



# THE SETTLEMENT

## NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

ABN 82 823 463 641

Endorsed as an Income Tax Exempt Charity and a Deductible Gift Recipient under the name 'Sydney University Settlement'

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## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009/2010

“We’re doing our job...”



## **THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Committee Members are volunteers who are responsible for the running of the Settlement Neighbourhood Centre. There is an election held every year according to the rules of the organisation. The centre's mandate is to be in relationship with those seen as disadvantaged and marginalised in the local community. We are accountable to our community and our Members.

<b>Chairperson</b>	Joel Pringle
<b>Deputy Chairperson</b>	Shireen Malamoo
<b>Secretary</b>	Lyn Turnbull
<b>Treasurer</b>	Vicki Ashton
<b>Syd Uni Representative</b>	Kathy Rushton
<b>Ordinary Members</b>	Liz Crosby
	Clive Norton
	Ruth Norton
	Claire Prenter
	Ben Spies-Butcher
	Maggie Roche

The Committee Members serving for 2009/10 have a wide range of skills in management and community services. Specific pieces of work have been carried out through committee structures, formed from time to time around properties, fundraising and programs. The Executive Committee meets every month to receive financial and staff reports and the full committee meets monthly to carry out the general business of the organisation. Records and all reporting requirements are maintained in accordance with the requirements of funding bodies and regulations.

## **CURRENT STAFF - OCTOBER 2010**

Michael Carr	Acting Coordinator and Child Care
Gloria Donohue	Administration and Child Care
Michelle Turner	Youth Work
Velani Ford	Cook
Adrianna Boyd	Cleaning
Edward Fraser	Accounts
Donna Bevan, John Rule & Neil Stuart	Consultant Support

## **FUNDING AGENCIES AND IN KIND SUPPORT**

- NSW Department of Community Services
  - NSW Department of Health
  - Community Building Partnership Funding NSW
  - Law and Justice Foundation of NSW
  - City of Sydney Council
  - Commonwealth Department of Community Services
  - Department of Education and Workplace Relations
  - Channel Nine 'Secret Millionaire' – Peter Bond
  - Cracknell & Lonergan Architects
  - All benefactors, volunteers and students
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## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The past year has seen The Settlement continue the process of improving its capacity to respond to changes within this rapidly changing community. With changes to the Redfern-Waterloo Authority, the opening of the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence and changes afoot for the Aboriginal Housing Authority and the Pemulwuy Project at the Block, it is important that The Settlement to continue fulfill the aim of serving those that are disadvantaged within the our community.

Internally, a consultant was engaged to update and consolidate the organisational Policies and Procedures of The Settlement, covering both operations and governance. There has been a great deal of positive feedback about the quality of this work and, at the time of writing, the documents are due for consideration by the Management Committee. Significantly, staff and members of the Management Committee had the opportunity to provide feedback on relevant pieces of the policies at early stages and throughout the project.

In terms of physical changes, the first stage of the much-anticipated redevelopment of The Settlement Neighbourhood Centre has begun. A ceremony for the 'turning of the first sod' was held 11 October, with local member and Deputy Premier of the NSW, The Hon. Carmel Tebbutt in attendance. This project is only proceeding with the generous financial support of the Department of Community Services, The NSW State Government (through the Community Building Partnership funding program) and donations by 'Secret Millionaire' Peter Bond and others. I thank the members of the Fundraising Sub-Committee and former Executive Officer Vicki Winters for their efforts in this. Fundraising continues to ensure that stages two and three of the project are able to proceed, and the continued support of the community is much appreciated.

Externally, The Settlement is participating in changes to structure of the Community Services Grants Program funding and we await the outcome of this process. The relationship between the University of Sydney was emphasised with the completion of a report into the financial needs of the Settlement community, with the assistance of University staff in the design and completion of the research report. The project was funded with a grant from the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, and will guide future service development.

Finally, I would like to thank staff for their patience and support during the extended recruitment process. Following the departure of the previous Executive Officer, the Management Committee is indebted to staff for their dedication to The Settlement and their ability to maintain services during this period. Particular thanks go to Michael Carr as acting Executive Officer, and to John Rule who has been supporting Michael in this role.

