Williamstown Community and Education Centre Inc.

1974 - 2026

OUTREACH COMMUNITY CENTRE. Inc.

139 Melbourne, Rd,
Nth, Williamstown. 3016.

Phone 397-7349 or 397-6168.

Williamstown
Community
and Education
Centre Inc

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OUTREACH COMMUNITY
CENTRE INC.

139 Melbourne Road Williamstown 3016 Phone: 9397 7349/6168 Fax: 9397 6837

Williamstown
Community
and Education
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1974 In August a group of local stay- at- home women wanted to get involved and do things in their local community.

In **1975** Jean Wright as bursar of the Williamstown North Primary School formed a sub-committee of the school council of interested parties with a view of providing craft and sewing classes, playgroups and a coffee and current affairs group.



A building on the school grounds at the back of the canteen (in Freyer Street) was provided for the purpose.

The group reported monthly to the school council. Vi Curran was co-ordinator and Milli Von Nagy was secretary. They received a small allowance from the Williamstown Council.
Jill Hocking was appointed as the Community Education Officer for a local network of schools' community outreach programs.



Milli Von Nagy Secretary until 2000

In **1975** Turtle Video finished their studio at 3 Fryer St after 5 months of work. The studio was housed in the building owned by the North Williamstown Primary School which has been renovated by Community Outreach , a group of people associated with the school concerned that the school's resources should be used by the community. A series of workshops were run on Sunday afternoons at a cost of $2 each.



Turtle Video members in the mid 70's

The studio was available for use 24/7 and shared with Community Outreach and other community groups. Turtle Video/Wescom continued operation for 37 years at various venues in the area.

In March colour television was introduced

In **1976** a regular coffee morning for the local mums began and the first community playgroup in Williamstown was established. The first Migrant English class in Williamstown was started along with a writers' group, leather workshops, macramé classes and Kids Town Club for children.



Writers' Group





Migrant English

Leather Workshop

Macramé Workshop 1976





Kids Town Club – Painting 1976



Kids Town Club – Photography 1976

In **1976** the Centre gained funding to run the first After School Program. A joint submission with North Williamstown Primary School saw the construction of the multi purpose hall in the grounds of the Primary School.



*68 6911 (6 lines)

WILLIAMSTOWN Price: 3c

Advertiser

Publicising Williamstown, Newport and Spotswood

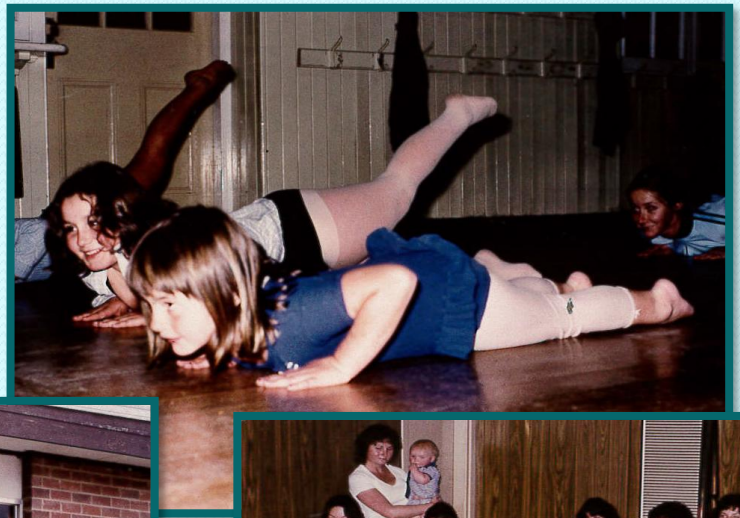
No. 5524 Registered for posting as a newspaper category "B" Wednesday, November 24, 1976

After school

The Outreach programme at North Williamstown Primary School has begun an after-school children's writing project under the leadership of Pat Traynor. When the plan was first put forward, it was thought that at the most, 20 children would be interested. However, more than 50 have enrolled, from Williamstown, Newport and Spotswood. The programme is being run at the Outreach house in Freyer Street, where Ms. Traynor is pictured with her students.

In **1980** many local groups came on board and were involved with the Outreach Centre.









In **1981** the Community Outreach Centre at 3 Freyer Street North Williamstown was, under the direction of Vi Curran – Coordinator, and Richard McCracken painted with a mural by the Flying Art Squad Mural Group. The Flying Art Squad is an enthusiastic band of unemployed young people using their energy and imagination to give something that they see as useful to their community.

The mural (pictured below) expresses historical, contemporary local issues on one large wall of the Community Outreach Centre.





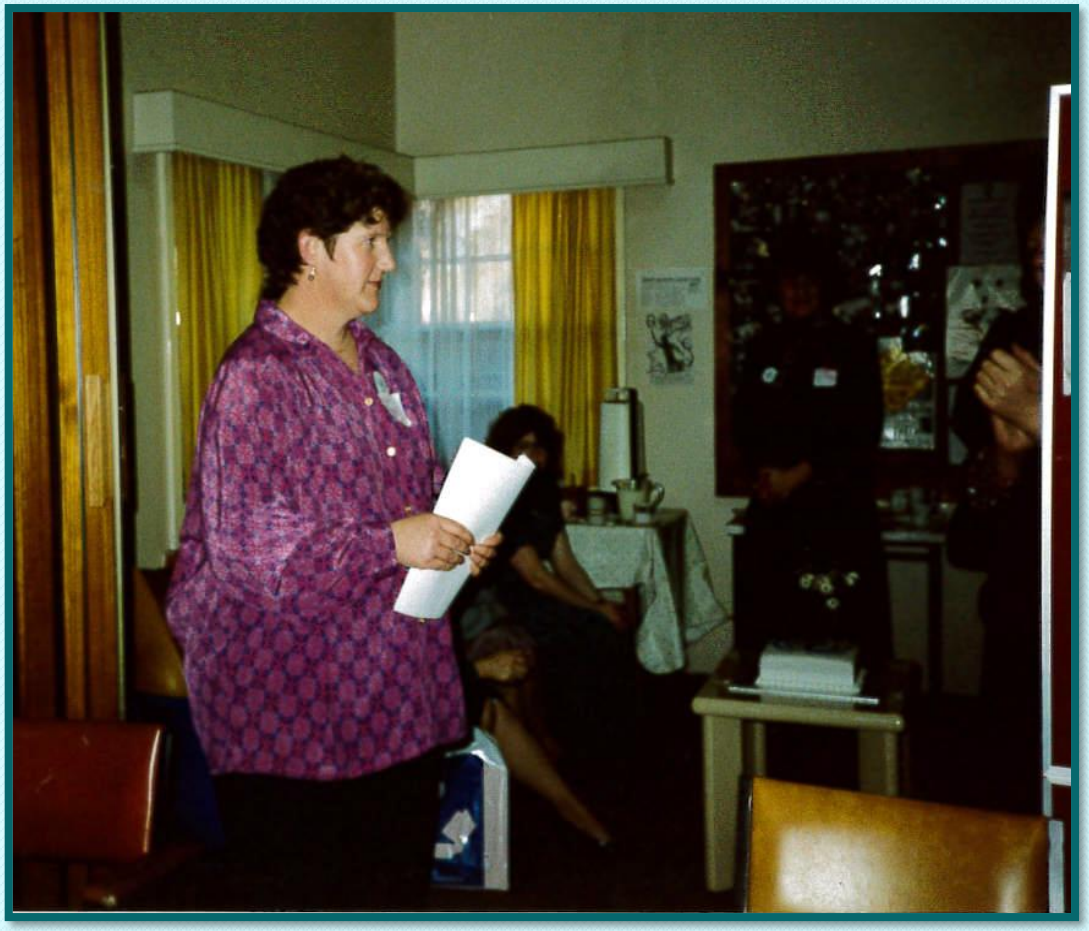
In **1982** the first Community Services Group is established, which today is known as the Interagency Network.



