



*CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSITY*

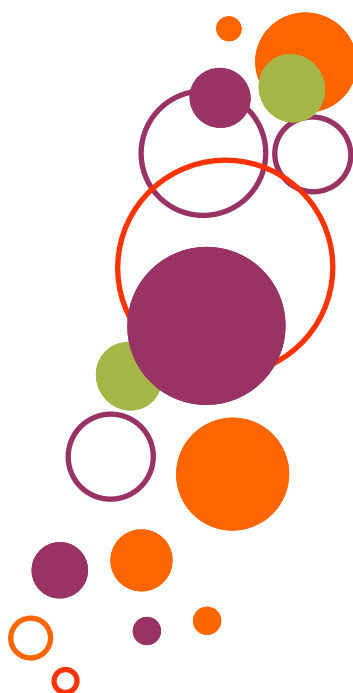
# *Springvale Neighbourhood House* Annual Report 2014





***26th Annual Report  
2014***

***SPRINGVALE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE Inc***





## Neighbourhood Houses

The heart of our community

This report can also be viewed online at: [www.snh.org.au](http://www.snh.org.au)

Hard copies of this Annual Report can be obtained from the House Main office:

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# Our House

## Vision:

*To empower members of our diverse community to participate fully within Australian society.*



*In 1983, Springvale Neighbourhood House was born as a brand new mudbrick room—"beloved daughter of Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau". The House was built as a special meeting space for small community groups, with resources, support, advice and a "home" away from home.*

*Through incorporation in 1987, we gained our autonomy, developing a dynamic relationship with the Bureau and also the wide world at our doorstep.*

## MISSION:

**To support and resource community groups and organisations undertaking social, cultural and community development activities.**

**To provide language, literacy and educational programs accessible to all members of our community.**

Springvale Neighbourhood House was purpose built through an unemployed youth project whose participants constructed hand-made bricks with clay from the local quarry.

The House is unique in the Neighbourhood House movement, established for self-help and empowerment of the culturally diverse community of the City of Greater Dandenong.

It provides a meeting place for newly arrived migrants and refugees, overcoming their feelings of social isolation.

During the years 1983 to 1992 many cultural groups arriving at Enterprise Hostel made their way to The House, and with its assistance, established support groups for their emerging communities enabling them to settle successfully in the local community. Many of these people are still involved with the House which has continued to be based on self help and support rather than classes and programs.

In the two decades that have followed many new migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have found their way to Springvale Neighbourhood House. With each new group, the House grows richer through sharing new cultural experiences including

traditions, dance, song, language, food and celebrations.

Springvale Neighbourhood House played a major role in coordinating and running multicultural events including Summation World Cultural Festival (1996-2006), All Nations Arts and Craft Market,(2003) and annual Diversity Day celebrations since 2008.

Springvale Neighbourhood House has become a Registered Training Organisation running English language and literacy classes.

Our Neighbourhood Literacy Centre coordinates ESL classes in Springvale and suburbs across the City of Greater Dandenong.

The House is home to 43 community groups and continues to provide a welcoming "home away from home" for all, regardless of country of birth, language, religion, citizenship or visa status.

**80%**  
of participants  
speak a language  
other than English  
at home



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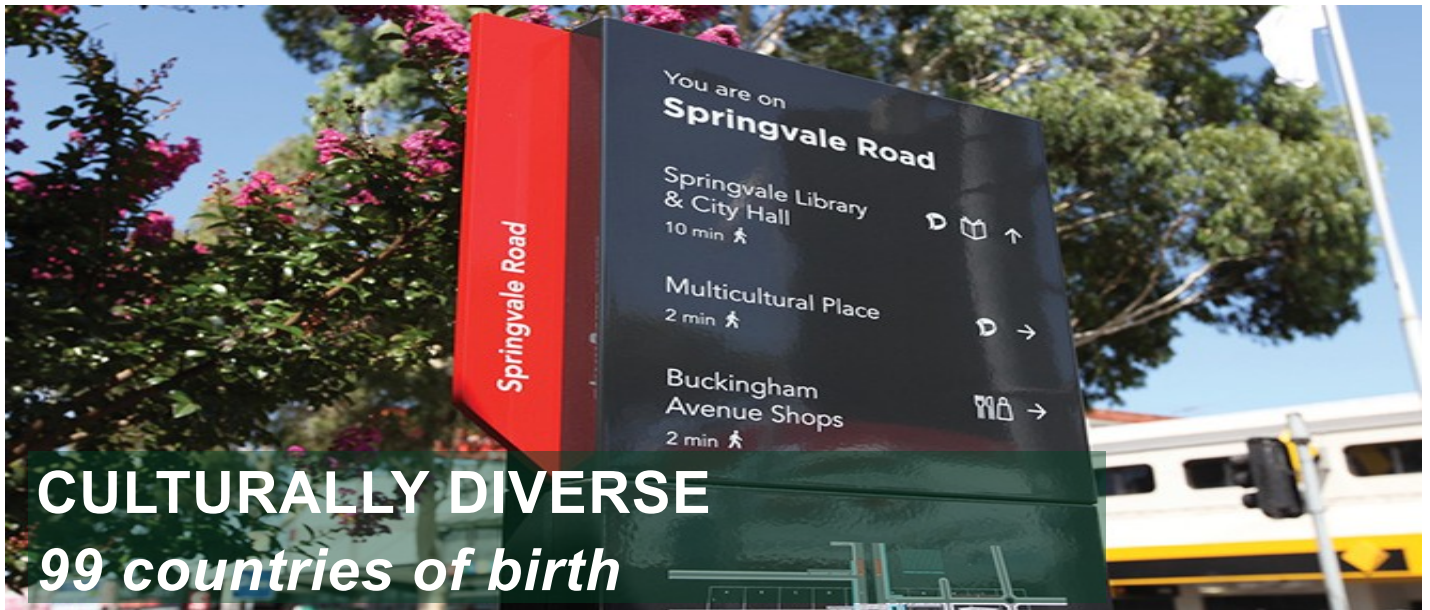
**P27** OUR ACTIVITIES

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# Our Suburb



## CULTURALLY DIVERSE 99 countries of birth

Springvale is the most culturally diverse community within the City of Greater Dandenong. The City of Greater Dandenong was rated the most socio-economically disadvantaged municipality in Victoria in the 2011 Census.

In 2014, Springvale had an estimated population of approximately 20,200.

Springvale residents have higher levels of migrant settlement, cultural diversity and limited English proficiency than Greater Dandenong, lower median incomes and lower rates of early school leaving.

The 2011 Census found that 69% of Springvale residents were born overseas, higher than for Greater Dandenong and more than double the corresponding metropolitan proportion (33%).

Among the 99 birthplaces of its residents were Vietnam (21%), India (11%), Cambodia (5%) and China (5%). Rates of migrant settlement are relatively high, with 8% of residents having arrived in Australia within the previous 2.5 years – similar to the figure for Greater Dandenong, of 7%.

Languages other than English are spoken by 79% of Springvale residents – compared with 64% for Greater Dandenong. Twenty-

two per cent have limited fluency in the use of spoken English, higher than the municipal level of 14% and over five times the metropolitan level of 4%. Among the major religious faiths are Buddhism, adhered to by 29% of residents, Islam (5%) and Hinduism (3%).

Nine per cent of young adults (20–24 years) had left school before completing year 11 – lower than both the municipal average of 13% and the metropolitan level, of 10%.

Median individual gross incomes of \$328 p.w., recorded in the Census, are the lowest in Greater Dandenong and equivalent to 55% of metropolitan levels.

Of the 6,489 homes in Springvale, 16% are flats, less than the proportion across Greater Dandenong of 21%, though more than the metropolitan level of 11%. Sixty-one per cent of homes are owned or being purchased by their occupants – less than the metropolitan level of 71%.

**79%**  
*of Springvale  
residents speak a  
language other  
than English*



# Our People



## Chairperson's Report: A year of excitement and change!



*"I have a real sense of satisfaction that I have been able to help the local community in a positive way. I have learnt a lot about the different cultures of the people who use the house."*

**Melinda Hamilton**  
Chairperson

Melinda Hamilton was elected chairperson of Springvale Neighbourhood House committee in November 2013. She is the leader of the little hobby group, runs a volunteer English conversation class, and she is a sessional tutor for our Literacy Centre. In her spare time, Melinda is a very resourceful and crafty woman.