It is only through the efforts of staff, the voluntary Management Committee and other volunteers and the support of funding agencies that The Settlement is able to continue. All are deserving of much gratitude.

Many regards,

Joel Pringle, Chairperson

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial reports are prepared for each Management Committee meeting and optimally the Executive Committee also receives draft reports for comment and monitoring.

The accountant service provided by Edward Fraser ensures that the Committee has information on all program activity expenditures. This year there has been discussion at Committee meetings about the best format to assist Committee member to interpret current expenditures and financial forecasting for the organisation.

I would especially like to thank Edward for his patience in dealing with accounts and payment systems within the office, which has been difficult in the last part of this year because of staff changes.

As the attached reports indicate the Settlement is managing its finance and assets in a responsible manner. I note that as changed funding processes are negotiated with the Department of Community Services there may be some opportunities for enhancement of program monies but the challenge for the coming year will be to ensure that Settlement programs are operating within alignment of all funding sources including those which provide the funding base for the Muralappi and OOSH programs. The Youth Program is likely to come under a new funding stream and this year we also signed off final reports for the Law and Justice Foundation.

I commend the audited report to the meeting and would like to thank Lawrence Green of Shedden and Green for conducting the audit.

Thanks and cheers  
Vicki Ashton, Treasurer.



## COMMUNICATIONS



We have started putting together a new website at <http://thesettlement.org.au/>. The 2000 website was archived. <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/10427/20010706-0000/www.koori.usyd.edu.au/raww/>. The young people involved with that put together a wish list for a website which is worth looking at again. In the future if there is enough staff to cover it, it would be good to work closely with current young people and resurrect this side of things. For now it is a promotional tool, making available information about the Settlement, celebrating it, and encouraging donations.

We have used a wiki temporarily, till we find a web designer, probono if possible. It gives us what we want in that a team of people can work on it collaboratively from any location. There is agreement that a website should reflect the unique character of the Settlement – welcoming, warm & friendly, colourful, incorporating the murals, with young people's voices ...

Volunteers are welcome, for instance there is a treasure trove of photos to scan and videos to convert for the historical record. The richness of the Settlement's programs over the years is truly awesome. We also need a couple of people to help maintain it, or at least express interest, so that if one person leaves, it doesn't come to a standstill. Feedback is welcome, any ideas or thoughts at all – let us know. What do you like, what would like changed, or added?

Maggie Roche, Committee Member



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DOES WORK

The photo, above left, was taken when the inside of the hall was used to prepare images which were eventually painted on the wall of Redfern Railway station. This happened in 1997. The project was called 'The Tribes' Project and aimed to provide health information and awareness about drug use for the community. The project engaged community members, paid them for the contribution of their artistic skills and was an important community education project. The project coordinator, Karla Dickens, is now a nationally recognised artist and was a finalist in the 2009 Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize. Some of the project participants are now contributors to Indigenous community development programs in different parts of Australia. The Settlement archives contain important stories - just like this one – demonstrating the important community development role that the Settlement has played over its many years of operation.

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## WORKING WITH CHILDREN

A policy project has been undertaken by the organisation for all project areas in August 2010 – this policy project will provide detailed documentation for staff and guidelines to ensure health and safety of children who attend the Settlement. Currently there are good practices to ensure the safety of children and these will now be encoded in the policies being written in the policy project. The Settlement provides a unique space for children to be safe and happy and be able to express themselves. The hall is quite large and allows the children to move around and be supervised in different activities. Children are comfortable in this environment.

The hiring of a qualified cook to provide nutritional and stable food such as sandwiches, fruit for afternoon tea and early dinner meal has provided an important service and has proved to be popular with all the program participants. At present the service is operating from an old building. There are currently plans to renovate the hall and when these are completed there will be more facilities for specific program activities.

As the staff are Indigenous it allows for talking and sharing of experiences and modeling of appropriate behaviour by respected Indigenous staff and community members. Staff relate to the participants as they know their extended and connected families. This also assists in managing any situations which require the participants to be corrected about their behaviour. Through appropriate communication they are taught respect for culture, family and tradition. The program is open to all and there are now children attending from all different cultural backgrounds, this allows for the development of experience in cross cultural relationships.

