

Elwood St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre Inc.

Committee Report

Year ending 30.06.2011

The names of Committee of Management members throughout the year and at the time of this report are:

Penny Digaletos, Chairperson
Sylvia Carnie, Treasurer
Philippa Armstrong
Josie Wadelton
Fel Bisiani (ex officio)
Helen Bennett, Secretary (resigned 10.10.2011)

Elwood / St. Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre Inc. [ESNLC] is a not-for-profit, community based centre that provides quality adult education programs and community support. It is one of over 320 *Learn Local* organisations that deliver education and training to Victorians who need to get a job and develop the skills needed for even greater personal achievement in learning and in the workplace. Our programs aim to cater, within a supportive environment, to the needs of those most disadvantaged in the community, empowering them to overcome educational gaps and social isolation. In order to reach a range of isolated and diverse communities some courses are offered offsite in local venues.

Following an audit in late 2010, ESNLC's status as a Registered Training Organisation was renewed until May 2015. Government funded and low cost places are available in pre-accredited, accredited and general courses that focus on English as a Second Language, Literacy, Art and Computer Skills. Accredited training provides skills and knowledge that leads to a nationally recognised qualification. Pre-accredited programs are programs that are designed for learners to gain confidence and the fundamental skills which lead to employment and further education opportunities, such as accredited programs. ESNLC also offers an occasional childcare service and provides rooms for a wide range of other community activities and clubs.

Changes introduced for the provision of government funded learning have had an impact on revenue. Educational delivery via funded places in accredited courses has continued, but at a reduced level. For the year 2010-11 ESNLC obtained funding and support from the City of Port Phillip, Toyota, Adult Community and Further Education [ACFE]/Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Bayside City Council and Bendigo Bank. This financial assistance has enabled projects such as a free art and music program for residents of the Elsternwick Housing Estate, a Community Learning Project for indigenous women, a musical recital as part of the annual Seniors' Week celebrations, a project on local waterways and strategic mentoring.

Our Learners

ESNLC learners include individuals who have had no prior formal education or who want to get back into learning after time away from formal study, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Indigenous Australians, existing workers and employees undertaking further study to achieve more in their jobs and adults learning for interest or their own personal development. Collaboration with community support organisations has again enabled ESNLC to offer programs that address specific learner needs.

Our Staff

From mid-July to mid-October the Centre was managed by Tim Tolhurst. Lisa Mitchell then took on the role of Acting Manager, assisted by Helen Bennett, a member of the Committee of Management, until Fel Bisiani was appointed to the role of Manager as of 24.01.2011. Our thanks are due to Lisa and Helen for bridging the gap. Teaching and administrative staff have benefited from attending Professional Development workshops and courses funded and provided by ACFE, the City of Port Phillip, ACE Vic and Skills Victoria.

Our Volunteers

Our generous volunteers support and enrich the work of ESNLC in many ways. Chris Carter provides general IT support to staff and members of the public and runs the PC club for ESNLC learners and local residents. Michiko Maclean, William Green, Brian White, Ewan Coffey and Anne-Maree Bernado have assisted our ESL learners; Colleen Abbott and Tony Walker have helped in our child care service; Neil McLean and Chikako Charenton have provided administrative support. Janet De Longville has helped by word processing contributions from *Roomers* writers.

Educational Delivery

In line with ESNLC's focus on language and literacy programs, 94 English as a Second Language learners from a wide range of cultural backgrounds have attended courses. These range from beginner to advanced level and include nationally accredited training towards the Certificates of General Education for Adults and ESL Frameworks that is funded by ACFE. Computer literacy and art therapy classes have also been well attended. In 2011 ESNLC has also offered Fee for Service courses such as Short Story Writing, Screenwriting and Spanish. Learners have continued to benefit from the Wi-Fi setup, which enables the use of technology in classrooms.

