not well and need support and looks after pets.

"I never got a nursing qualification so the next best thing was to work in a hospital where I can be close to people where I could look after them. I always wanted to come back to Redfern, so people have said why you want to move back to Redfern, my friends are here. My family didn't have anything to do with me, we didn't grow up together, so my friends are like my family these ladies here. I call Redfern my home."

Group meets every Monday morning from 9.30am to 2pm in the community room of the Betty Makin Building on the corner of Kettle and Morehead Streets.

STORY FACTORY



LORENA

LORENA PARAM BEEN HAS

volunteering for the Story Factory back in the days when they were called the Sydney Story Factory. She was a Manly resident when she read an article in the Sydney Morning

Herald about one of their editors Cath Keenan who was setting up a not-for-profit creative writing centre in Redfern for marginalised young people. The idea immediately appealed to her, creative writing as a means to improve literacy. She didn't pursue it at the time because of how long it would take to commute on public transport from Manly. So when she moved to Redfern, she was knocking on their door, to volunteer for them.

"I'm a retired teacher there is quite a lot of retired teachers and trainee teachers who volunteer. Although helpful, it isn't necessary, "you just have to love working with young people, the most important requirement is an interest in creative writing."

The Story Factory Redfern Centre a distinctive green building was once called the Martian Embassy. "Quite often passers-by, would come in and ask if we were a bar or have coffee when we tell them we are a creative writing centre for young children they were very much shocked but quite delighted".

Another centre has recently been opened on George Street in Parramatta, as a result of the high demand for their services, "so we have a beautiful sandstone building in Parramatta, volunteer work now involves travelling a fair bit if you're a regular volunteer at like me. I'll go as far as Campbelltown, Mt Druitt and almost to Richmond to work in the schools and with the staff and the Story Tellers."

"The Story Factory's goal is creative writing; it's not on grammar, punctuation or spelling per se, that, of course, comes up in the editing process. I mean the reason why you volunteer, you want to feel you're making a difference. I'm sure that's the motivation of every volunteer, myself included!"

"You get word of mouth evidence from parents and

teachers that the writing ability of the young people has just so much improved. So you're happy to pick up another workshop which might mean as it worked out for me to be six days a week. There's a great need, we can't get enough volunteers".

"The young people, particularly about the schools in Mount Druitt, have a poor attendance rate but when they hear the story factory is coming. They are all there, wanting to participate because we have the philosophy that there is no right or wrong. At the end of their term, they will have a published form of their work . . . A visual representation of what they have done. . . that's the secret of our work."

Lorena has worked on various creative workshop projects such as matchbox poetry where young people learn the step by step process of how to compose a four-stanza poem. The matchbox becomes the container for their poem, a favourite activity for most young people is decorating their matchbox.

At Plunkett Street School in Woolloomooloo, students from years four to six were write about a magical place called Ooloomooloo (Woolloomooloo spelt backwards) with witches and goblins. On completion of their term, the student's stories are compiled into a bounded book. The Story Factory produces hundreds of such books at the end of every school term.

Lorena likes the honesty of young people endearing, "I was working with a group of indigenous girls the youngest of the group was having difficulty using a pair of scissors. I asked her if she would like me to do it, then one of the older girls piped up and said, "see even the old lady knows how to use a pair of scissors," ". . . from the mouths of babes. What would an old lady know about anything".

Lorena works young people from culturally diverse communities from Muslin girls in Parramatta, Aboriginal children in Chippendale and refugee young people who come into the Redfern Centre.

Lorena enjoys her volunteer work and looks forward to returning after each school break. Although the Story Factory is planning all the time to get more volunteers she would be working with groups of two or three volunteers when there could be more.



WATERLOO RECYCLE WORKSHOP

WATERLOO RECYCLING WORKSHOP is a social enterprise located in the carpark of the Turanga Building on the corner of Phillip and Cope Streets. Every Friday they are open from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm. Naomi Smith is the recycle workshop coordinator along with her team of six volunteers, Dianna, Liz, Natasha, Vlad, Dave and Anne.

Dianna has been a volunteer since the recycle workshop's inception in 2008. The recycle workshop was a joint funded project with the City of Sydney, NSW Housing and Counterpoint Community Services. The City of Sydney provided funding for carpentry tools, FACs provided the workshop and Counterpoint auspice their administration. The late Jon English a retired joiner was the first furniture restoration volunteer, he built the original workbenches, store shelving and collected recycled timber for furniture repairs.

Dianna has a van and collects recycled items for her own marketeering rounds, something she has done for many years, so when she heard about the recycle workshop she offered to help out. She has a lot of contacts within councils

who inform her where to go for clean-up days around the inner west and surrounds. When she spots a nice piece of wooden furniture she collects it and hands it over to Vlad, their workshop carpenter for repair or restoration.

