

# Local Government Creative Ageing Grants Program Final report

April 2015

## VOLUME TWO OF TWO

VOLUME ONE: The Grants Program

VOLUME TWO: Council Creative Ageing Case Studies

## VOLUME TWO: Council Creative Ageing Case Studies

### Contents

Armidale Dumaresq Council - <i>Drumming Circle</i> .....	3
Ashfield Council - <i>Ashfield Library Knitters - Urban Knitting Project</i> .....	7
Ballina Shire Council - <i>People and Place, Age and Experience: a creative exploration</i> ....	13
Byron Shire Council - <i>Celebrate Life - Elders Flash Mob to the beat</i> .....	17
Campbelltown City Council - <i>Tours with David &amp; Friends</i> .....	23
Coonamble Shire Council - <i>Creating Together</i> .....	28
Cootamundra Shire Council - <i>Box Gum Grassy Woodland (BGGW) creative workshop program</i> .....	31
Great Lakes Council - <i>Storytelling in the Great Lakes</i> .....	35
Griffith City Council - <i>Creative Ageing summer program</i> .....	40
Inverell Shire Council - <i>Silk Tales</i> .....	44
Lane Cove Council - <i>Sustainable Wishing Tree Project</i> .....	47
North Sydney Council - <i>Park Life</i> .....	52
Oberon Council - <i>SWAP-Seniors Welding Art and Poetry Workshop</i> .....	54
Penrith City Council - <i>Memorable Tales</i> .....	58
Port Macquarie-Hastings Council - <i>I've got uke, Babe</i> .....	63
Rockdale City Council - <i>Seniors Soundscape Make A Noise For Wellbeing and Feel Good!</i> .....	66
Shellharbour City Council - <i>Our Time Our Place</i> .....	70
Snowy River Shire Council - <i>Wire, Wood, Light and Shadow: The Shape of Ageing Well</i> .75	
Tenterfield Shire Council - <i>Christmas Memories Shared</i> .....	80
Wagga Wagga City Council - <i>I Want to Share My Story</i> .....	83
Willoughby City Council - <i>Community Collage &amp; Decoupage Project</i> .....	87
Wingecarribee Shire Council - <i>Here is my song</i> .....	91
Wollondilly Shire Council - <i>LOLS - Laughing Out Loud Seniors</i> .....	95
Wollongong City Council - <i>Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project</i> .....	98
Wyong Shire Council - <i>Creative Ageing Expo</i> .....	102

# Armidale Dumaresq Council - *Drumming Circle*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Armidale Dumaresq  
Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-  
60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

3,620 / 15%

## Project Summary

Drumming Circles are promoted to seniors living in the Community through the Jacaranda Social Club which incorporates a Mind, Body and Balance (MBB) program. The MBB program is a Healthy Active Ageing initiative and the concept of a Drumming Circle is to stimulate the mind and body through creative expression and active participation. These occur twice monthly, doubling the original once monthly meetings within an existing program. Research indicates that Drumming reduces social isolation and depression, relieves stress, anxiety and muscle tension, increases joint mobility and co-ordination and improves circulation, brain function and focus. The benefits of this fun activity are achieved without the participants realising the level of active engagement.

From a community point of view, the promotion and involvement of this project has generated increased awareness of programs available for seniors within the community.

This project is building on an existing initiative and has become an ongoing program.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People over the age of 60
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersexual people (GLBTI)
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Socially isolated people
- People with Dementia
- Stroke Recovery Club
- Acquired Brain Injury

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Dance
- Music



### Activities

Following receipt of the grant money, Council purchased 10 drums for the Jacaranda Social Club and proceeded to promote the Drumming Circle in the local paper. To date we have implemented four drumming sessions under the Creative Ageing Grant with another two booked for February and two sessions each month till September. Additionally the Drumming Circle was featured in our existing monthly program and information has now been forwarded to service providers, registered members of the Jacaranda Social Club program and posted on the Armidale Dumaresq Council web site and Face Book page. Static displays to promote the Jacaranda Social Club, including the Drumming Circle, were displayed in the public library over the Christmas period. Another two promotional displays occur in February.

### **Outcomes**

As a consequence of the level of promotion and the four Drumming circles that have taken place, Jacaranda Social Club have received a number of enquiries and expressions of interest. As a result there has been a number of new registrations and referrals to the program and this activity has moved to a larger activity room to comfortably accommodate this larger group. The average number of participants attending the drumming circles has increased from 12 to 23. The feedback has been excellent and it has been most enjoyable to witness the level of fun generated from this activity. As Care Plans are updated, Jacaranda Social Club have been able to document various goal achievements including improved interaction and social skills, improved range of movement for participants who were previously resistive to exercise based programs, improved coordination, memory and focus for participants who previously disengaged after a short period of time.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

This project came about from feedback following a local Seniors Week event which involved a Drumming Circle at our local Regional Art Museum. Jacaranda Social Club was supporting this event so we were able to actively participate and personally experience how much skill and coordination was required. Needless to say how much fun and laughter that was also achieved. The plan to incorporate drumming into our monthly program was discussed with the group and everyone was keen to participate. Due to the cost of hiring the music therapist we were only able to provide this activity once a month. As a consequence of this grant we are now able to offer drumming twice a month.

### **Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 23**

### **Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 15**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Through promotion the project has generated interest within the local community, registrations, referrals, and enquiries have increased as a consequence of this initiative. The project has therefore provided seniors the opportunity to participate. They have provided positive feedback, they have enjoyed trying something new, meeting new people and forming friendships. They have also shown increased confidence and have been willing to dance with creative expression, demonstrating rhythm, sequencing skills and coordination. The Drumming Circles increase in complexity and are therefore measurable.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The Drumming Circle is held in an accessible activity room within a Community Centre. Facilities included disabled access, ramps, hand rails, wheel chair accessible toilets, adequate heating and cooling, good lighting, excellent ratio of qualified staff and volunteer support to the number of participants. Transport has also been offered to further support access.

### **Project Changes**

The Drumming Circle had to move to a larger activity room to safely accommodate the increased number of participants. This larger activity room is fully accessible and is within the same complex.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

So far the growth and outcomes achieved through the Drumming Circles has met expectations. All the participants who provided evaluations from the Seniors Week event have registered with the program. Through ongoing networking with service providers, referrals and promotion, numbers should continue to rise.

The program was also successful in securing assistance with transport through Tablelands Community Transport.

### **Partners & Providers**

Armidale Dumaresq Council.

Regional service providers including; Tablelands Community Support Options, Uralla. Guyra HACC services. Community Health. New England Medi Care Local. Armidale Transitional Aged Care Team. Aged and Disability Specialist worker/Kent House Community Centre. Armidale Stroke Recovery Club. Armidale Home Care. Armidale Private Home Nursing Group. Armidale Volunteer Referral Service. Armidale Care For Seniors. The Dementia Advisory Group (DNAG). Cathy Welsford and Angi Smith - Music Therapists. 13 existing members, 10 new members.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

While ever funding agreements continue through Family and Community Services and the Department of Social Services, with an auspiced agreement through Armidale Dumaresq Council the program will continue to provide Centre Based Day Care activities to local seniors. Systems and networking opportunities are in place with service providers who regularly refer clients to Jacaranda Social Club programs. The Jacaranda Social Club annually has planning days, monthly meetings, community interagency, Dementia Network Advisory group, Armidale Carers Support group and regularly liaises with service providers. These meetings provide opportunities to keep all stakeholders notified of changes to the program, any up coming events and vacancies. Minutes of the Community Care Interagency and DNAG meetings are also emailed to a wide distribution list to ensure that information is current.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The Drumming Circle has aligned very nicely into an existing Mind Body and Balance program with the Jacaranda Social Club. The increased number of registrations has ensured the viability of the program.

## **Key Learnings**

This has been an excellent project. The project was built up from an existing program, it is still continuing to grow and each month participants are continuing to provide positive feed back. Each month the numbers are increasing.

We have learnt first hand from participants the extent of how much focus and concentration it takes to listen to a rhythm and to concentrate. Each month we try to add onto last months rhythm and improve our coordination, concentration and skill. The extent of this is documented in client progress notes. Representatives and colleagues from TAFE, Community Health, Aged Care facilities, Community Health and other service providers have been encouraged to come and watch and take part so that they can experience how much participants are challenged cognitively and physically, but also to see how much fun and laughter we experience as a group. It has been so much fun to see this unfold.

One regular client who attends the Jacaranda Social Club groups twice a week does not enjoy the drumming as she has arthritis in her hands and suffers from painful twisted joints. Although she wishes not to participate in the actual drumming she thoroughly engages in the social aspect, the singing, meeting new people and has personally taken on the role as inspector and picks up on anyone who happens to miss a beat. Other people who have arthritis are managing to cope with the drumming and everyone is always encouraged to go at their own pace and personal level of ability.

As far as effectiveness, the number of participants should not grow beyond 25 clients. This is a great number to have with the ratio of staff and volunteer support available. The group is manageable, but busy at 23. The group is always cautious of less mobile clients needing to access toilets, with the use of walkers and navigating a busy room.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Limit the numbers to 25.

This project will be ongoing while ever the monthly evaluations of this activity remain successful and well attended with positive feedback. The annual planning day is in March and feedback/comments will be included in a survey to service providers, carers, clients and participants. This will also determine the need and outcomes of this project.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

Other Councils in the local area are aware of this project and have already been invited to be involved by supporting their clients to attend. They could start off with a small number of drums and pay the therapists monthly or quarterly, depending on their funding. Fundraising projects could support the purchase of drums and Recreation staff and Diversional Therapists can experience the benefits and learn as they participate. In most situations and after some experience, staff would be able to continue drumming sessions to some extent with a small group.

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

The Diversional Therapist who coordinates the Drumming Circle has been very happy with the outcomes of the project and says:

*"I am documenting my own notes after each session, rhythms and sequencing of beats. I am learning some lovely fun songs and ways to actively engage seniors physically and mentally. As a consequence of this*

*grant we have purchased 10 of our own drums, so now have a total of 13. Another funded service with ADHC has also purchased 12 smaller drums (our groups share this resource) and with the therapists 10 drums we can cater for a maximum of 35 participants. Having the different size drums enables us to meet the varied abilities of the clients and participants involved. I therefore consider this project to be very sustainable and ongoing."*

#### **Follow On Activities**

As previously mentioned, another funded service that also operates out of the Community centre has now purchased 12 smaller drums. They provided monthly drumming for young adults with a disability aged 16-65. The Drumming Circle coordinator has been asked to host an open day event during seniors week to further promote the "Mind, Body and Balance" program and incorporate the benefits of drumming. The coordinator was also invited to a local residential age care facility to give a demonstration of a drumming circle which involved residents, staff and management. The feedback from this impromptu performance resulted in funds raised from their Spring Fair being used to purchase drums for their facility.

#### **Online Information**

[http://armidale.nsw.gov.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1149198:jacaranda-social-club&catid=718:ageing-and-disability-services-armidale&Itemid=1905](http://armidale.nsw.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1149198:jacaranda-social-club&catid=718:ageing-and-disability-services-armidale&Itemid=1905)

[www.armidale.nsw.gov.au](http://www.armidale.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Contact**

**Name:** Mrs Stephanie Watts  
**Position:** Diversional Therapist/Coordinator  
**Phone:** 02 6770 3826  
**Email:** [swatts@armidale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:swatts@armidale.nsw.gov.au)

# Ashfield Council - Ashfield Library Knitters - Urban Knitting Project

**COUNCIL NAME**

Ashfield Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

8,000 / 19.19%

## Project Summary

A project building on the strength, knowledge and skills of the existing Ashfield Library Knitting group. The participants, who are predominately aged 60 years and over engaged in a process that culminated in a public installation of their work.

The group was facilitated through a process that took them from the confines of the meeting room in which they meet weekly and out to the streets to show off their talent via a knitting 'graffiti' installation.

The project formed part of the newly established Ashfield Civic Centre Forecourt Activation program that was launched in September 2014. The process was documented, and the participants were provided with an opportunity to develop technical skills using Ipads as they assisted with the documentation process.

The project successfully engaged a diverse group with 70% of the group indicating that they were born overseas, and that English is their second language.

Overall Aim: To promote and support an increase in active participation and engagement of older people in the arts.

Project objectives are to:

1. Harness and promote the skills, knowledge and diversity of the existing Ashfield Library Knitting group to support the sustainability and growth of this group.
2. Engage older people in a community development project that uses art/craft as the medium for engagement.
3. Increase older people's technology skills.
4. Establish robust partnerships across Council that engages Library Services, Community Programs and Planning and Environment.
5. Facilitate older people's participation in the Ashfield Town Centre Renewal - Forecourt Activation project..

This project is building on an existing initiative and has become an ongoing program.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- People over the age of 60
- Socio economically disadvantaged people

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Technology/digital
- Crafts
- Film/screen



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### Activities

1. Engaged an experienced facilitator/artist to introduce the concept of Knitting Graffiti/Gorilla knitting/Yarn bombing. The facilitator/artist worked with the women over a 6 week period to develop, create and install a knitted work in the forecourt. Three trees, and two seats in the forecourt were embellished with fabulous knitting. The installation remains on the three trees, and the group are planning to refashion the seat covers into knee rugs to be donated to local nursing homes. The group also made a larger blanket that did not form part of the installation, but will also be donated to a local nursing home.
2. Engaged a film maker (4-5weeks) to document the process utilising ipad technology. Council has just purchased 5 ipads so these were used by willing participants to engage in the documentation process, and to learn some new skills (film, photography and uploading online content). A 15 minute documentary has been made which will be screened during Seniors Week.
3. Participants continued to meet weekly and work on both personal projects and their installation component.
4. The work was installed in the forecourt on Friday 28 November 2014, and an event was held to celebrate and acknowledge the installation. The Mayor launched the event and representatives from the funding bodies attended. A community consultation mechanism, a conversation wall was set up to include 'when I see this knitting I feel.....' to collect community responses to the work.
5. Project evaluation occurred throughout the process. An online survey (survey monkey on Ipads) was administered during the first few weeks of the project. This survey not only collected relevant demographic data and feedback, but also was a good tool to introduce the women to Ipad technology. An end of project debrief, and administration of post survey occurred in late February/early March 2015 due to the Summer break. The group reconvened in February.

### Outcomes

Project outcomes aligned to objectives:

1. Harness and promote the skills, knowledge and diversity of the existing Ashfield Library Knitting group to support the sustainability and growth of this group.

The Group:

- Continues to meet on a weekly basis, and membership is growing.
- No longer requires Council facilitators to sustain the group, as a few natural leaders, and strong knitters have taken on teaching and supporting others.
- Are working towards having a stall at Council's Carnival of Cultures in 2016. Council continues to provide a free room, and very light refreshments.
- No longer requires full support, however a council staff member continues to pop into the group, as opposed to facilitating it.

Via an online survey:

- 90% of the group indicated that they would recommend the group to others.
- When asked 'Why do you come to the knitting group?' 40% indicated to learn to knit, 20% to share patterns and ideas, 20% for company, 40% to meet new people, and 40% indicated yes to all of the above.
- 70% of the group indicating that they were born overseas, and that English is their second language.

2. Engage older people in a community development project that uses art/craft as the medium for engagement

The knitters (predominately seniors ) were fully engaged in the project with. The following results from the initial survey further illustrate this:

- 80% of the group had not heard of knitting graffiti before this project.
- When asked 'When they first heard about the knitting graffiti project, how interested were you in getting involved' 44% indicated extremely, 22% moderately interested. 11% were slightly interested and 22% were unsure. As can be seen by the results of the project all embraced the concept. The pride and focus demonstrated during the installation, particularly the 'ceremonial' approach to placing the cover on one of the seats further illustrates the groups engagement. Refer documentary for evidence of this.

The project was completed within the time frame resulting in a wonderful public installation in Civic Centre forecourt that remains installed garnering ongoing compliments.

3. Increase older people's technology skills.

The group was taught to use Ipads, which included answering the project surveys via survey money (an online survey tool), and assisting with documenting the project. 50% of the participants indicated that they have not used an Ipad before, and one of the eldest group members indicated that she is planning to purchase her own Ipad.



4. Establish robust partnerships across Council that engages Library Services, Community Programs and Planning and Environment.

This project is the result of a strong collaboration between Community Programs and The Library Service. Stage two plans are already being discussed indicating that the collaboration will continue.

5. Facilitate older people's participation in the Ashfield Town Centre Renewal - Forecourt Activation project. The group installed their work in the Ashfield Civic Centre. This installation and launch formed part of the Ashfield Frolic in Forecourt program. It was launched by the Mayor, and funding body representatives attended. The community feedback was very positive with the following feedback being collected by a public consultation tool, a conversation wall which involved asking passing pedestrians to comment on the installation by responding to the work by physically posting a response to 'when I see this knitting I feel...!' onto a wall in the Civic Centre. Some comments collected include:

- I feel happy!
- Happy X 3
- Cheerful
- Jouyful
- Comforted
- Energised
- Motivated
- Inspired (X100!)
- Hopeful!
- Happy Ashfield Excited
- Inspired
- Bright & happy
- A big smile coming on!
- Smiley face
- Nice & lovely
- Joyous!
- It made me smile
- OMG
- Bright & happy!
- Amazing
- Colourful!!!
- Family
- Mom
- Feels & looks like a community
- What a buzz atmosphere!
- I want to buy a pair of knitting sticks
- Knitting very good & nice artwork
- I love knitting X 2
- A burst of colour! # Crafty!! # Arty #
- The knitting is lovely
- A clever but unfortunately a dying art
- Holiday program for kids would be good
- Naïve kids drawing x 2
- Trees should breath not be covered up

#### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

This project targeted an existing group which meets on a weekly basis to knit therefore providing a space to engage in some pre-project consultation. The group members, mostly women over 55 were consulted prior to the grant application being submitted to see if they were interested in the project idea. The group response was positive, and they also indicated among other things a keen interest in working on a project that utilises recycled materials and supports a charity.

They were also surveyed, and consulted throughout the project. The group had a huge influence on material use, colour schemes and the final pieces including one group member driving the 'making process' as can be seen in the documentary.

The facilitator was briefed to engage the group in the whole process, which ensured involvement in all stages of the project: planning, making, installation, celebrating and documentation.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 25**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 50**

#### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Older people had a 'hands on' involvement in designing, making and installing the knitting installation. They were also engaged as audience member.

The Facilitator/Artist is 60 years of age, is a practising artist that wins grants and works internationally, providing a great role model and true engagement with the arts. The film maker is a woman in her late 40's/early 50s also providing a good connection with the target demographic.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The group was situated in a physically accessible venue, and is wheelchair accessible. It is a 'drop in' scenario and everyone is welcome.

As the project involved 'making' it was seen as an opportunity to enhance hand mobility, and the reading and following of detailed patterns encouraged intellectual engagement. The program also supports those that are potentially socially isolated as it provides a weekly drop in social environment. An array of knitting needles were provided to manage varying hand mobility issues.

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The facilitator was well briefed on access issues, with a focus on disability issues associated with ageing e.g hearing loss, mobility issues etc.

### **Project Changes**

There were some minor changes to the project as the women were not very keen on knitting in the forecourt as they indicated that the sunlight was too strong for their eyes, therefore the following was not done:

- It was proposed that during late September/Early October the knitting group would be transferred to the forecourt for at least two consecutive weeks. The group would work as usual and the 'passing community', were to be encouraged to get involved. Spare wool and needles were to be made available and group participants encouraged to share their skills and knowledge.
- A public workshop (late Oct) was to be held in the forecourt to stitch the individual components together in preparation for installation.

The following two components were rolled into one. However stage two of the project is currently being considered which hopes to engage the local schools. The idea is for an inter-generational project with a focus on a 'two way' sharing of skills:

- Work was planned to be installed in the forecourt (early Nov). It was proposed to engage Ashfield Boys High students to assist with this as Council have recently completed a Town Centre Renewal project with all year 8 students so this was to be the perfect follow up activity as they were asked to tell Council how we can 'activate' our town centre.  
However the Ashfield Boys were not engaged due to time constraints on the project and instead:
- Work was installed in the forecourt in mid November 2014, and an event was held to celebrate and acknowledge the installation. The Mayor launched the event and representatives from the funding bodies attended. A conversation wall was set up to include 'when I see these trees I feel.....' ( changed this to - when i see this knitting I feel.....)to collect community responses to the work.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The group's enthusiasm for the project was higher than expected, and the output of knitting exceeded expectations. As can be seen in the documentary the group fully embraced the project, strong friendships were formed and the group cohesiveness blossomed.

The group knitted so much they will be donating knee rugs to local nursing homes, and are very keen to explore ways to sell their work. Plans are afoot for a stall at Council's signature annual event 'Carnival of Cultures' in 2016.

### **Partners & Providers**

We see this project as stage one of a larger long term project, with stage one focusing on internal partnerships, and stage two on external.

Stage One:

- Internal - Community Programs (CP) and Library Service
- External - professional artist and film maker engaged

Stage Two (pending funding and commitment):

Council has a good working relationship with local schools, particularly Ashfield Boys High School. We have also recently engaged with the Arts Worker at Settlement Services International. Discussions have already taken place looking at a project that uses 'knitting/craft' as the medium that brings young people, old people (knitting group) and asylum seekers together to share 'craft' and stories that culminates in an installation on Liverpool Road. It is also hoped that the project can extend to the young people teaching the older people about technology.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Community Programs and Library Services will continue to collaborate to deliver stage two of the project that is aiming to include an inter-generational project, and an opportunity for the group to sell their products.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

Ashfield Council's Community Strategic Plan 2023 is made up of the following seven themes:

1. Creative and Inclusive Community
2. Unique and Distinctive Neighborhoods
3. Safe, Connected and Accessible places
4. Living Sustainably
5. Attractive and Lively Town Centre
6. Thriving Local Economy

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## 7. Engaging and Innovative Local Democracy

This project provided an avenue to support older people to engage with Council's planning process, and community engagement focus, particularly in relation to theme one which aims to fosters creativity, celebrate cultural diversity and considers the needs of everyone especially the most vulnerable.

Council is committed to supporting and engaging it's ageing community and this project provided the perfect opportunity to enhance an existing program that supports older people. An exciting element of this project is the link to Ashfield Council's Town Centre Renewal project. In September 2014 a Civic Centre Forecourt activation program was launched and this project will form part of this program.

The project also supports our integrated planning model as is it will be a partnership between Library Services and Community Programs.

### Key Learnings

1. The funding and reporting cycle was very tight, and coincided with the festive season break making it quite a tight timeframe. I believe when working with older people more time is required to reduce pressuring participants to meet an 'outcome' as opposed to making the most of the 'process'.
2. Run it over a longer time period to allow for broader engagement e.g. local high school to assist with installation.
3. Allow more time for installation as this took longer than anticipated.
4. Combining the teaching of Ipad technology alongside the pressure of knitting to an installation deadline meant that the knitting took the focus. This was not necessarily a bad thing, but again if there was more time this could have allowed for more meaningful interaction with the technology. This became more more apparent as the some women were seeking rather sophisticated technological advice about their personal devices, with one woman seeking advice on purchasing an Ipad, and internet access which was beyond the scope of this project. Perhaps a separate technology class would have been better.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

- Set up a knitting group - provide free facilities and basic refreshments.
- Provide a facilitator that can knit to support the group.
- Allow natural leaders to rise as teachers and organisers.
- Aim for the group to become self sufficient i.e. not need a Council staff member to facilitate.
- Engage a professional artist to realise the installation idea.
- Engage a film maker to document the process.
- Allow for a longer time period than this project did.

### Sustainability of Impacts

1. The group will continue to meet with minimal support from Council. 90% indicating that they would recommend the group to others, 30% have been attending the group for more than 6 months, and another 30% have been attending for over 12 months.
2. The participants are motivated to sell their work, with profits going back into the group to buy materials.
3. The installation is long lasting and has been admired by the community. It is still installed.
4. The project can be easily replicated.
5. The project is easy to expand as the same women could (pending interest and funding) be involved in the second stage of the project i.e. teach young people how to knit and then do a public installataion.

### Follow On Activities

Stage Two (Pending funding and interest):

Council has a good working relationship with local schools, particularly Ashfield Boys High School. We have also recently engaged with the Arts Worker at Settlement Services International. Discussions have already taken place looking at a project that uses 'knitting/craft' as the medium that brings young people, old people (knitting group) and asylum seekers together to share 'craft' and stories that culminates in an installation on Liverpool Road.

### Online Information

[www.ashfield.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ashfield.nsw.gov.au)

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## Contact

**Name:** Ms Jane Pollard

**Position:** Team Leader Community Programs

**Phone:** 02 9716 1841

**Email:** [janep@ashfield.nsw.gov.au](mailto:janep@ashfield.nsw.gov.au)

# Ballina Shire Council - *People and Place, Age and Experience: a creative exploration*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Ballina Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

11,299 / 28.8%

## Project Summary

Project sought to provide a creative bonding experience between grandparents and grandchildren based around the theme of Ballina. Carving of clay pavers, to be laid in the Wigmore Arcade (newly renovated publicly owned shopping arcade in the CBD), was chosen as a simple medium for this activity.

The objectives were to explore the different experiences of community between older and young participants, to share these experiences with the wider community (through the subsequent use of the pavers) and to understand what is important to different generations of Ballina residents.

The results of the projects are being used to add value to other Council programs in understanding the valued attributes of place, so that these can be retained and enhanced in the future.

This project is a new initiative and will continue for a period of time.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- People over the age of 60
- Grandparents and grandchildren

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Crafts
- Visual arts
- Film/screen
- Ceramics
- Storytelling



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### **Activities**

A partnership was brokered with University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A) to increase exposure to older people. Supplementary advertising was also used. Four workshops were undertaken using clay artists from Pebuku Pottery. Older people brought their grandchildren along, and in some cases three generations of the same family attended the workshops. This was a very special part of the workshops. In one case, a great grandmother, grand-daughter and great-grandchildren attended. Some people came without any ideas, but many brought pictures or items to reproduce that they felt spoke to their experience of Ballina as a place. This was part of the communication objective between generations in sharing their different perspectives on Ballina as a place, and what was important to them.