Greetings, everyone! My first year as Chairperson of Springvale Neighbourhood House Committee is coming to an end and what a year it has been! It has been a big learning curve for me but I have had a lot of fun along the way.

I would like to thank the City of Greater Dandenong Council, the Victorian State Government, and our other funding bodies for their continued support. I would also like to thank all the staff and volunteers who have made my job a lot easier and made it a happy experience.

Also, to all leaders of our groups who have taken the time to attend our monthly meetings and organise our first combined charity function, I thank you for your valuable time and effort. I am sure this will be a great success and raise much needed funds for SCAAB - Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau.

I would like to welcome the groups who are new to Springvale Neighbourhood House this year - Las Iluminadis, Victorian Myanmar Muslim Community, and the Springvale Mandolin Music Group.

I wish a sad but fond farewell to the following groups which have left Springvale Neighbourhood House this year - Senior Slavic Women's Group, Relaxum and Druze Community Charity of Victoria.

I am looking forward to the next 12 months and the projects we can achieve together.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts put in by our work experience students who have done a wonderful job of organizing the outings for all members of the house to enjoy.

In closing I would like to wish all associated with Springvale Neighbourhood House a happy, healthy and peaceful next 12 months and beyond.

# Our Committee

## Who are our committee

**Q** What groups are represented on the Committee.

**A** Our 2014 committee has representatives from the Hararian Organisation, Al Emaan Muslim Women's Support Group, Rhythms of the Pacific, Maya Community Group, Little Hobby Group, Lakhanda—Sri Lankan Elderly Group, La Voz Feminia, Friends of the Neighbourhood House, United Filipino Elderly Group and a representative of multicultural women.

**Q** What percentage of SNH groups are represented on the Committee?

**A** In 2014, 25% of our groups have a representative on our Committee. This makes the committee truly representative of our members. We also have a Community Leaders Forum every 2nd month where leaders of all groups meet together with the Committee

**Q** Who has been on the Committee for the longest?

**A** Mohamed Mohamed is the longest serving committee member. He has been on the Committee for 27 years.

What do our committee members really think about being on the committee?



*"I enjoy representing my group, the Hararian Organisation on the committee because we are one of the oldest groups in the House. The House is like our home and we have been represented on the committee for 27 years."*

**Mohamed Mohamed**  
Deputy Chairperson



*"Being a Committee member reinforces feelings of belonging to a unique organisation that supports and encourages the development of its group members."*

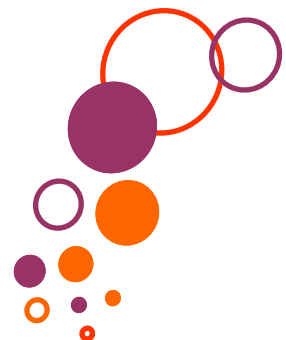
*The Committee as a governing body does not expect me to be a highly qualified and decorated member, but a responsible, committed and devoted member who works for all groups and enjoys being part of the family of Springvale Neighbourhood House."*

**Wilfredo Zelada**  
Treasurer



*"I like being a committee member because it is a learning experience for me, and also it gives me the opportunity to have a say in managing and improving the House."*

**Hayat Doughan**  
Deputy Chairperson





# Our Committee

What do our committee members really think about being on the committee? (cont'd)



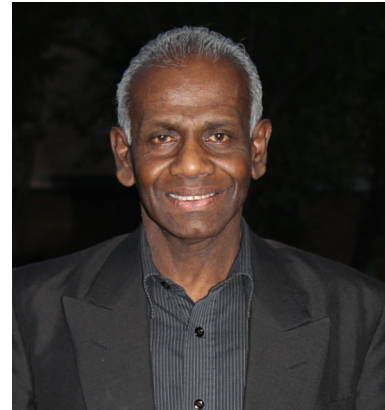
*"I like being on the committee, because, in a small way it is helping people to settle into our great country and to be productive."*

*Jim McNeill  
SNH Committee member*



*"As one of the Friends of SNH, I can add some of my governance experience to the committee as it takes on new members. I'm looking forward to the coming year as a time of growth and renewal."*

*Betty Wilderman  
SNH Committee Member*



*"Our committee is multinational and multicultural. We are truly representing the entire world!"*

*Gamini Fonseka  
SNH Committee member*



*"I like being a committee member because I enjoy giving support to the lovely staff of the House."*

*It gives me the opportunity to meet different people and make a difference to the community."*

*Maria Cruz  
SNH Committee member*



*"I've been on the Committee for 9 years and I've enjoyed learning about the traditions of the different groups who are members of the house. I've also learnt how to be a good secretary."*

*Meteka Tumu  
SNH Secretary*



*"I like how all committee members share their best thoughts for the vision and strategic plan. These included equal opportunity, being inclusive, providing support for each person and all groups. The House raises awareness about services & resources for diverse communities to participate in the wider Australian society. This is a committee and staff of friends, who treat each other and those who access the House like family."*

*Magda Ziadeh  
SNH Committee member*

# Our Accounts



Wilfredo has been a member of our committee since 1994 and has been our trusted treasurer for ten years. Wilfredo works as finance officer at the Victorian Womens Trust and is very good at reporting on accounts.

## Treasurer's Report 2014



*"As Treasurer of the Springvale Neighbourhood House I feel so honoured and proud of being part of the Administrative Committee elected by the Annual General Meeting to manage the affairs of the House during 2013-14. "*

**Wilfredo Zelada**  
SNH Treasurer

The audited financial report for the financial year 2013-14 included with this annual report presents the income and expenditure for the financial year and the financial position as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The notes to the financial statements included in the report present details and the comparison with the previous financial year.

The Springvale Neighbourhood House is in the process of reviewing its operations as a community development centre and a literacy and community education centre to ensure that it is relevant and is responding to the needs of the local community.

The Literacy programs have experienced a boost in the provision of Skills Victoria programs by reaching a level of funding exceeding \$500,000 compared to a level of funding for community development and support under \$130,000.

The Administrative Committee has also reviewed its legal obligations for making provisions for staff entitlements accordingly with the current industrial relations legislations and collective agreements.

The challenges our House has endured during

the last financial years are a reflection of changes happening in the Australian Government policies and the responses coming from the general community adapting to this changing environment.

As Treasurer of the Springvale Neighbourhood House I feel so honoured and proud of being part of the Administrative Committee elected by the Annual General Meeting to manage the affairs of the House during 2013-14.

Our achievements have been possible thanks to the continuous support of our funding bodies, other local community organisations working in partnership, the invaluable support of our team of paid staff, volunteers, students and every single group member who are making a reality the vision and mission of this wonderful organisation.

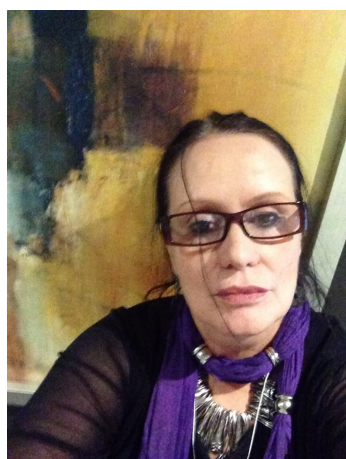


# Our Staff & Tutors



## Neighbourhood House Coordinator Report:

What a great first year on the job!!



*"I can't believe how much I love working at Springvale Neighbourhood House. Every day I get to travel around the world and learn new things about other cultures and my own culture too!"*

Melanie Virtue,  
Coordinator

In September 2013, I was given one of the greatest gifts ever—I was employed as the Coordinator of Springvale Neighbourhood House.

The first time I saw the mud brick building with its soaring wooden ceilings, I fell in love! When I learnt that it was built by the community, I knew I was working in a very special place.

On my first day, I was asked to plan an excursion. I was amazed by the popularity of the first excursion. Three Grenda buses AND our little community bus drove to Cranbourne Botanical Gardens. Over 200 people!