Williamstown North Primary School students entertain English Language students at Christmas

In **1986** a committee of interested parties was formed headed by Beata Peisker and Geraldine Schutt with support from Joan Dyall and Rhonda Johnson.

TAFE funding enabled the Centre to employ a Coordinator to run Adult Education, Leisure and Recreation programs for local residents.



Joan Dyall

In **1987** the organisation becomes incorporated (20/7/87) – name changes from 'Community Outreach' to 'Outreach Community Centre Inc', and no longer operates as a sub committee of Williamstown North Primary School. It now reports once a month to a board of management.



Jill Bilston - Coordinator and Marielle Campbell – Committee of Management

Jill Bilston is appointed Neighbourhood House Coordinator.
The organisation relocates to the Caretakers residence on the corner of Freyer Street, at 139 Melbourne Road, North Williamstown.

1988 **Computer classes begin at Newport TAFE.**

Childcare is available for women enrolling in courses to improve their employment options.

A craft group called Pins and Needles coordinated by Myrtle Cameron attracts up to thirty women weekly. The group continued for many years.





1989 **Judy Fowler appointed Childcare Coordinator. Judy continued in the position until 2003.**



Joan Kirner and Judy Fowler

The City Loop subway is opened

In **1990** the Centre celebrated the International Year of Literacy with a function attended by students, centre users, staff, Hobsons Bay Councillors and local identities.



Carol Willis



Ralph Willis – Federal Treasurer
Jill Bilston – Coordinator
Joan Dyall – Literacy
Coordinator Williamstown



Charlie Bates – HBCC Mayor



Southbank Promenade opens

1991 The Centre attracts large amounts of Federal funding for Migrant English and Literacy classes. Most of this funding supports the running of classes in Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North and Spotswood.



Migrant English and Literacy class

1992 **Opening of the new Childcare / Multipurpose extension**

During the renovation some of the classes were relocated to St Stephens Uniting Church.

Mobil starts donating to our Centre. These donations continue until the present day.

Funding gained for holiday programs for disabled adults.

Lynne Hewet starts at Centre as Adult Education Coordinator at Altona.

In an average week the Centre have at least 100 pre-school children using the facility and between 450-500 adults participating in activities.





In **1992** the Centre liaise and share information with similar groups in the region and state via membership of the Community Provider Committee of the Regional Further Education Council, Western Association of Community Centres, Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres and Community Services Group.



1992 saw the Outreach Centre run computer classes at the Yarraville Community Centre. Classes cost $40 for 9 weeks.

In **1993** the Centre runs a Career Information Session for job seekers over 45 years of age at the Williamstown Town hall. Over 350 people attend the activities.

The Centre, in response to high unemployment in the community received funding to run two training/employment projects.

Green House cleaning and Library skills. The greenhouse Cleaning Training Program for isolated community members with limited skills expands to Greenhouse Cleaning and is registered as a business. Green House Cleaning trained two groups of people in the area who are now employed as domestic cleaners with another group to finishing training in July 1993.



1994 Council amalgamations – Williamstown Council and Altona Council amalgamate under the name Hobsons Bay City Council.

Due to commitment to assisting those with disabilities, Centre gains official Public Benevolent Institution status. This status is very rare in the sector.

An adult holiday program was conducted over the Christmas and Easter period for lonely and isolated people in the community.



Program was funded by City of Williamstown and Footscray Council.

International Family Day is celebrated with an Open Day at the Centre.

1995 In response to high local unemployment and living in an area fast becoming an important Tourist Precinct, the Centre begins the first Training sessions in Tourist Guiding.



Japanese visitors from our Sister City Anjo – creating their own tourist piece of Williamstown area.

Opening of Observation Deck – Rialto Towers

In **1996** activities were run from Spotswood House, Altona North Community Centre, Altona Library, Altona North Migrant Resource Centre, Yarraville Community Centre, Williamstown Tenants Assoc., Nelson Place Community Facility, Richmond Fellowship in Melbourne Road, and the portable classroom at the Williamstown North Primary School.

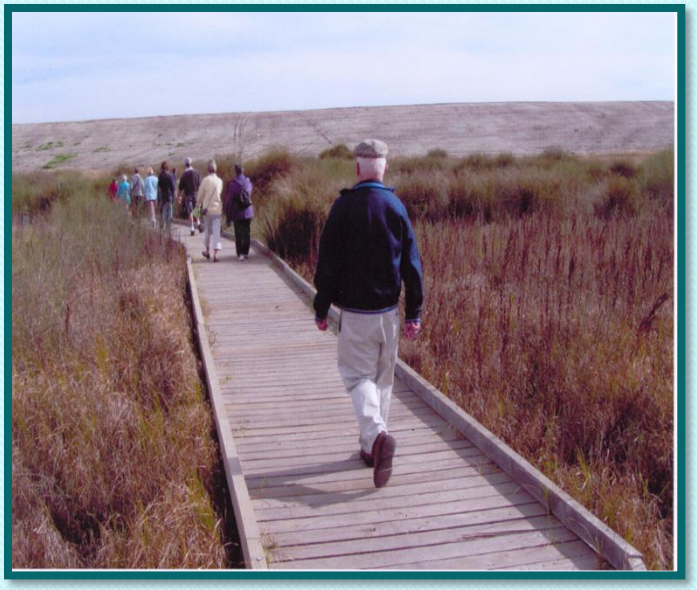


Students attending Adult Learners Week breakfast

The Williamstown Camera Club made the Centre its home from 1995 to 2011 when its numbers became too large to be accommodated at the Centre.

Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre opens

1997 saw the beginning of the Heritage Walks. The group started with ten people. Allan and Sue Searls continued to attend the walks for over 10 years. The group was lead by John Becroft.
The objectives of the walks are to enhance our knowledge of the local heritage, to have a bit of leisurely exercise and to socialise.
The group continued for over 20 years.





1998 Centre gets a new name.

'Outreach Community Centre' becomes 'Williamstown Community and Education Centre'. Rationale is due in part to establish Registered Training Organisation status.

Community Centre best in Victoria



Hobsons Bay Mayor, Cr Brad Matheson, congratulates staff at the Centre (L-R): Jill Bilston, Jacinta Byrne and Lynne Hewet.

For almost 25 years, Williamstown Community and Education Centre (formerly the Outreach Community Centre) has been providing local residents with a wide range of educational and recreational programs.

This valuable contribution to the community has finally been recognised with the Centre being named Outstanding Provider of the Year, by the Australian Association of Adult and Community Education.

Delighted with the achievement, the Centre's Coordinator, Jill Bilston, said that the award recognises the "life long learning" vision of the Centre towards adult education.

"Our classes cater to the broadest range of skills, hobbies, interests and learning needs," Ms Bilston said.

The Centre provides a wide range of education, recreation and craft programs, a drop-in service for information about community services and an excellent childcare program.

One of the Centre's most recent initiatives is a Technology Room with internet workshops and computer classes held on a regular basis, including Word 7 and Excel for beginners and advanced, introduction to computers, and the Mind Your Own Business accounting package - all at affordable costs.

For further information about the Williamstown Community and Education Centre and its wide range of courses, phone 9397 7349.

Hobsons Bay News October 1998

Centre receives Outstanding Provider of the Year Award from ALA during Adult Learners Week.

Green House Cleaning was sold to two women who graduated from the original course in 1995.

The Centre made its first appearance on the Internet. The website was vicnet.net.au/~outcc

With financial assistance from Mobil Oil and Tenix Defence Systems the Centre was able to set up a Computer Room and start teaching classes.

1999 The Spotswood Community House to have a makeover thanks to Victoria University Work for the Dole scheme. The House to have new paint, new veranda and landscaped front garden, with a new disabled access pathway.

Fabulous Friday Workshops continue to be a great success. Some of the workshops offered are: Folk Art, Paper Mache Pinata, Patchwork, Asthma management, Risotto and Paella making, Skin Care and Make-up, Women and Investment.