The workshops were videoed and photographed, and subjects also interviewed (together) about their experience of Ballina as a place. Images and interviews with participants were used to produce a series of short video clips and powerpoint presentations for screening at the seniors week event, Council's website and other relevant forums including the launch of the clay pavers installation once completed.

### **Outcomes**

Through four workshops, 500 pavers were carved with different designs, including references to the coast, nature and open spaces through words, pictures and other symbology important to participants. Pavers were laid during March 2015, with a launch (inviting back participants to see the finished product).

One 3 minute video of the creative workshops, 3 minute videos of the participants responses to individual interview questions (about what is important to them about Ballina, memories of Ballina and their vision for Ballina into the future) and 8-10 'grabs' for use on web and other displays based on the interview questions. One powerpoint presentation based on photos taken during the creative workshops.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

A partnership was undertaken with the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age, to increase exposure to the target age group. The President of U3A was involved in developing the concept plan also. The Northern Rivers Community Gallery Co-ordinator and Council's Social Planner also participated in developing the workshops plan and methodology. Their networks were also utilised for dissemination as they had participants in other programs in the target age groups.

With regard to the audience of the creative activity, the resulting carved pavers are to be installed in a busy part of Ballina (in the centre business district) which is utilised by the community daily. The audience for the project will be substantial and ongoing.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 12**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 5,000**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The project provided a simple way to engage with clay as a medium, in a fun and non-threatening environment. It also provided a communication medium for older people to express their thoughts and feelings about Ballina in a positive way, with family close by. Creative endeavour is not always seen as a family or group activity, and the concept was considered to be a way to engage with different generations and provide an opportunity for collaboration on a community arts project with a long public life.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The venue was completely accessible. Four different workshops were provided, so that opportunity for morning or afternoon attendance was available. Refreshments were also available.

### **Project Changes**

The installation of the pavers and launch event on the site was delayed by extensive rain experienced in the Northern Rivers in the November to February time period. Works were delayed on the Wigmores Arcade refurbishment overall, so it was March before the final pavers were laid. However, the pavers were laid as part of the overall works on the laneway and pathway around the arcade.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The use of fired clay pavers has allowed a permanent exhibition of the results of the workshop, with a permanent reminder for participants of their contributions. Additionally, the video quality has been exceptional and the results are applicable to more than originally anticipated. Both outcomes will likely increase the willingness of Council and the community to be involved in future similar events with similar aims.

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### **Partners & Providers**

University of the 3rd Age, the Northern Rivers Community Gallery, Pebuku Pottery (artists), Council's Social Planner (Community Services Section), Council's Sustainability Planner and Sustainability Programs Co-ordinator (Strategic Planning). Grandparents, parents and grandchildren from across Ballina Shire.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Council would be very pleased to partner again with U3A on similar projects. A further artistic partnership with the Northern Rivers Community Gallery has been brokered for February 2015 celebrating World Wetlands Day.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The Ballina Major Regional Centre Strategy is currently being developed in house. It is a strategic planning document aimed to provide a direction for Ballina as a town for the next twenty years as it develops into a regional centre. Part of the aim of the strategy is to retain and enhance what people like about it now. The workshops provided a creative way to delve into what people like about Ballina, and what they value about Ballina, in a low-key and creative way.

Interpreting places through public art projects are also highlighted as important to contributing to our community's sense of place in Council's Cultural Plan 2014 - 2020. A connected community is one of the four themes outlined in the plan that looks at community needs and aspirations and describes what we want to occur during the next ten years to promote positive lifestyles and improve the amenity for our residents and visitors to the shire. Specific outcomes of this plan met through this project are:

- Encourage community interaction.
- Create events, strategies and activities that promote interaction and education, as well as a sense of place.
- Assist disadvantaged groups within our community.

## **Key Learnings**

The project was a valuable learning process from which a further project outline was developed for a longer running project that contains multiple streams of creative activity and outputs. Lessons learned included allowing for increased budget for recording and media outputs and ensuring a guaranteed exposure of concept across multiple interest groups (ie broadening partner organisations).

Spacing the workshops would also work well to allow for greater word of mouth 'advertising'.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

More time on sourcing older participants would be taken, by working with more than one partner organisation. Use of other email groups such as Landcare, Rotary etc would also assist in achieving this objective.

A larger budget would allow more workshops to be undertaken over a longer timeframe. This would also increase the take-up by allowing for word of mouth to increase interest in the process.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

The project would be simply replicated using a similar project plan. The key is having a place for the finished product to be utilised (whatever medium is chosen).

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

In terms of the ongoing relationship building, this is difficult to quantify as the workshops were a one-off event. In terms of creating a public art outcome from a creative and collaborative endeavour that adds to the civic environment, the outcomes are definitely sustainable.

The project also adds to the ongoing relationship Council is building with its community, and in this sense is contributing to a sustainable outcome where there is respect and partnership developing.

### **Follow On Activities**

The concept utilised here has been adapted and funds applied for through the Creative Communities grants program. The developed concept includes all people over 50, choosing between four different activities over a number of weeks or months (each activity has a separate timeframe) with a showcase event at the end.

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Community input into this activity and media from the workshops has also been intergrated into the ongoing community engagement of the Ballina Major Regional Centre Strategy development.

### Online Information

[www.ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au)

### Contact

**Name:** Mr Matthew Wood  
**Position:** Manager Strategic Planning  
**Phone:** 02 6686 1284  
**Email:** [skyem@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:skyem@ballina.nsw.gov.au)



## Byron Shire Council - Celebrate Life - Elders Flash Mob to the Beat

**COUNCIL NAME**

Byron Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

8,978 / 29.69%

### Project Summary

Celebrate Life - Elders Flash Mob to the Beat will build on the success of the local Seniors drumming circle to introduce a fusion of contemporary jazz and traditional aboriginal dance to create an age appropriate 'flash mob' dance for seniors that can be performed at local events. The Seniors drumming circle would develop the music to accompany the performance. The project aims to bring together indigenous and non indigenous older people in a fun and creative way that promotes healthy activity. Celebrate Life showcases an investment in evolving culture acknowledging our elders as the keepers of this culture and allowing them a space in which to lead the community in the creation of cultural expression based on reconciliation of our different cultures.

This project will offer drum and dance workshops at the Byron Community Centre and hold a showcase event at the Byron Theatre and participate in the New Years Eve Events in Byron Bay and at random community cultural events. Project Objectives included:

- To provide a fun and healthy activities for seniors in music and dance.
- To engage seniors from different parts of our community to come together in cultural expression.
- To create a piece of contemporary culture based on traditional and contemporary dance practice.
- To include our elders and older people in important community events such as New Years Eve.
- To create cultural capital for ongoing community performances (Harmony Day, Seniors Week, Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week).
- To provide a fun summer program for local seniors and to showcase this to our visitors.
- To help foster community identity, the "connectedness" of individuals, active participation in community life and diversity among residents of the Byron Shire.
- Providing opportunities to increase contacts and enhance the social relationships of older people was seen as an ongoing challenge for agencies and services.
- Provide opportunities for participation in the life of the wider community, foster social inclusion.
- Promote healthy lifestyle programs related to positive ageing, through partnerships.

This project is building on an existing initiative and has been integrated into another program.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- People over the age of 60
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersexual people (GLBTI)
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Reflecting local history
- Dance
- Music



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### **Activities**

- 2 Week development of dances with contemporary dance teachers and aboriginal dancers working with health professionals to develop the dances.
- 4 weeks of drum music to create the music with didgeridoo and clap sticks incorporated into the performance.
- 4 - 6 week workshops Dance Workshops Contemporary and Aboriginal Dance to produce a Flash Mob performance, workshops were held at the Byron Community Centre.
- Performance showcase at the Byron community centre, Social Inclusion Week activities at the Byron Community Centre and Survival Day (Australia Day events).
- Performance as part of Social Inclusion Week and Survival Day (Australia Day).
- Showcase event at the Byron Community Centre.

### **Outcomes**

- Enriched community cultural capital through drumming performance troupe, regular activities for older people in a high profile community setting and the development of new cultural product in the form of a Flash Mob.
- Increased opportunities for older people to participate in community cultural events and celebrations.
- High Quality performance showcase involving other older people's creative achievements.
- Strengthened and inspired community networks.
- Strengthened Indigenous community networks, self esteem and cultural pride.
- Real experience of reconciliation between indigenous and non indigenous older people.
- Increased contacts and enhance the social relationships of older people.
- Increased sense of belonging for older people in our local community.
- Ongoing creative programs for older people.
- Increased awareness of creative opportunities for older people.
- Stronger networks between community groups working to support older people.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

- A steering committee of older people was formed from the Byron Community Centre's existing programs.
- Older people were engaged in all areas of planning for the workshops including when and where the workshops would take place, the differing levels of abilities and how these would be allowed for in the project and the final performances.
- The promotion will also target Indigenous elders through the Bundjalung Elders Council, Bundjalung Elders Respite Care, the Arakwal Corporation, the Sisters for Reconciliation and Local Land Councils.
- The project was promoted through the local U3A - University of the Third Age members.
- Participants were engaged through existing networks developed through Byron Shire Council's interagency.
- The project was heavily promoted through the local media including Bay FM and local ABC, local television networks, local newspapers and social media.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 50**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 200**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The project offered additional opportunities for creative activity through the delivery of three workshop series, and performances in their local community.

The workshops included:

- Seniors Drumming.
- Belly Dance for Seniors.
- Flash Mob with Dhinawan.

These opportunities would not have existed without the project and this funding.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

- Workshops within the project were designed to cater to a variety of physical abilities to increase inclusivity.
- Expert knowledge from community health was sought in the design and implementation of the project.
- Workshops were held in a venue that had full disability access.

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- Feedback from participants was encouraged throughout the workshop process and responded to as a matter of priority.

### **Project Changes**

Additional dance workshops were held in conjunction with the drumming workshops.

Performances took place during Social Inclusion Week, November 2015 and Survival Day (Australia Day) instead of New Years Eve. This was in response to the feedback from participants.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The main unexpected benefit to this project is improved relationships and networks in the indigenous community.

### **Partners & Providers**

- Byron Shire Council - Aboriginal Projects Officer, Aged and Disability Officer, Community Services Manager.
- Byron Community Centre - Community Services Coordinator, Creative Aging Project Management, General Manager.
- North Coast Area Health.
- Dhinawan Dreaming, Arakwal Corporation and Tweed Byron Local Area Land Council and Jali land Council.
- Sound Synergy – percussion.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Partnerships between Byron Shire Council - Aboriginal Projects Officer, Aged and Disability Officer, Community Services Manager.

Byron Community Centre - Community Services Coordinator, Creative Aging Project Management, General Manager.

Dhinawan Dreaming, Arakwal Corporation and Tweed Byron Local Area Land Council and Jali land Council, Sound Synergy - percussion, have been strengthened through this project and discussion about our next collaboration are in progress.

There have been 5 enquiries about the Flash Mob performance and seniors drumming circle performing at other community events.

The partnership is of great strategic benefit.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

This project aligned with the following council's existing plans and Community Strategic Plan - Society and Culture.

Byron Shire has a dynamic culture that is unique to the region and Australia; one that attracts new residents and new and returning visitors each year. Byron Bay and its hinterland are internationally renowned for community creativity and connection to place. With this attraction and growth, comes the challenge of meeting the needs of a diverse community and visitors. This includes access to and supporting local services and facilities, and helping to ensure other levels of government provide the Shire with education, health, transport and other services.

Culture in the Byron Shire is the expression of the history, heritage, customs, arts, recreation, sport, creativity and values of a community. The community is diverse and colourful. Each town, rural village and their localities have their own distinctiveness and mix of cultural values; embracing both traditional and alternative lifestyles and philosophies.

There is strong respect for Aboriginal heritage and custodianship, and the value in understanding our link to country.

It is Council's role to help foster community identity, the "connectedness" of individuals, active participation in community life and diversity among residents of the Shire.

SC2.1 Provide a range of recreational, cultural and community opportunities.

SC2.3 Facilitate positive family and community influences on child development.

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SC2.4 Create vibrant liveable places and spaces within towns and villages for people of all ages and abilities  
SC3.1 Work in partnership with the community to facilitate access to a range of cultural places, spaces, opportunities and activities for all in the community.  
SC3.2 Acknowledge, foster and celebrate Aboriginal culture.  
SC3.3 Encourage and support residents from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds to participate in all aspects of community.

Performance indicator

\* Increased participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in Council led initiatives, partnerships and key community events.

Positive Ageing Strategy

Key Focus Area 1 – Belonging, Social Inclusion and Volunteering

Vision: A community where workers, volunteers, neighbours, friends, parents and grandparents, of all ages and culture, have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities and develop a sense of belonging to a community where they feel respected, and valued.

1.2 (intergenerational) contact through a range of events, activities, programs and strategies.

1.3. Recognise and plan for the diverse needs of all older.

1.5 Expand volunteer opportunities for older people through partnerships with other organisations.

2. Key Focus Area 2 – Lifelong Learning, Employment and Retirement.

Vision: A community where lifelong learning, and opportunities for employment and retirement, are supported.

2.1 Enhance opportunities for skill development and lifelong learning in collaboration with education providers.

5. Key Focus Area 5 – Information and Communication.

Vision: Information provided to the community is regular, accessible and easy to understand.

5.1 Facilitate communication for older adults about services and activities that contribute to ageing well

5.3 Improve Council's role in providing information to the community.

Notes

5.1.1 Social Inclusion p. 15.

The need for social inclusion was identified by the community as extremely important for the health and wellbeing of older people. Older residents expressed concern about the risk of isolation.

Emotional wellbeing is directly connected to social wellbeing and depression is strongly associated with social isolation.

Many residents felt it was important for the Council to take an active role in supporting and promoting an increased range of opportunities for social and recreational activities where new friendships could be formed and improvements to physical and mental health could be achieved.

Finding ways to increase contacts and enhance the social relationships of older people was seen as an ongoing challenge for agencies and services.

Being actively involved in the community is shown to have benefits for seniors' health and wellbeing.

Participation in the life of the community can include workforce participation, volunteering, education and training and involvement in social, cultural or recreational activities.

Council Plans to: p.17

- Foster a sense of belonging for all people.
- Investigate and develop a range of community engagement feedback mechanisms to facilitate community involvement.
- Promote intergenerational contact through a range of events, activities, programs and strategies.
- Recognise and plan for the diverse needs of all older people.
- Celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of older people.
- Expand volunteer opportunities for older people through partnerships with other organisations.

6. Key Focus Area 6 – Support Services

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Vision: A community where ageing residents have access to appropriate support services to assist them to maintain active and relatively independent lives.

#### 6.2 Health Promotion

Promote healthy lifestyle programs related to positive ageing, through partnerships

#### 6.3 Social Exclusion

Seek to better understand social isolation and its impacts in order to identify potential solutions

#### 6.5 Advocacy and partnerships

Develop collaborative partnerships with service providers

#### Cultural Plan p. 27

During the consultation process a range of issues and needs were identified regarding Byron's culture. The issues fell into thirteen key themes and are provided in detail in Appendix L. The thirteen themes were merged into the following seven key themes that reflect the guiding principles of the cultural action plan.

These are outlined below:

1. Identity and Sense of Place

2. Access and Opportunity: 2.3

3. Cooperation and Integration 3.1

4. Creativity, Innovation and Education 4.3 & 4.4

5. Conservation and Sustainability

5. Leisure Recreation & Natural Environment \*\*Key objective but no specific strategies/actions to link to grant application.

To plan for, and offer, a diverse range of lifestyle choices and community services aimed at enhancing quality of life throughout the Shire 6. Acceptance and Diversity 6.1 & 6.2

6.2 a Festivals a& events (economy & tourism), a) Encourage the facilitation of community events and activities that are fully accessible for people with disabilities.

7. Recreation, Health and Wellbeing

7.1 a Promote and facilitate opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in creative, cultural, recreational and social development activities

7.2 Disability Access and inclusion Plan

## Key Learnings

The projects would have benefited from a longer lead in time.

The project could have run for longer and developed additional performances as there is definitely the capacity in the community.

Dhinawan Baker and Gareth from Sound Synergy are wonderful facilitators and I would recommend them to other Councils.

#### Potential Changes to Improve

The projects would have benefited from a longer lead in time.

#### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

Other Councils would require the networks and creative expertise to roll this project out. With those things in place it can be done.

## Sustainability of Impacts

The relationships and networks developed through this project will support the sustainability of this project and encourage further workshop and performance opportunities as well as develop further opportunities for older people.

#### Follow On Activities

There is potential and interest for further performances of the Flash Mob and interest in the drumming circle to continue. Performances will be paid for by specific events.

## Online Information

[www.byron.nsw.gov.au](http://www.byron.nsw.gov.au)

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## Contact

**Name:** Ms Belle Arnold  
**Position:** Aboriginal Projects Officer  
**Phone:** 02 6626 7226  
**Email:** [belle.arnold@byron.nsw.gov.au](mailto:belle.arnold@byron.nsw.gov.au)

## Campbelltown City Council - *Tours with David & Friends*

### COUNCIL NAME

Campbelltown City Council

### RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO

Metropolitan

### COUNCIL SIZE

Over 60,000 residents

### POPULATION OVER 60

31,755 / 21.03%

### Project Summary

A series of exhibition discussion tours and practical arts workshops were provided to seniors living with memory loss, held at Campbelltown Arts Centre (C-A-C) from November 2014 to March 2015.

Through the project, C-A-C offered 16 guided discussion tours for seniors with memory loss. These tours were coordinated across three different exhibitions with a vast array of works, including diverse approaches, art forms and subject matter. The tours enabled participants to converse and reflect, using contemporary and traditional art as a catalyst for exchange.

A series of four art workshops for a group of 10 seniors with memory loss was implemented from February to March 2015. Artist David Capra designed and facilitated these practical workshops with a repeat group of 10 participants, in response to the interests and approaches of participants. Mediums included watercolours, inks and pastels, felt, wool and clay. Approaches included tactile and sculptural art-making; collaborative works and portraiture.

Approaches built on existing interests and abilities of participants, also encouraged social exchange and artistic collaboration amongst the group. The project was intended to build the capacity of C-A-C to offer public programs for people with memory loss in future, and acted as a pilot for future public programming for people with memory loss.

This was achieved through building networks and working relationships with aged care providers throughout the span of the project; on the job training for C-A-C staff members through increased direct experience in working with seniors and specifically seniors with memory loss.

This project is building on an existing initiative and has been integrated into another program.



### Target Audiences Engaged

- People over the age of 60
- People with Memory Loss

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### **Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Visual arts

### **Activities**

The project consisted of two complimentary parts.

Part one involved guided art tours of current visual arts exhibitions, for small groups of seniors with memory loss. Participants viewed approximately 5 artworks during each tour, with a facilitator enabling and encouraging participants to provide their own thoughts and responses to each work, prompting reflection and personal recollection as well as facilitating conversation and social contribution among all members of the group.

A support facilitator during these tours enabled more natural conversation to flow amongst staff and participants and was also able to support one on one conversations as required and depending on group dynamics.

Part two of the project saw seniors with an existing interest in the arts to join a series of practical art making workshops facilitated by artist David Capra. This group attended over several weeks, in which they joined a discussion tour in the gallery, enjoyed a social morning tea to reflect on their experience and thoughts, followed by a practical art-making workshop.

### **Outcomes**

All objectives have been achieved, including the implementation of 16 tours and a four week workshop series, the design of a high quality workshop program, and building the capacity of C-A-C to offer public programs for seniors with memory loss.

In addition, the program has immediately increased demand from seniors groups for tours and workshops at the Centre.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Older people were involved in planning and implementation via consultation with members of Friends of Campbelltown Arts Centre, specifically several seniors who regularly support tours of the gallery. Five of the Friends were directly involved in the implementation of the program, supporting and co-facilitating tours.

Several of these co-facilitators had attended training at C-A-C offered by Alzheimers Australia, focused on guiding people with memory loss; while other co-facilitators had direct experience with friends or family members living with dementia.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 120**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 115**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The project enabled older people to:

- Visit Campbelltown Arts Centre and view both traditional and contemporary art works from 3 different exhibitions.
- Contribute their own thoughts, responses as well as critiques to art works, which were validated during group discussions.
- Create art works using multiple mediums and approaches.
- Experiment with their art-making, enabled by the alternative approaches of a practicing artist and arts educator.
- Communicate and negotiate with others in the workshop to create collaborative art works.

As a whole, both components of the project improved older people's access to the arts by developing Campbelltown Arts Centre as an accessible, friendly venue for people with memory loss and those who support them. The skills of arts centre staff and volunteers were enriched through working with seniors with memory loss, positioning us to better work with this demographic in future. The approaches of staff from service providers were also developed, with several staff members mentioning they will be able to implement similar approaches in recreational activities supported through their own organisation.



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### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

- Provided multiple forms of seating during tours and workshops, including sturdy seating with arm supports for people requiring additional support, as well as folding chairs for individuals without mobility concerns.
- Multiple facilitators enabled one person to position themselves either close to an individual with hearing loss, or directly opposite (in the case of individuals who lip read).
- Provided letters to services prior to visit, with clear instruction around how to access the gallery and directions for easy drop-off and pick-up points.
- Works from each exhibition were selected for easy viewing for people who are vision impaired.
- On occasion, audio from new media works in an exhibition was lowered or turned off, to allow participants to view and discuss another work in the vicinity with minimal disturbance – including for people who are hearing impaired.
- Tours were structured such that participants did not need to walk long distances between works and were able to avoid darker areas of the gallery. Where works were to be viewed in dark gallery spaces, participants were offered additional physical support from volunteers and staff members, in the form of an arm to guide and clear instruction as to where to sit.
- Both tour facilitators and artist either had existing, or underwent further training with Alzheimers Australia in guiding people with memory loss. This enabled sensitive, appropriate approaches that focused on participation and contribution of people with memory loss.
- While C-A-C offered support with transport for participants to access the venue, this was not taken up. With the majority of attendees participating with support from an aged care provider, feedback has been that participants weren't able to attend without a staff member and as such transport was pre-arranged.

### **Project Changes**

The dates of the project needed to be extended in order to allow more time for individuals and services to book and arrange visits.

This extension was partially necessary due to timing of the project, in that multiple services noted December to January period as a difficult time due to staffing, festive celebrations and clients visiting family.

This period was also noted as less than ideal in terms of heat stroke risks for frail and aged participants.

The extended dates allowed the tours to take place over the course of three unique art exhibitions, providing scope for any repeat attendees to experience and engage with varied mediums and approaches both traditional and contemporary art.

The extension further allowed the arts centre to promote several tours as part of Council wide seniors week events, reaching a large, general public audience.

Marketing for the project was adapted from a print flyer or PDF, to a simple Word document allowing services to modify information and format as appropriate to their demographic, be it larger format text, information for a newsletter, or minimal text.

We requested services to complete information forms on individuals attending, prior to the day, and also requested staff members not to join tours in order to allow small groups and personal conversation amongst seniors with memory loss. This approach proved impractical, in that service providers noted need to accompany individuals for WHS reasons.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

Several organisations have enquired about external workshops for their clients, wishing to arrange regular workshops close to residents' homes. Campbelltown Arts Centre has put organisations directly in touch with the artist (David Capra) to enable this continued relationship.

Similarly, one organisation enquired about ongoing workshops at Campbelltown Arts Centre. C-A-C Education Officer will continue liaising with services to facilitate workshops as appropriate to the group.

An unintended outcome has also been an increase in visits to the gallery from seniors groups, with enquiries from several service providers wishing to arrange tours for their clients who may or may not experience memory loss.

Tour facilitators have also adapted some of the approaches to use in tours and workshops with school students and community groups. This includes a focus on individual's responses and active participation,

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attention to group dynamics, as well as recognising the value of silence and encouraging participants to respond prior to contextualising works.

### **Partners & Providers**

Program Delivery:

Campbelltown City Council: Managed by Campbelltown Arts Centre (Edwina Hill, Education & Public Programs Officer), in consultation with Community Resources & Development (Lyn Ifedioranma, Strategic Aged & Disability Officer).

Volunteers:

Friends of Campbelltown Arts Centre.

Organisations who booked tours:

BaptistCare; CarringtonCare; The Whiddon Group; SSWAHS – Reslink; Fairfield Seniors Community Group, Camden District Activity Centre.

Organisations who assisted with promotion and advice:

Macarthur Diversity Services; Dementia Advisory Service, SSWAHS Seniors Issue Group, Campbelltown; Airds Bradbury Originals; HACC.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Carrington Care booked several clients into the workshop series, and have directly expressed interest in arranging ongoing tours and workshops at the arts centre. This is in initial stages. Interchange Australia have also made initial enquiries about further workshop opportunities on behalf of a group from Camden District Activity Centre.

The Whiddon Group have continued to book several tours for their clients, both repeat visits and new visitors from the organisation. Camden District Activity Centre have similarly enquired about future tours and are arranging an appropriate date with Campbelltown Arts Centre.

Other organisations including Alzheimers Australia, MSDS and Dementia Advisory Service all provided feedback and promotional support for the program, and C-A-C will continue to consult with these organisations in terms of future tours at the gallery as well as seniors events.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The project aligned with Campbelltown City Council's 10 year Community Strategic Plan Objective Four – 'A safe, healthy and connected community'. The same objective links in with the Campbelltown Ageing Strategy 2013-17. Objectives from the Ageing Strategy include 'Promote Healthy Living' and 'Social Support' with the aim of facilitating health and wellbeing, supporting community groups and organisations to develop community health and wellbeing initiatives. The Ageing Strategy also identifies the 'Ageing in Place' action 'community development programs to increase social connections for older residents'.

The program also coincided with Seniors Week and was able to be promoted alongside Council wide events. C-A-C intends to offer these tours in future years.

## **Key Learnings**

- Need to allow significant lead time in arranging visits with aged care providers.
- Should budget for additional access support, such as translators for CALD and/or hearing impaired participants.
- While we expected individuals as well as services to book tours, we found the vast majority of bookings were made through service providers, while the few individual bookings we received frequently cancelled. This individual focus may be an area to grow over time, while at present we may be best to work on existing successes by continuing relationships with aged care service providers.
- Feedback to date has been that programs such as this take a significant time to grow recognition and understanding in the community, who may not have previously visited the arts centre.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Potentially, the program could also be expanded to include staff training programs prior to tours. This would be for aged care staff to be trained in conducting arts tours for people with memory loss. Not only would this allow services to better support and understand the tours at the gallery, but would build capacity for aged care organisations to support similar tours and approaches at other arts and recreational venues.