“ I've lived in the area for 42 years; I'm originally from Walker Street, everyone gets very excited when new stuff comes in”

Driving around and picking up loads can put a lot of demand on Dianna's time but it is something she enjoys, often making multiple trips to the workshop in a day. When Naomi get the opportunity she goes out with Dianna.

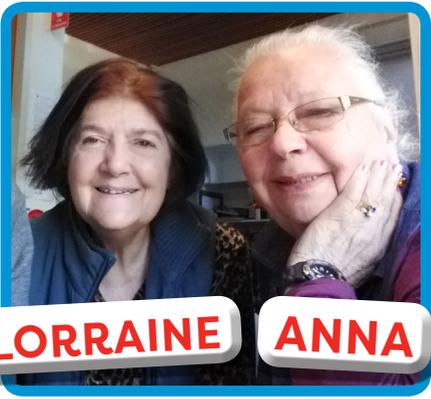
“Nothing goes to the landfill if things stay too long we drop the price or take all the freebies to Anglicare in Kensington. I've been into marketeering for a long time I know how to price things and understand what their resale value is. For new people who come in, we provide a \$20 kitchen pack containing, cutlery, crockery and essential kitchen items to get them started.”

“I wanted to give back it makes me feel good . . . You'd be surprised at the personal relationships you build up with people.”



Every Friday they are open from 8.30am to 12.30pm in the carpark of the Turanga Building on the corner of Phillip and Cope Streets

WATERLOO RESIDENTS MARKET AND GARDENS INC.



LORRAINE

ANNA

THE WATERLOO GARDENS GROUP

was established in 1997 by Professor Bruce Judd under a community development project with the University of NSW. The project lasted for 25 years until it ended two years ago. The group reorganised and registered as a not-for-profit incorporated association in 2017.

The Waterloo Residents Markets and Garden Incorporated association manage four community gardens, in Waterloo on the public housing estates of Cook, Daniel Solander and Marton and the community garden at Poets Corner on Morehead Street in Redfern.

Anna Kovic has been involved with the Waterloo community gardens for twenty years and has lived in the Daniel Solander building for forty-two years.

She is the garden coordinator and treasurer; she collects membership fees for individual garden plots. She works on Monday, Tuesday or Friday from 10 am to 2 pm, on the ground floor of the Marton Building. English is a second language for Anna; she speaks passionately in her Eastern European accent about the community gardens and the joy it brings to her life.



**WATERLOO RESIDENTS
MARKETS AND GARDENS INC.**

What skills have you learnt from volunteering?

Anna: What I'm doing all my life my nature is to help the people. My father and mother always teach me to be kind to each other, make sure don't do to anybody what you don't want to do to you. I always love these words and I always love gardening, meet people talking to the people. That's my health it makes me healthy, and make me happy that's why I'm doing this job.

I've done so many courses, I've got so many certificates from my previous job what I done. And that makes me happy, that make me live, I never have time to think how old I am and think how I feel and what I have to do today I have to do tomorrow.

To listen more, to be able to go to meetings and state your views if people agree with it or not, but I've always been that kind of a person. It rekindled my skills I used before I retired, because I was self-employed. All these things I do now are part of the things I did in my past life it just rekindled what I've been doing all my life.

Do you think you're making a difference?

No I don't just want to make a difference I want to make better, more communication that's what I want.

What is the most memorable thing?

There's a lady she had a heart operation and she was cleaning in the common area she was just in the hospital about two months ago. I say to her I can do that, she say no I do it for my heart. Cleaning garden pulling the grass in the garden it makes me happy.

Lorraine Byrnes is the vice president for WRMG:

I planted some plants and then I pulled them out as weeds I didn't know, then Mila gave me some seeds which were cucumber and they are starting to grow so that's a memorable part. But really I have many, many memorable parts it doesn't revolve around the garden the garden is life, just living is a memorable part . . . every moment is precious, no matter what whether its rain, hailing or shining. Every moment of my life is memorable. Cause everyone have an impact your life no matter how small.

**Website: www.waterloo-association.com
Email: waterloo-association@outlook.com
Address: Marton Building, 149 Cope St, Waterloo**

WATERLOO PUBLIC HOUSING ACTION GROUP



OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, Richard Weeks has attracted a lot of media attention and public support as the Chair of the Waterloo Public Housing Action Group WPHAG. It all started with a letter dated 15 December 2015 from the Minister of Social Housing Mr Brad Hazzard to the Waterloo Public Housing tenants, announcing the Waterloo Public Housing Redevelopment and the new Waterloo Metro Station.

WPHAG has an office at Shop 4, 95 Wellington St, Waterloo. Their office is funded and sponsored by Land and Housing Corporation and the City of Sydney. Richard is also the president for the Waterloo Residents Market and Garden Inc Assn.