Six sessions of Occasional Care running : four mornings and two afternoons - Judy Fowler (Coordinator) with Pat McDonald and Doris Miller.

In **2000** A Debutante Ball for young adults with an intellectual disability was held at the Williamstown Town Hall attended by over three hundred friends and family. Sixteen young adults were presented to the mayor of Hobsons Bay Cr. Carl Marsich. Mobil Altona Refinery gave a donation of $6,000 toward the cost of the evening.









New Melbourne Museum officially opened & City Link Freeway opens

In **2000** the ABC's Four Corners program featured Green House Cleaning on its show. Lynne Hewet's house in Williamstown was used to demonstrate the skills learned by the students.



Deborah Keogh with the ABC'S production team

2001 the Centre celebrates the International Year of the Volunteer through a certificate presentation and lunch. More than forty people attended the day. Guest speaker was Mr Alistair Harkness from the Electoral Office of the Premier Mr Steve Bracks.

The Centre celebrates International Disability Day, with a Disco evening and the unveiling of a plaque. Funding was gained through the International Disability Grants Program.



In **2001** Spotswood Community House undergoes a complete indoor and outdoor refurbishment through the Victoria University Work for the Dole scheme.

The Premier Steve Bracks officially launched the opening of the newly refurbished Spotswood House.



Prep children from the Spotswood Primary School help celebrate the day.

2001

This report is a dedication to the many talented community minded people who since the Centre's very beginning have contributed to the needs of an important part of the lives of so many in our community.

In particular we would like to mention Mrs Vi Curran, a parent of children in North Williamstown Primary School, who in the early 70's had a vision and devoted her talent, time and energy to making it a reality, along with many other dedicated volunteers. It is also a celebration of the success of the Centre over the many years since its beginning. Caring staff, students, tutors, childcarers, volunteers, North Williamstown Primary School council, community service organisations in the area, all who have contributed and shared in the ongoing success

Millie Von Nagy & Jean Wright.

TRIBUTE TO VI CURRAN

In 1973 State Legislation allowed the opening of schools for community use. North Williamstown's supportive Principal, Matt Myers, gave his consent to a group of active parents to test school/community involvement. North Williamstown's primary School Centenary Celebrations in 1974 was the springboard for Community Outreach being established.

This was the brainchild of Vi Curran who was such a forward thinker, years ahead with her ideas. She was fully supported by Matt Myers the principal, who like Vi had visions of the school buildings being opened up and used by the whole of the community by offering programs aimed at bringing adults into the school at evenings and weekends. During the weekend of the school's Centenary celebrations, the whole of the community were involved.

Vi organised for local groups and clubs to use classrooms in order to show what they did. She also arranged for ethnic groups to entertain the crowds with their own National dancing and cultures, and this was some 28 years ago!
The first evening classes to be held at the school were "Learning Japanese" with Matt Myers and crocheting with Iris Whitehurst.

This was a first for a government school in Victoria to open up its doors for classes for adults. Vi worked tirelessly on a voluntary basis seeking out tutors, liasing with the school and organising courses. The After School Program commenced and Vi worked hard applying for grants to expand the program. Through successful grants new facilities including the multi purpose hall, the dental unit and a new home for Outreach Community Centre were added to this progressively thinking school.

The success of the Community Outreach Program became too demanding for the dedicated volunteers; thus the need for paid personnel. In 1976 Williamstown City Council funded two part time positions. Vi Curran with her clear vision of Community Outreach was appointed Community Education Officer. Vi continued to work tirelessly with parents, community and school and with local government in determining community needs and developing links with other community services.

We salute and thank Vi for her vision of community support and development. In the International Year of the volunteer we remember Vi and all the volunteers who worked so hard to make Williamstown the very special place it is to live in today.

Millie Von Nagy & Jean Wright



From 2001-2002 Annual Report

2002 On the 10th July the Premier of Victoria The Honourable Steve Bracks handed over the key to the Williamstown Courthouse to Mayor of Hobsons Bay Cr. Angela Altair and the Williamstown Community Centre.





2003 The first week of February 2003 the Centre moved from Melbourne Road to Joan Kirner House which was our home for 17 years.

The Centre relocated in February and the refurbishment was completed in May. Several classes operated throughout this time. Computer classes continued at Melbourne Road until mid April.





2003 The official opening of the new Courthouse venue was held on the 21st of March. The Premier the Hon Steve Bracks officially launched the event and called on Mrs Kirner, the former Premier of Victoria to receive the honour of the site being named after her, to recognise the excellent work she has done for Victoria and the local community.







2003 With so much more space, the Centre is been able to increase all its programs and activities. The Centre commences a new After School Program, Mini Maestro's Music Program, Kumon and many more local groups.

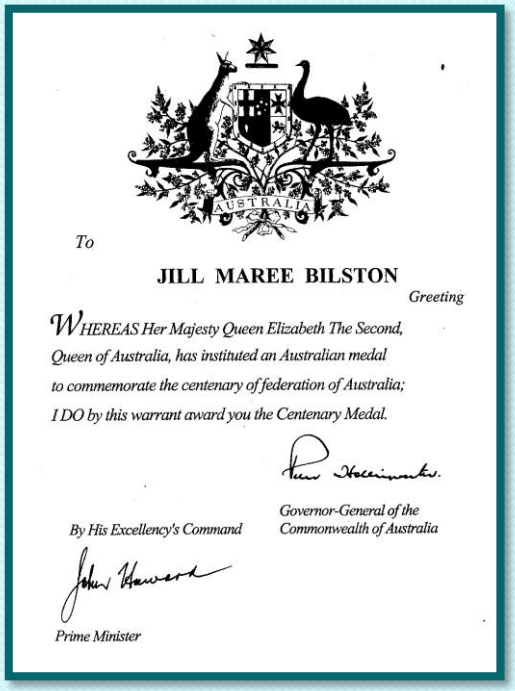
The After School Program for Williamstown and St Marys Primary School uses Joan Kirner House as its new home.

The Centre expands its childcare and playgroup activities. Hundreds of children use the childcare room each week.

The Federal funded Migrant English and Literacy classes grow rapidly in numbers. More classes are developed.

Spotswood Community House receives a new and continuing Coordination grant from the Department of Human Services.

2003 On the 10th June 2003, the Honourable Nicola Roxon, Federal Member for Gellibrand presented Jill Bilston, our Centre Manager, the Centenary Medal for services to Adult Education and the development of the West, and to Lynne Hewet, Adult Education Coordinator, the Vocational Excellence Award from the Rotary club of Williamstown for her outstanding contribution to Adult Education.



To

JILL MAREE BILSTON

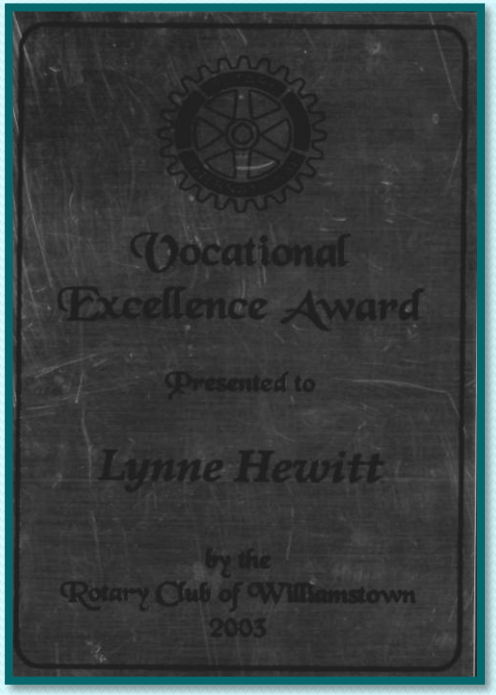
Greeting

WHEREAS Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Second, Queen of Australia, has instituted an Australian medal to commemorate the centenary of federation of Australia; I DO by this warrant award you the Centenary Medal.

Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

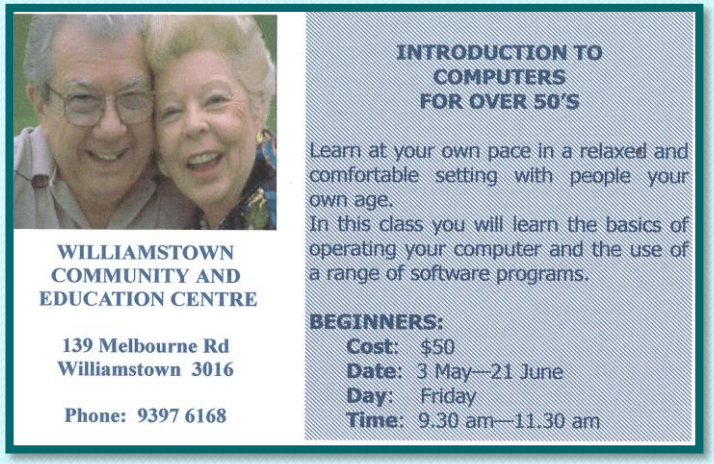
By His Excellency's Command

Prime Minister



In2003 Mobil Altona Refinery donates $11,000 to the Centre to cover the cost of leasing computers. Minister Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training officially opens the Mobil Computer Room with Mr Mike McGrath, Manager of Mobil Altona Refinery.







In **2003** a handful of German speaking parents got together in Williamstown and formed a playgroup at the Centre. The group met regularly to practice and improve their children's German language skills. The Alle Munchkins German Playgroup continued at the Centre until the end of 2013





2004 a shade cloth is erected over the childcare outdoor play area.

Signage at the front of Joan Kirner House installed.

Floydies Social Support Program commences at Floyd Lodge, catering for 20 disabled and elderly frail adults.

Funding from our Centre and a contribution from Council has enabled the development of the Hobsons Bay Network of Community Centres.





Floydies Social Support Program

2005 Marielle Campbell resigns as Chairperson of the Committee of Management and a 22 year association with the Centre. She believes it will continue to prosper, adding real value to the greater community and remaining essential to the unique character of the area.

Bill Bilston resigns as Centre Manager.

Lynne Hewet takes on the position of Acting Manager then Manager.



2005 **Federal funded programs bring over 30 nationalities to our Centre to improve English and Literacy levels.**

A Carers painting group starts, to support the carers of the elderly frail and disabled, to give carers a break.

Joan Kirner House gets a disabled toilet.

Spotswood Community House and Joan Kirner House staff develop a Men's Shed in the Spotswood area. This project provides activities to support socially isolated and disabled older men.

Men's Shed is established in Ann Street Williamstown, with support from Yarraville Community Centre, Council, Laverton Community Centre and Victoria University.

2005 **Pelicans Three Year Old Activity Group commences with Catherine Paleologoudias as Coordinator.**

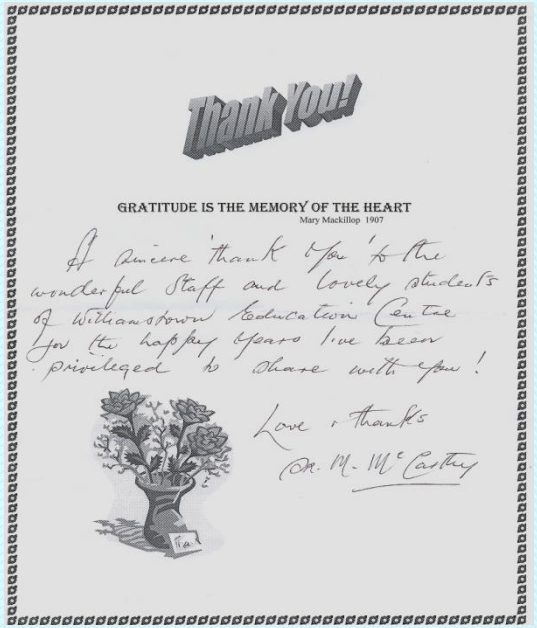
The back block of Joan Kirner House is soil tested and planning starts for the development of a mini playground for Centre run activities.





In **2006** long time volunteer Sister McCarthy, who the Centre nominated as Senior Citizen of the Year. Although she did not win, she was awarded a certificate which she proudly displayed.





2006 Emergency Relief begins. Jenny Peace is employed to support the many volunteers who deliver the program and provide counselling and referrals to the appropriate agencies.

Playgroups include Gumnuts and Children with Disabilities.

Bone Boosters, Yoga and Pilates commence.

Lynne receives Good Access Award for the Disabled from Council.





Bone Boosters

Commonwealth Games held in Melbourne

2007 The drama class for people with an intellectual disability 'Wakety Pals' started. With staff guidance the group is run with the participants as the primary motivators. They engage in drama games, movement to music and work to create a short performance.

Different activities are experienced each week from making place mats, greeting cards, jewellery to dancing, singing, charades, playing football. Once in a while the group chooses to go out to La Porchetta for a Pizza Meal.

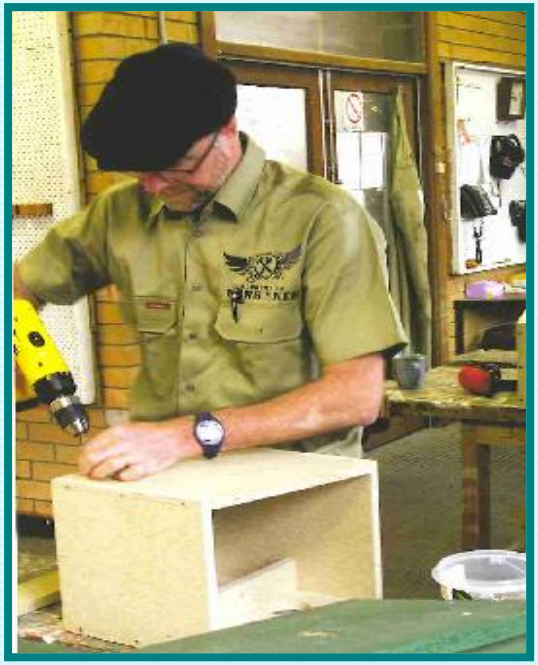




2007 With the assistance of a Community Building Initiatives Small Grant 2006/2007 from Hobsons Bay City Council, Spotswood Community House and Williamstown Community and Education Centre have continued supporting and developing the establishment of a local Men's Shed.

The Hobson's Bay Network was formed and have successfully applied for DPCD funding, under the umbrella of Hobsons Bay City Council. Spotswood Community House is the Administrative support centre for the network.





2008 On the 14th September 2008 a Community Concert was hosted by Willin Wimmin. The group was formed in 1991 and is currently led by Jennifer Lund. The choir is a place where we foster cooperation, validation and mutual respect through singing together.







New EastLink Freeway completed

2008 in December the All Abilities Bocce League Grand Final (The Maltese Bocce Social and Recreation Club) was won by the Williamstown Community and Education Centre – 7 to 4. David House was runner up.

Lesley Orrell, the Access for All Abilities Officer from HBCC, has been working with community organisations to promote sport and recreation opportunities for people with a disability.







2009 Setting up and running the Public Access Computer which allows the community to have free internet access using a computer located in the foyer at the WCEC.

Centre starts delivering Pre – Accredited and Accredited training for State Government.

Disability access has been improved at Williamstown with the installation of a new ramp and automatic opening door to the rear of the building.

Spotswood community Centre formed a partnership with Victoria University's 'Work for the Dole' Community Initiatives Program (VUCIP) to undertake a much needed 'makeover' of the House.