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### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

This project relied on access to a visual arts gallery, Campbelltown Arts Centre, as part of council, however the tour aspect of the program could be replicated with similar venues such as Local Government museums, historic houses, visitors centres, botanical gardens, parks or libraries.

We recommend inviting a trained artist to facilitate workshops, as this creative element provides an innovative, participant directed approach in that elements such as social interaction, artistic processes, artistic credibility and personal choice are key aspects to professional practice, as if not more important than more traditional art classes.

We would advise consulting with Alzheimers Australia to request training for facilitators and staff. This may be through attendance at existing training sessions out of area, or through organising in-house training days for a large number of individuals.

While we received interest from multiple services prior to this project, we would recommend creating committed partnerships from these providers. We found several services expressed interest, but in some cases weren't able to commit staff resources to bring clients to the Centre.

In organising tours around the capacity and availability of service, we were frequently required to support tours for more than 6 people and with people with varying interests and abilities. This size proves difficult to allow contribution from all involved, but this difficulty needs to be balanced with services' staffing ratios to support clients.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

These activities fit well into the broader scope of Campbelltown Arts Centre's existing Education and Public Programs activities. The project will be a sustainable part of C-A-C's ongoing engagement with the seniors community. Workshops and tours will continue to be offered, primarily to groups upon request, but if demand continues to grow the Centre will also look to open up regular tours to individuals.

#### **Follow On Activities**

C-A-C will continue to implement tours as part of its ongoing Education and Public Programs, upon request, and will promote and offer tours as part of Seniors Week again in 2016.

This program will be funded through Councils core operating costs. Should tours become more frequent or large scale groups enquire, tours will be partially funded through participant fees from services.

C-A-C will offer workshops for groups of seniors with memory loss, upon request. This will be supported as part of existing Education and Public Programs, with external costs such as artist fees and materials passed on to service providers.

### **Online Information**

[www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au](http://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au)

### **Contact**

**Name:** Mr Michael Dagostino  
**Position:** Director, Campbelltown Arts Centre  
**Phone:** 02 4645 4353  
**Email:** [michael.dagostino@campbelltown.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michael.dagostino@campbelltown.nsw.gov.au)

# Coonamble Shire Council - *Creating Together*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Coonamble Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Less than 20,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

948 / 23%

## Project Summary

The project was run in conjunction with Uniting Care NSW/ACT as part of a development program for women in Gulargambone. Gulargambone is a village in the Coonamble Shire LGA and is geographically isolated and socially and economically disadvantaged. The population of Gulargambone is less than 1000 and access to services and activities is limited.

The aim of the program was to provide activity, new skills and networking opportunities to women in Gulargambone, providing a non-threatening social outlet, the opportunity to share skills and to build confidence in the development of new skills.

It was planned that the project would strengthen the development of a Women's Group in Gulargambone, providing safe and respectful social activities in the town.

This project is a new initiative and has become an ongoing program.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Crafts



### Activities

Three workshops were held in plate making, coolamon making and pottery. The workshops were facilitated by Coonamble Arts Alive. Participants were given the opportunity to develop their own designs, cast the items and decorate them, while sharing knowledge and ideas.

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Planned information technology programs were abandoned due to an unforeseen lack of technology available in the community.

### **Outcomes**

The project has resulted in the strengthening of the Gulargambone Women's Group, with an increase in intergenerational networking. Older community members were able to interact with younger members of the community, building relationships.

The project has also identified other needs within the community, including a broadening of available information technology services, as well as an interest in other areas of social connectivity, including basic skills such as cooking and nutrition.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The older members of the community had previously expressed a desire to connect through arts and crafts activities. During the course of the workshops, they were given the opportunity to connect with younger members of the workshop group, sharing knowledge, information and ideas. The older members of the group have expressed a strong desire to be further involved in upcoming projects, which has given them a sense of ownership of this and future projects.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 12**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 0**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The project gave older people an opportunity to try new creative outlets. Traditionally, art and craft activities have been focussed on heirloom type activities such as quilting, embroidery and other handicrafts.

This project has given the participants the skills to branch out into new creative endeavours, and the confidence to be experimental in their designs and artistry.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The venues selected for the workshops were accessible to all members of the community, regardless of physical ability. The workshops were developed in such a way that participants with mobility or motor skills impairment would still be able to participate. Motor skills impairment were catered for through the predevelopment of items, in case of participants who were unable to cast or form pottery giving them the opportunity to take part through decoration of items.

There was also encouragement of idea and knowledge sharing, to ensure that, regardless of ability, all participants were able to feel a part of the group.

### **Project Changes**

Information technology sessions needed to be cancelled because of the lack of availability in the town. This was only discovered on the final planning of the workshops, and has highlighted a need within the town as a whole. While there are public IT areas available, it was learned through the planning process that they were insufficient for a session of this nature. This has given us the opportunity to revisit the information technology needs of the community, and in particular the older community, and work to address this.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The Gulargambone Women's Group has grown in numbers due to the facilitation of the workshops, The women who participated in the Creative Ageing activities are now participating in the regular women's groups activities which are increasing their opportunities for social connection. Further unexpected outcomes include the extent of intergenerational networking which has developed through the presentation of the project. The service provider has since developed other activities, including cooking and nutrition, and the increase in attendance and cross mix of ages attending activities has highlighted the desire for the community to further participate in intergenerational activities.

### **Partners & Providers**

Coonamble Shire Council worked with Uniting Care NSW/ACT on the project development, with Uniting Care NSW/ACT delivering the project workshops. The workshops were facilitated by Coonamble Arts Alive, a community based not for profit arts organisation which provides workshop services as well as regular activities in Coonamble. As the project progressed, community members in Gulargambone spread the word about the activities, providing feedback and information on the needs of the community and encouraging others to attend.

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### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

There has long been a strong association with Coonamble Shire Council and Uniting Care NSW/ACT in the development and implementation of community projects in the Shire. The success of this project in Gulargambone will strengthen that relationship, with the possibility of it extending to other villages and Coonamble itself.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

P1.3. Leverage the skills and knowledge in our community to promote social interaction.

P1.3.1. Support activities/projects that increase community participation and connection.

P3.4. Improve access to services for disengaged community members.

P3.4.1. Support appropriate community development activities undertaken by a range of organisations and provide assistance with project development, governance, grant writing, community building and group facilitation.

P4.2. Improve interaction across social cultural and age groups.

P4.2.2. Support strategies that focus on active ageing and ageing in place.

## **Key Learnings**

In order for participants to come more prepared, or have ideas around design, they need to be provided an outline of what the activity entails and what concepts are going to be implemented in the activity. This will give them prior time to think about the design of what they want to achieve. With limited time for the activity a number of participants were rushed to come up with a design for their artwork. We could have possibly run a pre-session on another day to draft designs for their ceramics.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Organise a pre-design day to research or share ideas around design and look at resources or tools that may assist in the design of their ceramics project. This would then allow time for the actual workshop to concentrate on the technical aspects of the workshop and creativity of the piece.

The undertaking of a minimum needs/skills assessment of the group would also ensure the needs of the group were better understood and catered to.

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

The outcomes and benefits of the project are sustainable through the development of community interest and the ongoing management of the partnership with UnitingCare. There have been limited opportunities for older people to participate in programs, and the building of the project into an intergenerational activity has highlighted the willingness of the community to build on these networks.

### **Follow On Activities**

Participants have indicated they would like to engage in more of these activities. Stronger relationships are being built with the women in order to better understand their needs to then allow activities to be organised to support these needs. The potential for partnerships and collaboration with other service providers has increased which will possibly lead to new funding opportunities and sharing of resources to facilitate more activities.

A Mental Health information workshop was held in March which was facilitated by the Rural Health Worker and a further cooking and nutrition workshop was also organised for March.

## **Online Information**

[www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au)

## **Contact**

**Name:** Ms Lianne Tasker

**Position:** Director, Community Services

**Phone:** 02 6827 1916

**Email:** [j.geerdink@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:j.geerdink@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au)

# Cootamundra Shire Council - *Box Gum Grassy Woodland (BGGW) creative workshop program*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Cootamundra Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Less than 20,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

2,352 / 31%

## Project Summary

This Creative Ageing Local Government Grant supported a series of skills development workshops where leading Australian artists taught senior local residents field recording, weaving and bush dying techniques utilising local environs and locally sourced materials.

Objectives of the project were met and included the provision of our senior residents with:

- access to leading Australian artists.
- activities that will expose them to a range of creative skills.
- a means to creatively explore our local environs.
- an activity that can be continued and expanded upon collectively and independently in their own homes and/or in community facilities.
- a forum for their skills to be demonstrated to the local community.

We also achieved our goal of utilising and showcasing the facilities of The Cootamundra Arts Centre to our local community.

Project outcomes included the development of new and transferrable skills in our community, which can later be expanded upon independently by participants. Outcomes will also include the development of creative artworks, which will be displayed at our recently built Arts Centre 1st -9th August.

This project is a new initiative and has been integrated into another program.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Crafts



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### Activities

We presented a suite of community workshops in weaving, bush dyeing and field recording, which were oriented around the iconic 'Box Gum Grassy Woodlands' (BGGW) habitat, which is local to our region. Workshops included:

- **RANDOM WEAVE**

Random weave basketry and Ancient Twist workshops utilising fibres and materials sourced from the local BGGW habitat. Tutor Harriet Goodall. Friday Dec 5th, 9.30am - 3.30pm and Saturday Dec 6th, 9.30am - 3.30pm.

Harriet helped attendees explore the contemporary sculptural basketry technique of 'random weaving' and learn which plant fibres are suitable for weaving. The workshop format embraced the ancient magic of sitting in a circle, and creating something wonderful using our hands. By the end of the workshop, attendees left with 1-2 sculptural nest-like baskets, and an understanding of how to extend their weaving.

Harriet provided class notes on collecting, drying, preparing, weaving and storage of natural materials, including a comprehensive list of plants which can be harvested for making baskets.

- **ANCIENT TWIST with Harriet Goodall**

Ancient Twist - Knotless netting (cordage/string bag making) and Aboriginal coiling techniques. Sunday Dec 7th 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Introduction to the ancient techniques of knotless netting and coiled basketry using hand-dyed raffia, local grasses, yarns and strings to start work unique vessels.

- **Bush Dyeing workshop with Jemima Saunders**

Introduction to bush dyeing techniques using plant matter derived from BGGW environs. Working with silk and wool (protein fibres) participants learnt to dye with vivid dyes obtained from locally found plants. Using traditional Japanese Shibori resist dyeing techniques participants created their own bush dyed scarves and sample pieces for further exploration/embellishment. Thursday 11th December 10am-4pm and Friday 12th December 10am - 2pm.

- **Field Recording workshops with David Burraston & Sarah Last**

Starting with an introductory workshop, participants learnt about different recording techniques and technologies used when field recording. From here we will schedule a follow up workshop where we listened to each others recordings and discussed editing and composition techniques. Saturday 13th December 9.30am – 2.30pm and Saturday 10th January 9.00- 2.00pm.

### Outcomes

New skills were acquired and new community networks were established for the organising partners and the participants.

The workshops provided:

- Exposure to and development of new creative skills amongst our older residents.
- Provision of skills that can be readily transferred, particularly inter-generationally.
- Provision of skills that have been further developed by participants communally and/or independently.
- Creative explorations and interpretations of our local environs.
- Demonstration of the facilities available at our local arts centre.

Post workshops a group of women have continued to regularly meet and experiment with the bush dyeing techniques they have learnt. The majority are over 55 and there are also some younger participants in their 40's. Aside from enjoying the camaraderie and new friendships amongst the group, the ladies are also enjoy sharing their gardens and knowledge of plants, up cycling of textiles and observing each others experimentations with different techniques and plants.

We are currently planning an exhibition of creative outcomes at the Cootamundra Arts Centre from 1st – 9th August. This will:

- Positively profile our older residents to the local community.
- Increase confidence of our older residents to pursue other creative activities.
- Showcase the facilities and community engagement of the Arts Centre.



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### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The Wired Lab (TWL) gauged the initial interest in these workshops and their subject matter through our contact with older community members and partner organisations. We fielded enthusiasm indicative of the need for the range of skills taught, and interest has been expressed for these workshops to continue.

When planning workshops we consulted the volunteers at Cootamundra Arts Centre, and groups such as University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A), Rotary and Landcare, the majority of members/volunteers for these groups are who are over 55.

All workshops participants are now involved in the planning of future informal get togethers and the exhibition in August.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 66**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 66** (expected to increase after exhibition in August)

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

All participants have indicated that they have continued to practice the skills they learnt after the workshops. This has been both individually in their own time, or during informal get togethers to practice bush dyeing and weaving. We have extended our loan of field recorders to the field recording workshop participants and all have continued to make recordings. The planned exhibition in August has also created incentive for all participants to keep meeting and developing works.

The Cootamundra Arts Centre has also opened up its visual arts studio space every Wednesday for those in the community wishing to work in textiles. This will also provide a platform for increased participation in creative activity.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The Cootamundra Arts Centre is a fully accessible site. For any participants that had physical challenges we ensured the space had no trip hazards and participants were provided with seating and assistance to suit their needs. The tutors also pitched their workshop to suit the abilities of participants.

### **Project Changes**

We had planned to have an exhibition in the week during Australia Day, 26 January. However due to a death in the family, project coordinators could not install the works and it was deemed appropriate to reschedule the exhibition to a later date.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

We had hoped that participants would continue with the skills they learnt. We are particularly pleased that there has been such a demonstrated commitment by participants to continue to get together in their own time.

Another beneficial outcome is Cootamundra Arts Centre continuation of skills development in the arts of fibre arts and textiles, where they have programmed further workshops with Jemima Saunders later in the year.

### **Partners & Providers**

This workshop series is part of a partnership with Cootamundra Arts Centre and Cootamundra Shire Council and supported by LGNSW's Creative Ageing Grants Program, and an 'Artist in Residence Grant' from the Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund managed by Museums and Galleries of NSW.

Cootamundra Arts Centre and Cootamundra Shire Council assisted with promoting the workshop to their constituents. As did U3A, Cootamundra Retirement Village, The Woman's Club and local landcare groups.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Partnerships are already continuing such as the exhibition we have planned and future workshops at Cootamundra Arts Centre. We are also talking about working together to seek further funds to present more workshops for senior participants.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The project aligned with two core priorities, 'Social' and 'Environmental', of Cootamundra Shire Council's 'Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023'. The activities particularly aligned with:

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Strategic Priority #1 – SOCIAL: To promote thriving social networks that create and nurture a strong, modern and vibrant community.

Strategic Priority #2 – ENVIRONMENTAL: To protect the natural environment and maintain the rural character of the Shire.

The objectives and outcomes also aligned with the following community concerns identified by Cootamundra Shire Council when developing the Community Strategic Plan:

- Concern for environment.
- Need to provide more cultural facilities & activities.
- Document and preserve heritage.
- Plan for an ageing community.

## Key Learnings

It is difficult to know when is a preferable time of year to schedule community activities. We opted for early December for a range of factors such as tutor availability and TWL staff availability. However, December is a busy time of year with many having extracurricular community and family commitments in the lead up to Christmas and New Year. While we filled all the workshops to capacity, some participants indicated they would have come to all the workshops on offer, rather than one or two.

### Potential Changes to Improve

Offer workshops throughout the year to further increase participation across a range of discipline areas.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

They could also schedule creative workshops that respond to their local environs. Workshop content should be oriented around skills that do not require a large investment in resources or equipment.

## Sustainability of Impacts

For participants they can continue these creative activities at the own pace and scale what they do according to their abilities.

The investment of local government in partnerships that foster positive social and creative activities have multiple benefits for individuals and the community as a whole. These include increased social networks, improved community harmony, improved community health, increased physical and cognitive activities.

### Follow On Activities

Our exhibition is planned for 1-9 August. Alongside this event The Cootamundra Arts Centre is also planning a 'Fabric and Fibres' expo which will include some exhibits by other fibre and textile artists in the region.

Local partners Cootamundra Arts Centre, Cootamundra Shire Council and The Wired Lab are continuing to seek avenues to continue to funds activities such as these through organisations such as Arts NSW, Regional Arts NSW and Foundation of Rural and Regional Renewal.

## Online Information

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B6NnThojjg5id3JfNHY3Q1FITUU&usp=sharing>

[www.cootamundra.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cootamundra.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Ms Sarah Last  
**Position:** Artistic Director / CEO  
**Phone:** 0414 226 623  
**Email:** [sarah@wiredlab.org](mailto:sarah@wiredlab.org)

# Great Lakes Council - *Storytelling in the Great Lakes*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Great Lakes Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

13,586 / 39.5%

## Project Summary

A series of workshops were run by volunteers to assist participants to tell a story either by painting or drawing a picture, or creative writing.

Workshops were held across the LGA with a small number being held at a nursing home in Forster.

Final works were exhibited at Council during the last 2 weeks in January. The exhibition is currently touring the LGA so that residents in other towns and centres can enjoy the works.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Older people who are carers
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People with disabilities
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Visual arts
- Reflecting local history
- Creative writing



**Activities**

1. Volunteers sought and engaged.
2. Planning sessions with volunteers, decisions made on advertising, networking, venues.
3. Advertising took place.
4. Workshops were coordinated and run in all towns.
5. Works were typed up and formatted in most cases, by Council officer, laminated, mounted on black card.
6. Volunteers met to plan exhibition, assisted with set up of exhibition.

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7. An exhibition launch was held on Monday 19 January, with an opening address by the General Manager, Glenn Handford. Most of the volunteers and a number of the participants attended, and were able to speak to other attendees about their experience in the project, and the story they told.
  8. The exhibition is currently on a 'road show' to other towns and centres in the LGA.

### **Outcomes**

Older people, many of whom had not previously engaged in 'the arts' in any way, participated in this project. They were mentored by experienced and enthusiastic volunteers. They formed new friendships and learned new skills. Some participants discovered a talent for storytelling and will continue this activity. Volunteers from different areas worked together and discovered a new sense of family. An aged-care provider was involved in the project and report that participation gave their residents a boost.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Volunteers facilitated the workshops. All the volunteers were aged over 60.

They worked with Council to determine desired outcomes, logistics and advertising for the project, and then facilitated the workshops. Some also visited a local aged care facility to work with those residents. They then worked with a Council officer to arrange an exhibition of the works, and an opening/launch of that exhibition.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 57**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 230**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Many participants had never been involved in this type of activity at all. For them, getting a story down on paper was very daunting. However the volunteers were extremely enthusiastic and patient, and assisted participants to achieve an outcome that they were happy with. Many volunteers worked with those participants outside of the official 'workshop' in order to provide additional coaching and support. Some of the results were extraordinary, and the volunteers are actively encouraging those participants to continue to tell stories.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

All workshops were held at Council-owned, accessible locations with the exception of some visits by volunteers to an aged-care facility. The offer of transport was made, but not taken up by participants. Some volunteers visited a local aged care facility to work with participants who were not able to get out and about.

### **Project Changes**

The biggest challenge with this project was the timeframe. Running a project such as this over a short period of time, when the Christmas/New Year festivities fell within the period was very difficult. We found that we pretty much had to write off the whole of December - because both the volunteers and the participants were busy preparing for Christmas and/or away over that period.

As a result we had to squash the workshops into the October/November period. Given that a fair amount of planning and preparation was required up front, there was little time available for the actual workshops. We feel that we might have had greater participation and greater publicity for the project had it not had to compete with the festive season.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

We did, as we hoped, discover a couple of hidden talents amongst our participants and they are being encouraged to continue telling stories.

In addition, instead of having an area-specific exhibition in that area, we decided to bring all the works to Forster for the official exhibition period. One of the volunteers who was involved in that organisation spoke at the opening of the exhibition and said that the project and the final exhibition had made her and her local community (at North Arm Cove) feel less isolated, and 'part of the family'.

The exhibition of all the works travelled to Stroud, Tea Gardens and North Arm Cove during February.

The project has also highlighted a great desire/need for aged-care residents to be able to tell their stories and have them recorded. This is something the volunteers have indicated they may continue post funding.

### **Partners & Providers**

Great Lakes Library and a number of volunteers were the partners for this project.

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Volunteers planned and ran all the workshops and used Council venues or the Libraries in each location.

They were also very active in the planning and organising of the final exhibition.

The only Council staff who were involved in running the project were staff members from the Community Services section - to liaise with, and coordinate the volunteers, book venues, arrange advertising and the purchase of materials and refreshments.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

The volunteers have highlighted that there is a great desire from residents of aged-care facilities to get their stories down on paper. Whilst this is somewhat different to the original goals of the project, it is quite possible that the volunteer group will continue to work in aged care facilities, and recruit other volunteers to continue to work on this.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

There are 3 plans and strategies that this project contributes to:

#### **1. GL CULTURAL PLAN**

Key Performance Area: Cultural Activities and Events

- Support & Develop new activities from existing venues.
- Investigate opportunities for showcasing the visual arts, eg retirement villages, business foyers, etc.

Key Performance Area: Access and Inclusion

- Promote the value of the creative process in the social & community development sectors.
- Engage marginalised groups in cultural activities.

Key Performance Area Resources. Strategies

- Create and develop skills register and volunteer base.

#### **2. GL ACTIVE AGEING STRATEGY**

Key Performance Area: Social Participation

- Support groups that provide lifelong learning opportunities.
- Promote social interaction and active ageing through provision of opportunities for older people to volunteer for activities that suit a variety of interests and experience.
- Facilitate and encourage provision of outreach services where appropriate.

Key Performance Area: Respect & Social Inclusion

- Involve older residents in decision-making process on issues around how to best meet their needs.
- Promote social interaction and active ageing through provision of opportunities for older people to volunteer for activities that suit a variety of interests and experience.
- Celebrate the role and achievements of older people.

#### **3. GREAT LAKES 2030 - COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

Key Performance Area: Vibrant and Connected Communities

- Ensure community, sporting, recreational and cultural facilities and services reflect current and future needs.
- Enable opportunities to experience lifelong learning through improved access to educational facilities.
- Increase community inclusion, cohesion and social interaction.

## **Key Learnings**

1. Running a program like this in a tight timeframe, over December/January was difficult. If this project was to run again, it would definitely need a longer timeframe at a different time of year.
2. When Council applied for the funding, it was anticipated that most of the stories that would be told, would be imaginative - thus the creativity. However in hindsight, the project name "Storytelling in the Great Lakes" probably did not encourage participants to be imaginative. It appears that participants (and volunteers) interpreted this as a "memoir" project, with the majority of the participants' stories being memories of an event in their own lives.
3. It was originally planned to hold the exhibition in the Library, however for a number of reasons that was not possible. As a result, the exhibition was held in Council's foyer. We had hoped that the exhibition would be viewed by younger people (who would be visiting the library), but not many young people would naturally come to Council, and we missed out on that audience.

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4. In the grant application phase, there was considerable interest from local artists to assist in running the project. When Council received notification of a successful result, and recontacted those artists, we found that they were not prepared to participate over the festive season. As a result most of the volunteers were more inclined towards creative writing, than painting or drawing. Thus most of the final works were creative writing works.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

1. Definitely a longer timeframe that did not coincide with Christmas/New Year (or Easter) or any other time of year when people were away from home, or preoccupied with other activities. A longer timeframe is also necessary in order to be able to conduct the program at aged-care facilities. Volunteers identified this target market about half way through the project. Most facilities require volunteers and workers to undergo a police check and a full induction prior to being able to set foot in the facility. With the festive season break right in the middle of this project, there was simply insufficient time to comply with these requirements.
2. Rename the project to eliminate the preconception that the project is about getting one's memories down on paper - not that this is bad thing - but we would like to encourage more creativity.
3. Hold the final exhibition in a place (like the Library) where young people visit - so they are exposed to the project.
4. Involve more artists, and encourage participants to try painting/drawing/collage.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

Engage with the community to find volunteers who have the expertise and enthusiasm to help members of the public with painting/drawing/writing - they need to be able to work with older people. Some of our volunteers visited residents in a nursing home and some of those residents were keen to tell their stories, but were suffering from various degrees of dementia and required additional levels of patience and encouragement.

Involve volunteers in the planning process - how they would like to run the workshops, set the criteria - who will do what. Allow a good 3 weeks to a month for planning.

Advertise widely - make use of networks, and contact community organisations like the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A), Lions Club, Probus Clubs, etc as well as traditional advertising in local papers.

Make the workshops as non-threatening as possible - this is supposed to be a fun experience for the participants.

The exhibition was a great way to end the project and it instilled a sense of pride in the participants. They were really happy to have their works displayed. Involving all the volunteers in the planning of the final exhibition, for our LGA was especially beneficial - our LGA covers 3,500 square Km. Some of the towns and villages are quite isolated. The volunteers said that helping to plan the exhibition in Forster to start off with, and then the roadshow, had made them feel 'part of the family'.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

The volunteers have identified a great need for older people (especially those in aged-care facilities) to tell their stories. While it was not the objective of the project for volunteers to get the memories of frail older residents down on paper, it has nevertheless been one of the motivators for some of the participants.

The most popular activity (surprisingly) was the creative writing rather than the painting/drawing, and there are a number of creative writing groups across the LGA which participants can join in order to progress their skills.

Most of the participants have said that if we decide to run the project again "we're in", and that they have friends who regretted not being involved and are keen to participate if we run the program again. It is quite feasible that this component of the project could be ongoing - volunteers visit aged care facilities and work with the residents on an on-going basis.

More broadly, since the project was mostly run and coordinated by volunteers, with some Council support, there is no reason that it couldn't continue - especially if the Library continues to provide in-kind support (venue).

#### **Follow On Activities**

As described above, the volunteers have identified a need for older people in residential aged care to tell

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their stories. We foresee that volunteers will be keen to continue working in those facilities to help older people get some of their memories down on paper. The Manager of the aged-care facility that participated in the project has asked if the exhibition can be erected at that facility at the conclusion of its current roadshow, so that families of the residents have an opportunity to view the works.