There could perhaps be more structured activities but currently the children come to the centre because it offers an environment in which they are not being told what to do all the time and free to express themselves through play and energetic activities e.g. indoor basketball, handball and trampoline.

Other organisations and centres have their own rules and procedures; some have very structured activity programs. The work of the Settlement remains complementary to the work of those other organisations and support services as it is well known that the Settlement accepts any participant and so that means that programs at the Settlement can't be as structured as those of other organisations. This function of being a 'spillage' point or 'safe haven' for the 5-12 year olds who can't access the other services is a very important function within this community and should not be underestimated for the value it provides.

There is a structure within the program based on

1. Access to a safe environment
2. Access to a large space for free movement
3. Access to computer and art equipment
4. Physical activities e.g. indoor basketball
5. Nutrition support

The children have this support available to them after school and during vacation times. In vacation times the children have gone to movies, swimming, and ice-skating and have enjoyed activities and BBQs at the Settlement.

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## WORKING WITH YOUTH

Young people who come to the Settlement often need direct material support or need to be linked to health services not provided by the Settlement. As a general procedure the client is supported to access a mainstream facility through referral and if required we accompany the young person and assist them in making an appointment. For those who engage in program activities if they require for example drug and alcohol or mental health referrals then those are made to the appropriate local service

Young people are provided with referral letters, follow up services, direct transportation if required and are provided with access to general health promotion information e.g. resources about sexual health and other important youth health issues. The Settlement presents an open, friendly and non judgmental face to diverse clients, the workers understand the local community and the network of health services (specifically those supportive of Indigenous youth)

The area in which the Settlement operates continues to be one of high stress for the client group. Changes to the whole of the Darlington/Chippendale/Redfern/Waterloo/Alexandria area continue to have an impact on the client group and their sense of connection to the area. In particular anticipated housing changes on The Block continue to unsettle families and the base of support for youth continues to dwindle. In this case access to workers who can provide specialist and caseload support for young people is important. Those who come to the Settlement for support may be from outside of the area i.e. they may have gravitated to services in Redfern because this is where some of their family is located but often it is difficult to get a person back to the service unless there is an immediate response available for them. Specialist services that have come into the areas such as the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence and the now, well established Redfern Community Centre, are often not able to provide an entry point for clients who require high level and specific follow up rather than just access to a program of activities.

The current program which includes cultural camps and caseload management is probably the most effective response in this environment. At least it provides a way in which those at risk can still be linked into some community activities and provided with information about relevant services.



The Muralappi program has in the past provided particular support by building up a youth room and resource centre in the building. The Settlement is now undergoing significant renovations and it is anticipated that the 'youth and resources room', which is really no longer suitable due to deterioration of the building, will be replaced by a number of specially built multipurpose rooms. This should enable a number of spaces to be available at one time for carrying out of any caseload interviews or future activities under the program. To date the Settlement resources have been limited because the building is well and truly past it's 'use-by' date. The Settlement Neighbourhood Centre management committee has approved redevelopment of the back part of the building and that has the potential to be an improved facility to support the activities of the Muralappi program.

A number of activities carried out for the client group in the last twelve months

- # BBQ's at the Settlement
- # Maroubra beach surfing lessons – six boys and five girls
- # Harbour Cruise on the Tribal Warrior – including cultural performances and lunch five boys and six girls
- # Windsurfing at Balmoral Sailing School – seven boys and five girls
- # Indigenous Camp at Jamanee Gunya (Milton) – eight girls
- # Indigenous Camp at Jamanee Gunya (Milton) – seven boys
- # Movie outing - to see Bran Nue Day
- # Darling Harbour Laser Zone and lunch.
- # ten-pin bowling outing.

The high level needs of youth who come to the Settlement means that forward planning for activities such as camps is not so straightforward. Sometimes activities have been planned but cannot be delivered for particular clients because some other (more pressing) situation may have arisen between the time of planning the activity and when the activity was to be carried out. In previous years there have been more cultural camps held but in this reporting period there was only two. The other activities outlined above have been events through which Muralappi has been able to carry out support for the client group.

The outings are an encouragement for youth at risk to stay in touch with workers at The Settlement, then when appropriate, and if issues are identified for the young people referral can be made to more specialized services for follow up.