2009 A great initiative was undertaken through partnership with ISIS Primary Care, Western Region Health Centre Staff at Floyd Lodge, Williamstown Primary School, the Men's Shed and our Centre in applying for and receiving a Hobsons Bay Community Grant to develop a "Community Garden" for the residents at Floyd Lodge.

The interested residents were allocated a "tub" to plant and nurture their own garden plot.

A series of mosaic workshops was offered at our centre for Floyd Lodge residents. Our tutor Heather and the students created pots, totem poles, and a beautiful mosaic birdbath.







2010 **New Federal Government Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program commences.**

State Government funding, compliance and regulatory environment requires sector to adapt quickly.

'Sailability – The Next Step'. Sailing Program for people with disabilities. A partnership with Hobsons Bay City Council, Yachting Victoria and the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria.





Melbourne celebrates 175 years

2010 The Karen (Burma) community with the help and partnership of the Williamstown Community and Education Centre, Laverton P12 College, Centre for Multicultural Youth (Learning Beyound the Bell), ISIS, Time Help and a wonderful band of volunteers and tutors continued the work of the homework support group to give children and young people individual attention at a regular homework club.





2011 New Logo introduced. Association membership increases from 6 to over 50. Mobil donates 12 iPads.

Our Centre was fortunate to gain funding from the Department of Planning and Community Development in partnership with Vicnet, a division of the State Library of Victoria through the Community ICT Skills Grants.

The launch was on Friday 20th April and was well attended by Wade Noonan MP, The Hon. Joan Kirner, representatives from many local agencies and students.





2012 To ensure the operational sustainability of the Centre into the future a restructure of the organisation was implemented.
Mark Brophy was appointed as the new Centre Manager.



Aside from our houses at Williamstown and Spotswood, we are now delivering services to our local community at over seven separate locations, from the Senior Citizens' Club in Williamstown and Dulcie Shaw House in Altona North to St. Stephen's in Williamstown and the Migrant Resource Centre in Newport.

2012 **Scholarships through VET Development Centre for all teachers to upgrade qualifications.**

Successful State Government grant to improve pre – training reviews, enrolment process, etc to increase efficiencies.

Julie Hanna was the driving force behind the Spotswood Food & Garden Swap.

Under the direction of Jenni and Barry Mitchell, Conversations for the Curious conducted several sessions and workshops at the Senior Citizens' Centre in Williamstown.

Teachers across all programs ensure their students have considerable exposure and involvement in local community activities and excursions.



In **2012** an important community project undertaken was the participation of some of our students in the opening of the new Williamstown Library's Time Capsule Project. This involved students writing their stories about their journey to Australia and their first impressions of their life in Australia. The diversity of our students is also noteworthy as we have students as young as 18 and others who are in their eighties.

They come from all over the world including Argentina, Brazil, China, Columbia, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Hungry, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Malaysia, Spain, Vietnam, Nepal, and the Philippines just to name a few.



In **2013** the MID Art class contributed to the Dreams ArtAbility 2012 Exhibition. This exhibition unites a range of talented artists of all ages from a variety of cultures who are living with a disability. The Exhibition was held at the 'Atrium' Federation Square.

Tutor Claire Hynes assisted by Cheryl from David House.







2013 **Cathy Paleologoudias and Carol Willis receive Inspirational Woman Awards from Hobsons Bay City Council.**

The Centre foyer was given a clean and bright facelift with the brown bricks being painted a fresh cream colour.

Other Improvements included a New sandpit in Childcare (Thanks to Simon Zdraveski and Joncol Building), new floor in our childcare facility and an automatic door upgrade in the foyer making this venue safer for children.



2013 Centre receives 3 year Federal Government Skills for Education and Employment Program contract.

Emergency Relief handed over to Anglicare. Jenny Peace moves to new education administration role at Centre.

Another Spotswood Community Centre revamp starts. Has it really been 12 years since the last one!! Work undertaken by Work for the Dole participants and Matchworks.





2014 The 'Our People Tree' by Paula and Claire became a feature on the foyer wall.

Paula catalogued our teacher resources, which was much appreciated by all our teaching staff.

A comprehensive history of our Centre 1974-2014 was compiled and presented as part of our 40th year celebration.





2014 Jenny Peace and Lynne Hewet receive Inspirational Woman Awards from Hobsons Bay Council.

Student and teacher excursions included a visit to Parliament House, Surf Life Saving, Werribee Zoo, Film Festival and Multicultural Week activities.

Film and television star, William McInnes visited our Centre and spent the morning with our Mild Intellectual Disability Group (MIDs)









2014 83 Cecil Street (the old Childcare Co-op.) became the new home for our Tuesday morning Childcare, with two groups running each week.

Spotswood Community House upgrade completed. Looks fabulous!!. New pergola, fencing, floor coverings, blinds, disabled access, interior paint, water tanks, sustainable garden, kitchen stove and more.







2014 Yarn Installation. – ‘Growing Together’

This installation is a patchwork of colours using recycled and forgotten yarns brought together to create a cocoon for the 120 year old Elm Tree located in the grounds of the Centre.

The installation is a combination of the cooperation and friendship of our students, centre users and staff who have combined their diverse talents from varied backgrounds and cultural influences to create this work under the direction from ‘Craft & Conversation’ tutor Claire Hynes.

This project is part of the celebrations proposed for the Centres 40th Anniversary of servicing the community and the Hobsons Bay area and an entry in the Hobsons Bay ‘Art in Public Places’ event.



2014 the Williamstown-Spotswood Community Centre Celebrated its 40th Anniversary. The Celebration was attended by the Hobsons Bay City Council Mayor Cr. Sandra Wilson , Joan Kirner, Councillors, past and present students, staff, local MP's, Community Centre users and stakeholders.





Nhuy La, EAL student, had designed and made a 40th Happy Birthday banner for the celebration incorporating the words from the song performed by Jodie Whitehirst and the *Second Avenue Singers.*





On October 31 2014 , our Centre funded and sponsored seven of our staff to undertake the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – Address Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Skills.*

As our server was old and software outdated Mobil Altona Refinery donated the funds for a new server.

Thanks to our Hobsons Bay Community Fund Grant last year, our first iPad for Mature Learners classes started this term facilitated by Janine.



In **2015** a Community Grant from Hobsons Bay City Council made it possible to run a conversation program for new arrivals to Australia who are not eligible for government funded training.





In 2015 we had over 230 students participate in our classes, with 24 different languages spoken.

The Hon Joan Kirner AC

Victoria's First Woman Premier
1938- June 1st 2015

The Committee of Management, staff, students and Centre users are deeply saddened by the news of Joan's passing. Joan was an inspiration to us all, and was always a reminder to us of the importance of 'community'. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Ron, family and friends.



In October Children's Week **2015** was celebrated with a Centre sausage sizzle.

We had a great turn out, with Centre users, parents, children and staff enjoying a BBQ lunch with the children and childcare staff dressing in playful costumes. Jodie Whitehurst entertained us with her lovely singing and guitar playing.







2015 Mobil Day of Caring. In October employees from Mobil Refinery in Altona as part of their Community Volunteering Program spent a day at our Centre doing some much needed cleaning and sprucing up of the exterior of our building. Well done team.











2015 Teachers Liz, Lucy, Fedra and Heap received 100 per cent accuracy in our verification results for the delivery of the Department of Education and Training ; Skills for Education and Employment training.

Students attended a end of year bus trip to Queenscliff Marine Discovery Centre and despite the cold weather learnt about fishing in Victoria.



Centre Christmas celebration 2015



2016 started off with a complete upgrade to Childcare . The 'No Jab, No Play' Legislation was included in our policies and Childcare staff all completed the 'Mandatory Reporting' training.

Our first garden beds were installed at Joan Kirner House thanks to a HBCC grant, Petstra Gardens and our R E Ross Trust Project.

Paula won the Neighbourhood House Week Victorian People's Choice Award photo competition.