As already stated, the exhibition is currently doing a roadshow around the LGA so that residents in other towns and centres can view the works - this is a post-funding activity. There is very little cost for this - the exhibitions are being held at Council's libraries and halls in those towns, so there are no hire fees involved, and volunteers are doing the work.

Council staff are currently considering running more workshops as part of Seniors Week on an ongoing basis with budget set aside for Seniors week.

### Online Information

[http://www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/News\\_Directory/Creative\\_ageing\\_project](http://www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/News_Directory/Creative_ageing_project)

[www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au](http://www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au)

### Contact

**Name:** Mrs Lynda Hepple

**Position:** Community Development Coordinator

**Phone:** 02 6591 7490

**Email:** [lynda.hepple@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lynda.hepple@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au)

## Griffith City Council - *Creative Ageing summer program*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Griffith City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-  
60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

5,389 / 19%

### Project Summary

The aim of the Creative Ageing program was to promote community connectedness and wellbeing among seniors. A series of creative classes held at Griffith City Library encouraged seniors to try something new and creative in a welcoming environment.

Objectives of the project were to provide seniors with opportunities for:

- Social interaction for seniors who can easily become isolated .
- Mental stimulation and education in learning a new skill.
- Discovery and learning in the comfortable and welcoming environment of the library.
- Independence through participating in classes with take-away lessons.
- Personal growth and enrichment through creativity.

As the project was hugely successful the objectives of the project were successfully met.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

#### Target Audiences Engaged

- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

#### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Reflecting local history
- Crafts
- Music
- Visual arts
- Physical movement through Pilates and Tai Chi





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### Activities

A series of creative programs were held on each day of the month throughout November and January. The same class was held on the same time/day each week for four weeks for 1.5 to 2 hours. Some presenters presented the same class each week, others presented a progressive program.

November program at Griffith City Library:

- Mon - Charcoal drawing
- Tue - Family history research
- Wed - Learn to play the Ukulele
- Thu - Pilates
- Fri - Pasta making

January program at Griffith City Library:

- Mon - Card making
- Tue - Photography (for both SLR and iPads)
- Wed - Tai Chi
- Thu - Mosaics
- Fri - Line dancing

Coleambally Community Hall in December:

- Charcoal drawing

Coleambally Community Hall in February:

- Card making

### Outcomes

Seniors who participated in the program benefited from:

- A free creative activity in a welcoming environment.
- An opportunity for increased social interaction.
- An appreciation for creative expression and practical skills to express their own creativity.

All those involved expressed an eagerness for the program to continue.

The library:

- Increased the number of programs available to seniors.
- Benefited from increased exposure through media and positive word of mouth in the community.
- Increased visitation numbers during the months of November and January.
- Learned valuable lessons through both the development and delivery of the program and feedback from participants.

### How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation

Through discussion and social media seniors were invited to comment and offer suggestions on proposed programs. Monthly movie screenings for seniors provided a platform to promote the Creative Ageing Summer Program. Seniors on the library's management committee were invited to contribute their feedback and opinion. Evaluation forms distributed throughout the November sessions invited people to suggest improvements to program delivery, and propose creative classes they would be interested in attending in January.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 396**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 0**

### How Project Increased Older People's Participation

Each of the sessions was designed to be a hands-on creative learning experience so that participants gained basic skills in their chosen activity. Many of the presenters are active in sharing their creative skill with the local community (for example holding classes at the local community college or personally hosting workshops) and so seniors can choose to continue learning after completion of the library's program.

### How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability

The Griffith City Library meeting room, Coleambally Town Hall and Murrumbidgee Shire Council meeting each has full disabled access and toilet facilities. Carers of seniors were also welcome to participate, even if they were younger than 60.

### Project Changes

Many of the classes initially envisaged had to be changed due to the availability of presenters.

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### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

Lean to play the Ukulele was one of our most popular sessions. Many participants bought their own ukuleles and have since formed a group that meets outside of the library to continue learning and sharing their music.

We made contacts in Coleambally who are eager to work together in the future planning and promoting of Coleambally events.

### **Partners & Providers**

The library was primarily responsible for organising and promoting the programs. Presenters with creative skills and presentation experience were engaged to deliver the sessions. A number of the presenters also work at Western Riverina Community College and the director of the college was supportive of his staff participating in the program. The local Genealogical and Historical society delivered the family history research sessions.

Scalabrini Village brought a number of their residents along with carers to the pasta making sessions. Cypress View in Coleambally brought participants and carers to the charcoal drawing and card making sessions in Coleambally.

Griffith City Council's communications department assisted in promoting the program through media releases and radio interviews. The Murrumbidgee Shire office assisted with the promotion of Coleambally sessions.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

We would love to be able to make creative ageing a permanent program throughout the year. If funding is found to do so, we would like to re-engage those presenters who were most successful. Their classes included charcoal drawing, learning to play the ukulele and researching family history.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

There are 3 Priorities within Griffith City Council's Community Action Plan that the program addressed:  
Priority 2 : Places and spaces - plan and develop facilities and services to meet the needs of an ageing population.

Priority 5 : Education - learning through the ages.

Priority 12 : Arts and culture - improve access to cultural and artistic activities.

## **Key Learnings**

- Promotion is very important in both getting the word out to the right people in time for them to make arrangements to come to classes.
- Promotion is also important in managing participant expectations; it is important to outline exactly what will and will not be covered in a session, and also indicate whether classes are stand alone or progressive (ie. if you miss the first week you will be behind the other participants).
- Paying presenters for their time ensures a level of reliability and commitment that is hard to achieve with volunteers.
- Seniors as a demographic are exceptionally keen to learn new and different things.
- Creative classes for seniors appeared to achieve a level of comfort and enjoyment not experienced in other classes we have run, such as technology classes.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Sessions held at Griffith City Library were a great success. However, improvements could be made in the management of participant expectations by outlining the content of the sessions (what is covered, what is not) in more detail in promotional material. In the iPad photography classes in particular; we had participants come along more interested in learning how to use an iPad than using an iPad for photography.

A number of Coleambally sessions were cancelled due to few or no registered participants. Reasons may include poor promotion (news of the events may not have reached potential participants in time). The library has since established a relationship with the manager of the Coleambally Respite Group (for elderly who are still living at home) who also works at the Murrumbidgee Shire Offices. This contact is in a position to both offer advice on planning programs for seniors and ensuring news of events successfully reaches those who may be interested.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

This project is easy enough to replicate provided an institution has the budget to pay presenters. In our experience paying someone for their time ensured a level of reliability and commitment that we have had trouble achieving in the past with people who were donating their time. Majority of the work is in organising

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presenters who will commit to the 1.5-2hrs at the same time every week for four weeks. Once presenters had been booked in the program largely ran itself with little intervention required from library staff apart from helping to set up/pack up, and inviting feedback from presenters and participants.

## Sustainability of Impacts

Seniors learned skills and made acquaintances that will stay with them long after the project. Some were even inspired to create their own group to continue meeting and learning on a regular basis.

For the library, the goodwill and relationships generated by the project is also ongoing. While staff are eager to maintain the momentum and continue the program this is unfortunately unfeasible without funding.

### Follow On Activities

As previously stated, the program was exceptionally popular and we would love to be able to make creative ageing a permanent program throughout the year. We are in the process of developing a proposal requesting that a budget be created to facilitate this in the next financial year. If this is unsuccessful we will seek out further grant funding opportunities.

## Online Information

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Griffith-Library/236755229698410>

[www.griffith.nsw.gov.au](http://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Miss Karen Lowe

**Position:** People & Programs Team Leader - Griffith City Library

**Phone:** (02 6962 8300

**Email:** [pam.young@griffith.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pam.young@griffith.nsw.gov.au)

## Inverell Shire Council - *Silk Tales*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Inverell Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Less than 20,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

4,223 / 26%

### Project Summary

The Silk Tales project is a new initiative aimed at encouraging creative and cultural expression amongst the older Gamilaraay people. Guided by an Aboriginal Cultural Arts Tutor the older Gamilaraay people will be engaged socially by exchanging stories from their own history and experience of identity formation. As the stories are shared the individual's will be taught silk screening that will allow their story to be captured through cultural expression on silk experiencing their own autobiography.

The objectives of the project are:

- a) promotion of Inverell's Indigenous culture and history as seen through the eyes of older Gamilaraay people using silk screening techniques.
- b) Increase social inclusion of the older Gamilaraay people.
- c) Expression of past tales through art.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

#### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Socio economically disadvantaged people

#### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Crafts
- Individual Aboriginal History



#### Activities

Weekly cultural art classes with an Aboriginal Cultural Arts Tutor alternating between Inverell and Tingha.

#### Outcomes

Inverell's Indigenous culture and history as seen through the eyes of older Gamilaraay people has been expressed through the medium of silk screen. The participants acquired knowledge and skills of silk screening and techniques. This project encouraged social inclusion of the older Gamilaraay people establishing new friendships and re-establishing past friendships. The older Gamilaraay people now have experienced an medium for their expression of past tales through art.

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In summary the following outcomes were achieved:

- a) A new craft learnt.
- b) Learning Aboriginal art techniques.
- c) The expression of story through art.
- d) Social engagement.
- e) Increased self-confidence amongst participants.

#### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The older people who the participants in the project created the artist cultural journey. The outcome of the silk screening was their story.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 20**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 0**

#### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The older people were taught an alternative form of personal expression. The older people now have broadened their creative skills and now have an additional outlet for personal and cultural expression.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

Each Venue accommodates disabled parking, access and facilities. The Linking Together Centre staff member assisted and supported participants to enable full access and participation of the project.

#### **Partners & Providers**

Inverell Shire Council's Corporate and Communities division provided administration and executive management of the project. The Linking Together Centre ran the project at both locations.

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Inverell Shire Council's Corporate and Communities division will continue to offer administration and executive management of project collaboratively with the Linking Together Centre (LTC) in delivering projects that contribute to the in betterment of the community's well being.

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

This project aligned to Council's Community Strategic plan that promotes health, well being, life long learning and lifestyle diversity. Council's community strategy is to "provide local opportunities for recreation, culture and social activities" and to "develop a range of educational and skills development opportunities to meet the requirements of the community". This project achieved both (Inverell Shire Council, Community Strategic Plan, 2009-2029, Destination 2,C.07 & C11).

## **Key Learnings**

The program went to schedule and the outcomes were achieved. The pre work of program development and program planning allowed for an effective and efficient program that added to the participants well being by expression through creative art.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

No changes would be made. If the program was going to be run again, it would be reviewed in consultation with the LTC Staff and the local community members.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

This program could be replicated in council areas that have an Indigenous Community, with the purpose of engaging the older generations in social activities that allow for the personal expression of their history and culture through art mediums.

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

The sustainable outcomes that can be achieved are social engagement, the ability to teach the new skills acquired through other programs and services they may be involved in and/or now have the self-confidence to be involved in, and the art that was produced that allowed personal and cultural history to be documented..

#### **Follow On Activities**

The participants involved in the project have the ability to be involved in other programs and services at the Linking Together Centre, including those which require mentors for Indigenous Youth artist expression.

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## Online Information

[www.inverell.nsw.gov.au](http://www.inverell.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Mr Stephen Golding

**Position:** Executive Manager Corporate and Community Services

**Phone:** 02 6728 8267

**Email:** [stephen.golding@inverell.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stephen.golding@inverell.nsw.gov.au)

# Lane Cove Council - Sustainable Wishing Tree Project

**COUNCIL NAME**

Lane Cove Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

5,945 / 13%

## Project Summary

The Sustainable Wishing Tree project was a creative initiative with a sustainable message that was inspired by the tradition of wishing trees. In many cultures, the tree is used as an object of wishes and offerings. In the Japanese culture, Tanabata is a yearly festival where people hang their wishes on the trees, creating an amazing visual experience.

For this project we engaged seniors through the Lane Cove Men’s Shed, Centrehouse Community Arts Centre and Gallery Lane Cove to make an art installation with sculptor Mark Swartz, who uses sustainable materials. Then, through a number of workshops seniors designed their own paper ‘wishes’. Grandparents designed and make their own paper craft ‘wishes’ with their grandchildren (made out of recycled paper, with seeds inside). The wishes were hung on the recycled tree installed on the grassed area beside the Lane Cove Community Centre, 164 Longueville Road, Lane Cove.

Over time the ‘wishes’ will perish in the soil below the sculptural tree, but will rejuvenate and transform into new plants and provide a new visual experience. Seniors, other community groups and the general public will continue to visit and experience the tree as it will stay in place as a permanent installation.

**Objectives:**

- To create a public art sculpture with a positive message with the help and assistance of seniors.
- To educate seniors on sustainable practices in art.
- To educate young people on sustainable practices in art.
- To encourage seniors, especially men to work collaboratively on a creative project viewed by a wide audience.
- To provide a number of opportunities for seniors to work across varied creative activities.
- To increase intergenerational activities by providing opportunity for grandparents to work on a creative project with their grandchildren.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Aboriginal people
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- People with disabilities
- People over the age of 60

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Visual arts
- Crafts



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### **Activities**

Three workshops were held at the Men's Shed with sculptor Mark Swartz. The participants created small sculptural components from sustainable materials such as reclaimed wood and wire.

The Men's Shed then collaborated with Mark Swartz to finish the sculpture, and participated in the installation of the wishing tree in the Lane Cove Community Centre.

In addition to the sculpture workshops 3 'Wishes' making workshops were held at Gallery Lane Cove for seniors where they made wishes from recycled paper.

Artist, Paula Do Prado was engaged to make the recycled paper to create the objects and talismans, which were painted and written with people's 'wishes'.

Two of those workshops were held for grandparents and children to make their wishes that were hung on the tree and one for seniors who were able to take their wishes home.

An opening event for participants, family/ friends and the community was held to celebrate the creation of the tree and the installation of the Sustainable Wishing Tree.

School and community group visits will be organised to view the tree at the gallery and view the progression of the tree in its various stages of decay and rebirth.

### **Outcomes**

- Increase the number of opportunities for seniors to engage in creative activities.
- Increase intergenerational activities including the opportunity for grandparents and grandchildren to engage in creative activities.
- Provide an opportunity for seniors to work on a public art project that will be viewed by a large audience, in a gallery environment.
- Create artworks with an environmental and sustainable impact.
- Increase the collaboration between community groups and utilise resources effectively.
- Increase the understanding of sustainability and recycling in the community.
- Increase in the number of members of the Men's Shed.
- Provide an opportunity for all participants to meet and celebrate their achievements at an opening on the completion of the project.
- Provide an intergeneration event in the form of an opening event on the completion of the project.
- Develop a Stop Motion Photography display of the project highlighting sustainability through the death and regrowth process.

The Sustainable Wishing Tree has been installed on the grassed area beside the Lane Cove Community Centre, 164 Longueville Rd, Lane Cove. The positioning of the installation allows people who attend the Centre, visit Gallery Lane Cove or walk past the Centre to be able to view the Sustainable Wishing Tree.

A number of the seniors who attended the workshops at the Men's Shed had not been involved with Sheds prior to the project. This project served as an introduction to those participants on what was available to newly retired people and older people wanting to try something different. The workshops participants included women who have now become members of Community Sheds. A number of the men showed interest in becoming members of the Shed and taking on the role of 'Supervisor'.

Lane Cove Men's Shed is now exploring ways in which they can utilise the untapped resources the Shed has, such as running one-off workshops and running events on days the Shed is not open to members. There were workshops planned for Seniors Week 2015.

Gallery Lane Cove and Lane Cove Council have formed a partnership and have received funding from NSW Seniors Week to hold an art exhibition and associated workshops during Seniors Week 2015.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The Men's Shed is an active group of seniors who were involved from the beginning of the project in the planning of the sculpture design, how the sculpture workshops will be co-ordinated and the installation of the sculpture at the Lane Cove Community Centre.

One 'Wishes' workshop was held for older people on a Saturday afternoon as part of the opening and celebration of the Installation of the Sustainable Wishing Tree.



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Two workshops were held for grandparents and children to make wishes that were hung on the Sustainable Wishing Tree.

The tree was 'planted' in a outdoor area which is accessible to older people as the Lane Cove Community Centre is a hub of activity for older people in Lane Cove and the area provides an accessible pathway for people to move around Lane Cove.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 50**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 100**

#### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Although a number of the participants at the sculpture workshop had been members of Men's Sheds and had experience in working with wood or woodwork tools, they had not been involved in an arts projects or collaborative community project similar to this one. The participants had not worked with an artist or sculptor previously. As a result of this project two of the participants visited the artist's workshop and have plans to continue the relationship after the completion of the project work to with the artist.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

Lane Cove Men's Shed is situated at Unitingcare St Columba Retirement Village which provides accessible facilities. The sculptural/wood working project was conducted at the Men's Shed that has members of varying abilities and ages.

The workshops and installation of the sculpture was at Gallery Lane Cove which is an accessible venue.

#### **Project Changes**

Originally the project was to hold three 'Wishes' workshops for grandparents and grandchildren. Due to the timing of the announcement of the Creative Ageing Grant we were unable to run the planned workshop in the October school holidays. As the project was required to be completed by 30 January 2015 we felt it was realistic to hold two Grandparents and Grandchildren workshops rather than three.

The Sustainable Wishing Tree was to be displayed on the outdoor Sculpture Terrace at Gallery Lane Cove and transferred to various sites however due to structural reasons the tree was installed at street level at Gallery Lane Cove/Lane Cove Community Centre.

#### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The project allowed the Lane Cove Men's Shed to try new things and have women be involved in the Shed as participants. They are eager to hold one-off workshops to attract new members and to teach people new skills. The project highlighted to them that they had many skills and resources that are valued by the community, both as individuals and a group.

The Men's Shed used this project as a stepping stone for holding new workshops during Seniors Week.

#### **Partners & Providers**

- Gallery Lane Cove
- Lane Cove Men's Shed
- Mark Swartz (artist)
- Paula Do Prado (artist)
- Centrehouse Community Art Centre
- Council's Community Services Team
- Council's Sustainability Team
- Council's Cultural Development Team

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Lane Cove Council will continue to work closely with the Lane Cove Men's Shed to provide a range of one off projects on a Friday that will attract people who are not currently using the facility.

Lane Cove Council and Lane Cove Men's Shed planned workshops during Seniors Week. These workshops will not be limited to men only.

Lane Cove Council and Lane Cove Gallery planned an art exhibiton and related workshops during Seniors Week.

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

Lane Cove Council recently completed their Action Plan for an Age-friendly Lane Cove Strategy to gain a better understanding as to whether it is an age friendly community or not.

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The Strategy was prepared in accordance with the process and guidelines as outlined in the World Health Organisation Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (Lane Cove Council has gained membership of the Network, the first Council to do so in NSW).

The purpose of Council undertaking the initiative was to assist in responding to the challenges of an ageing population, and to foster an environment that promotes active ageing and community engagement.

As a result of the consultations a number of recommendations were made, these included such things as providing additional activities and programs to grandparents and assistance with their grandchildren; increase in Men's Shed activities; promotion, encouragement and facilitation of community groups to run a diverse range of activities; additional activities that are stimulating and target seniors who are physically and mentally active.

The Sustainable Wishing Tree project will assist Council in addressing some of those recommendations.

Lane Cove Council's Delivery and Operational Plan (2014-2017) acknowledges the importance of a community rich in culture with a unique identity. Council believes this goal could be achieved by the implementation of a number of strategies such as but not limited to:

- The facilitation of creative expression by supporting a diverse range of cultural festivals, activities, groups, arts & events; and
- The maximising of community participation in cultural and creative activities.

The Sustainable Wishing Tree project is in response to and will be part of Council's Delivery and Operational Plan (2014-2017).

## Key Learnings

On a project where the finished product is quite heavy a Structural Engineers Report should have been completed at the early stages of the project. The Gallery Lane Cove balcony that was originally to be the resting place for the tree proved to not have the capacity for the weight of the finished tree. However, having the tree installed on the ground level, on a grassed area allows the pedestrians and visitor to the Centre/Gallery an opportunity to view the tree. Had the tree been installed on the Gallery balcony only those people who visited the Gallery would have had an opportunity to view the installation.

Many of the Men's Shed participants had not worked on a group activity and found not being able to complete a 'project' in one workshop difficult. Participants were invited to attend the series of 3 workshops or just one or two so some people did not see the completed tree until the installation. Other participants would have preferred to have taken a sculpture home with them rather than work on a joint project. To ensure people felt they were still part of the project they were kept informed of the progress via email and photos of the finished installation were sent to everyone. Invitations to the 'Bubbles on Balcony' Saturday 6 December 2014 were sent to the Men's Shed members and all workshop participants.

### Potential Changes to Improve

We would ensure participants had a very clear understanding of what the project entails prior to attending the workshops.

Extend the number of workshops and allow participants time to make a small projects before they move onto a 'joint' project.

Separate the project out to (1) Sustainable Wishing Tree Sculpture and (2) Wishes workshops - run them as two different projects.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

Councils could run this project by working in partnership with the local Men's Shed and engaging a local artist or sculptor.

The art project doesn't need to be restricted to a Sustainable Wishing Tree but be tailored to the needs and be relevant to the community and group the Council is working with.

There are a number of internal Council teams that could coordinate the project such as; Community Services, Sustainability Team or Cultural Development Team.

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## Sustainability of Impacts

The Sustainable Wishing Tree can be used for other activities and projects as it is in a central location accessible to the community. Council Teams are keen to use the installation for community art project in the near future that incorporate all age groups and cultures.

### Follow On Activities

The Sustainable Wishing Tree will stay as an installation at the Lane Cove Community Centre where it can be used for future 'Wishes' workshops.

Due to the success of the project the partnership between Lane Cove Council, Lane Cove Men's Shed and Gallery Lane Cove would be interested in planning a similar project in the future. A Grant would need to fund this project.

## Online Information

[www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Ms Jane Gornall

**Position:** Executive Manager - Human Services

**Phone:** 02 9911 3593

**Email:** [rjacka@lanecove.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rjacka@lanecove.nsw.gov.au)

## North Sydney Council - *Park Life*

**COUNCIL NAME**

North Sydney Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

11,322 / 18%

### Project Summary

A community play on the subject of homelessness in North Sydney has been developed.

This project is a new initiative and will continue for a period of time.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Older people who are carers
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- People over the age of 60

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Film/screen
- Music
- Theatre



**Activities**

- 10 sessions of script reading/acting and script development.
- Two recording sessions to record an audio track of the play.
- A short film has been produced on the making and recording of the play.

**Outcomes**

- Older people have been involved in the production of the play.
- The play will be given air time on community radio in February.
- The group are keen to do more plays and projects.
- The group wish to do a live performance.

**How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

They were actively involved in the development of the script and the recording process.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 10**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 40**

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### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Most of the actors had not previously taken part in acting or recording activities.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

- Building was fully accessible.
- Some of the people were supported to attend sessions.

### **Project Changes**

Given the resources and the timeline it was decided to focus on radio play production. However it is still hoped to produce a live version.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

- The group of actors bonded very well and developed their roles.
- A greater awareness of issues that effect people who are homeless.
- Some possible work opportunities as narrators for some of the older people involved.

### **Partners & Providers**

- North Sydney Council Community Development
- Stanton library
- North Sydney Community Centre.
- Crew Cut Films

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

All organisations involved are very keen to do some more drama productions.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

It provided an interesting program for older people to express their acting ability and community interest. It seemed to create a good interest in community issues.

## **Key Learnings**

I think it is important to not think too big and ensure that people are very much part of the process.

The participants enjoyed being involved in the script development and discussing the various production techniques of the play.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Involve more community partners and try and obtain some additional resources.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

The project needs to very marketed and the concept explained well.

People who have never acted need lots of encouragement.

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

The group could carry on meeting and working on productions within existing budgets.

### **Follow On Activities**

- Community radio/mainstream radio to be followed and put the play on air and interview the participants.
- The making of Parklife (The film) to be shown to the local community.

## **Online Information**

[www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au)

## **Contact**

**Name:** Mr Christopher Taylor  
**Position:** Community Worker  
**Phone:** 02 4324 2474  
**Email:** [chris.taylor@northsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:chris.taylor@northsydney.nsw.gov.au)

## Oberon Council - *SWAP-Seniors* *Welding Art and Poetry Workshop*

### COUNCIL NAME

Oberon Council

### RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO

Rural

### COUNCIL SIZE

Less than 20,000  
residents

### POPULATION OVER 60

1,259 / 25%

### Project Summary

The aim of the Oberon Seniors Welding Art and Poetry (SWAP) project was to conduct a combined workshop that allowed participants to creatively express their connection to Oberon's local rural project through art and bush poetry.

On the weekend of November 15-16 2014 the creative genius of Oberon gathered steam as seniors met to share stories and poetry and investigate the possibilities of creating metal sculpture that reflected Oberon's rural heritage.

The SWAP workshop was conducted by two of Oberon's most creative local talents. Renowned sculptor Harrie Fasher lead the group through the process of designing and welding together scrap metal to create sculptures that reflect Oberon's farming heritage.

Local bush poet and ballader , Brian Beesley, recited well known bush ballads as well as some of the poems he has penned about bush life. The theatrical delivery of his poetry inspired participants and a small audience to continue to develop their artistic talents after the workshop to enhance their retirement years.

The main objectives of the workshop were to bring seniors together to capture the rural bush stories and experiences of participants through visual art and creative story telling. The main target audience were seniors particularly men who are socially isolated through retirement or through the geographic isolation resulting from their choice to remain living on the farm during their senior years.

With the support of the the Oberon Mens Shed the workshop did acheive its goal of enagaging older isolated men in both a creative and social activity. Sparks flew in the humorous and collaborative atmosphere thanks to a lot of laughter, hard work and determination. New friendships were forged and old friendships rekindled through the weekends activities.

This project is a new initiative and has become an ongoing program.

#### Target Audiences Engaged

- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

#### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Visual arts
- Literature
- Reflecting local history



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### **Activities**

The welding workshop introduced participants to the basics of welding and metal fabrication to design and create sculptures from scrap metal particularly found objects from farm environments. The workshop was held at the artist's studio at historic Essington Park set amid a rural landscape. For safety reasons the welding workshop was limited to 10 participants and was quickly booked out with a waiting list!