When we returned, I realized why these outings are so important. A woman explained *"thank you for taking us to that beautiful place. Without this, I just have my home and my group, nothing new to talk about with my family and friends. This gives me life!"*

Our excursions and activities like the Biggest Morning Tea provide a great opportunity for group members to meet members of other groups. One of my best memories was seeing one of our Lake Mountain photos in which 8 people from different cultural backgrounds were laughing and enjoying the experience

together.

I've enjoyed getting to know each of the groups who come to the house. They truly are the life-blood of this house and their contribution through the Community Leaders Forum is invaluable to our ongoing success.

I'm glad to report that my first Diversity Day celebration was a success, due to the massive help from Rosemary and her team of volunteers. Seeing over 400 people celebrating together, sharing food, song and dance was spectacular.

This year our community bus became a reality with assistance from our Chisholm students Jasmine and Melinda. 22 groups sent a member to the RACV safe bus driver course. The bus is booked at least twice each week; one week it was booked every day with one group actually handing over the keys to the next group at midnight.

I've commenced a few new activities this year including a *Welcome Café* where people new to the area, can drop in for a chat and a cuppa. I'm happy to see members of our groups joining in the *Welcome Café*, our new *Try It Club*, *Little Hobby Group*, and *Friday Walking Group*.

# Our Staff & Tutors

What do our staff and tutors really think about working for Springvale Neighbourhood House?



*"It is interesting and exciting work with a fantastic diverse group of people"*

*Rebekah O'Loughlin  
Coordinator, Literacy Centre*



*"What I really enjoy is the huge variety of people who come in. who often invite us to share traditional and extremely tasty food. I like the friendly and sharing atmosphere of the House."*

*Rosemary McLeod  
Administration Assistant*



*"I love to meet people and I like collecting and banking money for the House. I enjoy the variety in my work and helping anyone who drops into the office."*

*Sonia Hernandez  
Finance Officer*



*"In Sri Lanka I taught English as a 2nd Language to native secondary/ tertiary level students who knew my mother-tongue but here in Australia I volunteered as a tutor & continued teaching with Springvale Literacy Centre because of the community setting. I try my best to meet the challenges of teaching English, not only to adult multi-cultural students from diverse linguistic backgrounds but also to Australian literacy students including those with mild intellectual disabilities, and so my learning and teaching continues"*

*Mystica Perera  
Tutor*



*"I have enjoyed teaching at the Springvale Literacy Centre this year, because the lessons have been both challenging yet enlightening and skill enhancing to me. The adult migrant students have been both diverse and unique and it has been a privilege to be a part of the English language success stories at this centre."*

*Maria Fairweather  
Tutor*



*"This year, our English class focused on the community around to shape our learning. We have built a very good relationship in our class which is conducive to higher learning. We have included outings to further enhance learning such as a trip to the Dandenong market"*

*Robyn Egerton  
Tutor*



# Our Staff & Tutors

What do our staff and tutors really think about working for Springvale Neighbourhood House?



*"At the Literacy Centre, I've learned many different teaching skills to satisfy the needs of different learner groups. Often my students' life stories have been an inspiration & learning experience for me as a person & a tutor. It's a privilege to be part of the Adult Community Sector & Springvale Literacy Centre"*

*Ranni Pillai*



*"I like teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because I get extreme satisfaction when I see the great improvement in my students' achievement in their English. They are also very thankful and appreciative and now they are hungry to learn more!"*

*Bee Ling Goh  
Tutor*



*"I like teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because it is a very friendly environment with great colleagues."*

*Graciela Kuzu  
Tutor*



*"I love teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because of the composition of the groups. I find dealing with students from diverse cultural backgrounds very exciting, enriching and educating. Teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre is challenging as in the same class there may be people with very different levels of formal education experience, for instance students holding university degrees and those who only completed primary school education"*

*Kasia Malinowski  
Tutor*



*"I like teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because it gives me a great feeling of satisfaction to see my students' growing potential and confidence to achieve their goals in life and make new friends. It's a privilege to teach them, share their life stories and give them encouragement and support to succeed in their studies."*

*Julia Smirnova  
Tutor*



*"Learning is a two-way street that's life-long and I've learnt a great deal from my students. Every lesson is enjoyable. It's rewarding to observe that not only are students learning, but they enjoy coming to class making all the preparation that goes into building cohesive, and contextualised lessons worthwhile."*

*Jo Scott  
Tutor*

# Our Staff & Tutors

What do our staff and tutors really think about working for Springvale Neighbourhood House?



*"I like teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because it makes me feel happy and relaxed. The experience in being part of the Springvale Literacy Centre is pretty unique and it has a great team spirit"*

*"Teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre is challenging because as trainers or practitioners we deal with students coming from such a diverse background. To be able to communicate with students with limited or no English is indeed a very challenging experience"*

*"Since I began teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre I have learned to be patient, friendly and professional at the same time"*  
Subha Sriram

Tutor



*"My teaching high light for this year was when one of my longtime students started talking to me after being too frightened to speak in class."*

*I really enjoyed taking my class to Garden World because they were all excited looking at all the plants and enjoying a group coffee in the restaurant."*

*Teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre is challenging because the students keep going off on their own tangents. Since I began working at Springvale I have learned patience, sign language and have developed a sense of humour."*  
Melinda Hamilton

Tutor



*"I really enjoy teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because I get to teach many students from different backgrounds, age groups, and levels. Even though it is challenging at times, but also very rewarding to see the students becoming more confident and happier. They are able to take advantage of the use of the internet to communicate with their friends and families. They also have a better opportunity to find a job in the future."*

Bach Nguyen  
Tutor



*"I like teaching at Springvale Literacy Centre because it is a very friendly environment and the students are willing to learn computer skills."*

Duc Nguyen  
Tutor





# Our Groups



Our groups are the life of the House!!

IN 2013-14, SPRINGVALE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE HAD 41 GROUPS AS MEMBERS OF OUR HOUSE.

GROUPS PARTICIPATE IN THE HOUSE BY HOLDING THEIR MEETINGS HERE AND JOINING IN OUR MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND CELEBRATIONS.

OVER 80% OF OUR GROUP MEMBERS ATTEND OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM TO HELP THE HOUSE PLAN AND MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY.

SNH SUPPORTS GROUPS TO BECOME INDEPENDENT THROUGH ENCOURAGEMENT, ADVICE & ASSISTANCE WITH: FUNDRAISING, SUBMISSION WRITING, PLANNING OUTINGS, ORGANISING INFORMATION SESSIONS, RESOURCING GROUP LEADERS, AND PROVIDING MULTICULTURAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES WHERE THEY CAN MEET OTHER GROUPS AND SHARE THEIR CULTURE.

## AL EHSSAN SUPPORT GROUP



The Al-Ehssan Support group (pictured left) has between 7 and 10 members.

We like everything about Springvale Neighbourhood House. We enjoyed the snow trip this year.

We are very happy that the House provides us with a locked cupboard so that we do not have to carry things around.

This year we have enjoyed all of the outings, chair yoga, and the Friday morning walks.

## AL-EMAAN: MUSLIM WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

Our group (pictured right and top of page) meets every week at Springvale Neighbourhood House, where we enjoy the welcoming and safe environment. The staff are very supportive of all House members.

We participate in the house activities including excursions, information sessions, fundraising and Diversity day. We all look forward to continue enjoying being members of the SNH



# Our Groups



## AUSTRALIAN CHINESE MUSICAL BAND

The Australian Chinese Musical Band (pictured above) has 100 members.

We enjoy coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House because we can meet up with members of different groups, participate in activities organized by the House and practice Chinese music weekly.

This year we enjoyed performing Chinese Music at various events in Springvale and other suburbs.

We performed in concerts in other areas with the use of the Springvale Neighbourhood House community bus.

We met other groups through "Morning Tea" events. Next year we will have more concerts and meet more new friends from other groups. The highlights were appreciating cultures of other groups from non Chinese backgrounds, the dances performed by the Indian girls and the dancers and songs by the Chinese group.



## BOURIO ANATOLIES

Bourio-Anatolies is well supported by the staff at Springvale Neighbourhood House. They help us with advice about difficult issues and with community grant applications. SNH provides a safe place to hang out.