In February **2016** we started the Willi Walking Group with sponsorship from Hobsons Bay City Council and lead by Paula . What started off with a group of enthusiastic people from the local community soon grew to include many of our students and teachers.





In early **2016** the Grow, Cook, Create and Share Program commenced sponsored by The R E Ross Trust. The program provided existing and new students the opportunity to explore extra curricula activities.



Students participated in the Life Saving Victoria 'Recreation Program for Multicultural Seniors'.



June 2016 opening of Joan's Garden

Over 100 people, State and Commonwealth politicians, Government Departmental heads, Hobsons Bay Councillors, media, Community Centre managers, Committee of Management, representatives from EMILY'S List, local business sponsors, staff, volunteers, members, students and Joan's close friends all attended the Opening of Joan's Garden.

The Honourable Linda Dessau, Governor of Victoria spoke beautifully of her friendship with Joan, Joan's legacy and the subtle references to Joan in the Garden.

Thanks to EVERYONE who supported and contributed to this event. It was fantastic and will be remembered for a long time...







'Financial Literacy for Positive Living' with the aim to improve quality of life of the disadvantaged in our community begun with a grant from the Hobsons Bay Community Fund.

A Sydney Myer Fund sponsored Project enabled us to establish free English Conversation Classes for Refugees and Asylum seekers who are not eligible for Government Subsidised training.

Congratulations to both Lynne Hewet and Karen Potts for Recently completing the '*Good Practice for LLN Assessment and Support*' and the '*Putting Students First: Delivering Suitable and Appropriate Training*' programs at the VET Development Centre.

To celebrate Book Week the Centre launched a Family Cookbook with recipes collected from Centre users and reminiscent of cookbooks our mothers used to cook from.



Staff as at December 2016


Karen Potts –Admin


Jodie Whitehurst -Teacher


Jeannie Johnson - Infotech Coordinator


Lynne Hewet— Education Coordinator


Yuri Akamatsu - Childcare


Claire Hynes - Teacher


Rita Dobrotka - Teacher


Mark Brophy - CEO


Andrea Kydd- Childcare


Cathy Paleologoudia - Childcare Coordinator


Lucy Docherty - Teacher


Heap Ma - Teacher


Lara Janka – Finance/ Administration


Anne Douglas - Teacher


Heather Crossley - Childcare Leader


Luz Stella Arteaga - Childcare


Jim Lynch - Teacher


Paula O'Shea- Reception


Claire Tiesen - Teacher


Fedra Bazargani - Teacher


Gemilla Esmail – Childcare Leader

New look brochure and website for 2017

The New NHACE Collective Agreement approved by the Fair Work Commission came into effect at the end of last year.

Thanks to an Environment Grant with HBCC our Centre will be introducing a range of environmentally friendly initiatives throughout the year i.e Friday File Fling, Book Swap, Seed Sharing, DVD and CD Swap etc.

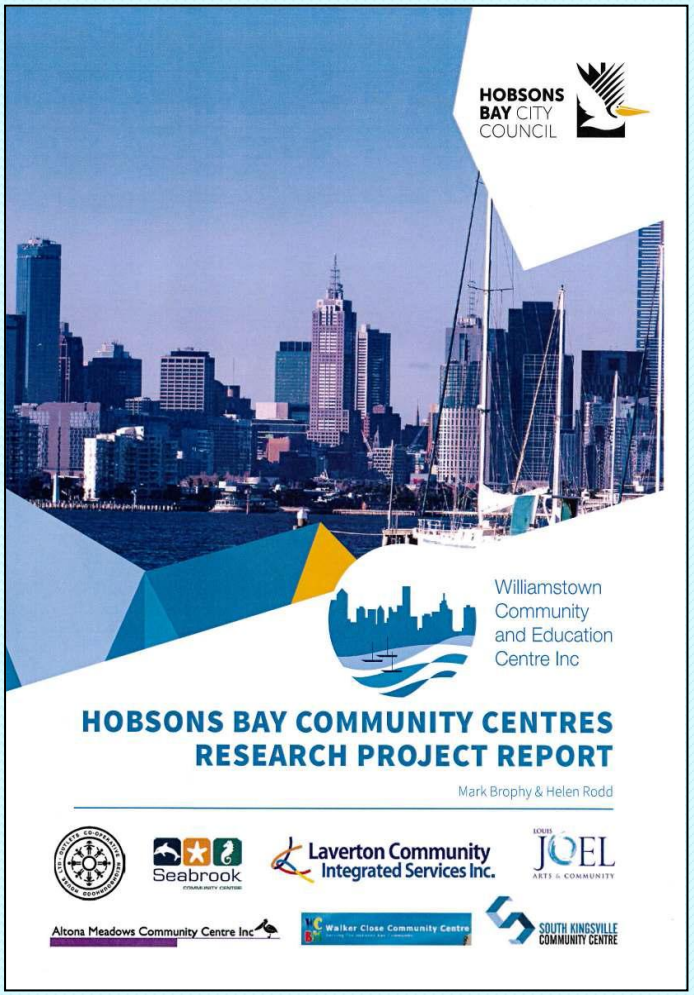
Free Healthy Lunches sponsored by Hobsons Bay City Council and using some of the fresh ingredients grown in our vegetable will run each term throughout the year.





Hobsons Bay Community Centres Research Project Report

This Report was commissioned by Hobsons Bay City Council. The research was conducted by Researcher Helen Rodd (past Manager and Committee Member of West Footscray Neighbourhood House; current President of Network West; and Community Development Practitioner at Victoria University) and Centre CEO Mark Brophy.



2017 is Pelicans Tenth Birthday. This decade long locally well known and popular Program at Joan Kirner House in Williamstown has dramatically exceeded initial expectations and its success is almost entirely based on local word of mouth due to the great work of staff.

Narelle, the Childcare Coordinator from Yarraville Community Centre visited our Centre on February 20th and 23rd to deliver the Victorian Child Safety Standards Training. All Childcare staff attended as well as Lara, Lynne and Mark.





International Women's Day 2017 was celebrated with a morning tea and impromptu musical performance by Anbessa playing his Ethiopian harp. Staff and students joined in a 'conga line' around the Centre.



Cultural diversity week was celebrated in March 2017





This year the Wakety Pals are celebrating their 11th year practicing their routines on Thursday nights at Joan Kirner House.

Caroline and Janelle from Bird Life Australia took our Skills for Education and Employment students and staff on an informative bird watching tour of Jawbone Reserve in Williamstown.



Neighbourhood House Week and Volunteer Week 2017 was celebrated with a Centre lunch and a presentation of Certificates of Appreciation to our Volunteers.





Lara did a presentation with Claire's English Language class on our Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

We celebrated Refugee Week on Wednesday 21st June 2017 with a Centre lunch. Students bought food from their home country to share. Proceeds from a 'count the jelly babies in the jar' competition were donated to the Hobsons Bay Refugee Network.

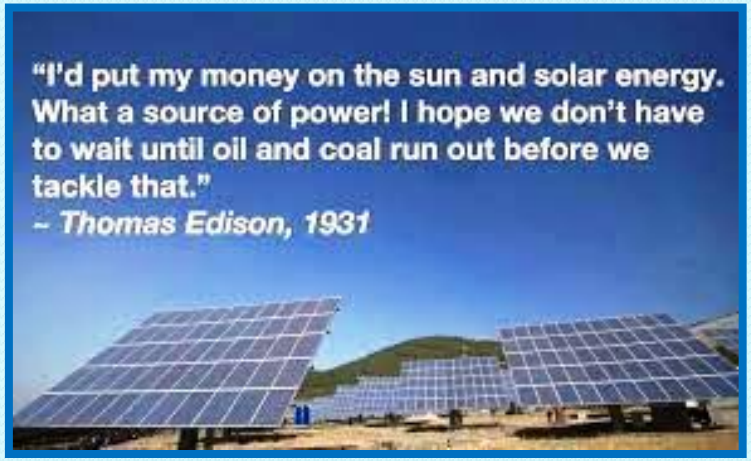






Students also attended a Refugee Week Fashion Parade celebration at Laverton Community Hub.