The artworks created ranged from literal reflections of rural and farming life to more abstract artworks. Most artworks were completed at the workshop while some participants were encouraged to continue to work on the creations at home. It is hoped that all 10 participants will enter their works in Oberon Council's Waste to Art exhibition in May 2015.

Unfortunately there were not many enrolments in the proposed poetry workshop so this part of the project was cancelled. However at the completion of the welding workshop participants came together with a small group of other people to hear local poet Brian Beesley recite some bush ballads and to enjoy a cuppa and some damper and other refreshments. The poetry recital prompted much story telling especially about shearing in the old days around the Oberon district which was fitting as Essington Park is one of Oberon's oldest grazing properties.

### **Outcomes**

The main outcome of the project is that the artworks created will now be entered into the 2015 Waste to Art exhibition which this year has the theme of recycled metal. Creative welding is not normally an activity associated with seniors particularly women. The exhibition of these works at Waste2Art will inspire other seniors to get creative by using experiences and skills that are both familiar and new to explore new creative territory during their retirement years.

Importantly the workshop reached a number of isolated senior men who were involved with the Oberon Mens Shed movement. Publicity of the workshop helped to promote the activities of the Mens Shed resulting in a number of new membership enquiries. The Mens Shed have already asked for another Welding Workshop to be held in 2015.

The workshop provided an important creative social experience sparking new friendships and community connections.

Oberon Council has already received a request to source grant funding to run a basket weaving workshop by artist Harriet Goodall who ran a highly successful Random Weaving workshop for Cootamundra Shire Council funded by the Creative Ageing Local Government Grants Program.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The project was run in collaboration with the Friends of Oberon Library (FOOLs) and the Oberon Mens Shed. These two community groups were involved in the planning, promotion and delivery of the project with FOOLs members kindly catering for the workshop.

After consultation with the Mens Shed it was decided to run the workshop at the artist's studio rather than the Mens Shed because it gave participants the opportunity to be exposed to a wider range of welding and steel fabrication techniques and equipment.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 15**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 200**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The SWAP project not only facilitated the development of the participants own creative talents it will foster the participation of seniors in creative activities through the exhibition of the works at the forthcoming Waste2Art exhibition. The project was reported through the local newspaper, the Oberon Review, and in Arts out West newsletter and created much interest within the Oberon Community.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The project was open to all seniors and the venue chosen was wheel chair accessible although this facility was not required by participants.

Due to the grant funding we were able to offer the workshop free of charge which enabled seniors on limited income to attend. Normally a workshop of this type with such a high calibre artist as Harrie Fasher, including equipment, materials and venue hire would cost participants in excess of \$500.

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### **Project Changes**

As enrolments in the poetry workshop were low and due to reduced funding it was decided not to run the poetry writing component of the workshop.

The change of venue to the artists studio also ensured the safety of running the welding workshop.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

An unexpected but very welcome outcome of the SWAP project is that the artist Harrie Fasher and her assistant Nicole O'Regan have now been engaged to conduct two similar workshops for the neighbouring Bathurst Community. One workshop will be part of the lead up to Bathurst Council's Waste2 Art exhibition and the other is for Skillset, an employment agency that develops employment skills and opportunities for young people. These workshops create employment opportunities for Harrie and Nicole as well.

### **Partners & Providers**

The involvement of project partners Friends of Oberon Library (FOOLs) and the Oberon Mens Shed was critical to the success of the project. Council staff involved in the project included the community services staff and the grants coordinator. A number of community volunteers assisted in setting up for the studio ready for the workshop.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

The FOOLs have put in a request to apply for funding for a basket weaving workshop.

The Oberon Mens Shed are keen to run another welding workshop. It seems the Oberon Community cannot get enough of creative arts opportunities!

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The project aligns with and links together Oberon Council's commitment to developing and encouraging opportunities that showcase our communities creative talents, stories and identities and the preservation of our social, oral and natural heritage.

Within our heritage are "our stories" which help to define who we are and how we relate to the rest of the world. The SWAP project helped seniors to creatively tell their stories and to reaffirm their place in the Oberon Community.

## **Key Learnings**

Enrolments in the workshops and feedback indicated that the strongest interest amongst Oberon's ageing community is for visual arts and craft based workshops.

Interestingly the strongest interest came from women rather than men. Oberon Council will continue to develop creative and social opportunities for older men as they are often under-represented in creative pursuits.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Look at workshops that would appeal to men. As the welding workshop proved so popular we will look at running more workshops of this type.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

The welding workshop artist Harrie Fasher has already been engaged to conduct two similar workshops for neighbouring Bathurst Council. She would be keen to run Creative Local Government Grants workshops for other Councils.

Participants could be invited to travel to Oberon as part of the workshop to enjoy Oberon's spectacular rural landscape.

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

Many participants are keen to develop their skills through future workshops.

The exhibition of the works created will encourage people of all ages to explore using waste materials for art projects.



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### **Follow On Activities**

As already mentioned Oberon Council will be holding its annual Waste to Art exhibition in May 2015.

Funding for a womens welding "Women of Steel" workshop in April has already be secured through the Community Arts Support Program from Trade and Investment Arts NSW.

Funding for future arts workshops including the basket weaving workshop is being sort from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal and other philanthropic organisations.

### **Online Information**

[www.oberon.nsw.gov.au](http://www.oberon.nsw.gov.au)

### **Contact**

**Name:** Mrs Lynette Safranek

**Position:** Finance and Community Services Director

**Phone:** 02 6329 8145

**Email:** [gillian.salmon@oberon.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gillian.salmon@oberon.nsw.gov.au)

# Penrith City Council - *Memorable Tales*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Penrith City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

26,740 / 15%

## Project Summary

Memorable Tales was an exciting creative multimedia family stories 8 week project with older people. Workshop participants learnt to create a short documentary style video on the theme of memorable family stories and tales. Participants utilised a video recording device, a mobile phone, tablet or point and shoot camera to create their video. They learnt new technology skills to import and edit their video using a software package. They then edited this to make their final story.

The aims of the project were that participants developed a project plan, integrated archival material including old photos, old documents/newspaper articles and used filming techniques with sound. They learnt how to conduct a video interview, ethics and best practice when recording peoples stories, basic video editing skills and exporting and sharing their video with others using social media.

The finished videos created by participants were shown at an organised screening of the videos for family, friends and the wider community with 35 people in attendance including the Mayor and General Manager.

The project objectives were:

- Seniors learnt and enhanced technology and multimedia skills.
- Built creative partnerships with local organisations.
- Engaged older people in creative use of video/technical skills for self-expression.
- Build intergenerational dialogue by creating and presenting video/movie tales.
- Demonstrate a creative project which breaks down ageist attitudes and has a positive outcome.
- Encourage active brain development through learning new skills and engagement in creative processes.
- Provide opportunities for seniors to be socially connected and informed on local activities for Seniors.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Reflecting local history
- Film/screen
- Music



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### **Activities**

A multi media artist was engaged to facilitate the eight sessions of the project and assist people to complete the project. In addition the artist was engaged to produce an authored dvd at the end of the project.

The project involved three stages:

The first stage involved consulting with project collaborators and the engagement of older people in the project and the development of an Implementation Plan.

The second stage involved a series of workshops as listed below:

- Planning a short documentary (from narrative structure to using storyboards to map out your story).
- Integrating archival material into your documentary.
- Filming techniques: How to record quality video and sound with your camera.
- Setting up and conducting a video interview.
- Ethics and best practise when recording people's stories.
- Using available/free video editing software to perform basic video editing.
- Exporting and sharing your video with others.

The third stage of the project involved a launch and film screening with family and community members to celebrate the success of the project and see the finished video/documentaries. Also a final evaluation of the project was completed by six participants who attended the screening.

### **Outcomes**

- Enhanced skills and confidence in using technology - including camera, tablet, smart phone and computers to make video.
- Engagement in creative video making.
- A series of short memorable family tales in video form.
- Improved intergenerational communication and connection.
- Increased participation in future creative activities by older people.
- Increased social connection and engagement by participants of the project.
- Increased self expression for participants.
- A sense of achievement by gaining new skills and developing a useful family resource.

A total of 15 people registered and started the 8 week project. Eight weekly sessions were held, with additional times on at least 2 days and the facilitator offered additional support to those that needed it outside the session times. Eight people completed the series of sessions. Eight people finalised a video for the screening. A DVD with the 8 short videos was produced.

Participants learnt a number of new skills, including that they are able to use this technology and found this very rewarding, they made new friends, and learnt a systematic approach to film making.

The screening of the final videos was attended by 35 people including the Mayor, General Manager, Community & Cultural Development Manager of Penrith City Council and friends and family of participants. A final video was produced and given to participants, family members and the local Library. Additional copies have been produced for the funding body, presentation at forums or conferences. Two evaluations were conducted, one mid way through and one on completion of the project. Mostly positive feedback was received with suggestions for improvement as well.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

There was consultation with groups of older people at the University of the 3rd Age (U3A) and Neighbourhood Centres about their interest in leaning new technology, also about the type of project which would engage them – a family memories project was suggested a number of times. During the project participants requested additional time in the venue with the technology and the facilitators assistance. We facilitated this request by booking the venue for two full days so two additional half day sessions were added to the project. Also the facilitator offered her time to assist some participants to finalise their project. Evaluations indicated additional time would be needed if the project was run again.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 15**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 35**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

For many participants in the project this was their first creative project involvement.

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Some participants from this project have gone on to be involved with another project under the Re-imagine Ageing initiative, including family members of participants. Word of mouth promotion has been increased through participation in this and our follow-on project 'Agile Not Fragile'. We have had a lot more interest in creative projects as a result of these two initiatives.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The building was accessible with a ramp and steps. There was one participant who had mobility issues and required support to access the project.

#### **Project Changes**

Additional hours were needed for the facilitator to assist participants with their projects. We needed to book the venue for at least 2 additional afternoon sessions for participants to use the equipment. There was more home work required by participants than some had originally anticipated when they agreed to attend the project. This additional time requirement caused some people to withdraw from the project. There were technology issues which contributed to the need for additional time. Due to time constraints to run and complete the project we did not pursue the intergenerational component of our initial plan. Also the train the trainer component did not eventuate - this would have required considerable release time from staff work time to participate in the project. In addition the facilitator had a limit on numbers she could effectively assist with the project as it required considerable one on one assistance.

#### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

At least one participant learnt a range of new skills in using technology for videoing and produced an art house type video, exceeding his expectations. Other participants learnt many new skills, some went on to try another creative project in dance - which suggests the project opened peoples minds to new possibilities. Word of mouth promotion has been another benefit we may not have expected.

#### **Partners & Providers**

Council Facilities department gave us access to the venue as an inkind cost, also the venue for the Screening. The IT department assisted with some of the IT requirements. Also U3A and the Penrith Seniors Computer group promoted the project and some participants also attended from these centres. In addition a participant from a local Maltese group and the Penrith Womens Health Centre. Council Events department assisted with the screening - inviting the Mayor and General Manager and other relevant Departmental managers.

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

We have ongoing relationships with all the partners in the project and these relationships will continue. Some further relationships have been built and strengthened through this project, particularly the Seniors Computer group, U3A and the Womens Health Centre - particularly with regard to innovative and creative projects.

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The Memorable Tales project addressed some of the actions from the Planning for an Ageing Community Strategy 2010 + by the implementation of creative ageing projects and promoting inclusion and self expression. In addition the project reflected Councils Access and Equity commitment to strengthen diversity in the city as some participants were from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, some were isolated and made connections through the project. In addition the project reflected Council's Inclusion plan in that it met access needs for people with mobility/disability issues.

The project addressed actions to meet the social and leisure needs identified in Council's 'Planning for an Ageing Community Strategy 2010 +'. In line with this strategy, the Re-imagine Ageing project has been established and is engaging with seniors groups and older people by implementing demonstration community cultural development projects and activities - the Memorable Tales project being one of these demonstration projects.

The project also aligned with Outcome 6 of the Community Plan - We're healthy and share strong community spirit. A relevant statement from the community plan - Council seeks to celebrate our heritage, cultural diversity, build social inclusion and foster creativity, encouraging the participation and contribution of all people in the City. The Memorable Tales project aligned well with this objective and the below mentioned strategies from the community plan:

- 6.2 Encourage social connections and promote inclusion in our community.
- 6.3 Support cultural development, activating places and creativity.

In addition Penrith Inclusion Plan states "It envisions an inclusive and engaging City that facilitates the participation of all members" the project also aligned with Penrith's principles for a sustainable city in

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particular - empowering people and fostering participation as well as many other aspects of the above mentioned plans and strategies.

## Key Learnings

The main lesson learned was that the project needs to be longer probably 12 sessions or 3 hours. The 8 weekly sessions was not enough for most people to learn the skills and implement them satisfactorily.

Some people pulled out after the first few sessions partly due to their own over commitment issues, some indicated that doing additional work at home put them off. Thus a longer running program would be preferable. An Introduction session, or registration process explaining and emphasising the time commitment needed outside of the course time may overcome people withdrawing in the early stages of the project.

A number of additional sessions were needed, the facilitator offered a lot of additional unpaid time to assist participants and see the project through to its conclusion.

A free version of the video software was used. This caused some problems with loss of video or things taking a longer time to load. It would be preferable for each person to purchase an upgraded version of the video software package for home use at a cost of \$60, or use another program. The licencing laws have changed with the software package utilised and some computer operating systems could not use the free version of the software.

There was a lot of positive feedback about the project and the facilitator particularly in the two written evaluations held during the project.

It was not possible to include the intergenerational component in this short timeframe of this project.

### Potential Changes to Improve

The project would need to run for a longer period over more sessions as explained above. At least an additional four sessions. Most participants identified that additional time is needed for this project in their evaluation forms. The facilitator suggested a simpler framework for the course if it was run again. This would require additional funds for facilitator time. An introduction session could be organised prior to registrations to emphasise the time commitment needed for participation in the project. In promoting the project we need to emphasise that a time commitment is needed in addition to class time to do preparatory work and improve skills in utilisation of the video making software. It would be necessary to purchase the software at \$60 for individual use. There were some issues with transfer from home computers to the centre laptops used. This issue caused the project to take additional time. Participants films should stay on topic such as family stories, otherwise the final collection of films are a bit random.

Participants suggested in their evaluations that the project should run again.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

To replicate the project, councils need a public computer lab or access to a number of computers to run the project. Also a place that participants can access these computers outside the workshop hours. A multi media facilitator or person skilled at working with diversity of community members over 60 years and an understanding of adult learning techniques would be needed. Also skills in teaching the use of the video software in a systematic way and using various types of smart phones, tablets and cameras to take video footage would be useful. Participants needed some computer skills to participate - thus we targeted the promotion to those with computer skills. It would best for other councils to source someone from their area with these Multi media skills.

It is suggested that promotion of the project go through various existing active senior groups such as U3A, seniors centres, seniors computer classes, probus groups and Neighbourhood centres which have active seniors or culturally diverse groups already participating. It is also important to promote to people who are not already participating. Also promotion through any computer classes targeting seniors such as through Libraries or Community Colleges.

## Sustainability of Impacts

Those who participated in the project will retain the skills they learnt if they continue to utilise them straight away following the completion of the project. The videos created will become documented family history and the library have also been given copies. The DVD can also be used to promote some creative projects as

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more intellectually stimulating and more engaging than current activities offered for older people. As an alternative project for active older people the project was a great demonstration model of different activities which interest and engage seniors. It can be showcased with various service providers including some neighbourhood centres who came to the screening. Council will continue to look at projects which enhance and engage technology skills with active seniors as there is a gap in many seniors skills in this area.

**Follow On Activities**

The project could be replicated over a longer period through say U3A. However it requires a person with the expertise in editing video and the use of the software and the time available. Some of the participants have indicated they would continue to use this method for personal creative projects and could teach their family some skills.

**Online Information**

[www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](http://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)

**Contact**

**Name:** Mr Erich Weller

**Position:** Manager Community and Cultural Development Department

**Phone:** 02 4732 8244

**Email:** [rsmith@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rsmith@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)

# Port Macquarie-Hastings Council - *I've got uke, Babe*

## COUNCIL NAME

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

## RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO

Regional

## COUNCIL SIZE

Over 60,000 residents

## POPULATION OVER 60

23,310 / 32%

## Project Summary

Seniors were invited to participate in free beginners ukulele courses. The Port Macquarie Library was the first in Australia to purchase 10 x ukuleles and have available for free loan. This enabled seniors to borrow a ukulele kit from the library for 4 weeks and then purchase their own uke if they decided to continue. We had planned to run 3 programs but due to popular demand we extended this to 4 programs.

A performance element included a uke flash mob at the shopping centre food hall.

The aim, objectives and outcomes included:

- Engage newly arrived and newly retired seniors and create a pathway for them to create a local community uke group.
- Train seniors so they are proficient at community performances.
- As a resource have 10 x ukulele kits available for loan at the library, to encourage seniors to 'have a go' and remove any financial barrier to beginners.
- Activate spaces so they become fun and vibrant spaces in our community
- Connect those with a shared interest.
- Foster creativity and a love of music among older people.

This project is a new initiative and has become an ongoing program.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Music



### Activities

- Library purchased 10 x decent ukuleles, tuners and spare strings and set up a free hiring/loan system.

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- Sixteen 2hr beginners ukulele workshops have been run. (4 x workshop series with each class attending 4 x 2hour sessions).
  - A total of 60 seniors participated in the workshops (each class size of 15 seniors).
  - Uke Flashmob at Port Central Food Hall.
  - Video of Uke Flashmob featured at the PMHC Short Film Festival in January on a giant inflatable screen.

#### **Outcomes**

- The participating seniors have formed a brand new ukes group "Senior Cue" (Conservatorium Ukulele Ensemble) which meets fortnightly as they wanted to continue to learn and socialise.
- We doubled the course - from 30 to 60 seniors due to the enormous interest. We still had 42 seniors on the waiting list to do the course and the Conservatorium has kindly agreed to undertake the extra courses.

#### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The Mid North Coast Conservatorium partnered with Council to deliver this project. This devoted group of senior volunteers attended planning meetings, gave best advise on the type of ukuleles to be purchased, helped devise the program schedule and managed the bookings. Council's Seniors Week Working Group provided free promotion and distribution of course information to their seniors networks.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 60**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 250**

#### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

60 seniors actively participated by joining the beginners groups and learning a musical instrument.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The venues are all disability friendly (Library, Mac Adams Music Centre, Conservatorium). The ukulele teacher assisted seniors with a disability (often arthritis) on ways to easily hold the instrument and simple chord structures that were easy to use.

#### **Project Changes**

An additional course (4weeks x 2hours) was added due to demand.

#### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The amazing uptake and interest was phenomenal with the phone running hot. The 10 x library loan ukuleles were snapped up.

Council provided morning tea and found that most seniors would arrive early and leave late as they enjoyed socialising with their new group of friends and this led to many of them (over 30) wanting to continue to meet and go on learning the ukulele and continue socialising. They also independently started to arrange informal coffee catch ups with their new friends.

#### **Partners & Providers**

Council had a dedicated team involved in the project including :

- The Place Facilitator- Aged & Disability, Library Services team and Council Communications team (graphic design, media release, social media).
- The ukulele teacher, Ruth Allen, the founder of the Port Macquarie Ukestra, was fabulous, creating a friendly and achievable 4 week course from scratch and she was a big hit with the participants - so much so that they asked her to be the teacher for their new Uke Group CUE.
- Our partners Conservatorium Mid North Coast were fabulous and assisted the Seniors Week working Group (members include representatives from The University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A), Dept Veteran Affairs, Hastings Independent Retirees & Residents Action Network).

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

The new partnership with the Conservatorium continues. They were amazed by the high uptake of participants and are undertaking extra beginner classes as well as providing a venue for the new CUE group to meet and play every fortnight.

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

This is supported by Councils 2013-2017 Delivery Program - Looking after our People objective:



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- 2.8.1 Support, facilitate and advocate for arts and cultural programs that engage the community and deliver a range of performing, visual arts and cultural development services.

## Key Learnings

Be more prepared for the high demand. Thankfully we could accommodate an extra 4 x week class however booking room availability became difficult.

We thought the title "I've got Ukes, Babe" was really cute.... referring to the Sonny and Cher song, however it never really took off and the participants referred to it as they were attending the "Senior Ukes".

### Potential Changes to Improve

This project was so successful that we were inundated by seniors and could not meet demand - even after offering extra classes.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

Important to partner with your library services team. Having 10 x decent ukes for loan means that there is not a financial barrier to joining in and also once people are addicted to the ukulele they can purchase a ukulele that suits them.

Important to partner with a group like the Conservatorium due to loads of booking enquiries (we went from offering 30 spots to doubling to 60 due to high demand and having a waiting list of 42 seniors on top of that). Your music partner will also have music stands etc. Ensure that your music partner can continue with the project. Have a growth Strategy - for example the Conservatorium has now created a whole series of seniors beginners uke classes and charge per person per class as they have the confidence that it will be a success. They are also mentoring the CUE new ukulele group which has formed as attendees wanted intermediate classes and to continue socialising as a group.

## Sustainability of Impacts

This is now an ongoing program. The seniors had a taste of playing the ukulele, many of those wished to continue and were confident this was something they enjoyed and are very happy after trialling it to buy their own ukulele and to sign up and pay for intermediate classes.

Our partners the Conservatorium have undertaken to provide both beginners and intermediate classes after seeing it was such a runaway success. The popular uke teacher has agreed to mentor the CUE group.

### Follow On Activities

The Conservatorium were initially hesitant and unsure if there would be enough interested seniors to even fill one class. Well that was soon changed ! Four classes later and with such continuing and overwhelming demand the Con has now started advertising a whole heap of beginner uke classes (Seniors pay \$5 ) plus running intermediate classes and hosting the CUE group.

## Online Information

<http://youtu.be/Z8GWXTNSmSc>

[www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Ms Julie Priest

**Position:** Place Facilitator - Aged & Disability

**Phone:** 02 6581 8480

**Email:** [julie.priest@pmhc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:julie.priest@pmhc.nsw.gov.au)

# Rockdale City Council - Seniors Soundscape Make A Noise For Wellbeing and Feel Good!

**COUNCIL NAME**

Rockdale City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

35,867 / 20%

## Project Summary

Make a Noise for Wellbeing and Feel good was a cross Council collaboration between Rockdale and Hurstville Councils and Seniors Groups across the St George area. The project design allowed for a diverse range of participation, flexibility in content and no special skill level.

The project aimed to provide a positive experience of being involved in an 'easy' creative project.

Project objectives included the opportunity to make sound recordings of their own voices, cultural backgrounds, singing or playing instruments or talk about their creative pursuits in any way they wished. This included their experience of being involved in it. Other objectives included increasing the understanding of participating in a creative pursuit and the relationship with creative ageing and wellness, the development of a cultural product in the form of a 20 minute CD and provision of avenues for the audio work to be heard in a public environment and provision of an opportunity to participate in a Sound Recording experience.

At the launch of the CD, a refugee woman who was involved said that each cultural group would normally keep to themselves, but this project brought everyone together and they are more likely to participate in future community activities.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Music



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### Activities

- Project promotion to Seniors Groups.
- Recording of approximately 20 Seniors Groups across Rockdale and Hurstville.
- Development of a coherent and enjoyable listening CD that plays for 20 mins.

### Outcomes

- A number of Seniors have indicated they are interested in being involved in another project about their Creative Memories.
- Development of a cultural product that can be listened to online, utilised in other projects including the forthcoming Creative Memories Project.
- Production of CDs for each participant.
- Positive experience of being involved in an 'easy' arts cultural project.
- Increased social connectedness and interest among different seniors groups.
- Sharing of Stories.

### How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation

Older people were asked to comment on the potential project prior to the grant application being submitted. Once funding was confirmed and a Sound Recordist appointed people who had expressed an interest and Seniors Groups across Rockdale and Hurstville were informed of the the committmernt required and invited to participate in a workshop for up to 2 hours. The flexibility of the project was emphasised in that they could participate in any form they wished. A number of discussions were had with groups on how they wanted to partipate and this information was provided to the Sound Recordist who then knew what the groups were interested in showing/performing or discussing. This allowed the Sound Recordist to orient sessions appropriately.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 300**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 150**

### How Project Increased Older People's Participation

The project has obviously whetted the appetite of many seniors who are keen to participate in the Creative Memories Project.

The project also emphasised people's strengths and interests. One participant was very keen on Shakespeares The Twelfth Night and got the opportunity to recite it . And there were other groups such as Bellydancers, a Choir and the Wellness Dames.

### How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability

The project was designed around any level of participation. People were invited to bang a table, sing or hum in any way they wished. We did not specifically prescribe how to participate but left it up to them to decide how they wished to contribute.

Most groups did not have to travel to attend. Christina Mimocchi sound recordist travelled around to groups in Rockdale and Hurstville and accompanied them on outings as appropriate. We had involvement from the Choir at Bexley Scalabrini (a nursing home) and the Dementia Group at Greenwood Cottage. Effectively having the sound recordist travel to where group were meeting increased access and ease of participation.

### Project Changes

Because of the time frame of just before Christmas the project had to be implemented almost immediately when the funding was received. The Seniors Groups had to be recorded mainly in November and early December as many Seniors Groups disband for a period of time over Christmas and January. The essence of the project remained however and editing into a CD format occurred in early Janaury.

### Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes

The CD that has been developed will be used as a Soundscape for the Creative Memories Project . Participants were also interested in what other groups had contributed.

### Partners & Providers

Rockdale Council - Community Capacity Building Team, City Media and Events re promotion.

Hurstville Council Community Services.

External organisations - Rockdale Community Services, Arncliffe Mens Shed - Arncliffe Community Centre,

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St George Migrant Resource Centre Nepalese Grandparents Social Club, Scalabrini Bexley Choir, Greek Seniors, Muslim Care, Hurstville Bellydancers, Hurstville Computer Club, Wellness Dames, Greek Welfare, Hurstville Chess Club, Hurstville Old Time Dancers, Italian Seniors, Greek Seniors, Resourceful Australian Indian Network, St George Brass Band and individual seniors Jenny Tran, John Brooks and Ron Hunt, Christina Mimmocchi Sound Recordist and Musician.