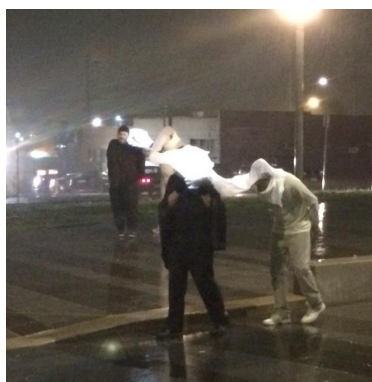
Last June I was involved in a street performance in Dandenong. (pictured left) It was a festival called Nocturnal.

I performed with Fusion Theatre and we performed for four days. The staff from Springvale Neighbourhood House came to see the performance. The performance was called "mind the light".

This year Springvale Neighbourhood House assisted with a funding submission and support letters for a new film called the Greek Seventies.

We have been invited to a Greek film festival in October-November to show my film "who is he".

If the submission is a success, we will make a new film to enter the Dandenong film Festival. Our out door performance in Dandenong was a puppetry performance and I was the puppeteer. I held a large head that had a light in it. It illustrated the mind.



*Alex from Bourio Anatolies performs in Fusion Theatre's "Mind the Light" street theatre as part of the City of Greater Dandenong's Nocturnal Festival, June 2014.*



# Our Groups



## HUONG QUE

Huong Que (pictured above) meets weekly at the House to choreograph and practice traditional Vietnamese dances.

The House provides encouragement and the opportunity to perform publicly. This means we can introduce Vietnamese culture, costumes, folk dance and music to the wider community.

This year we have been able to perform for various organizations on at least 17 occasions. We recently performed at the Full Moon Festival in Dandenong.

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## BLUE LAGOON

Blue Lagoon (pictured right) provide a welcome end to the working week. Their drumming can be heard all over the Queens Ave block and is a signal to all workers that the working week is almost finished.

The performing group combines traditional Cook Island drums with Hawaiian rhythms to create a unique and infectious sound.

Blue Lagoon is a regular user of the Springvale Neighbourhood House bus which we use for transport to performances, outings, and picking up Cook Island visitors from the airport.

Blue Lagoon provides social and spiritual support for our members and extended families.

## HARARIAN ASSOCIATION

The Hararian Organization has 103 members.

The House helps the Hararian Organization (HO) to run its program for its members.

Our group really enjoys the programs that the Hararian Organization puts in place for its members.

The House helps us to run Hararian Association committee meetings, youth cultural sessions and classes and to run women's programs. We plan to maintain this year's program plus more session/activities for the junior members.

Special events for this year have included cultural celebrations including Ramadan and Eid. We held a fundraising event and VCE information session workshops organized by ex-VCE students to pass on valuable lesson learnt to current VCE students.



# Our Groups



## LAKHANDA ELDERLY SRI LANKAN GROUP

The Lakhanda Elderly Group (pictured above) has been utilising the House every Friday for the last 9 years, with a member base of about 30 people.

The group participates in activities such as meetings, information sessions, workshops and picnics. An event our group enjoyed this year was a celebration of Sinhalese New Year. As usual, our group contributed their artistic abilities to the elderly segment of the Lakhanda Radio program.

We enjoy the friendly environment and the opportunity to meet other

groups at Springvale Neighbourhood House as well as participating in House activities.

This year the House has helped our group to meet and by giving publicity to our group.

Next year we plan to hold information sessions with help from Centrelink, Immigration authorities and Health organizations.

Planned activities for 2015 include celebrating the Sinhalese New Year and our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our program will be announced through the House news letter

## LA VOZ FEMENINA

La Voz Femenina (pictured right) has 27 members. One new lady joined this year. We share all our customs. Most importantly we are the same age and share the same language.

We wait for the next Monday to re -connect with each other. It keeps us alert and we enjoy each other's company. We enjoy chatting over our work.

It is nice to have this meeting place. Springvale Neighbourhood House helped us to organise walks and visit the museum where we spent the most beautiful day.

We went to Mornington Peninsula which was very, very good. We also used the mini bus to go to a restaurant.



Thank you very much for making these things possible. We are very happy with new chairs and tables that are cute and comfortable.

Next year we want to continue to have the support of the Neighbourhood House, with the beautiful ladies in the office, who are always so kind with us. Thank you.

We continue to work with our various crafts, knitting and painting. We also celebrate birthdays and the anniversary of the group.

We have parties to celebrate different nations of Latin and South America. We also attend all tours organized by our

Neighbourhood House. Thank you!



# Our Groups



## LITTLE HOBBY GROUP

The Little Hobby Group (pictured above) has 15 members who are friends and have fun in class.

Some members learned how to follow a pattern to knit a hat, scarf or baby jacket. Other members learned how to knit beautiful 3 dimensional scarves.

We have enjoyed learning how to make knitted lace coat hangers to sell at the SnowFest in Springvale to subsidise making a teddy bear (pictured right).

We used Springvale Neighbourhood House community bus to travel to Tooradin to purchase our teddy making material. We had a lovely day and had coffee by the water.

## IRAQI COMMUNITY

Aramaic was the language of Semitic peoples throughout the ancient Near East. It was the language of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Hebrews and Syrians. Aram and Israel had a common ancestry and the Hebrew patriarchs who were of Aramaic origin maintained ties of marriage with the tribes of Aram. The Hebrew patriarchs preserved their Aramaic names and spoke Aramaic.

The language of the people of Palestine shifted from Hebrew to Aramaic sometime before 2300 B.C. Therefore, we know that Jesus, his disciples and contemporaries spoke and wrote in Aramaic. The message of Christianity spread throughout Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia in this Semitic tongue.

We are now taking classes for this beautiful language that we don't want to lose. We learn not just to speak the language but also to read and write. Thanks to our amazing teacher Samir, we have students from 6 to 60 years of age.

## LAS ILUMINADIS

We are a newly formed social group for elderly Spanish people over the age of 55. This is our first year as members of Springvale Neighbourhood House.

Our group meets fortnightly at Springvale Neighbourhood House and share social and cultural activities, information sessions, outings and a traditional lunch.

We enjoy the support from Springvale Neighbourhood House who helped us write our group's successful funding submission to the City of Greater Dandenong.

Our favorite room at Springvale Neighbourhood House is the Jan Trezise room because we enjoy using the kitchen to make our delicious lunches.



We would like to join the Springvale Neighbourhood House community activities. Everyone is welcome to join our classes at the House on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 8pm.

# Our Groups



## MAYA DANCE GROUP

The Maya Dance Group has 16 members. The House is our dancing home. The SNH is where our group was born back in the late 80's and early 90's. It all started in this beautiful home that opened its doors to us and allowed us to create dances and be able to showcase our culture at local festivals.

The House gives us a great feeling of freedom, a friendly environment and an opportunity to share our culture. This year we have been busy training a small group of children – we call them our fourth generation of the Maya Dance Group.

They will be performing for the first time at the September Festival at Sandown Racecourse on Sunday 21st September at 12noon.

We are very proud to be working with our new generation. The House helps us every year by giving us the space and time to be able to run our rehearsals. The time we spend at the House is very efficient as we create choreographies for our cultural dances.

We thank the staff and the committee for the great work they do every year here at the SNH. Next year our group is looking forward at celebrating our 25th anniversary and we hope you can all join us in the celebration.

## MADDA BORKANA

Madda Borkana has 17 members plus family members.

This year our group enjoyed meeting and connecting as a community.

The House helped us by making us welcome. We enjoy meeting together. We plan to continue using the room weekly or monthly. We held Eid celebrations together.

We hold monthly meetings to learn about our culture and our language. We meet weekly to chat in our language, help each other and socialize.

Highlights of our year included the Refugee Welcome barbecues we enjoy every 2 months.





# Our Groups



## MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S GROUP.

The Multicultural Women's Group has been meeting at the House for over 30 years. It is like home to us.

We would like to thank the committee and all friendly staff for the care, commitment and great ideas that have made this Neighbourhood House the great, successful and caring place it is.

This year our group really enjoyed great recreational activities, bus trips and some great outings. We thank the Coordinator for her inspiring ideas and bringing the House to great achievements. She is a fantastic coordinator. Keep up the good work!

This year we are very happy to have the SNH mini bus that we can hire. It has been great help to our group, especially to our older members who cannot walk too far.