Thanks to the very generous support to our Centre by Powershop, the 'Your Community Energy Initiative‘ and Powershop customers, in July 2017 we have 42 solar panels installed on the roof at Joan Kirner House. We will be doing our bit for the planet, reducing our carbon footprint and even putting power back into the grid.





The Skills for Education and Employment Green Class visited the Eureka –Skydeck in the city. They had a wonderful day and were very grateful to Lucy their teacher and the WCEC.

2018



We hosted the Commonwealth Games Baton Relay.

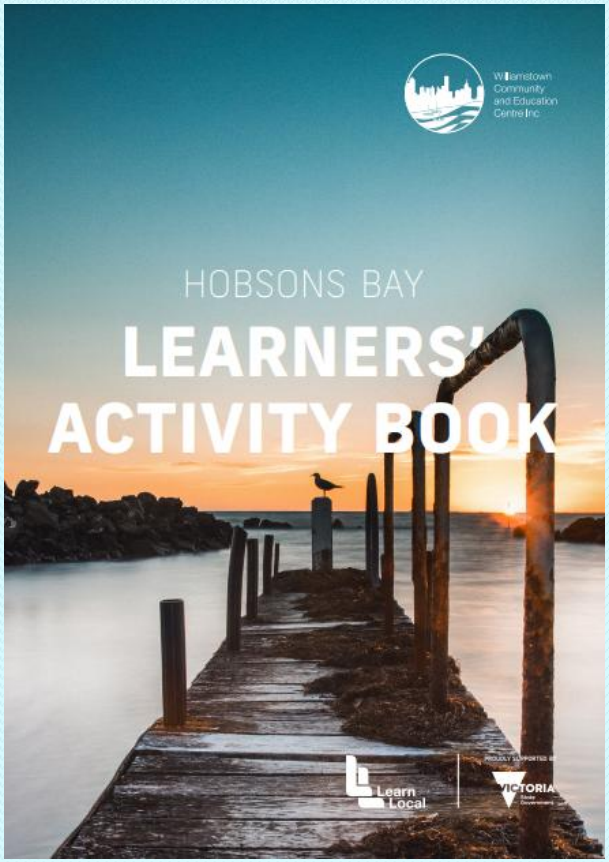


Laverton Community Bank provided support to help us continue our gardening, cooking, craft and social media extra curricula activities for students.



We started our Recycling Made Easy Project sponsored by a Hobsons Bay City Council Environment Grant. This helped significantly support the Hamer Sprout Fund initiative.

2019



We were very excited to announce a successful application and resultant project sponsored by the Adult Community and Further Education Board, Capacity and Innovation Fund

The Project description is -
'A student Activity Book focusing on Hobsons Bay, for teachers delivering pre-accredited English Language courses and the Accredited English as an Additional Language Framework Course.'

You can find this resource on our website!

2019



Altona, Laverton Community Bank Branches and Point Cook Business Centre funding and support for students.

Gateways Social Pop-Up Café starts at Joan Kirner House every Wednesday.



Our Centre was successful in an application to be a part of this Share the Dignity initiative with a Pinkbox Dignity Vending Machine providing free sanitary items to women in need.



2019



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2019



2019 Hobsons Bay Business Excellence Award
Not for Profit Category Winner



Year One children at Lumineer Academy, a local Primary School, kindly built sculptures from recycled bike parts, for our raised community garden beds.

2020

In the January 2020 break, we repainted Joan Kirner House childcare area, the staff room, office, room six, and the toilets.

We also received a detailed glowing report for our VRQA Audit for the year before.

We received and set up 14 brand new iPads thanks to the Tim Watts Stronger Communities Program



We had The Honourable Gayle Tierney, Minister for Training and Skills and Minister for Higher Education and Ms Maria Peters, Chairperson of the ACFE Board launch the Learn Local Awards and the ACFE 2020–25 Strategy at Joan Kirner House.

2020

In March, the first lockdown occurred.

We were still open as a Learn Local and were providing some childcare.

We then introduced distance learning for students, staff worked from home and many programs, centre users and rentals vanished within a week or so.

Lynne and the teachers had been innovative and worked hard to experiment and adapt to a new ‘mixed mode delivery’. We up a system of ‘Study Packs’ where teachers dropped in during the week and prepared hard copy work for students.

They were then put in trays for each class to collect.



2020

Then in early July we faced the second - harder lockdown



All classes and programs were suspended. Childcare was shut down due to low numbers.
Teaching and admin staff started working from home and anything we did, needed to be strictly online.

Early August curfews were introduced, travel over five kilometres was banned, with outdoor time limited to one hour a day.

2020

The centre still had successes during a tumultuous year, being announced as a Finalist in the Victorian Training Awards in the category of Community Training Provider of the Year.





Our recycling efforts continued, and we were recognised for our achievements





Restrictions started to ease in late October.

Some staff came back, and we were able to start the Willy Walking Group again with limited numbers.

We started ‘COVID Safe’ outdoor student catch ups.

2021



Thanks to support from Co Health we had a new Coffee Van regularly coming to our Joan Kirner House.

We hosted the Volunteering Photo Exhibition, in which our President Sonja was showcased, in the foyer of Joan Kirner House.

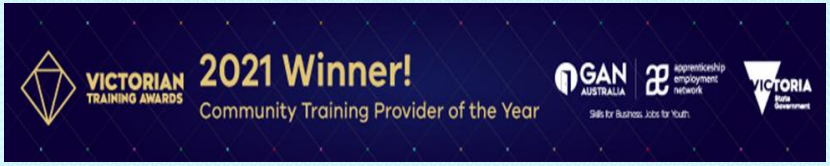




Tahlia Kotiau, our Administration and Reception Officer and Cody Rollinson, one of our volunteers, both won the Hobsons Bay Inspirational Youth Award

2021

We were announced as a Victorian Training Award Finalist, for the second year in a row. In October we won!





Thanks to Hobsons Bay City Council and support from Greater Western Water, we installed our new Recycling Made Easy Box at Joan Kirner House.

We also set up a brand-new Pantry Swap for packaged food in the foyer at Joan Kirner House.



We also installed new garden beds at the rear of Joan Kirner House, as well as in childcare, and a new childcare sand pit.





Jodie Whitehurst is selected as a finalist for the Victorian Learn Local Pre-Accredited Trainer Award for the 2021 Victorian Learn Local Awards

2022



Tahlia Kotiau our Reception and Administration Officer named 2022 Hobsons Bay Young Citizen of the Year.





Altona North Community House
9397 6168
Williamstown Community and Education Centre Inc

Property settlement on our new Altona North Community House.



Thanking the frontline

Hobsons Bay council is marking International Women's Day by celebrating frontline and essential workers who have worked tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Twenty hardworking Hobsons Bay women, who were nominated by their community and peers through the Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network, will be recognised in a roving photography exhibition held in Altona.

The exhibition, 'COVID-19 women at the frontline – A spotlight on frontline and essential staff' features women who work or volunteer at a wide range of community organisations such as Williamstown Community Education Centre, Newport Outlets, Volunteer West, St Vincent de Paul, Laverton Community Education Centre and the Vietnamese Association.

The exhibition will open at the Altona Civic Centre foyer on Tuesday, March 8, and will then travel throughout Hobsons Bay.

The nominated women will also be recognised at the International Women's Day Community Walk around Cherry Lake, also set to take place on Tuesday, March 8.

The walk will feature a performance from Wiradjuri woman and opera star Shaneta Ratzke, as well as guest speakers and creative workshops by artist Sofie Dieu.

The family-friendly event is free, and everyone is welcome to attend. Those interested should meet at the Fresno Street end of Cherry Lake.