Pat Cranney recording assistant & Ben Mansfield post production.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

A number have expressed interest in being involved in the Creative Memories Project as participants that would be interviewed by younger people. This project is a partnership with Shopfront Creative Arts and invites Seniors to talk about their Creative Memories and/or show examples. This would then be made into short films with the Soundscape as a "sound backdrop".

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

This aligns with our Delivery Program

1.3.3 Ensure that a variety of opportunities for arts and culture, programs and partnerships are offered throughout the year.

1.4.3 B Ensure that the needs of older people and people with disabilities are recognised and presented through Council policies and programs.

In that it has created participation opportunities in art/cultural projects for older people, it also aligns with Council's Draft Ageing Strategy.

## **Key Learnings**

Because of the short time frame and the fact that the project commenced prior to Christmas we were not able to conduct all the activities planned such as the secret preview celebrations and the development of a reference group.

We were however fortunate in having a very experienced sound recordist and musician and very keen and enthusiastic groups of Seniors.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Run the project over a longer time frame.

Not run the project prior to Christmas.

Promote it during Seniors Week/Month and run it shortly after.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

First determine if Seniors are interested in participating in having their wellbeing noises recorded.

Contract/Employ a sound recordist/music therapist/musician who has experience working with Seniors Groups and has the technical ability and experience to record people, and mix a product to broadcast standards.

Promote the project to Seniors groups and individuals.

Don't expect the Sound recordist to locate groups. Best use of limited resources is to provide the sound recordist with a list of groups and times. Council staff should be liaison with groups and project promotion.

Allow room for groups to talk about the importance of the activity to people participating.

As some individuals may not be part of groups create ways for them to be involved.

Be very flexible and have the sound recordist come to the groups.

If the theme is wellbeing ask Seniors what types of activities they currently do which creates this. For example they could share their recollections on a shopping trip about the local area and what it was once like.

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Allow for a diversity of opinions, ideas, creative experiences and memories to be expressed.

When running the project do not pick a peak time.

Welcome all levels of participation and make it easy for people to participate by having the sound recordist come to them.

## Sustainability of Impacts

The project has whetted people's appetites.

The CD can be used as a discussion point and amongst Seniors Groups and Services. The CD can be played in public places and used in other projects.

### Follow On Activities

Creative Memories Seniors Week Funding. The recordings will be used as a Sound Backdrop for short films that will be created about Seniors Creative Memories and life long passions.

## Online Information

[www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Ms Carol Arrowsmith

**Position:** Age & Disability Specialist

**Phone:** 02 9562 1862

**Email:** [acarol@rockdale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:acarol@rockdale.nsw.gov.au)

# Shellharbour City Council - *Our Time Our Place*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Shellharbour City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

12,566 / 19.69%

## Project Summary

'Our Time Our Place' was about creating connections: the sharing of skills, knowledge and stories of the local area between generations and across cultural groups. The project brought together older people from Warilla Senior Citizens Centre and Shell Cove Community Centre and younger people from Lake Illawarra High School and Youth Off The Streets, led by a professional artist from Chalk Talk to design and create a series of large scale, temporary chalk murals based on stories and memories of the City.

The following outcomes were achieved:

- addressed objectives and actions set out in Shellharbour's Community Strategic Plan, Healthy Ageing Strategy and Draft Arts and Cultural Development Strategy.
- established new opportunities for older people to take part in creative activities in the Shellharbour Local Government Area.
- encouraged intergenerational relationships and skills sharing within the community.
- increased social participation and community engagement of older people with younger people.
- improved perception of safety among older people in and around the Local Government Area.
- improved the image and understanding of older people among younger members of the community.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People with disabilities
- People over the age of 60

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Visual arts
- Reflecting local history



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### **Activities**

A professional artist from Chalk Talk facilitated four workshops. The first two workshops provided the opportunity for the younger people to capture stories from the older people involved and discuss ways in which these stories would be represented with chalk. The murals were then created in the second two workshops in an empty shopfront in Stockland Shellharbour and drew interest from a range of different people. The murals were on display in Stockland Shellharbour throughout December and January. The chalk murals were moved to Shellharbour Village Exhibition Space for the official launch of the exhibition on the 28th of January. The Mayor launched the exhibition which was attended by a range of older residents involved in the mural creation and other interested residents. The exhibition ran from the 28th of January until the 1st of February with over 50 people visiting the exhibition. Copies of Shellharbour's Healthy Ageing Strategy were available for visitors of the exhibition to take. A number of these individuals also joined the Healthy Ageing Newsletter mailing list.

Feedback from older and younger participants was captured and included:

- "Breaking down barriers – great interactions".
- "A very enjoyable morning. Refreshing".
- "What a great experience for us all young and older".

### **Outcomes**

'Our Time Our Place' has achieved the following outcomes for Shellharbour Local Government Area:

- Increased perception of safety among older people.
- Increased social participation and connectedness of older people and younger people.
- Improved image of older people among the younger generations.
- Increased access to and knowledge of services and programs through joining the Healthy Ageing newsletter.
- Increased skill development in creating chalk murals.
- Improved understanding of the local area through capturing stories in the artworks.
- Increased engagement in a range of creative activities among older and younger people in the Shellharbour Local Government Area.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Participants (both older people and younger people) were involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of 'Our Time Our Place'. Older people were involved in the two planning workshops where they shared the stories of their memories of Shellharbour and provided input into what they wanted the murals to look like. A number of these older people were also involved in the creation of the murals and then assisted in exhibiting their works at the Shellharbour Village Exhibition Space. They also took part in the evaluation of the project.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 40**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 100**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

There were no comparable projects currently operating in the Shellharbour Local Government Area. 'Our Time Our Place' provided a unique opportunity for participation in the development, planning and creation of a large scale artwork in public space with a diverse range of participants. This project provided access to and opportunity for mentoring by a professional artist from Chalk Talk while increasing confidence and broadening skills in creative techniques and ways of thinking. The project also provided the opportunity for the exchange of further creative skills and knowledge with other participants. 'Our Time Our Place' has also resulted in a number of the older people becoming involved in other creative groups within Shellharbour.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

Considerations were made to ensure both those engaged as participants and those engaged as the audience of the mural creation could be involved. Workshops took place at the Warilla Senior Citizens Centre and Shell Cove Community Centre to ensure that these sites were accessible and suitable for older people and people with a disability as well as the younger people. A partnership was established with Community Transport and transport was offered to the older people to get to Stockland Shellharbour and the Shellharbour Village Exhibition Space for the mural creation and the exhibition. When selecting sites, we ensured that there were accessible parking areas for people with a disability and accessible facilities such as toilets and food and drink options.

### **Project Changes**

Through consultations for Shellharbour's Healthy Ageing Strategy 2015-2017, older people told Council that

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they wanted to be involved in more intergenerational projects and creative projects.

Unfortunately, the interest from older people in the Local Government Area to participate in creating chalk murals for 'Our Time Our Place' project had been lower than expected. This was despite our best efforts to promote this through all our networks, contacts, local paper and Council website and social media platforms.

We requested approval to amend our project brief with a new approach to target older people in the project and this approval was granted. Rather than the older participants creating the chalk murals, the older participants were involved in a story telling project, sharing stories of growing up in Shellharbour to the younger people who depicted these stories in the chalk murals.

During the mural creation, there was a skills exchange, with the young people teaching the older people techniques in using chalk to create the murals. The number of older participants was therefore slightly lower than outlined in the original grant application.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

One older person who had recently moved to Shellharbour and was engaged in the project has now become involved in other programs at the Warilla Senior Citizens Centre. Many older people expressed interest in signing up to the quarterly Healthy Ageing Newsletter, which allows people to be kept up-to-date with services, programs and events that older people can tap into. A strong partnership has now been established between the older people at the Warilla Senior Citizens Centre and Shell Cove Community Centre and these groups have expressed interest in being involved in future projects. This project was received equally as positively by the young people involved, with many approaching Council staff and the artist to express thanks for being given the opportunity to be involved.

### **Partners & Providers**

A range of organisations, service providers and community groups were invited to participate in 'Our Time Our Place'. All high schools within the Local Government Area were invited to be involved in the project. All older residents in the Shellharbour Local Government Area were also invited to participate. This opportunity was advertised through the Lake Times, Shellharbour City Council and Shellharbour Connect websites and Facebook pages and an email to all local service providers and community groups. Multicultural groups and Aboriginal Elders groups within the Local Government Area were also contacted specifically to encourage involvement.

The project management team met with other relevant Council teams internally such as Community Transport, Home and Community Care, Youth Services, City Development, Finance, Risk and Property and Recreation. Organisations and community groups were invited to promote their services and programs in the final exhibition at the Exhibition Space. While no group or organisation took up this opportunity, partnerships were established for future projects.

Council also partnered with Stockland Shellharbour Shopping Centre to provide workshop and exhibition space in a public location. Council also partnered with local business and artist Chalk Talk to facilitate the workshops and mentor participants. A local photographer was also engaged to document the project.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Shellharbour City Council will continue to partner with Warilla Senior Citizens Centre, Shell Cove Community Centre, Lake Illawarra High School, Youth Off The Streets and Chalk Talk in the future through future projects and information sharing. Other partnerships were established with Shellharbour Public and Private Hospitals and it is anticipated that projects will take place with them in the future.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

'Our Time Our Place' aligned closely with a range of Council's existing plans and strategies. It supported Shellharbour's Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023, including the following objectives and strategies:

- Vibrant, safe and inclusive City.
- Encourage and support activities and events where communities can gather and celebrate.
- Develop creative opportunities for key partnerships and volunteering to support the community.
- Make Shellharbour a friendly environment where people feel safe.
- Have accessible community and cultural facilities available for current and future community members.
- A creative community participating in arts and cultural activities.
- Active and healthy community.
- Provide residents access to a range of services and facilities that are relevant and responsive to health and wellbeing.



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- Provide a range of accessible recreational opportunities and associated facilities to cater for a broad range of ages, abilities and interests.

'Our Time Our Place' also aligned closely with Shellharbour City Council's Draft Disability Strategic Plan and Healthy Ageing Strategy. Council conducted a range of community and stakeholder consultations to determine the needs and priorities of older people within Shellharbour City as part of the Healthy Ageing Strategy. Some of the priorities that were identified included:

- a need to improve the perception of safety of older people in and around the Local Government Area.
- the need for intergenerational programs to allow for engagement with younger people and skill sharing between different age groups.
- art programs to improve mental health.

There was also a strong link to Shellharbour City Council's Draft Art and Cultural Development Strategy. While this Strategy is currently being drafted, consultations with the community and relevant stakeholders highlighted that intergenerational programs, skill sharing workshops, community and public art projects were desired in the Shellharbour Local Government Area.

'Our Time Our Place' aimed to improve the perception of safety of older people and this objective links closely to Shellharbour City Council's Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy. It specifically linked to two major strategies within the 'Graffiti Management Plan', including Community Education and Awareness and Partnerships and Art Opportunities for Young People. There was also strong connections to the 'Safer Public Places Compact Project' and 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design', which both sit within Council's Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy.

## Key Learnings

Through the 'Our Time Our Place' project, many lessons were learnt regarding what worked and what we would do differently in the future.

Establishing older people as project champions assisted us in ensuring older people were attending the workshops, media opportunities and exhibitions.

Lessons were also learnt regarding promotion of the project. Although the project called for participants through a variety of channels, many were encouraged by a personal discussion. In the future we would consider directly contacting potential participants by phone and through attendance at meetings as much as possible.

Utilising a public space, such as that at the shopping centre generated a greater awareness of the project and resulted in a larger number of people who were engaged as the audience. Exhibiting the work in a public exhibition space at the conclusion of the project also contributed to this, while also validating the importance of the work of the participants.

For future projects, we will involve groups of older people in idea generation for possible projects before applying for this funding. This will allow us to have participant buy-in if successful and encourage more older people to participate in the project.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

Other Councils could replicate this project in their respective areas. It is important to link this to existing Council plans and strategies, which shows the need for these particular projects. Engaging a professional chalk artist who is experienced in effectively running workshops with people of different ages and abilities is needed. Involving older people in the planning, implementation and evaluation and ensuring that there are project champions is beneficial. We also found that we were able to generate more interest and engagement in the project by partnering with the local shopping centre and utilising the public space provided. Having the work exhibited in a public exhibition space at the conclusion of the project also contributed to this, while also validating the importance of the work of the participants and is recommended.

## Sustainability of Impacts

A number of the outcomes of the 'Our Time Our Place' project would be considered as being sustainable, including:

- Increased access to and knowledge of services and programs. Most of the older people involved in the project joined the Healthy Ageing newsletter mailing list, which will ensure they are kept up-to-date with programs, services and events for people 50+ living in Shellharbour.

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- Increased social participation and connectedness of older people. As a result of this project, a number of older people have joined other groups and participated in different activities taking place in the Shellharbour Local Government Area.
  - Increased skill development in creating chalk murals.
  - Improved understanding of the local area through capturing stories in the artworks.
  - Strengthening of relationships between Council and participants including local schools, groups and community centres. Many participants expressed interest in taking part in future creative projects.

#### **Follow On Activities**

Further creative and intergenerational projects will take place to foster the connection between older and younger people, which aligns with Shellharbour's Healthy Ageing Strategy and Draft Arts and Cultural Development Strategy. Some of the relevant 'big ideas' from the Healthy Ageing Strategy that will be carried out over the next three years include:

- Shellharbour City Council's Aged Services and Youth Services collaborate on an intergenerational activity and share their skills and experience with one another.
- Investigate mentoring opportunities between older people and young people.
- Investigate digital storytelling and public art projects to improve the perception of safety.
- Investigate a multicultural cooking competition for grandparents and grandchildren. A partnership has been established between Multicultural Communities Council of the Illawarra and Shellharbour City Council to plan and implement a Multicultural Intergenerational Cook-Off involving older and younger participants from a range of different cultural backgrounds in April 2015.

These 'big ideas' will be incorporated into Shellharbour City Council's Operational Plan each year, and will be dependent on funding, partnerships and resourcing capacity.

Shellharbour City Council has also applied for funding through the Creating Liveable Communities Competition to attain a mobile asset (e.g. trailer or caravan) to set up in green spaces and vacant lots for a period of 4 weeks before moving onto the next location. If successful, this project will aim to be a resident led approach to neighbourhood building using short term, low cost, temporary interventions and activities that improve local neighbourhoods and catalyse long term change. Pop up projects will include art exhibitions, exercise classes, music performances, traditional games, outdoor movie screenings, theatre performances, community engagement initiatives, education sessions. The projects will be ever changing, playful and flexible to adapt to the changing needs of our older residents, carers and people with a disability. Community information and wireless internet access would also be available on site.

#### **Online Information**

<http://www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au/default.aspx?WebPage=1728>

[www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Contact**

**Name:** Dr Lauren Peters

**Position:** Community Planning Officer

**Phone:** 02 4221 6170

**Email:** [lauren.peters@shellharbour.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lauren.peters@shellharbour.nsw.gov.au)

# Snowy River Shire Council - *Wire, Wood, Light and Shadow: The Shape of Ageing Well*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Snowy River Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Less than 20,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

1,355 / 17.5%

## Project Summary

A life size tree has been designed and made utilising recycled items that have been collected by participants – visiting Council Recycling centres and from their own homes and from the local bush, using wood, steel, wire and bark. Hanging from the steel branches are autumn coloured glass sun catchers and ceramic painted shapes that the members have made learning new skills to form these beautiful pieces. These items were for sale when the tree was displayed at the April 2015 Lake Light Sculpture event (an annual event that is steadily gaining a heightened profile). The aim to celebrate older people – their achievements and stories- has been met. The journey has been just as important as the end result.

The project was successful in bringing approximately 40 older people together from across 2 Shires over 10 sessions – sharing stories, experiences and ideas. The interest and involvement levels increased over the few months and the participation varied according to the level and type of skill required and dexterity required once the project commenced.

The interCouncil relationships have had a positive effect and relations are improved between Waste, Planning, Hostel, and Community Services departments and with the wider community. The idea of the participants engaging in an art project was fulfilled and will continue to grow, as the sculpture was showcased at the local exhibition at Easter.

The sessional workers involved have been very impressed with the amount of involvement of the older participants, some of whom cannot walk without aids, have hearing and sight impairments and ages range up to 93 years old. The chatter and banter each week has been amazing and the groups have bonded even more over this time. The involvement by the group from the outset was slow however increased over time with various sessions to brainstorm and have ideas drawn up on the butcher's paper.

This project is building on an existing initiative and has been integrated into another program.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Older people who are carers
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people
- Dementia and memory loss



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### **Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Visual arts
- Imagination and brainstorming
- Recycled items

### **Activities**

Working with older people to feel part of a project like this can take longer than just commencing a project and not involving the target group. The group's facilitators took two sessions of planning and brainstorming. This time was required to ensure all participants hear what is going on and to explain the projected outcomes without 'taking over' however still providing enough ideas and a plan to demonstrate the project will go ahead.

Introduction of Sessional Workers – a skilled teacher coming to the group to give instruction on and invite participation.

Three Sessions of a Lead lighting expert – the sessional worker taught the group to learn to cut glass leaf shapes, foil them and solder them to make leaf sun catchers - producing up to 50 leaves that were attached to the branches of the tree.

Five sessions of Welder/project manager – using recycled iron (reinforcement steel) bolts and nuts – allowing some people with cognition issues to be able to sort through a bucket of nuts and bolts and find the match – this proved very successful for 3 people. It also was reminiscence therapy as one of them worked in the building industry. As this sessional worker was a woman – this was also a talking point amongst the men who had been welders in the past. They were impressed with her professionalism and skill and the equipment was very different from when they were welding. E.g. – wearing the welding helmet is now automatic.

Transporting participants to various towns to ensure each town feels some ownership of the project – including Adaminaby – even though the Sculpture was showcased in Jindabyne.

Two sessions of an Artist attending group to paint other ceramic pieces that can be hung from the tree. Showing the participants how to blend paints, using colour and shades and how to hang the pieces had the group quite involved. Adding beads, string and wire again allowed some of the people with dexterity issues still to manage this project.

### **Outcomes**

The outcomes have included:

- Reduced isolation, increased participation.
- Ownership and skill development, increased skilling up – and utilisation of skills not utilised for a long time e.g. welding, sanding and painting.
- The use of tools – hand tools where possible – the discussion of tools they used to own or projects that have been completed in their lives was very interesting.
- Using different mediums – e.g. wire – a lot the men were farmers and used to do a lot of fencing – so tying knots and bending wire with pliers brought back memories and stories. One resident refused to come to the group to tie wire – he was a fencer all his life and did not want to participate that week! Saying "I'm sick of seeing fencing wire!".
- Feedback from the participants has been positive - there seems to be a higher appreciation of both their own skills, and those of their peers, in the creative realm.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Two separate existing groups were involved in the initial planning. 15 seniors commenced the researching on the Internet and brainstorming ideas. The facilitator of those groups supported the use of butchers paper and whiteboards and lots of vibrant discussion. The Autumn Leaves group took lead with the project as the Men's group were not as interested or used to taking on larger projects. The Autumn Leaves had already completed a larger mosaic project last year and were more 'able to conceptualise and engage' in the concept than the men's groups. However as time moved on the skills of the men have been utilised e.g. welding skills and transporting ideas.

Each session has a separate workstation and it was interesting to see a participant would take on the lead role in that smaller group – instructing and guiding the other participants. It was lovely to see the group members taking individual and group ownership of the project and working tirelessly as the groups only meet once a week.

### **Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 40**

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**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience:** The project will be showcased in April after the funding time frame has closed.

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The prowess of each participant grew over time according to the task at hand and the skills of the group led where the project was going to go. We found that some individuals took on the 'leader' role in particular sessions – e.g. the group that were sanding – one 90 year old male was instructing the women how to sand – the best way to handle the sanding block and how to get the best out of the grain in the timber. Another 93-year-old woman who has sight impairment then took on this role the next session – when the previous man did not attend. An 82-year-old woman with dementia was able to sand the timber and was supported by another group member.

Several individuals were utilising the I-pad – to gather some design ideas and to take photos.

Participants, most who are still living independently in the community were all verbally and/or physically engaged in the project. Sanding, painting, wiring, drilling, welding, cutting, shaping, bending, re-coating and choosing items that blend fit and match. The tree has developed each session and has changed according to materials and abilities of the group.

We did encourage some men from the Men's group to come along to the weekly Autumn Leaves and utilised skills such as welding and lacquering – when these skills were required the men were more forthcoming.

All older people have physically and verbally participated –and extra/new older people were involved in the set up of the tree at the Easter Sculpture project. Other older people admired the sculpture once it was in place at the Lake Light Event and possibly at any further public exhibitions.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The skill of the group facilitator and knowing the group members is very important – again everything does take longer when the groups needs are quite high and complex – e.g. dementia, sight impairments, hearing impairments, mobility issues and impairment in hands and coordination. Breaking each task into smaller tasks is crucial. Also having various workstations – in a space that allows for the 7-8 mobility walkers to move around is crucial. Ensuring the light is adequate and the temperature is right. Access to venues was a challenge however good planning allowed all to access each venue. Having equipment that was safe and with good grips allowed people with issues to still use the glasscutters for example.

### **Project Changes**

Initially we thought we had support from the local Men's Shed to utilise the venue and tools – this was not possible at late notice, which held up the commencement of the project. We had to source other venues and source other locals with tools and expertise. The project has been quite fluid as far as the collection of materials – we were able to seek support from the local tips who were putting away certain items we had requested and the group went and collected these at various stages. Seeking people with the skills set but also a personality and skills to work with older people ended up changing due to availability.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

As we still encouraged men from the Men's Groups to come and be involved at the setting up stage it was interesting the 'ownership' from members of the Autumn Leaves group – responses such as 'we don't need any other support, and we are doing ok so far' – we explained that we may need the support of people more physically able to help set-up the sculpture due to the ground being a bit uneven. We also will need other people who can help support the pack-down and transportation etc. The group are keen to have the Sessional workers return after this project to teach them more about welding – making garden sculptures and also do some more lead lighting projects. The members who have taken on the 'lead role' in the smaller groups have been fantastic. For some of the male participants to see how well the women managed with some skills that normally are more male focussed e.g. welding, sanding. Also one of the women with dementia was also able to participate for longer periods than normal. The several men who were more than open and proud to show off their prowess in particular skill areas e.g. welding.

### **Partners & Providers**

We have utilised volunteers to transport participants to and from venues and also to set up equipment. We had the electrical equipment being utilised tested and tagged by the Council handyman/builder. We have requested items to be put away at the Recycling Depot and the Aged Hostel have been sending extra staff along to support their residents to ensure they are being included and involved no matter their functional disability. The sessional workers with Artist skills have provided their equipment and material and many

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hours of preparation without seeking payment – they were keen to see the project set up at Easter – with Lake Jindabyne as the backdrop.

Community Services staff have had discussions with the Community Development worker in regard to future projects that involve both older people and youth. This would now be possible as the older participants are very open to new challenges and not afraid to try new things. The local Country Women's Association (CWA) provided the group lunches in Jindabyne, Berridale and Adaminaby when the sessions were in those towns.

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

We will be continuing to work closely with the hostel residents as it often a good way to introduce people still living in the community to residential care – to get a feel of what it is like in a hostel. It promotes the hostel in a positive light.

We will also continue to have lunches prepared by the CWA for future groups sessions – the lunches were nutritious and delicious.

We also will continue to have a relationship with the local Club as one of the venues – as they have good access and delicious lunches if the CWA are unavailable.

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

Building links and partnerships with the community is very much part of the Community Strategic plan and our Social Plan 2013-2016.

### **Key Learnings**

The timing between acknowledgement of receipt of funding and the commencement could have taken place earlier – the time of year also impeded on the work able to be done due to the Christmas holiday break. Securing a venue where the sculpture could be left was also not solved til later on and was difficult for the Welder/Project Manager to continue to have to transport it home and back to the venues.

The early involvements and time spent drawing images and plans on whiteboard and butchers paper helped to develop the plan. Another key learning was for the target group to grasp what the potential sculpture could look like but still feel they are contributing to the development of it – that the artist did not come up with the idea. It was a good group process.

That the work areas need to have adequate light and space – this was a bit unusual as the size of the sculpture grew and needed larger areas and we couldn't mix the sanding areas with the painting areas and separate area for welding etc.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

The timing between the notification of receipt of funding and when the project has to be completed was unrealistic. As we had the Christmas/New Year in-between. This does not allow enough planning time with the target group to commence the planning and then seek the appropriate support/skills and agencies to ensure it is completed in a timely yet – participative way.

I would also have someone from the Exhibition Committee come along and talk about the Exhibition to allow the group to feel part of the bigger picture as well.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

Design similar creative project themes to link in with existing funded services that support frail older people or a day program for seniors.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

The skills that were re-awoken will be utilised again – the group are very keen to continue with Lead lighting and attempt larger projects. The Sessional Worker is also keen to return at a fair price to continue to teach the group the lead lighting skills – more advanced than the foiling skills used in this project.

The group are also interested in continuing more art projects – learning some painting skills – the sessional worker – artist is very keen to return and engage children alongside the older people and also use Art as Therapy - expressing feelings and words for people with Dementia and other stroke victims who do not have verbal skills. This would be an amazing project, and we believe we can sustain this within the existing Carer Support group funding.

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Welding skills & advice are able to be drawn on progressively given the rural nature and farming background of a lot of elderly persons in this region.

#### **Follow On Activities**

As above, the National Respite Funding will hopefully continue to be funded and allow the program coordinators to continue along the Expression and Art line. The group really responded well to be challenged through Art and the end result being very rewarding to the participants. We will also explore the Artistic needs of all people in our Shire – and the idea of bringing older people together with younger people – seems to have strong interest threads in both target groups.

The participants are keen to do more Welding so we will make contact with University of the 3rd Age and the local TAFE College to seek support and interest.

We will put a price tag on the Sculpture and someone may purchase it – and funds would go back to the group. We are also happy to donate the sculpture to the community – it could be housed at a local park or other community venues to again showcase what older people can do and be proud of it. The project has allowed the participants to feel they have achieved a major work. By utilising skills from yesteryear it truly allows older people to feel valued and the project reinforces the need for quality programs for the 'well aged' – around the Arts and Culture.