We are lucky to have our member who drives the mini-bus. Next year we would like the House to promote awareness of our group by advertising in the newspaper, library and church – St. Joseph.

This year we drove the bus to Sorrento and boarded the ferry to Queenscliff and enjoyed fish & chips for lunch. There was time to browse through the local craft shops. In the summer we love going to our favourite reserve for barbecues.

During the year, Giuseppina showed us how to cook gnocchi with semolina flour.

We also held a health session about breast cancer. We enjoyed a Mother's Day Luncheon at "Sette Bella". Fantastic sea food there!

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## MULTI CULTURAL WOMEN'S SEWING GROUP

The Multicultural Sewing Group has 25 members, ten of whom are new this year.

Our group comes to the House to learn new crafts. This year we are sewing, knitting and making new products.

Sewing tutors, Ann Alvarez, Enisa Silajdija and Grace St John are also volunteer English tutors, which helps participants to learn situational English as they learn their craft.

The House helped us to raise money for charity. Next year we will be learning to use patterns and different materials.



# Our Groups



## SEEAC HOMEWORK GROUP

The SEAAC Multicultural Homework Support program (pictured above) has 22 Students and 20 Volunteer tutors. This year we enrolled 12 new mentors and 10 new students.

SEAAC runs the Multicultural Homework Support program at Springvale Neighborhood House on Tuesdays. Our volunteer tutors assist students from Secondary schools, TAFE and AMES with their homework.

Students like coming to Springvale Neighborhood House because it is located centrally, close to the train station and easily accessible by

students who go to school in and around Springvale. Students like the spacious rooms and clean kitchen and the cooling and heating and the toilet facilities.

This year our group enjoyed the end of Term 1 and 2 celebrations at the House. The House has helped us continue our homework support program for two consecutive years.

We look forward to continuing our program in coming years and would love to have classes here at Springvale Neighborhood House.



## RHYTHMS OF THE PACIFIC

Rhythms of the Pacific has fifteen members. The group's most important activity is keeping the culture.

The best thing the group has done recently is to share the culture at many cultural festivals. The group plans to go for a tour in the future.

The Group thanks the House for having them for the last thirteen years and into the future.



# Our Groups



## S.E.R.M.O.C.A.V.A.

The South East Region Melbourne Oromo Community Association in Victoria, Australia (SERMOCAVA) has 50 members.

Our group likes coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House because it is quiet and convenient. We enjoyed holding different meetings there.

Next year our group are looking forward to having a room for our

children to teach them their mother tongue (vernacular language) weekly on Saturday.

Our activities include performing traditional songs and dances and 'Erracha' (Thank Giving).

The highlights for 2013-4 were sampling different kinds of cultural & traditional foods, BBQs and listening to guest speakers

## TURKISH CARERS' GROUP

The ADEC Turkish South Carers' Group has 40 members with five new members joining this year.

Our group likes to come to Springvale Neighbourhood House because we make new friends, share experiences, find the answers to questions and receive lots of information about health, legal issues, careers and rights.

We like to meet the other nationality group members and going out with them. We really enjoyed the Mornington Street Market, Melbourne Museum and many information sessions.

We always find the House clean and safe. The House gives us lots of opportunity to visit many places and enjoy trips to places our clients never go by themselves.

Next year our group is looking forward to coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House. We are very happy with all your staff and activities. We would like to know about the activities 3 months ahead of time so we can arrange our program.

In February we visited the Berwick Botanic Garden. We walked



at the park, cooked a BBQ, shared the food and talked about mental health issues.

During March and April we invited guest speakers from Diabetes Australia and Alzheimer's Australia. In May we met at Springvale Neighbourhood House and attended the Mothers' Day Lunch.

In June we met other groups from Springvale Neighbourhood House and visited the Melbourne Museum. In August we listened to a speaker from Centrelink who told us about carers payments and recent changes.

For the future we are planning another session with Centrelink, to attend the Carers' Week lunch, to listen to a speaker from the State trustees and to arrange our end of year party.

# Our Groups



## The Spirit of Enterprise

A Project of National Significance

We have continued to develop the Trail of significant sites in Springvale which relate to the Enterprise Hostel.

The Enterprise Migrant Hostel, now at Lexington Gardens Retirement Village, is the first of these sites. A Tribute Garden of Enterprise roses and a beautiful sculpture was officially opened in December 2012.

### **The Second Significant site - Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau**

A small garden of Enterprise roses was officially opened at the Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau in December 2013. This site celebrates all the help staff gave to the many people who lived at Enterprise while they were there and after they left. The plaque says:

*In recognition of the pioneering work of the  
Springvale Community Aid and Advice*

*Bureau (SCAAB) in settlement services for migrants and refugees; in particular to honour the magnificent contribution of Sherron Dunbar, through her broad understanding of world affairs, her empathy and compassion for people of all backgrounds, and her unswerving commitment to social justice and human rights.*

We were honoured to have John Bennie, the CEO of the City of Greater Dandenong officially open the garden. He acknowledged the importance of the Enterprise project and the strong support the project had among Councillors and Council staff.

### **The Third Significant Site**

The Springvale Rise Primary School was where the ethnic teacher's aide program was piloted. It has since become a state wide program. There are some beautiful sculptured books in front of the school.

We have almost completed work on arranging

to have this important story written on one of the books and hope that this work is completed by the end of year.

### **Markers**

These and all of the other sites will have installations which will mark and tell the story behind the importance of the site. We will need to find the funding for all of these.

### **Website**

The website, [www.enterprisehostel.org](http://www.enterprisehostel.org) has been upgraded and now contains all the information from the original website plus videos and many other activities since that time.

### **Thank You**

We thank the staff at the House for their constant support for our work. They are an exceptional group of people.

## SPRINGVALE MANDARIN NETWORK MANDOLIN MUSIC GROUP

Our group, the Springvale Mandarin Network Mandolin Group has 14 members.

We enjoy coming to the House because we can practice for our performances. We held two big events this year. They were the Multicultural Celebration, the New Year Celebration and the Snow Fest in Springvale.

At Snowfest, our performers were lucky to perform for 70 minutes. The crowd was very big and happy to see us.

Next year we intend to become more involved

with the community and present more performances.

Springvale Neighbourhood House provides hospitality and a location to practice. We need costumes for our dancers and we need musical instruments.

We enjoyed visiting the Melbourne Museum because we gained more understanding of Australian history and Australian native animals.





# Our Groups



## SPRINGVALE MANDARIN NETWORK

The Springvale Mandarin Network (pictured above) has 388 members.

We enjoy meeting at the House because the leaders are friendly and kind. We loved the trips to Cranbourne Botanical Gardens and to Lake Mountain to see the snow.

We also enjoyed the Biggest Morning Tea - a fundraising event for the Cancer Council.. It was very interesting that the Sri Lankan tea won the tea-tasting competition, with Chinese tea coming second!

When our volunteer English tutor, Erika retired this year, Springvale Neighbourhood House helped us to organize a new tutor, Melinda, to teach at our English classes and we hope they will continue to support us.

This year we enjoyed participating in the Springvale Neighbourhood House Diversity Day Celebration—singing and dancing,. We also enjoyed Tai Chi and table tennis to keep us healthy.

## UNITED FILIPINO ELDERLY GROUP

The United Filipino Elderly Group (pictured right) has 46 members and has welcomed five new members this year. We like coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House because of its central location, and it is accessible to public transport. It is not so expensive to hire and the staff are kind, friendly and helpful.

The most enjoyable occasion this year was the celebration for our 21st anniversary on 29th March, 2014, when our elderly members, invited guests and friends joined together for a disco and dance night. Our guests were the Mayor of Greater Dandenong and the Coordinator of Springvale Neighbourhood House. It was a night to remember.

The SNH helped us to use the hall for our venue for our monthly meeting every last Saturday of the month. In addition, one of the helpful staff helped us to complete the application form for the Community Grant Application. We are looking forward to our 22nd anniversary. We always celebrate it in the Springvale Community Centre.

We celebrated Mother's Day in Springvale Neighbourhood House where we had a Mass followed by lunch. We ordered some food and members brought food to share.