Recreational and Support Activities

Over the year ESNLC has provided a home for community groups and organisations, including Elwood Book Club, Overeaters Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, AA Meditation, PC Club, Elwood Toy Library, Men's Group, Diabetes Prevention, Elwood Chess Club, Origami, Steiner Playgroups and the Poets' Garden Working Party. ESNLC has also provided affordable room hire space for a wide range of independently run activities and almost 100 children's birthday parties.

Marketing

In the interest of containing costs, in 2011 the quarterly brochure that publicises ESNLC programs and activities has been designed in house and a local printer used. The method of distribution has also been changed, to ensure that the brochure reaches local residents in their homes and in public places such as cafes and bookshops. Both distribution companies used are in the City of Port Phillip.

Childcare

ESNLC is licensed by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to provide occasional child care five mornings a week. This license has been renewed for an additional five years until February 2016. Funding for this operation is provided under the ACFE Child Care Program and is currently guaranteed until 30.06.2012.

Events

In March Joan Gibby, a volunteer, organised an afternoon of activities at the Elwood Angling Club, including a display by EcoCentre staff and a walk through the native vegetation along the foreshore led by Meyer Edelson. Meyer explained in fascinating detail the various ways in which local indigenous people historically used the plants. The venue was decorated with mobiles depicting environmental themes and created by local schoolchildren. A musical recital held at ESNLC in Seniors' Week was attended by over 60 people. Members of the Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra and other musicians performed a repertoire of eclectic world music.

The *Roomers* Project

2011 has been another great year for *Roomers*. The weekly workshops have continually been very well attended with the average number of participants being 12 per workshop. We have had 5 new participants attend regularly. There have been some wonderful tutors engaged this year including Kate Holden, Arnold Zable and Tony Birch.

This year we have focused strongly on the magazine itself, and have increased both the size and the frequency. We have increased from a 16 page to a 20 page magazine and have increased the frequency of publishing from 3 times a year to being a quarterly. This has definitely raised the profile and the calibre of *Roomers* and I have had no trouble in gathering the additional material needed to fill the extra 4 pages per issue. The participants have welcomed these changes and are very excited about continuing to raise the profile and the quality of the magazine.

Next year we will be bringing a new designer on board, a St Kilda based design firm: Sweet Design who are very well known in the arts and also for their pro bono work, They will be totally revamping the look of the magazine and producing it in full colour. And all for the price we are currently paying. This is very exciting news indeed.

A group of 11 *Roomers* writers traveled to Daylesford in winter to perform at the Words in Winter Literary Festival. We performed a spoken word show titled "*When the dust settles*" to a full house at the newly renovated Daylesford Neighbourhood House. Thanks to a City of Port Phillip Community Grant we were able to stay for the weekend at a beautiful Edwardian Guesthouse and take the time to really enjoy the festival. It was a huge success and the organisers of the festival have asked us to return next year.

Philippa Armstrong, Roomers Editor

Studio 106

Studio 106 has had a very successful year in 2010-2011. There is now a stable of 18 artists, with constant demands being received from artists for space. Tenancy has expanded to include jewellery and film-making activities and new artists from Russia and Japan have been welcomed. Our artists have been selected as finalists in several art and film competitions. Among the finalists were Noralisa Speranza and Maria Leonard for the prestigious Alice Bale Prize; Robert Scholten and Maria Leonard

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for the BSG "Works on Paper". Katrina Mather's animated film "Nullarbor" won first prize at the Sydney Film Festival. Zev Howley's film "Sarah's Jihad" picked up the audience vote for best Short-Cut Film in 2010. Robert Scholten designed the new Studio 106 website at www.106art.com.

Josie Wadelton, Studio 106 Artist

On behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank ESNLC staff members - Lisa Mitchell, Helen Graber, Jelena Andrejeva, Fel Bisiani and the *Roomers* Coordinator, Philippa Armstrong; our teaching staff and volunteers, our child care worker Christine Smith and Deb King for assistance with statistical reporting. Together they have enabled ESNLC to provide a diverse and responsive community service.

Finally, my thanks to the members of the Committee of Management for their contribution this year.

Penny Digaletos

Chairperson, Committee of Management

Dated this 24th day of November, 2011.