#### **Online Information**

[www.snowyriver.nsw.gov.au](http://www.snowyriver.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Contact**

**Name:** Ms Teena Paterson

**Position:** Grants Officer - Snowy River Shire Council

**Phone:** 02 6451 1195

**Email:** [records@snowyriver.nsw.gov.au](mailto:records@snowyriver.nsw.gov.au)

# Tenterfield Shire Council - *Christmas Memories Shared*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Tenterfield Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Less than 20,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

2,037 / 30%

## Project Summary

The project tapped into older people's memories and life experiences to provide the material for a Christmas concert. The December concert was shared with the whole breadth of the community.

It involved people in the Shire aged 60 years and older and had workshops/rehearsals to enable the older residents to contribute creatively to the Christmas concert.

The project aimed to bring together many local community organisations that have older people in the organisation or give a service to older people in a shared Christmas celebration. It also aimed to have a Christmas performance for older people that they could plan and participate in.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People over the age of 60
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersexual people (GLBTI)
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Dance
- Music
- Theatre
- Poetry
- Story telling



### Activities

The activities that took place were:



- 
- Workshops and discussion groups were held at the premises of local community organisations to enable the older residents to contribute creatively to the Christmas concert.
  - Decorations made and the set designed.
  - Concert rehearsals were held during December.
  - A performance of the Christmas concert on the 13 December 2014 that was suitable for, planned and carried out by older people.

#### **Outcomes**

- Older resident's memories and life experiences provide the material for a Christmas concert.
- Residents aged 60 years and older in the Shire participated and contributed to the project.
- Workshops and rehearsals took place to teach skills to older people and enable them to contribute creatively to the Christmas concert.
- Local community organisations that have older people in the organisation or give a service to older people participated in the project.
- A Christmas performance that was enjoyed by older people in the Shire.

#### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

This project allowed older people to bring to light their experiences and use those memories to express them in a creative way.

At the start of the project older residents were consulted through the workshops and discussion groups to plan content of the concert.

The Director encouraged and worked with all the older people who want to be involved in the performances to enable them to take part.

Older residents were involved as performers - singing, story telling, playing piano, clarinet and reciting poetry. Older residents were also members of the audience.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 18**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 60**

#### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Older people in the Shire were involved as direct participants in the concert through music, dance, story telling, poetry and song.

Most of the audience members were older residents who were enjoying watching creative activities during the concert.

#### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The performance was held at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts Theatre that has full disabled and wheel chair access and disabled facilities.

The discussion groups and workshops took place at the aged care facilities and venues of community organisations that deal with older people so all venues were able to offer full access for older people.

The one performance was a matinee as most older people prefer a matinee and those that have no transport in the evenings can attend. Transport to the performances was offered for any performers who do not have access to transport.

#### **Project Changes**

Only one performance of the concert was held as the older people who were the performers said they did not want to participate in two performances as it was going to be too much.

#### **Partners & Providers**

- The Strategic Planning & Environmental Services Department of Tenterfield Shire Council
- Millrace, Haddington and HACC
- The volunteers at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts
- A Director
- Sound technician
- Lighting technician
- Ten FM radio station and the Tenterfield Star
- St Joseph's Primary School
- Tentergrafix & Tenterfield Printing
- 18 performers
- Tenterfield Shire residents in the audience

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### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Through the Community Development Officer all the community organisations have a continuing relationship with Tenterfield Shire Council.

The volunteers at Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts volunteer daily in a venue managed by Council.

Ten FM radio station, Tenterfield Star, Tentergrafix & Tenterfield Printing have an ongoing relationship with the Senior Economic Development Officer at the Council.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The project aligns with Tenterfield Shire Council's strategies and directions as it:

- Provides a recreation/leisure opportunity for older residents in the Shire.
- Accommodates the needs of an ageing population and people with disabilities
- Is a cultural activity that will foster an involved community and a creative environment.
- Provides an activity that could improve the physical and mental health of older people in the community.
- Is an opportunity for Council staff to assist with the organisation of an event and activities aimed at improving the lives of older people.
- Enriches the cultural life of the community.

### **Key Learnings**

Not everyone sees Christmas in a positive light.

The community was generally depressed at the end of last year due to the drought and this reflected in the response to the project. The director had to work hard to get the community enthusiastic about the project. General economic conditions certainly affect the willingness of community members to be involved in cultural projects.

Energy levels of older people were not as high as expected and the performers only wanted to participate in one performance.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Don't have such an emphasis on including older people in the performance but maybe involve them in the backstage component (script writing, ushering, directing) etc rather than the performance - widen the age groups that can take part. Involve all the schools.

Possible try something like a pantomime.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

They could have a Christmas concert or other Christmas themed performance.

The best way is to hire a Director who could drive the project and involve as many other organisations as possible as it takes a lot of time and effort.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

This was a one off Christmas Concert. The amount of time and effort it took to bring the concert together it would need a paid person to make it sustainable if it was to be an annual event. The cost of paying for a Directors time would make the concert too expensive without grant funding. The audience in Tenterfield can not afford to pay the admission charges required to cover the true costs of staging a concert.

### **Online Information**

[www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

### **Contact**

**Name:** Ms Dianne Clayton

**Position:** Community Development Officer

**Phone:** 02 6736 6140

**Email:** [d.clayton@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](mailto:d.clayton@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

# Wagga Wagga City Council - *I Want to Share My Story*

## COUNCIL NAME

Wagga Wagga City Council

## RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO

Regional

## COUNCIL SIZE

Over 60,000 residents

## POPULATION OVER 60

10,844 / 19%

## Project Summary

"I Want to Share My Story" brought our senior citizens together to develop their digital photography skills. Six Animation and Visual Effects and Photography students from Charles Sturt University led a six week course which took the 30 participants through getting the most from their digital cameras and exploring new ways in creative expression.

The overall objective of this project was to promote healthy ageing by creating opportunities for the senior members of our community to actively participate in a range of stimulating, creative and educational experiences. The project endeavoured to spark a greater interest and participation in the arts and cultural activities for the older generation of Wagga Wagga. The workshop was booked out within 5 days, with a waiting list developed.

The objectives were met, with all participants very satisfied with their experience, in particular the way the CSU students communicated with the participants. The participants are very happy with the work they produced and looked forward to the exhibition during Seniors Week.

This project is a new initiative and will continue for a period of time.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Older people who are carers
- Young people (intergenerational projects)
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People over the age of 60
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Technology/digital
- Visual arts
- Reflecting local history



### **Activities**

Six facilitators were involved with the program, with four facilitators at any one time facilitating the workshop. The workshops ran from 7 November through to 12 December from 10 -11.30am at a location in the Wagga Wagga Civic Centre. During these workshops, the participants learned how to use digital cameras from the point and shoot variety, through to the DSLR camera for the more advanced students. Participants learned the different type of camera functions, how to compose a photo, how to edit their work with the group dividing up to learn editing skills in basic programs to advanced students learning PhotoShop. At the end of the workshop, participants submitted four of their favourite images they created for the public outcomes.

In January, the Cultural Officer checked in with the participants to see how their photography is progressing, with some participants asking for advice and submitting extra work for the exhibitions and have continued to practice their new skills.

### **Outcomes**

The participants produced a wide range of photographs which were prepared to be presented in two public outcomes.

The first was an exhibition in March at the Museum of the Riverina, in particular, during Seniors Week 2015. The second was a two week presentation through the digital projectors. Wagga Wagga City Council has digital projector infrastructure creating a 50x8m projection on the the side of the Civic Centre building next to Wollundry Lagoon.

These art workshops provided opportunities for lifelong learning as well as tangible physical and mental health benefits through the opportunity for participation in activities in a larger community thus developing new friendships with people with the same interests. As these workshops took place in a group setting which provided social interaction and a sense of inclusion, new friendships were formed over a shared creative interest.

Participation in creative art raises self-esteem, increases enthusiasm for life and inevitably positively contributes to the overall well-being of our ageing population and sparks more involvement in other activities.

Feedback from the participants was extremely positive, as well as from the facilitators. Positive feedback from the end of workshop survey included the following comments:

- Sense of achievement including positive feedback
- Mental stimulation
- Socialisation
- Motivation to use their technology
- An opportunity to learn from professionals

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Eight older people from Wagga Wagga's Seniors' Week Committee and Senior's Community Centre Management Committee were consulted through the planning and implementation. The participants also led the direction of the workshops in what skills they wanted to progress in.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 30**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 1,000**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The workshops gave the participants the confidence to use their digital cameras as well as teaching them new skills with their laptops and downloading editing programs, editing their photos and a group of the participants graduated to using Macbooks and PhotoShop.

The participants looked forward to the public outcomes as well as some of the other Seniors Week programming which they were not aware of before this project. The projection was up on the the Civic Centre Building for two weeks from 7 - 11pm 7 nights a week in a highly trafficked area, hence the conservative estimate above in audience estimation.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The workshops were held in the Wagga Wagga City Library and Art Gallery. Both locations were easily accessible for people with mobility issues. We did have some hearing impaired participants who we assisted throughout the workshop. The amount of facilitators meant we could provide a lot more one-on-one attention.

### **Project Changes**

We extended the workshop to six weeks to give more time to the participants, and after the first workshop increased to four facilitators to ensure all participants received as much assistance as necessary. Eastern Riverina Arts was not available as a location for the exhibition, however they will feature one of the photographs in their window.

We did not get the opportunity to visit the University, as the participants wanted to make the most of the facilitators and working on their photographs, however, we would still would like to do this for future workshops.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

Throughout the six weeks, we got to know the participants quite well, in particular their creative interests. The end of course survey suggested a range of creative skills they would like to learn and will be incorporated to future programming within Council.

Many of the participants were unaware of the regular programming at the Council Cultural Facilities, and in fact many had not attended the Art Gallery in the past. The participants experienced a photography exhibition during their first workshop and are now regularly visiting new exhibitions at the Art Gallery. The participants also signed up to Cultural Facility newsletters to ensure they did not miss new opportunities.

One of the facilitators has run workshops for Eastern Riverina Arts and we are currently looking at working with her for an WaggaFest (short film competition) workshop in stop motion animation.

### **Partners & Providers**

- Cultural Officer
- Social Planning
- IT
- Library
- Art Gallery
- Museum of the Riverina
- Charles Sturt University - School of Communication and Creative Industries
- Wagga Wagga Seniors Week Committee 2015

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Wagga Wagga City Council's relationship with Charles Sturt University's School of Creative Industries is cemented, with the school looking to work with Council on future projects to give their students practical experience. We hope to run further workshops in the future.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

Council's Community Strategic Plan, clearly outlines the goal of having opportunities and places for connection. The measure "We use sports, recreation, arts and leisure as ways of staying connected" is clearly linked to this project. The target is increased community satisfaction with the ability to participate in arts and cultural related activities. I Want to Share My Story aligns with these goals as well as our visions: "We are a thriving, innovative and connected community on the Murrumbidgee. We are rich in opportunity, choice, learning and environment. Wagga is a place where paths cross and people meet". This project is another example of an opportunity Wagga, particularly for our ageing community.

The project also addresses community cultural needs identified in the Council's Cultural Plan: To be a regional centre where culture and creativity shall enrich the lives of the whole community. Council endeavours to work with the community to increase advocacy and capacity building of community groups, and facilitate partnerships with and between people, community groups and professional artists. This project, through the breadth of its community involvement, support for an existing arts and cultural organisation who works with community groups throughout Wagga Wagga and engagement of professionals to come to Wagga Wagga, addresses the needs identified in Council's Cultural Plan. The activities involving artistic workshops and a free artwork exhibition at the end of the workshop, during Seniors Week 15-22 March 2015 clearly align with council's plans and strategies.

## **Key Learnings**

The Senior's Week Committee suggested that the workshop be run for no longer than 1.5 hours at a time- the participants noted in their survey that they wished for the workshop to be longer, as the sessions ran quickly and they would have liked more time to practice skills.

For future workshops, we would have two sessions, one for beginners and one for more advanced participants, as we had to keep setting extra activities for the more advanced participants and we felt that some of the beginner level participants were being discouraged.

This workshop could easily run for ten weeks, for example to learn more skills in Photoshop.

We would perhaps change the day, as some participants skipped workshops as they were going away for the weekend.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Longer sessions would be a must as well as running two courses for different skill levels. It would also benefit to have it run for ten weeks.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

This program could easily be rolled out. The student facilitators were a large part of the success as they really enjoyed sharing their skills and the participants really enjoyed spending their time with them. I would recommend that other Councils find a good partner organisation to give young artists a chance to share their skills who genuinely wanted to working our senior members of our community. One of the CSU lecturers was very supportive of the program and both he and I were able to coach the young facilitators through the workshops.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

We hope to find a model of this workshop that is sustainable to incorporate annually to the Seniors Week program.

The participants have already indicated that they are practising their new skills, and had lots of opportunity to reinforce the new skills over the Christmas break.

The participants are socialising with their new friends from the workshop and are planning to attend many Seniors Week activities together, including the exhibition launch. The participants have been raving about the benefits of the workshop to their wider networks, and have asked Council to seek further funding to continue the workshops into a series instead of a one off.

#### **Follow On Activities**

We would like to continue a series of workshops for seniors, preferably free. We are looking to collaborate with various sections of Council to see if we can make this sustainable. The participants indicated a variety of new media type skills they would like to learn. It is important to pay the facilitators however at industry rates.

We have encouraged the participants to capture their memories of Seniors Week for another potential public outcome.

### **Online Information**

<https://news.csu.edu.au/latest-news/arts-and-culture/sharing-photography-with-seniors>

[www.wagga.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wagga.nsw.gov.au)

### **Contact**

**Name:** Miss Tracie Miller

**Position:** Cultural Officer

**Phone:** 02 6926 9356

**Email:** [miller.tracie@wagga.nsw.gov.au](mailto:miller.tracie@wagga.nsw.gov.au)

# Willoughby City Council - Community Collage & Decoupage Project

**COUNCIL NAME**

Willoughby City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Metropolitan

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

11,949 / 17.69%

## Project Summary

Paper Scissors Patterns - Was a cross cultural project which aimed to use an arts project to bring together residents from a variety of cultural backgrounds to work together on a collaborative arts project.

Consisting of 1 presentation and demonstration to introduce the concept of the project, followed by series of 8 x 2 hour workshops where participants learnt to use the techniques of collage and decoupage to create pictures that represented the cultural heritage of Willoughby, culminating in an afternoon tea where the framed work was displayed and celebrated. Three participants were interviewed and filmed during the afternoon tea to capture the story of their involvement in the project. An online survey was also conducted with participants, administered by staff using ipads.

The overall aim of the project was to provide common ground to older adults from all ethnic backgrounds to share their memories and stories, encourage participation and understanding, promote greater mutual respect and trust and lay the foundation for future projects and friendships.

Our objective was to create a value for money project that brought together the older members of our community from CALD backgrounds who attend the MOSAIC Centre and those from an English speaking background who attend the Dougherty Community Centre. The concept was to bring together older people from different cultures, who in a non threatening and creative environment, could learn about the different patterns and decorations commonly found in cultures and share their experience and associations - to learn about each other and develop friendships.

The project was very successful. The group progressed well through the workshops, building on basic skills of cutting and pasting to learning colour and design, composition and to a significantly increased knowledge of the different cultures within Willoughby. There was significant interaction between the participants from the MOSAIC centre and those from the Dougherty Centre and new friendships were formed.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- Geographically isolated people
- Socially isolated people
- People with disabilities
- People over the age of 60

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Visual arts
- Reflecting local history
- Crafts



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### **Activities**

The activities consisted of a demonstration & morning tea at the MOSAIC Centre where the idea of the project was introduced and participation sought.

Eight x 2hr workshops were held weekly on Monday afternoons.

An afternoon tea and viewing of the framed final artwork during which we filmed interviews of the participants comments on the project and conducted an online survey of the project.

### **Outcomes**

The outcomes were substantial:

- Increased confidence by the participants with composition, colour work and the expression of their ideas.
- We noted significant cross cultural education within the participants who attended the workshops.
- Extremely positive experience for all those involved. The participants were overjoyed at the journey they took both creatively and culturally. The feedback from our survey was 100% positive and the participants all agreed that they would like to be involved in other creative projects.
- Improvement in breaking down social isolation, two participants commented that "they rarely got out" but had arranged to come to a project that interested them. One participant caught the Council Cab to and from the Workshops. Another participant commented: "This project has really helped me deal with the grieving process after my mum moved into a nursing home, using my brain and memory has helped my depression to lift."
- A community art work that will hang in the Dougherty Community Centre. The artwork not only celebrates living in our culturally diverse community today but provides a foundation for designing other projects and programs.
- The project confirmed to Council how valuable creative arts projects are for seniors. We are now investigating ways of delivering other Creative Arts Projects to Seniors.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Willoughby Seniors were engaged in implementation of the project and the planning and design of the final work.

The journey towards the the completion of the final artwork was a collaborative one. Skills and ideas were built over the first four workshops where participants created individual projects. Through these first three workshops it was evident that their skills were improving, we found that they started choosing suitable source materials for colour and texture, they were thinking creatively and being increasingly able to realise images from their imagination and execute subtle cutting and knife workmanship. At the end of week 4 the group looked at patterns, that they could identify within the Willoughby area and started discussion on the form and composition of the final artwork. The group moved from individual projects to smaller groups working on the their part of the artwork together. This involved new levels of cooperation and teamwork and in a highly collaborative project.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 18**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 1,000**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Our project was purely aimed at Willoughby Seniors. Many of the participants commented that they had been looking for something like this and that opportunities, that were free or low cost and convenient in location for creative endeavours, were limited and subsequently they had not been participating in any creative projects. Through this activity Council have identified a group of residents that are interested in creative activities and that can be invited to participate in other activities. Council does have creative art centres which were discussed but location and access had prevented this particular group attending.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

Full access was considered an important requirement in the venues selected. Three of our participants were dependant on walkers. One was significantly physically impaired. The Dougherty Centre and the MOSAIC Multicultural Centre are fully accessible with good transport links. We provided large work spaces and plenty of room between tables to enable access. Volunteers and Council staff were on hand to help with the cutting tasks for those participants who struggled in the beginning with fine motor skill tasks.

### **Project Changes**

The short lead time between grant application, grant allocation and completion date meant that the marketing



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of the project to garner participants had to be adjusted and instead we decided to do a "show and tell" initial demonstration to gather interest and then used our contacts at the Dougherty Community Centre, Willoughby Community Aid Division to invite participation in our Paper Scissors Patterns Project.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

We were surprised at the sheer joy that the participants got out of the workshops and learning the new skills required. They showed off their individual artworks with other people at the Dougherty Centre. At the completion of the project some participants brought their family and friends to the final afternoon tea to show off what they had been a part of.

### **Partners & Providers**

- Local Artist, Melissa Sloan
- MOSAIC Multicultural Centre
- Willoughby Council Arts and Cultural Unit
- Willoughby Council's Aged and Disability Unit
- Dougherty Community Centre

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Council Divisions will continue to partner in offering creative opportunities for Seniors.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The activity aimed to build upon Willoughby Council's commitment to be an inclusive and cohesive multicultural community and provide equitable access to Council's services and programs. The project closely aligned with the KPI's of the Willoughby City Strategy 2013 - 2029 where Council specifically aims to facilitate and support a range of cultural, recreational and social activities recognising emerging social changes and interests. In this activity Council built upon its commitment to provide an environment where cultural diversity is respected, supported and celebrated through engaging in cross-cultural activities.

## **Key Learnings**

Fine motor skills in the elderly can be poor and this sort of project significantly improved those skills.

Creative activities have a significant role to play in providing a non threatening environment for socialisation for the over 55's.

There is significant demand for value for money creative projects.

Access and location is important to the success and participation of Willoughby Seniors in such an activity.

Cultural boundaries are significant and there is an ongoing need for activities that break down these barriers.

It is important to consider and plan for evaluation activities at the start of the project. Older people are open to participating in different forms of evaluation activities and these work best if a social atmosphere can be created for the feedback session..

## **Sustainability of Impacts**

The majority of materials used in the project were sustainable. Recycled paper was used every week. The group collected materials like magazines, newspapers, brochures and old wrapping paper and brought their collection in every week. Scissors and glue were recycled from previous projects.

Evaluation of the project was conducted using existing ipads, rather than a paper form for the participants to complete.

### **Follow On Activities**

We had originally envisaged 3 more series of workshops, continuing on from the initial one. We applied for a grant with Department of Social Services (Multicultural Arts and Festivals) to fund the subsequent 3 workshops and unfortunately were unsuccessful and at this time do not have funding to continue with the project in its current form. Having confirmed the benefits and the demand for creative art projects Council will be investigating ways we can run similar projects at a smaller financial outlay.

## **Online Information**

[www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

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## Contact

**Name:** Ms Angela Casey

**Position:** Community Development Manager

**Phone:** 02 9777 7581

**Email:** [kathy.whale@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kathy.whale@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## Wingecarribee Shire Council - *Here is my song*

### COUNCIL NAME

Wingecarribee Shire Council

### RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO

Regional

### COUNCIL SIZE

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

### POPULATION OVER 60

13,013 / 29.19%

### Project Summary

The project aimed to support a group of older people who have dementia living within the Wingecarribee community to write, sing and record their own song.

The project included four facilitated workshops held during November 2014, at which professional performers and songwriters, Shortis & Simpson, supported the group to write, perform and record a song.

The resulting CD features 3 original songs written and performed by the group. It showcases the abilities and interests of the group with the songs being played for the family, friends and the wider Wingecarribee community.

Central to the project was the use of a fun and inclusive approach.

This project is a new initiative and has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- People over the age of 60
- Socially isolated people
- People with dementia

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Music



### Activities

4 workshops held with 3 original songs written, performed and recorded.

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CDs produced and distributed to project participants. CD played for participant family and friends.

### **Outcomes**

- Social interaction - working on a project together and exchanging experiences and ideas in developing the song.
- Self-esteem and confidence building - the satisfaction of being involved in producing something to be proud of.
- Community awareness raising - by playing the recording and promoting the project through various mechanisms including community events, print media and radio.
- Fun - An enjoyable, stimulating and creative experience for participants.
- Skills development - existing interest and musical skills of clients and staff/volunteers were enhanced by the opportunity to work with professional musicians.
- Ongoing resources - the Wingecaribee Adult Day Centre has a resource (the CD) that participants enjoy listening to and encourages them to reflect on their strengths and re-live their shared creative experience.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The 12 older clients with dementia were central to planning and implementing the project.

The clients' existing interest in music and singing was the basis for the project. Their schedule and usual routine at the Centre influenced the design of the project, ie 4 x 2 hour sessions.

The clients interests and views drove the song lyrics and the projects final product (the CD recording).

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 12**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 200**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Through the series of workshops the 12 participants were supported to write, perform and record a song. This included writing lyrics that captured what the participants appreciated about their group (fun and friendship, dressing to look their best) and reflected their various musical influences (Elvis).

Participants played instruments including guitar, drums and other percussion instruments and sang.

Participants also have the CD to continue to play.

Centre staff and volunteers have also acquired new skills allowing them to continue regular music sessions for participants going forward.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

All workshops were held at the Wingecaribee Adult Day Centre in Bowral which is a fully accessible building. Transport for clients attending the centre was provided by accessible buses.

Trained staff and volunteers were on hand to assist clients with any additional needs.

All participants were included in the project either through singing and/or playing musical instruments.

The CD also included each participant recording their name and where they grew up. For David, a participant who is deaf and mute, he agreed to have the songwriters record this information on his behalf.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The speed with which participants became involved in the project and ease with which the first song was written.

The enjoyment and involvement of all participants (regardless of their condition/ability) exceeded expectations.

The benefit and skills development for centre staff and volunteers.

The excitement of the Centre's resident canary, Jasper, whose joyful singing was recorded and featured on the CD.

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### **Partners & Providers**

- 12 clients of the Wingecarribee Adult Day Centre living with dementia.
- The Wingecarribee Adult Day Centre including staff and volunteers.
- Shortis & Simpson - songwriters and musicians.
- The Seniors Working Group of Council which agreed to showcase the project and play the CD at its Autumn High Tea Dance as part of 2015 Seniors Week celebrations.
- The Council's Arts and Cultural officer and Ageing and Disability officer.

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

The Council will be alert to opportunities to work with all partners again.

The Wingecarribee Adult Day Centre agreed to be involved in showcasing the project outcomes during Seniors Week activities.

The Centre and Shortis & Simpson are also in communication and open to opportunities to work together again in the future.

The Council will also be considering whether the project could be replicated with the support of volunteer musicians to work with other groups of older people within the Shire.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The guiding principles that underpin the framework for the Wingecarribee Community.

Strategic Plan 2031+ are Social Justice and Sustainability. All strategies seek to strive for equity, access, participation and equal rights, particularly for the disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Under our 'People' theme one of the goals is that Wingecarribee fosters a diverse, creative and vibrant community and to do this Council and the Community identified that we need to engage the under-represented in the life of the Shire and encourage and implement activities that strengthen community spirit. The project directly delivers against this objective.

## **Key Learnings**

That the ability of people living with dementia should not be underestimated, particularly in regard to ability to recall and enjoy music but also to learn new lyrics and melodies.

Music is a great way to engage people in a creative and stimulating social activity.

It is important to spend time with each participant, discussing their background and musical interests so that everyone is included and as a result feels engaged in the project regardless of their condition/ability.

The involvement of centre staff and volunteers (with whom the clients were familiar) ensured clients felt comfortable and happy to participate.

Based on the outcomes of this project, this model is likely to be equally enjoyed and beneficial for people living with a disability.

### **Potential Changes to Improve**

To record the sessions or document the specific process used by Shortis & Simpson to support the group to develop and perform the song. This would provide a tool to support other groups interested in undertaking a similar project, while also allowing the approach to be adapted to respond to the abilities and interests of participants.

### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

Councils could replicate the project by developing partnerships with local musicians and service providers or community groups that support older people.

The project could also be adapted to include people of all ages with a disability.

Councils could provide community grants to support individuals or community groups to run and manage the project.