We celebrated Christmas in July at Sandown Greyhound Entertainment Centre. We had a nice time and good lunch and get together

We attended Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral where Cardinal Tagle from the Philippines officiated at the Mass. The Cathedral was full of Filipino migrants. We went to Fitzroy to St. Brigid's Church for the festival of our Filipino Migrant Patron Saint San Lorenzo Ruiz. We had a Mass followed by lunch and programs.

# Our Groups



## VIETNAMESE CARERS' GROUP

The ADEC Vietnamese Carers' Group (pictured above) has 35 members including five new members this year. We enjoy coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House because it is easy to access by public transport and convenient for shopping after that. The staff are friendly.

This year our group listened to information sessions at Springvale Neighbourhood House about MS, Hepatitis B and Palliative Care.

This year we used the projector and computer

for our sessions. Next year our group will participate in yoga and line dancing. We enjoyed sailing and a barbecue at Lysterfield Lake, a new experience for the group. We also ate lunch at Springvale RSL with other communities. It was great seeing dancing and hearing music from other communities.

We also celebrated the Vietnamese New Year. This was wonderful because we were keeping up our traditional celebrations in Australia.

We also held a Mother's day event with Karaoke and lunch at a restaurant. There were gifts for those with the best voice and the best dress.



## VENTANA HISPANA (SPANISH WINDOW)



Ventana Hispana (pictured left) has 183 members.

We enjoy coming to Springvale Neighbourhood House because of the air conditioning and the good environment. It is near public transport,

is open after hours and charges according to the number of participants.

We really enjoy the Latino dances which provide good exercise and participants become friends.

We perform in aged residences and at other events. The House has helped us by giving flexibility in our bookings and making the bus available.

We plan to continue our present activities according to the community needs. We transport members for hydrotherapy every Tuesday. On the last Friday of every month we enjoy social activities including performances, dancing, sharing food and celebrating birthdays.



# Our Activities



## FABULOUS FRIDAY WALKERS

At the request of one of our groups, Springvale Neighbourhood House commenced a walking group on Friday mornings (pictured above)

The small group consists of members of our groups, students from the Literacy Centre and members of the local community.

This is a walking group with a difference. Each week we explore a local place of interest. Often we meet with a local resident or worker and they tell us about their piece of local history.

This year we've toured a local Buddhist temple, shared a Burmese coffee & heard about how the Free Burma Café started, visited the Enterprise

Hostel memorial garden where the multicultural history of Springvale began decades ago, discovered the RSL memorial and vegetable gardens just around the corner & met some generous community gardeners (pictured right), met the artist-in-residence at Heritage Hill Museum & tried our hand at weaving.

We've also toured the new Dandenong library, had a guided tour of the new Springvale Railway Station, met the manager of Lim's Pharmacy and heard about all the extra services they offer to the local community, watched the evolution of the Springvale Multicultural Men's Shed from a vacant block to a renovated portable classroom with an outdoor learning area.



## TRY IT CLUB

To introduce more physical activity to our House and its member groups, the Thursday Try It Club was born.

The Club is designed to overcome all the barriers to lifestyle change— too costly, too much time, too hard, too boring.

To address these barriers the Try It class is gold coin donation, 30 minute classes, aimed at beginner level, with a new activity introduced every 6 weeks.

This year participants have learned Chair Yoga

(pictured right), Tai Chi, Yogasana, Zumba and Fitball.

Club members come from existing Springvale Neighbourhood House groups, our Literacy centre students and local residents.

The first class only attracted 4 participants, yet within a few weeks we had over 20 participants each week.

It's been fun learning the different types of exercise and getting to know the fabulously fit instructors.



# Our Activities



## COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUMS

In March 2014, Springvale Neighbourhood House Committee decided to reintroduce the Community Leaders Forums (pictured above).

Since that time we have held four forums and all have been extremely well attended by leaders from SNH groups. In fact, they are so popular that our most recent forum had too many people to sit around the tables and so they formed a second row around the edge of the room.

These forums serve a number of purposes. Firstly, they enable group leaders to meet each other and share their group's achievements, plans and ideas for future activities. Secondly, they acknowledge that our House runs on a community development model working to

support and promote the group leaders as representatives for their community needs. Thirdly, the forums enable our Committee members to meet with the group leaders and hear first hand about their achievements and any issues they want to raise.

Finally, the forums help us to plan future events and direction for the House.

At a recent forum, the leaders decided that all groups should decide on a local charity for everyone to raise funds for over the next 12 months. After a survey, Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau was chosen as our 2014-15 charity. Our first fundraising event is a Gala Charity Dinner Dance with an international drew parade.

## BIGGEST MORNING TEA



Over 200 people joined Springvale Neighbourhood House for our fundraising morning tea.

We had heaps of fun sampling teas from around the world and voting for our favorites.

The international tea tasting included Sri Lankan, Russian Caravan, Irish Breakfast, South African Rooibos, Moroccan Mint (green tea), Indian Chi, Yorkshire and Chinese (black tea).

Unsurprisingly, the Sri Lankan tea won - even the Springvale Mandarin Network

members voted it as number one tea ahead of the Chinese tea which they voted as second best.

Most importantly, we raised over \$800 for the Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea campaign.

This experience gave us a taste for fundraising, and our group leaders decided to nominate Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau's emergency relief fund as our first SNH Charity. Over the next year, we'll be holding two big events and raising funds for this great community service.



# Our Activities



## MELBOURNE MUSEUM

Everyone enjoyed our trip to the Melbourne Museum.

When our four large Grenda buses arrived, we created an instant multicultural crowd. The whole entrance foyer was filled with Springvale Neighbourhood House groups and Literacy Centre students.

Over 280 people from Asian, European, Central American, Middle Eastern, African and Pacifica backgrounds explored the museum.

The most popular exhibit was the dinosaurs with every group posing for a photo in front of the largest skeletons.

Phar Lap was another favorite with many learning the tragic story of this Aussie icon for the first time.

The gift shop was popular with our literacy students, especially the fluffy dinosaur and Phar Lap toys.



## MORNINGTON CULTURAL EXCHANGE VISIT

The Mornington Street Market was transformed into a multicultural shopping zone when the 3 Springvale Neighbourhood House busloads arrived.

Local residents and market stall holders appeared mesmerized by the passing parade of groups totaling 143 men and women from the following cultural backgrounds—Chinese, Spanish-speaking women from Central American, asylum seeker families from Burma, Muslim women from Lebanese backgrounds, Sri Lankan, Arabic, Italian, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Our groups asked local traders about their craft items and made a few purchases.

After our trip to the market, we visited the wonderful staff at Benton Square Neighbourhood House for lunch. After lunch, the Benton Square kinder children joined our group for a cultural

exchange concert.

The Chinese dancers demonstrated their traditional dance to the children (see picture right). One of the Italian women sang a children's lullaby that she used to sing to her grandchildren.

One of the Muslim women sang a song about a baby duck that is only happy when it is with its mother. She told the children she had hair just like them, only in her culture the women choose to wear a scarf.

The children delighted our groups singing three songs, ending with "heads & shoulders, knees & toes". All the grandparents, especially those with families overseas, had tears of happiness as they followed the children's actions and sang along.



# Our Activities



## CRANBOURNE BOTANICAL GARDENS

180 people attended our excursion to the Cranbourne Botanical Gardens (see picture above). What a day! Almost every visitor to the gardens that day was a member of our group.

The Cranbourne Botanical Gardens staff made us very welcome. They gave everyone a sticker to wear so they could be identified by the volunteer guides. The volunteers spoke with individual group members about the gardens and let them know which path to take back to the kiosk.

Our members with mobility problems toured the gardens in the open carriage bus.

Groups mixed together, sharing the breathtakingly beautiful gardens and lunch by the lake.

The Muslim women found a place to pray under a stand of gum trees. A Buddhist monk sat meditating by the lake. The Multicultural Women's Group chatted in Italian and shared their food together.

The Mandarin Network took heaps of group photos next to the fabulous plants and water features. Our Literacy Centre students had photos taken with their tutors and took notes for their excursion assignment.



## FREEMART

In September 2013, Springvale Neighbourhood House commenced a new tradition to celebrate the start of Spring—a FreeMart!

Quite by chance two women separately dropped good quality new and used items into Springvale Neighbourhood House on the same day.

As the office began to look like an opportunity shop instead of neighbourhood house, the idea of a free market was born.