Richard's number one angst against the Liberal State Government's intentions and the implications it held for hundreds of tenants like him, was their lack of transparency to consult with them. It became his personal crusade the Aussie battler call to action", to form a public housing tenant action group to challenge the Waterloo urban renewal project.

There was some general apathy from tenants to get behind his cause but he did eventually manage to recruit some members. Hence the Waterloo Public Housing Action Group was formed and launched into action with a petition. They went out to the Waterloo community and beyond to drum up support and signatories. Tent Embassy Aboriginal activist Jenny Munro joined the group as a long-standing Redfern resident. She came up with the idea to set up a tent embassy on Waterloo Green, which also served as a temporary office where tenants could come in, sign the petition and talk about maintenance issues. Although the tent embassy was short-lived, it managed to attract a lot of media attention and generated a great deal of public support.

The Waterloo Public Housing Action Group have been successful with entering into direct negotiations with the Minister for Public Housing and FACs senior management for open and transparent consultation.

WPHAG investigated 196 tenant applications for maintenance issues for urgent action directly to the Minister for public housing, two of which was dangerous to personal health. Their investigations exposed systemic flaws on how tenant maintenance issues.

RICHARD



**Website: www.whag.wordpress.com
Facebook: [waterloo public housing action group](https://www.facebook.com/waterloopublichousingactiongroup)
Twitter: [waterloo public housing action group](https://twitter.com/waterloopublichousingactiongroup)
Address: Shop 4/ 95 Wellington St, Waterloo**

WEAVE YOUTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES

The following Weave volunteer stories have kindly been provided with permission of Yvette Hymann, Weave Volunteer Coordinator and Denise Clarke-Hundley, Weave Tutor Program Support Worker.

CHERRY



CHERRY, moved overseas to study in Sydney. For her, volunteering for the Weave's Tutoring Program was a means of connecting to the community.

"This is the thing that I can contribute. So I feel that I belong to the community. Because I'm an international student it's a good way to connect."

As an experienced teacher currently doing her PhD at UNSW Sydney, Cherry says her two years of tutoring with Weave have helped her to find herself through a kind and supportive tutoring community.

"Sometimes I spend the whole day studying at my university. And then I come to Weave and it refreshes my mind. Then, I go back to my studying after that. I can concentrate more."

A dedicated educator, Cherry says a big part of tutoring is developing a bond with the children she works with. One thing that really helps is the care taken when placing tutors with students.

"The supervisor (Denise) cares so much about the students and tutors. She matches the students and my strengths so we can best support them."

But most importantly, the program is about connecting with people.

"I used to be a teacher and I love children and their individual differences. I feel satisfied when I can help or teach them. The children are so cute and do fantastic work."

NICK has been tutoring with Weave for two years. I started volunteering on the tutoring program about two years ago. I knew that I was keen to start doing some kind of volunteering, and I couldn't really pick a place.

"I was looking for something that resonated with me, but also where I was using skills that I already had.

Volunteering with Weave is an immensely satisfying experience – connecting with young adults, helping them and watching them grow. Even in a couple of weeks, the way that they grow and the way they come out of their shell is an immensely satisfying experience."

I think teaching is one of those things where you can see the fruits of your labour quickly. When they "get it" and you can see that they get it, it's a very satisfying feeling.



NICK

It's improving someone's life in a very small way, but there's something about teaching that I find intrinsically satisfying.

One of my students really struggles with maths, so a lot of the work that we do is very fundamental, basic stuff. When I first took him on, I focussed purely on the content of times tables to very little effect.

And it took me a couple of weeks to realise that there's so much more going on behind-the-scenes in terms of a student's confidence.

It would sometimes leave me quite frustrated. Then, there was a turning point, when I went in a little more casually, and my only intent was to listen to him. I looked beyond maths to just be there for him.

There are lessons when we won't even talk about maths, just talk about something going on in his life. To me, that is the value of one-on-one tutoring – it allows for the very personal connection, it allows students to set the pace that works for them. He's flourished in a rather profound way. His willingness to open up has markedly improved.

That is the turning point – from being a teacher to being a person."



KIMBERLEY

KIMBERLEY has been volunteering as a tutor with Weave for almost one year, and in that time she's worked with three students.

"I first joined Weave as a volunteer tutor as I was eager to be involved with an organisation that had a solid presence; an organisation with a legacy and the opportunity for me to be part of the community long term."

That's why Weave was interesting to me, because it's been around for so long and has done so much with and for the local community.

I love being present and able to give my undivided attention to the kids. It's been such a joy getting to know them, how they think and like to learn, and how I can be of most help for them.

I hope that in some small way I can help them not just with their learning needs, but also as young people navigating their way in the world.