### The Great Aussie Bush Camp

A very successful camp of mixed sexes, five female and five male was held in October. The youth were given a opportunity to wind down and get away from the high paced city life. Many of them were faced with a new environment that they never had been part of and experienced new and exciting adventures, they took on every challenge that was given to them and gave 100% to everything. Many were running around just lapping up the beautiful surroundings and fresh air. They interacted with instructors, they listened and learnt. The camp was held at Tea Gardens, three hours north of Sydney.

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## **OUR ORGANISATION – HOW WE WORK**

### Our Governance Arrangements Support Our Programs

Progress in the last twelve months through the policies and procedure initiative of the Management Committee and the strategic plan development planning demonstrate that The Settlement has a forward looking governance arrangement to support community development programs. These are currently focused on children, youth and their families but in future may extend into other program activities and community development initiatives.

### Our Partnerships

The Settlement has a contract with Bridge Housing to manage the Settlement housing properties and stock and also this includes an ability to refer to Bridge Housing around matters that may relate to young people, families and housing. The Settlement works in partnership on youth program activities with the Glebe Youth Services, South Sydney Youth Services and the Redfern Community Centre. The Settlement also engages with the activities of the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence and is a member of the Police Local Area Community Liaison Committee.

### Our Cultural Capabilities

The Settlement workers describe the organisation as a multicultural service with special attention to the needs of Indigenous Youth and Families. There are a range of needs of youth and families in the area that need attention and these include – financial management skills, parenting skills, sexual health awareness, assistance outside of formalised schooling patterns for at risk youth and drug and alcohol interventions. Because the Settlement staff are Indigenous and with connections to the local community, when interventions are required they are carried out in a culturally appropriate manner. Confidentiality is very important and respect for the individual within a whole of community approach. The Settlement staff say - ‘we know where they’re coming from’ – this is an invaluable cultural resource and capability in the community.

### Our Referral Networks

These include Centrelink, the Aboriginal Medical Service, Mudgingal, Redfern Aboriginal Corporation, Redfern Legal Centre and the other youth services (as noted above) that work with young people and families from the Redfern, Waterloo, Chippendale and Alexandria areas. It is important to note that the young people in this locality are highly mobile and do not always stay with the one service – so it is important that a range of services are available and that those services have a good referral network – the Settlement is an important part of that network.

### Our Approach to Service Provision

The Settlement remains an open and welcoming service to any of the young people or families in the local area. Any services provided are in the context of the community development framework which is part of the draft strategic plan of the organisation. The Settlement has a long history of providing services for the most disadvantaged within the local area and is committed to continuing that tradition

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## Our Policies and Procedures

The Settlement has undertaken a policy development project. This project has included the engagement of an external consultant to talk with staff about their program activities and to relate policy to practice. This has been a professional development opportunity for staff as it has engaged staff in discussing their workplace practices, seeing the value of work that is done and then recording this as appropriate policy e.g. there always has been an informal arrangement of the participants being taught respect for each other and being taught to adhere to boundaries and appropriate behaviours - in other words there is a behaviours and discipline policy. This and other policies has now been written up, adopted by the Management Committee and is currently with the staff for them to consider the implementation details, there may be further changes as this progresses as policy development is an ongoing process. In this way there has been an opportunity for professional development through reflection in the policy development project.

## Our Strategic Thinking

The Settlement as an organisation is not only going through change by redevelopment of the premises but also through the development of a strategic plan for the organisation, this is currently in draft form and will be considered by the incoming committee. The organisation has not had the opportunity to strategically examine its service provision within the changing environment for a long time. There were significant difficulties for the organisation in 2005 when the then management committee was removed from office by members. Since that time there has been a slow rebuilding of confidence in the work of the organisation and now the organisation is in a position to look strategically at future operations, within the changing community environment of Chippendale, Darlington, Redfern, Waterloo and Alexandria where clients are drawn from. In one sense this larger strategic visioning for the organisation contains an evaluative component as the organisation is engaging actively with service staff, clients and the community about the changing environment and changing needs.





**PHOTOS FROM THE BACK OF THE HALL – UNDER RENOVATION**

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