Mayor Peter Hemphill said it was time to shine a spotlight on the significant contributions frontline women have made to the COVID response.

"Throughout the pandemic, these 20 incredible women have helped keep the community safe and connected, often in tough and challenging circumstances," he said.

"Through the photography exhibition, social media campaign and International Women's Day walk, we want to recognise and celebrate the achievements of all women and outstanding contributions to our community."

Lynne Hewet, Tahlia Kotiau and Lara Janka from Williamstown Community Education Centre.

Lynne, Lara, Renee and Tahlia become Hobsons Bay International Women's Day Nominees, acknowledging their work in keeping our Centre running, and supporting our community during Covid lockdowns.

2022



Its official! President Sonja, and Tahlia receiving our 2021 Victorian Training Award in person. We received this last year, but this night was to recognise winners from previous lockdown years who couldn't attend an 'in person' event.

Fit out Altona North Community House commenced in September.









Opening of Altona North Community House on 4 October. Classes start on the same day.



2023

Computers supplied and fitted at Altona North Community House.

A West Gate Neighbourhood Fund supported initiative.

In partnership with Coles Williamstown, established a Food Relief donation point.



Year Six students from Newmark Primary volunteering at our Centre

Successful with a Be Connected grant providing IT training to 150 clients.

Australian Government | Be Connected
Every Australian online.



2023

Donations of $2,000 from Mobil, and $1,000 from the HealthCare Foundation contribution to our Pantry Swap and Food Relief efforts.



Students at the Life Saving Victoria Safety Program.

18 refurbished laptops from the Victorian Department of Education donated to students in need.







We were a finalist for the Hobsons Bay Business Excellence Awards in the Mayoral Award: Service to the Community.





The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
STATE MEMBER FOR WILLIAMSTOWN
Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation ■ Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight ■ Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Congratulations

Williamstown Community and Education Centre

It is with great pleasure to send you my

Congratulations

on being a Finalist for

Service to Community Mayoral Award

2023

The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
STATE MEMBER FOR WILLIAMSTOWN
Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation ■ Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight ■ Minister for Roads and Road Safety

101 Douglas Parade, Williamstown VIC 3016 ● 03 9399 9022 ● melissa.horne@parliament.vic.gov.au

2023

Students were invited on an end of year boat trip from Willi to Southbank.







EMILY's List Australia members and Pamela Anderson, CEO give a generous donation to our Food Relief program at our Centre Christmas Function.

EMILY's List Australia

2024

Brand new sponsor, Woolworths Spotswood commenced contributions of bakery items for our centre users. Fresh baked goods collected from the store by our dedicated volunteers, Maryann and Bobby.





Claire, Lynne, Linelle, Lara, Tahlia, and our President Sonja, were all nominees for The Hon. Melissa Horne MP International Women's Day Celebration on March 15

2024

Mobil offered us a grant to support our Walking Group, Morning Teas and BBQs for a full year!





Carol and Sandra from St Johns Uniting Church Williamstown, dropping off pumpkins, apples, bread, and greens for our Pantry Swap and Food Relief efforts.

2025

Our Food Relief program continues to grow and flourish, with donations from EMILY's List Australia, Healthcare Foundation and Country Women's Association, only a few weeks into the year!





Williamstown Community and Education Centre chief executive Dr Mark Brophy (left) with Dr Gerard Zammit from the Healthcare Foundation who donated toiletries to be distributed to disadvantaged people throughout Hobsons Bay. (supplied)

Offering a helping hand

The Williamstown Community and Education Centre (WCEC) has been given a helping hand to continue its work supporting the disadvantaged in Hobsons Bay.

The WCEC received a donation of toiletries and essential items to be distributed to those in need throughout the Hobsons Bay community.

The donation came courtesy of the Healthcare Foundation, another local organisation which helps the less fortunate in the inner-west.

The Healthcare Foundation was established five years ago by podiatrist Dr Gerard Zammit who operates a chain of foot care clinics across the western suburbs, including in Altona and Altona North.

Dr Zammit's foundation has regularly donated food to the WCEC which it then distributes via its Food Releif and Pantry Swap initiatives, but the donation on Monday, January 20, was the first to contain toiletries and sanitary products.

WCEC chief executive Dr Mark Brophy said he was extremely appreciative of the Healthcare Foundation's generosity.

"These donations help our local disadvantaged tremendously, in not only helping them financially, but bringing dignity into their lives," said Dr Brophy, who pointed out that Hobsons Bay was home to much more disadvantage than many people realised.

"Many locals are unaware of the significant amounts of people doing it tough in local public housing including the high rise Floyd Lodge and Nelson Heights."

The toiletries and sanitary products will be distributed from the WCEC's base at Joan Kirner House where its sponsored programs, training courses, morning teas and other events and initiatives take place.

For more information, email: manager@wcec.com.au



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.
care empower contribute

HealthCare Foundation

EMILY's List Australia

2025



Spotswood Community House members (from left) Pei Ling Wan, Abdullah Nemah, Diane Ryan, Julia Marrallano and Lynne Hewet with a new garden bed built as part of efforts to rejuvinate the house on Melbourne Road. (Ljubica Vrankovic) 474590_01

Spotswood Community House comeback

The Williamstown Community and Education Centre (WCEC) is renowned for the help it provides to people in Hobsons Bay and now that help is extending to other community centres too.

After receiving a grant from the Melbourne Airport Authority, the WCEC has set about rejuvenating the Spotswood Community House on Melbourne Road which has endured a tough few years.

WCEC's education co-ordinator Lynn Hewet is leading the rejuvenation efforts and explained why the Spotswood Community House needed their help.

"It's (the community house) between Spotswood Primary School and the new Union Quarter development and while that building was happening, there was a lot of upheaval, there was dirt, there was dust, there was traffic and it just meant a lot of the programs running at Spotswood had to be relocated," said Ms Hewet.

"And it was on the back of Covid so it meant numbers dropped dramatically."

Many of the programs that relocated from Spotswood went to WCEC and are now being sent back, including English language classes, boat license classes, art groups for people with disabilities and a playgroup that supports parents of children with disabilities.

Having started the rejuvenation efforts in October last year, Ms Hewet said good progress had been made, but they still had a way to go to get numbers attending the Spotswood Community House back to where they used to be.

"At its peak we were probably having 80 to 100 through a week and at the moment we 30 to 40 so we've still got a way to go."

Details: https://www.williamstown-spotswoodcc.org.au/

Spotswood Conversation Class explores new experiences with a free Food Cube and Worksho by Cultivating Community,





Teachers Fedra, Lucy, Jodie and Rita, Project Officer Lucila, Vice President Lucienne, and others in our community, were all nominees for The Hon. Melissa Horne MP International Women's Day Celebration.

2025

Newmark Primary School, Williamstown social project. Learning about the rich cultural diversity within our local community.







Tapestry unveiling!

newmark
Primary

2025



We sponsored the ‘Creating social change and diversity’ award at the Hobsons Bay Business Excellence Awards.



New Recycling Made Easy Hub at Joan Kirner House!



Our President, Sonja Ilievska announcing and presenting the award!

2025



In partnership with Newmark Primary School, Williamstown, Joan Kirner House hosted the Year Six Volunteer Program for nine weeks. They assisted us with many tasks, including making showbags for our new students, setting up our Recycling Week clothes swap and adorning Joan Kirner House in festive decoration.

Our CEO, Dr Mark Brophy, receiving a successful grant from the Hobsons Bay Community Fund for sponsoring a Spotswood Community House initiative in 2026.



2026



Lynne Hewet was honoured as an outstanding woman in the community by Melissa Horne MP at the International Women's Day Morning Tea

KiP
KIDS IN PHILANTHROPY

WILLIAMSTOWN
HIGH SCHOOL

Our CEO, Dr Mark Brophy, was invited to Williamstown High School for the Kids in Philanthropy Program. Mark presented to the students information about the services we provide to our community.