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## Sustainability of Impacts

The opportunity to engage people with dementia in a supported environment to provide social interaction, stimulate creative ideas and showcase outcomes for the broader community, will have long term benefits for all involved.

The skills that the centre staff and volunteers have developed through working with professional musicians are being used in a ongoing way during fortnightly music sessions at the Centre.

The Centre has a resource (the CD) that participants enjoy listening to and encourages them to reflect on their strengths and re-live their shared creative experience.

The learning process from this project will inform ideas on how it could be done again without external funding with other groups.

The project can be showcased to promote and support the development of other ideas for creative ageing projects throughout our shire.

Groups may be encouraged to apply for local council grants to partner with groups or services for older people to develop similar projects.

### Follow On Activities

Shortis & Simpson are running a music theory for non musicians workshop within the Shire open to all members of the public. The workshop will be funded by participants and is a result of interest generated and relationships built through the project.

The CD will continue to be showcased through a range of mechanisms including being played during Council's key 2015 Seniors Week event, uploaded to the Council website and through planned follow up print and media coverage.

Council will resource this follow up promotional activity.

## Online Information

[www.wsc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wsc.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Ms Eliza Hazlett

**Position:** Acting Ageing and Disability Officer

**Phone:** 02 4868 0866

**Email:** [eliza.hazlett@wsc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:eliza.hazlett@wsc.nsw.gov.au)

# Wollondilly Shire Council - *LOLS - Laughing Out Loud Seniors*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Wollondilly Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Rural

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Between 20,000-60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

7,134 / 15.42%

## Project Summary

Wollondilly Shire Council facilitated The Humour Foundation’s Laughter Boss training, which provided staff working in Aged Care fun and practical skills to help them bring play and laughter to their everyday work with the aged. The Humour Foundation acknowledged the challenges faced by staff working in Aged Care and the Laughter Boss training aimed to help participants understand the concept of using play to promote humour in their daily work - to benefit residents, staff, the facility and themselves - and is designed to give them the skills and knowledge to do so. The training resulted in the establishment of the LOLS - Laughing Out Loud Seniors Program which was implemented across local Aged Care Residential Facilities and Adult Day Centres. Participants accessed the training at no cost.

- Establish partnerships with 5 Aged Care Facilities in Wollondilly.
- Provide Laughter Boss training to 30 staff from aged residential care and day care centres.
- Establish a 12 week trial program in aged care residential and day centre settings.
- Facilitate weekly supervised visits to the facility by the performers.
- Mentor facility staff in techniques of creative engagement.
- Support staff to communicate, build relationships and engage with residents.
- Conduct formal evaluation and review.
- Establish ongoing programs in facilities.

This project is a new initiative and the project has been completed.

### Target Audiences Engaged

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People over the age of 60
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersexual people (GLBTI)
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- Socially isolated people

### Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised

- Music
- Visual arts
- Dance
- Theatre
- Laughter Therapy



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### **Activities**

The main activity centred around training 30 participants in Laughter Boss humour therapy to empower and skill people working in aged care to take a different approach to their work, to engage with clients and residents with humour, play, lightheartedness and fun. The full day training was followed by survey and personal support by Council's Community Projects Team. Participants then created activities in their workplace or used their skills informally.

### **Outcomes**

We established partnerships with 6 aged care facilities.

We established partnerships with another 11 respite, day and community programs in Wollondilly.

Thirty staff undertook Laughter Boss training and used it in their workplace.

100% of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training met their expectations and that they were given enough skills and confidence to being a Laughter Boss in the workplace. 100% of participants had fun and found the props to be of value, whilst 86% found the workshop to be relevant to their situation and that 96% found the theoretical context to be of value.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The Humour Foundation has conducted a wide range of research and consultation with older people and aged care providers in the development of the Laughter Therapy Program. Council conducted consultation with local aged care providers to gauge interest in the project, planning and implementation.

### **Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 0**

### **Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 736**

### **How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

Each participant in the Laugh out Loud program went back to their workplace with new found skills that they were able to utilise in completely unique and different ways. They were able to tailor their skills to complement their settings, their older residents and clients and their organisations model. Participants used the Laughter Boss skills to have 'silly days', to use humour in the training room, to take a walk down memory lane with songs and singing. By training individuals who work directly with older citizens we were able to reach a great audience across the region.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The venue for the training day was held at an accessible location, we were able to accommodate a person in a wheelchair who was able to fully participate in the whole day.

### **Project Changes**

At the initial training session the group indicated that they were happy and confident to go out and use their new skills, all participants were given the option of regular support and contact which they took up on a voluntary basis rather than being compulsory which we originally envisaged doing. Not wanting to stifle the project and by allowing the participants to freely engage with their colleagues, clients and residents, they were able to implement and grow the project to meet the needs of their setting.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

One organisation immediately began using their public Announcement Board in a different way, previously it had advertised what day bingo was on etc but they began to communicate with the wider community posting jokes and quotes instead. Another organisation reported that the staff selfcare and time management had improved which resulted in improved management of difficult situations with residents. The echo coming from all participants was that they were surprised at how much their own self care had improved, that they gave themselves permission to laugh and be silly at work and deal with stress more effectively. Time management improvements came up with many participants reporting that they were increasingly taking their unpaid breaks and finding humorous activities to unwind and take themselves and situations less seriously. Permission was a word that often came up, participants gave themselves and others permission to be silly to be lighthearted and this was infectious and spread through the workplace.

### **Partners & Providers**

- Wollondilly Shire Council Community Services
- Library Services
- Wollondilly Support and Community Care Incorporated
- RSL Lifecare



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- Stockland
  - Harbisson Care
  - Sector Connect
  - Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital
  - Nepean Food Services
  - Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative
  - Antham Care
  - STARTS (Southern Tablelands Arts)
  - South Western Sydney Local Health District
  - Interchange
  - Warragamba Silverdale Neighbourhood Centre

#### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

The project enabled us to strengthen relationships we already had with organisations and forge new relationships. We were able to provide a link of support to organisations, increase our network and get to know the people who work in our community and aged care settings. We look forward to involving them again in our Seniors Week activities

#### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

This project met operational objectives within the community strategic plan.

### **Key Learnings**

The timing of the project over the Christmas period possibly had an impact on the immediate delivery for participants, with the end of year wind down in progress participants were not able to fully use their skills until the new year. That said, full time aged care settings were able to use their skills immediately with one organisation changing the way they used their Announcement Board to inject humour into the community.

#### **Potential Changes to Improve**

Changing the timing of the project and increasing the length of the project would have enabled a more longitudinal study of the long term benefits for participants and the ageing community.

#### **How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

Program outlines are available from the Humour Foundation and documented research can be obtained through the internet.

### **Sustainability of Impacts**

Participants are able to utilise the skills learned across a broad range of settings in aged care facilities, day programs, respite etc. The skills learned are transferrable and The Humour Foundation are able to provide further training as required.

#### **Follow On Activities**

Participants will continue to utilise their skills in their workplace. Some organisations have indicated that they will be holding quarterly 'silly days' where they focus on jokes, practical jokes and fun in their day programs. Other participants are using their skills in training sessions and day to day programs through song and their interaction they have with clients, the language they use etc. The facility Announcement Board is still being utilised to inject humour in to the community and communicate playfulness.

### **Online Information**

[www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au)

### **Contact**

**Name:** Mr Rob Moran

**Position:** Community Projects and Events Team Leader

**Phone:** 02 4677 8211

**Email:** [rob.moran@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rob.moran@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au)

## Wollongong City Council - *Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project*

**COUNCIL NAME**

Wollongong City Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

42,036 / 22%

### Project Summary

The "Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project" engaged 46 local seniors ranging in age up to 98 years from the Wollongong Local Government Area in the planning, development and implementation of a creative photography project in which they feature in recreations of 16 iconic movie/television scenes.

Council's Aged and Disability Officer facilitated the development of partnerships with The Silverbelles Dance Group, Uniting Aged Care Farmborough Heights and local seniors to assist Council with the delivery of the project.

The aim of the project was to provide the opportunity for local seniors to actively participate in a creative cultural project and to promote positive ageing and recognise the lives, achievements and diversity of older people. The seniors were invited together and encouraged to think about and describe a movie/TV scene that had relevance or significance to them and that they wanted to recreate.

Following the development of the concepts for the photographs a project team comprising Council Officer, a hair and make-up artist and photographer worked with the seniors to develop the sets and source the costumes and props to recreate the scene. The Silverbelles Dance Group provided many of the costumes from their collection to support the project. Photographic shoots were held and the resulting photographs promoted via social media and the web. The photographs will be exhibited in a local shopping centre and in Council libraries and community centres.

A celebration event attended by 60 people was held to thank the participants and launch the photographs. The project generated large media and social media interest from the broader community. A survey indicated that the major highlights for the participants was the fun of participating, getting dressed up and having their hair and make-up done and photos taken and being acknowledged and recognised by the Lord Mayor.

This project is a new initiative and will continue for a period of time.



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### **Target Audiences Engaged**

- People with disabilities
- People over the age of 60

### **Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Technology/digital
- Photography/costume

### **Activities**

1. A detailed project plan describing the key milestones of the project was developed.
2. Council Officers engaged The Silver Belles Dance Group and Uniting Aged Care Farmborough Heights as partners and a diverse group of 46 local seniors aged up to 98 years of age, and contracted a photographer and professional hair and make-up artist.
3. The project team consisted of two Council Officers, professional photographer and a hair and make-up artist.
4. The seniors were brought together at a number of meetings held in accessible venues across the City including a residential aged care facility for the purpose of introducing the project concept and brainstorming the movie/TV scenes and costumes and props required etc that they wanted to re create and that would be significant to them.
5. Council Officers worked with the seniors and project partners to source costumes and props and schedule the photoshoots including hair and make-up.
6. Photoshoots were held both on location and in accessible venues where required.
7. A series of photographs were taken.
8. A launch and thank you celebration was held.
9. A participant survey was developed and implemented to capture the participants feedback.
10. The project and resulting images have been widely promoted in local media including: newspapers, news, radio, twitter, face book, Council's website and YouTube.
11. This project was supported by Council governance and management policies and procedures.

### **Outcomes**

The Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project delivered the following outcomes:

- The project participants were invited to complete a survey following their participation in the project. The most often reported highlights were described as just being in it and the fun of it all, getting dressed up and having their hair and make-up done and the photoshoots, meeting people and meeting and being recognised by the Lord Mayor.
- Recognition by the broader community of the contribution seniors make to our community.
- A participant prepared an article for the newsletter of the seniors living development she lives in talking about her experience of participating in the project.
- A series of photographic images including the sixteen images produced to an exhibition stage of iconic movie/TV scenes. The images feature 46 local seniors and were produced as an output of the project and are available for future use. The scenes included Blues Brothers, Priscilla, The Addams Family, On the Buses, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, I Love Lucy, Breakfast at Tiffanies, Al Capone, Grease, Singing in the Rain, Jailhouse Rock, Mary Poppins, The Andrews Sisters, Casablanca, Cabaret and African Queen.
- The project attracted a large media response including a seven minute radio interview on ABC Illawarra, WIN News story, the front page of the Illawarra Mercury on 31 January 2015 and the Local Government pages of the Sydney Morning Herald on 3 February 2015.
- Council has strengthened the relationship with the Silver Belles Dance Group and developed a new relationship with Uniting Aged Care Farmborough Heights and with local seniors.
- The project has a webpage on Council's website and features on ABC Illawarra's website and the Illawarra Mercury's website.
- The project has attracted a significant social media interest on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.
- The project has featured in the Uniting Aged Care "The Journey" Newsletter.
- Council's Aged and Disability Officer has been invited to provide a presentation to the local View Club about the project.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

The Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in pictures project adopted a community development approach to encourage participation. Council partnered with The Silver Belles Dance Group and Uniting Aged Care Farmborough Heights. The seniors were invited together to explore their creativity to influence the direction and concepts of the photographs. The seniors were invited to reflect on their life experience and connection to film/television and describe a movie/TV scene of significance to them. The seniors were then supported to act out this idea through the recreation of the scene using hair, make-up, costumes, props and photography. The seniors guided the development of all stages of the project.

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**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants:** 46

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience:** 10,000

**How Project Increased Older People's Participation**

The project was provided in accessible venues and the use of photography and costume made the project accessible to people with very limited mobility. Many of the participants commented that they hadn't done anything like this before.

**How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

All activities of the Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project where required were provided in accessible venues. Fourteen of the 46 participants had limited mobility and 11 of the 14 used either a walking frame or wheel chair. Limited mobility was no barrier to participation in the project. A couple of the participants expressed their delight at being able to participate. One said " as I can't dance anymore due to balance - being able to wear my costume for the Priscilla scene" was a real highlight. The photos do not show limited physical ability.

**Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The media and social media interest in the project was far greater than anticipated.

The fun and belly laughter expressed by the participants when getting ready for and participating in the photoshoots was really quite extraordinary. This was expressed as being a real highlight of being involved in the project by the seniors in the participant survey.

**Partners & Providers**

Council partnered with the following organisations to deliver the activities of this project: The Silverbelles Dance Group, Uniting Aged Care Farmborough Heights, The Arcadians Theatre Group and Luxe Events and Decor.

Council contracted Total Bliss Hair and Body Spa to provide the hair and make-up services and Bernie Fischer Photography to provide the photographic services.

A volunteer student from the University of Wollongong studying journalism assisted with the project.

**Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

Council Officers envisage a continued relationship with all of the project partners. The Silverbelles Dance Group will be dancing at the Lord Mayors Afternoon Tea Dance as part of Seniors Week.

**Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The Golden Oldies Screen Dreams in Pictures project aligned with existing Council plans and strategies including the "Community Strategic Plan Wollongong 2022" which includes the goals "Wollongong is a creative vibrant city" and "we are a connected and engaged community". The project aligns with Council's "Wollongong Positive Ageing Plan 2013" and has assisted Council in the delivery of focus area 2.2 "Community has a positive attitude to ageing and respects and values the views and contribution of older people". The project aligns with Council's "Cultural Plan. 2014 - 2018"

## Key Learnings

The timeframe to deliver the project proved quite challenging and fast paced given the time of year with public holidays and people on holidays over the Christmas period..

**Potential Changes to Improve**

Given consideration to the time of year prior to undertaking such a project.

**How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project**

A good starting point would be to refer to the detail in both the grant application and project plan. These documents provide sufficient information to describe how the project was developed, implemented and then evaluated including key milestones etc. However the size and scope of the project delivered could not be delivered within the grant funds and would require additional financial resources to achieve the stated outputs.

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## Sustainability of Impacts

The relationships built and developed with the project partners and participants should remain ongoing and therefore sustainable as a direct result of the project.

The making of the Golden Oldies YouTube clip and Council's website is still receiving hits.

The photographs are available to promote positive ageing beyond the life of the project.

### Follow On Activities

The photographic images produced as an output of the project are available and will be displayed in various venues across the coming months to promote positive ageing and creativity. Council will fund any costs associated with this which are expected to be minimal.

## Online Information

<http://wollongong.nsw.gov.au/services/community/Pages/screendreams.aspx>

[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Mrs Sue Savage

**Position:** Community and Cultural Development Manager

**Phone:** 02 4227 7237

**Email:** [ssavage@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ssavage@wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

# Wyong Shire Council - Creative Ageing Expo

**COUNCIL NAME**

Wyong Shire Council

**RURAL/REGIONAL/METRO**

Regional

**COUNCIL SIZE**

Over 60,000 residents

**POPULATION OVER 60**

36,980 / 25%

## Project Summary

Aligned to our recently endorsed Central Coast Positive Ageing Strategy 2014, Community Partnerships and Planning section hosted a Creative Ageing Arts and Craft Expo which was open to all.

The Expo meets the 'being involved' priority area identified as part of the Positive Ageing Strategy. Local residents indicated during consultation that they wanted to connect to community organisations and activities (arts, recreation, cultural facilities), volunteering and having a sense of belonging, connection and purpose.

Funded under the Creative Ageing Local Government Grants 2014, the expo aimed to showcase local cultural and creative arts and crafts groups and for the groups to promote their creative practice to the local community. The creative groups were invited to hold a stall and were encouraged to offer a 'hands-on' activity or display. In addition, local dance and musical groups performed to showcase their skills and talents and promote the strengths of our local creative community.

Local art, craft and creative groups attended including the following: Potters, Weavers, Spinners, Knitters, local Art Societies, Water Colour Society, Wood Turners, Calligraphy, Art Collective, Maori Association, Bungree Aboriginal Elders Group, Historical Society, Lapidary, Writers Guild, Patch Working, and Wyong Drama Group.

The social enterprise Sam's Café provided food and drinks on the day. The Entrance Community Centre Men's Shed also featured displays, tours, and talks about their activities, highlighting the benefits of being a member of a Men's Shed.

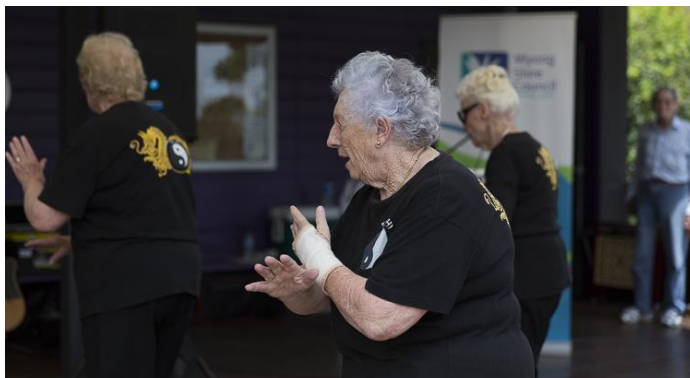
This project is a new initiative and has been integrated into another program.

**Target Audiences Engaged**

- Aboriginal people
- Older people who are carers
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- People over the age of 60
- People with disabilities
- Socio economically disadvantaged people
- Geographically isolated people
- Socially isolated people

**Artforms/Modes of Expression Utilised**

- Literature
- Reflecting local history
- Crafts
- Music
- Visual arts
- Dance



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### **Activities**

The Creative Ageing Art and Craft Expo was held on the 20th November 2014 at The Entrance Community Centre. This was a one off event. Over 24 stallholders from local arts, craft and cultural groups displayed their activity and promoted their group to the public. The Entrance Art Gallery was transformed into an amazing space of colour, texture and vibrancy. Entertainers, Ron Sinclair and Phil King entertained the community throughout the day as did the Chinese music and elegant dancing. Feedback from the day was very positive, “enjoyed the vibrant atmosphere and the fact that so many groups participated. We were glad of the opportunity to be involved”.

The groups were invited to showcase and promote their creative practice to the local senior’s community and to provide a ‘hands-on’ activity/display where possible.

### **Outcomes**

Project Outcomes:

- Facilitate increased participation within the community by older people in creative activities.
- Create opportunities for local cultural and creative groups to effectively promote themselves to the broader community.
- Improve social connectedness amongst older people living in the Wyong Shire.
- Develop collaborative partnerships between emerging and more established community groups.

### **How Older People Were Engaged in Planning & Implementation**

Local creative groups were involved in the planning, implementation of the Arts and Craft Expo. Project leaders came from Wrapped with Love knitting groups and local weaver and spinner groups who provided the initial idea for the Expo and were integral in the planning of the event. Tasks they engaged with included:

- Connecting to other arts, crafts and creative groups within the Wyong Shire.
- Giving advice (site planning, hanging exhibits, use of space, who should be involved).
- Promoting the event within their groups and the broader community.
- Forming partnerships and networks with each other and the community.
- Assisting with set up and event management on the day.
- Provided ideas, drive, enthusiasm and passion for the event.

The planning team were able to connect with other arts and craft groups within the Wyong Shire community to promote the event broadly across the area. As Council has a long history of engagement with the local seniors community (particularly through the process of developing their Positive Ageing Strategy 2014), these relationships enabled a thorough promotion of the event and the involvement of many key stakeholders who work within the senior sector.

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Participants: 100**

**Older People Engaged in the Activity as Audience: 225**

### **How Project Increased Older People’s Participation**

All stallholders were asked to provide an activity for people to try.

Qualitative survey evaluations conducted on the day reflected the positive outcomes of the event in linking older people to creative activities. Fifteen of the 24 stallholders filled in evaluation forms and all said that they had increased interest in their club or organisation from community members, with 12 groups stating they had attracted new memberships. The Pen Writers group reported having 8 new members sign up for their group and The Wyong Drama group reported, “some will attend our shows (added to mailing list), some interested in joining group”.

The Inner Wheel Group reported the importance of the community being more aware of what they do with their fundraising activities and other groups reported giving out lots of information, “We had a demonstration. Passed out brochures. We’ll know how successful we are when we see how many new members we get”.

### **How Access & Participation was Enabled Regardless of Physical Ability**

The Entrance Community Centre was chosen because it is accessible to people with any level of disability. The centre has wheel chair access from the car park and adjoining streets and has disabled toilets on site. The walkways have special structures for vision impaired people so they can navigate the space. Displays were erected with accessibility in mind including: leaving plenty of space for wheel chairs, walking frames, walking sticks and strollers. A risk assessment was completed prior to the event (and monitored during the event) to prevent falls and incidents. Chairs were strategically placed to allow older people the opportunity to

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rest. A Wyong Shire Council employee was available to help escort people from their cars or from the community bus when needed.

### **Project Changes**

No changes required as the project was implemented as described on the grants application form.

### **Unexpected Benefits/Outcomes**

The Arts and Craft expo exceeded expectations in several ways. The networking between the groups was very beneficial as they swapped information, learnt about what each other does and met like-minded people. "A day out with like-minded people. We've learnt a lot about suppliers".

"The vibrancy and the atmosphere of the Expo was great and the camaraderie amongst the stallholders was evident by the happy faces and smiles" (anecdotal observation from Community Development Worker). "The background music was good. Nice atmosphere".

How many creative groups participated exceeded our expectation as the local groups were glad to be involved and have the opportunity to promote themselves. Many of the smaller knitting groups had not met each other before and the Expo provided an important opportunity for all the groups to learn what each other are doing.

### **Partners & Providers**

Wyong Shire Councils Community Development Worker (Community & Cultural Programs) and Council volunteers.

Groups involved on the day listed below:

- Wyong Drama Group
- Toukley and Long Jetty Senior Citizen Clubs
- Wyong Family History Group
- Toukley District Art Society
- The Entrance Men's Shed Inc.
- The Lakes Church Craft group
- Frank Golt – drumming workshops
- The Bateau Bay Embroidery Group
- Lakeside Quilters
- Tuggerah Lakes Art Society
- Phil King and Ron Sinclair – musicians
- Northern Settlement Services
- Inner Wheel Club of Wyong Inc
- Central Coast Art Collective - Marta Lett - Calligrapher, designer, tutor
- Central Coast Lapidary Club Inc
- Central Coast Woodturners Corp Ltd
- Tuggerah Lakes Potters Assoc. Inc
- The Entrance Knitters Guild Group
- Central Coast Watercolour Society Inc.
- Wrap with Love Inc.
- Christina Stewart – spinner (raw and prepared fleece and knitting)
- Lakehaven Spinners and Weavers Inc.
- Pens Writers' Group
- Lapidary Club
- China Australia Friendship Association – dancing, music, chinese calligraphy
- St John – first aid
- The Benevolent Society – Community Development Worker assisted on the day and with promotion.
- Adssi Homeliving provided community bus and promotion to clients.
- Social Enterprise Sam's Café – provided morning tea and refreshments

### **Continuing Relationships with Partnering Organisations**

All the groups are very excited to be involved with future events. The project has helped Council to build and develop strong networks and relationships with all the participating creative groups and local organisations.

The Wrapped with Love group are planning to hold a 'Knit In' during July 2015 and have asked Wyong Shire Council for their support and involvement.

### **Project Alignment with Council's Plans and Strategies**

The Creative Ageing Expo will meet key objectives from Wyong Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan, including our desire for; communities to be vibrant, caring and connected with a sense of pride in their local neighbourhood, communities will have access to a diverse range of affordable and co-ordinated facilities, programs and services, our community to be well educated, innovative and creative, with people attaining full knowledge potential at all stages of life.

The Central Coast Positive Ageing Strategy identified six priority areas as being critical to supporting activities that promote healthy and active ageing in the region including; staying healthy, being involved, getting around, my community, my home, transition and support. This project aligns well with the priority area "being involved" as local residents during consultations indicated they want to connect to community



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organisations and activities, volunteering and having a sense of belonging and purpose. Current challenges faced by survey participants included: loneliness, access to community (arts, recreation, cultural facilities), finding out what's on and what is available in the local community, and connecting to volunteering opportunities.

## Key Learnings

Good lead up time is required to ensure maximum attendance - beyond that the event was highly successful.

### Potential Changes to Improve

A longer planning period (this was restricted by the short 'turn around' from grant application to delivery). This would allow Council staff more time to promote the Expo to the broader community, arrange alternative transport options and reach the target audience.

### How Other Councils Could Replicate the Project

By adopting a similar partnership based approach - with community and community organisations.

## Sustainability of Impacts

The new networks, relationships and links between the creative groups will carry-on into the future as the groups plan and work together on other activities. Relationships between the creative groups, local residents and organisation that were involved in the event will help us plan, consult, promote other events and activities in the future. As many of the groups reported receiving interest in memberships, the Expo will help the groups grow and attract new members. Local seniors who join and attend new activities will benefit in many ways; a feeling of belonging, social connectedness and the feeling of pride in learning a new skill and meeting new people. Some of these outcomes cannot be measured in the scope of this project however, it is widely known that long term community connections have significant health implications and mental health benefits. It is important that older people have good social connections with family and friends and are connected to their communities.

### Follow On Activities

The Wrap with Love knitting groups are planning to hold a 'Knit-In' in the Wyong Shire in July. The KNIT IN is a fantastic community event supported by the organisation Wrap With Love, which creates colourful warm wraps for communities in need around the world. Previously this event has been run in the Gosford Shire by ABC radio.

## Online Information

[www.wyong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wyong.nsw.gov.au)

## Contact

**Name:** Mr Glenn Cannard

**Position:** Section Manager Community & Cultural Programs

**Phone:** 02 4350 5214

**Email:** [Glenn.Cannard@wyong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Glenn.Cannard@wyong.nsw.gov.au)