Soon word was out on the block (Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau, Refugee Action Program and Springvale Learning and Activity Centre). People started arriving at the office with boxes of new and used items.

We advertised a FreeMart and filled one of our large rooms with 8 trestle tables of items including clothing, children's toys, books, kitchenware and DVDs.

Much to our surprise everything found a new home on the day, and many people found their way into Springvale Neighbourhood House for the first time. Some of these people have since become involved in our groups and activities.

The FreeMart was such a recycling and marketing success that it is now a Springvale Neighbourhood House tradition to be repeated every Spring.

What a great excuse for spring-cleaning!





# Our Activities



## DIVERSITY DAY CELEBRATION

Our Diversity Day Celebration was a five hour program including: an interfaith welcome, official City of Greater Dandenong welcome, cultural performances by 13 community groups, 18 local information & cultural craft stalls, and a multicultural community lunch (African, Burmese, Lebanese & Iranian).

The event was attended by 433 people including local residents and members of Springvale Neighbourhood House.

Entertainers included the Australian Chinese Musical Band, Kismet Belly Dance, Tamil Dance Duo, Silangan Cultural Dance Group (Filipino), Burmese Dance Group, Iranian Women's Choir, Red Chamber Chinese Opera Group (pictured above), Huong Que (Vietnamese folk dance),

Springvale Chinese Mandarin Network (choir & dance), Springvale Mandolin Music Group, and SLAC Line Dance Group.

To close the day, we had a relaxation session run by the Cultural Yoga Project—a volunteer group providing yoga to low income and disadvantaged communities.

The day was made possible through funding from City of Greater Dandenong and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and Springvale Learning and Activities Centre's generous donation of their hall and concert area.

The multicultural lunch included Lebanese, Indian, Burmese and Arabic food served by a team of volunteers.



**Springvale Neighbourhood House**  
Invites you to join us to  
**Celebrate our Diversity**

**DATE** : Wednesday 19th March 2014  
**TIME** : 10:00 am - 3:00 pm  
**VENUE** : Springvale Learning and Activities Centre  
1 Osborne Ave, Springvale, 3171

**Cultural Performances**  
Community information & fun activities  
Refreshments, food, music & dance,  
Craft and food for sale

For more information please contact  
**Springvale Neighbourhood House**  
PH: Shamala 9548 3972  
E-mail: [events@snh.org.au](mailto:events@snh.org.au)

OUR EVENT IS SUPPORTED BY  
**VICTORIAN multicultural commission**  
**CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG**  
City of Opportunity

Springvale Neighbourhood House  
cultural diversity week

## END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Springvale Neighbourhood House end of year celebration is a fusion of Aussie traditions blended with the cultural traditions of our member groups.

Our traditional halal turkey was a great hit as usual. It was enormous and large enough to serve 60 people with enough meat left on the bones for one of our groups to take home to make traditional turkey soup.

The international smorgasbord provided by our members included spicy Indian and Sri Lankan

curries, Italian deserts, Arabic sweets and a fabulous Sri Lankan green cake. Musical entertainment was provided by the Australian Chinese Musical Band.

Everyone collected a present from the gift tree before posing for photos with other members of their groups, Dandenong Mayor Jim Memeti and Springvale Neighbourhood House committee and staff.



# Our Activities

## WELCOME CAFE



The Welcome Café was started in response to the growing number of asylum seekers and refugees who come to the House wanting any type of activity that would get them out of the house.

Since the Café started in October 2014, the Café has evolved to a drop-in friendship and English conversation group..

The Café is used by refugees, asylum seekers, local residents and members from Springvale Neighbourhood House groups.

Every Tuesday we meet for two hours to chat.. Some people come for friendship, others to practice English conversation and others as

volunteer helpers.

Visitors drop in to talk about their group or service. These have included members from our Muslim women's groups, Centrelink, Springvale Legal Service, AMES, and a local training group.

Often we find that all people of all faiths are sitting around the table—Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Bai Hai, and Hindu. We compare our religions and find that all share the belief in being the best person you can be and not doing harm to others.

We also talk about Australian cities and outback,, Australian laws and culture. Mostly we have fun and learn lots about each others country of birth.

## RACV SAFE BUS DRIVER TRAINING

Springvale Neighbourhood House Committee offered each group the opportunity for one of their members to participate in the RACV Safe Bus Driver Training course at no cost.

This was to increase the safe hiring and driving of Springvale Neighbourhood House's community bus. 24 groups took up this offer and

since have hired our bus for day and weekend trips.

The training was delivered by an experienced RACV bus driving instructor and three learners in each three-hour session.

All learners passed the training and earned their safe community bus driver certificates.



## SNH COMMUNITY BUS

Springvale Neighbourhood House Committee purchased a 12-seat commuter bus in early 2013.

Their vision was for the bus to enable Springvale Neighbourhood House groups to use the bus for community outings and to enable them to participate in community events.

The affordable hire cost is cost-recovery only.

Since the bus was launched by Dandenong Mayor, Jim Memeti in October 2013, it has been hired by over 50% of our groups.

The total number of hire days for 2013-14 was 124.

Our little bus has travelled as far as Geelong, Sydney, La Trobe valley, Sorrento, Sunshine and Mt Bulla.

During the past year, our bus has

- taken students to climb the 1000 steps at Mt Dandenong,
- enabled the Sri Lankan elderly group to attend a Buddhist temple in Sunshine,
- transported a carer group to go sailing and enjoy a picnic in St Kilda,
- assisted our performing groups to travel as a group with their instruments in one vehicle on their way to and from performances.
- driven the little hobby group to Tooradin to purchase teddy bear craft materials from the Bear Essentials shop
- been used for one term to drive house-bound Spanish-speaking elderly people to and from hydrotherapy at Oasis pool..





# Our Literacy Centre



## Literacy Centre Coordinator:

*It's been a very busy year at the Literacy Centre!*



*"Thank-you for the opportunity to work at the Literacy Centre. My role continues to be rewarding when I see how motivated students are to attend classes (even when they don't have to). It is also fulfilling to be able to help people who really need assistance in terms of the 'ineligible' students who educationally have very few options. I also love that the classes are run still maintaining a Neighbourhood House philosophy and a lot of community access programs are incorporated into learning."*

Rebekah O'Loughlin  
Springvale Literacy Centre  
Coordinator

Over the past 12 months we've delivered 60 classes each week to 700 students –including accredited and pre-accredited classes, volunteer classes and one-to-one tutors. In total we delivered 188 teaching hours each week and 92,000 student contact hours for the year.

One of our new initiatives is the Chinese learner ESL class at Springvale Neighbourhood House which is going very well. Digital literacy classes continue to grow in demand.

It's been a very busy year doing the following activities: updating our scope of registration with the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA), completing our VET approved provider application and preparing documents/applications for our VRQA quality audit.

The classes run at the old Dandenong Library also needed to re-locate over the last year. This included accredited, pre-accredited classes and a large volunteer program. After lengthy research, both the Russian Welfare Society and the St James Anglican Church halls were hired for the accredited and pre accredited programs but have since all moved to St James Hall. Thank-you Father Michael at the Russian Welfare Society and Winston

at St James for your assistance and support. The Volunteer classes were moved to the public spaces in the new Dandenong library.

Thank-you to all the tutors and volunteer tutors for your work, especially to the classes that have been in transition. Thank-you to all funding partners, Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE), Higher Education and Skills and the City of Greater Dandenong for their continued support. Thank-you to everyone who assists in the continued running and development of the programs: Noble Park Community Centre, Dandenong Neighbourhood House, Springvale Learning and Activities Centre, Mystica, Subha, Bee, Kasia, Jo, Julia, Rani, Graciela, Bach, Rukiah, Robyn, Maria, Melinda, and Duc at the Neighbourhood Literacy Centre. Also thank-you Melanie, Rosemary and Sonia at the Springvale Neighbourhood House, the volunteer tutors and Springvale Neighbourhood House Committee of Management.

Over 200 students have also participated in joint activities with Springvale Neighbourhood House groups such as Diversity Day and the Biggest Morning Tea as well as many excursions, which have been very successful.

So thanks again. I look forward to another great year!