The first 10-year-old boy I worked with on his English reading and writing was very stressed about the learning process – he would grip his pen and kind of shake trying to figure out the words. So I said, "Just have a go. It's ok to make mistakes; we're both learning." It made such a difference in the way he approached our work together, and we had a lot of fun reading and writing for each other after that.

I also really love encouraging the kids to share their opinions. To think about something and discuss it together.

I feel it's important to encourage them to have a voice, and just because they're young it doesn't mean that their voice doesn't matter.

Volunteering with Weave has been a smooth process – the program is organised, very professional, super friendly and easy going at the same time. I've loved getting to know the program coordinator, Denise, each week too – she makes the whole experience wonderful!

It has been an enriching and humbling experience to get to know the people at Weave. There's a real heart and soul there, and it confirmed that I do want to shift my career focus from communications to healthcare as a way of being more involved in the community.

I used to have grand plans of wanting to change the world. But now I feel if I can change one person's world in some small way then that's what I want to do, just like I feel the incredible people here at Weave have changed my world and how I want to be in it. I'm so grateful for that."

CHRIS has been helping young people to get their licence since 2016. As a volunteer for the Weave Driving Change Program, Chris helps young people go through the process of obtaining their L's, driving for 120 hours, and finally getting the freedom to drive.

"It's a great sense of achievement – you can see it making a difference to their lives."

It was this sense of achievement that led Chris to raise money for two cars for the program in 2017.

And now he's done it again – raising the money to buy another car for people in the La Prouse community wishing to practice their driving.

Chris says his motivation is the young people he's met on the program:

"The students are all very enthusiastic about it. They always say thank you, they're very appreciative. I've never had a student not turn up for a lesson. It's a very positive program that helps young people improve their lives. With driving programs, everyone has a positive outcome – everyone ends up getting their licence."



CHRIS

Twitter: @Weave_Youth
 Ph. 02 9318 0539, Head Office Address: Corner of
 Elizabeth & Allen Streets, Waterloo

CONTACTS

**For more information on how become involved in volunteering,
please contact the organizations below**

107 PROJECTS

Address: 107 Redfern Street, Redfern, NSW, 2016

Web: www.107.org.au

Facebook: 107 projects

Phone: 02 9167 6999

Mission: To improve communities by encouraging people to live creatively.



ABORIGINAL DANCE THEATRE REDFERN

Address: 88 Renwick Street, Redfern, NSW, 2016

Facebook: Aboriginal Dance Theatre Redfern

Mobile: 0418 674 451

ABORIGINAL DANCE THEATRE REDFERN



INNER SYDNEY VOICE REGIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Address: (rear) 770 Elizabeth St, Waterloo, NSW, 2017

Web: www.innersydneyvoice.org.au

Email: admin@innersydneyvoice.org.au



INNERSYDNEYVOICE

REGIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

NSW VOLUNTEERING

Address: 4–6 Cavill St, Ashfield, Sydney NSW 2131

Web: www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au,

www.govolunteer.com.au

Facebook: NSW volunteering

Email: admin@volunteeringaustralia.org

Phone: 02 6251 4060



NSW VOLUNTEERING

NATIONAL CENTRE OF INDIGENOUS EXCELLENCE

Address: 180 George Street, Redfern, NSW 2016

Web: www.ncie.org.au

Facebook: National Centre of Indigenous Excellence

Phone: 02 8094 2500



NATIONAL CENTRE OF
INDIGENOUS EXCELLENCE

REDLINK

Address: Mckell Office, 55 Walker Street, Redfern

Phone: 02 830 35958

Email: RedLink@facns.gov.au



**Family &
Community
Services**

REDWATCH

Address: 67 Raglan Street, Waterloo, NSW 2017

Web: www.redwatch.org.au

Phone: 02 9698 9569

Meets: 6.00pm 1st Thursday of each month
at Counterpoint Community Centre



THE SETTLEMENT

Address: Neighbourhood Centre & Housing,
17 Edward Street, Darlington, NSW, 2008

Web: www.thesettlement.org.au

Phone: 02 9698 3087

Email: info@settlement.org.au



THE SOUTH SYDNEY HERALD

Address: PO Box 3288, Redfern, NSW, 2016

Web: www.southsydneyherald.com.au

Email: editor@ssh.com.au

Phone: 0400 008 338

The South Sydney Herald

TRIBAL WARRIOR

Address: 27 Cope Street, Redfern, NSW, 2016

Web: www.tribalwarrior.org.au

Facebook: [tribalwarrior](https://www.facebook.com/tribalwarrior)

Phone: 02 9699 3491



VILLAGE 2 VILLAGE FREE BUS

Address: Suite 2, Level 1, 579 Harris Steet,
Ultimo NSW 2007

Web: www.villagetovillagesydney.wordpress.com

Phone: 02 8241 8000



This is not an exclusive list, however each of these agencies will be able to assist you contact other opportunities in your area.



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**Family &
Community
Services**

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