# Our Courses

ACCREDITED COURSES		
COURSE	VENUE	DESCRIPTION
Pre-CSWE (Certificates in Spoken & Written English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Reserve</li> <li>Springvale Literacy Centre</li> <li>Dandenong- St. James Church Hall</li> </ul>	Beginner level classes to prepare students to commence Certificated Courses in English.
CSWE I (Certificates in Spoken & Written English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale: Reserve,</li> <li>Springvale Literacy Centre,</li> <li>Springvale Learning &amp; Activities Centre</li> <li>Dandenong- St. James Church Hall</li> <li>Chandler Primary School</li> </ul>	Level ( 1) classes to improve Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking skills in English.
CSWE II (Certificates in Spoken & Written English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noble Park Community Centre</li> <li>Dandenong— St. James Church Hall.</li> </ul>	Level ( 2) classes to improve Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking skills in English.
CSWE III (Certificates in Spoken & Written English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Learning &amp; Activities Centre</li> <li>Noble Park Community Centre</li> <li>St. James Church Dandenong.</li> </ul>	Level ( 3) classes to improve Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking skills in English.
Life Skills (CIALN - Foundation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>Dandenong Neighbourhood Houses.</li> </ul>	Special needs class to develop basic skills in Literacy & Numeracy .
Advanced PRE-ACCREDITED COURSES		
Post Beginner/ Intermediate ESL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Reserve</li> <li>Dandenong Neighbourhood House.</li> </ul>	Beginner to Intermediate level classes to develop communication skills in English.
Parental Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noble Park Primary School</li> </ul>	Assistance for parents to develop their day to day communication skills in English.
Advanced Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dandenong Neighbourhood House</li> </ul>	Reading, Writing, Spelling & language development for students with good speaking skills .
Beginner Computer Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Library</li> <li>Springvale Literacy Centre</li> </ul>	Learn and develop basic computer skills related to hardware, software & introduction to internet. Practice the Microsoft Office Package.
E-Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Library</li> <li>Springvale Literacy Centre</li> </ul>	Internet research & communication, Face Book, Skype & revision of Microsoft Office.
Advanced Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Literacy Centre.</li> </ul>	Revision of Microsoft Office programs-Word, Power Point, Publisher & Internet Research
Office- Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Library</li> </ul>	Microsoft Office programs –Word, Power Point, Publisher, Excel/ Internet research.
Beginner to Advanced level Conversation Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Reserve,</li> <li>Springvale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>Dandenong Library.</li> </ul>	To enable students to develop conversation skills in English- led by volunteer -tutors.
Beginner to Advanced level Conversation Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springvale Reserve</li> <li>Cambodian Temple</li> <li>Springvale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>Dandenong Library.</li> </ul>	To enable refugees, asylum seekers and other ineligible students to develop conversation skills in English- led by volunteer -tutors.



# Our Students



## Zahira's story

*"My name is Zahira and I come from Morocco. I have been in Australia for 24 years. I have never been to school in my country and I learnt to speak English when I came to Australia. I work in a retirement village in Keysborough doing cleaning and cooking.*

*I am very happy learning English here for 2.5 years. I can read much better now and I can copy better and now I want to get more so I can write the words without copying.*

*All my work colleagues say I am doing very well and they were surprised that I can pick up some words.*

*At the moment I am doing Cert 3 in Aged Care. I need to read and write a lot with this course. Before I knew the names of the letters but I can't write it out but now I can recognise and write them out. Much better now! Otherwise I wouldn't come here to learn English."*



## Xiao's story



*"My name is Xiao. My teacher Bee teaches very well from basic English so easy to understand everything from writing, listening, speaking and computer. My English is improving. I am very happy to come to school and learn English."*

*"I'm so happy about my class because my*

## Liz's story

In 2011, Liz enrolled in the Advanced Literacy course to improve her communication skills in English.

For 23 years she had worked as customer service officer at a city branch of a national bank. When her position was made redundant she decided to return to literacy classes while attempting to regain her confidence in order to re-enter the workforce.

In 2012, Liz trained as a volunteer-tutor at the Springvale Literacy Centre. She assisted a student at the Dandenong Library.

Liz also ventured to assist another volunteer to



tutor an asylum seeker/refugee class. Thereafter Liz undertook the challenge of assisting a vision impaired student in her home:

*"I have learnt so much while listening and editing when my student reads out texts written in Braille. It has helped me immensely in improving my skills in creating sentences. Sometimes she just wants me to have a conversation with her. I am very happy and feel fulfilled; having volunteered as a tutor with the literacy centre."*

Liz continues her journey of learning while attending the Advanced Literacy class for the fourth year in succession.

# Our Students

## Suong's story

Suong came from Vietnam in 1997. She worked in a candy factory until her son was born. Suong and her husband then arranged their shift work so that one of them was always at home with their son.

Suong's husband became very ill when their son was very young and she stayed home to look after him until he passed away.

Suong started learning English at Noble Park Community Centre in July 2013 so that she could help her son with his school work and so that she could fill in forms.

Suong now says that her pronunciation is better, she can understand her son's homework and she's happy to have learnt more about Australia.

She aims to speak fluently enough to get a job as a receptionist, but laughingly thinks that might be just dreaming.

Suong's comments: *"The best part of my learning this year was comparatives, conjunctions, prepositions, long and short vowels, present perfect and noun groups."*

*I (also) learnt about recount writing, grammar, listening, reading and pronunciation.*

*I've learnt a lot of things about Australia and cultures of other countries.*

*We went on excursions and saw things I didn't know."*



## Sun's story

*teacher teaches us many new things. For example she tells us about new words, how to put it in the sentence, how to pronounce it and how use it in conversation.*

*She teaches us about living in Australia. She uses the net and she shows us short films, so she asks us about them and she has us talking together. She even uses body language for teaching. Sometimes we go out with her, so she shows us how to buy something and how we can connect with people."*

## Ngoc's story

Ngoc is an adult student in her forties. She migrated to Australia in 1997. She is a stay at home mother with limited English skills and no computer skills.

She joined Springvale Literacy Centre at the beginning of this year. She learnt basic computer skills and now she is very happy that she can use the computer and internet for exchanging emails with her family and friends from overseas and in Australia.

She also mastered the typing skills in Windows, Word and some Excel skills. She feels more confident in her computer skills these days.

Ngoc is looking forward to taking up a higher course next year so she can find a job as a Receptionist

## Nhan's story

*"I love to come to computer class. It gives me a sense of achievement and makes me feel useful in a way, apart from writing emails as usual."*

*Now I can do a few other things too, though I haven't been able to put it into practice as yet, but knowing you always learn new things, that feels really good."*

## Guosheng's story

*"I enjoy coming to class because I can see how much my speaking and listening skills have improved since I joined the course. I have also learned a lot about Australia in our sessions, which is really useful if you live in this country."*



# Our Students

## Aisha's story

Aisha started her learning journey at the Literacy Centre by joining the computer class and then she was looking for options to improve her English language skills.

She came to know about the different English classes that are run at the Literacy Centre to cater to the needs of the students. She joined the Post beginner ESL class.

Aisha is really happy to learn both the courses which help her to improve her literacy skills along with computer technology skills. She is also attending some accredited English classes as well as craft classes.

*She says "I'm very happy with the classes and it helps me a lot in participating in community activities and volunteering."*

Aisha is very keen to learn and tries her best to attend every class despite her physical and health issues. I think a story like Aisha's is a great inspiration to others who are looking for options of up skilling and lifelong learning.



## Bach's story

Bach is a 54 year old student, who migrated from Vietnam 34 years ago. He was working in a factory until 7 years ago. Having already retired, he has a lot of spare time.

He decided to join my computer class at Springvale Library. Before he joined us, he had learned some basic computer skills at the Osborne Learning Centre.

During his time here, he has studied basic internet skills and some advanced computer skills like Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point etc. With these new skills, he is now able to take up a book-keeping position in his local church.

## Lily's story

*"I like learning English at Noble Park Community Centre for a number of reasons. Firstly, I have improved my English skills. For example, in the past I avoided answering the phone or contacting different institutions by phone.*

*Now, I'm a lot more confident when it comes to listening and speaking in everyday situations. Secondly, I like the fact that our course includes out of class events like excursions. I enjoyed every single one.*

*Finally, I like the venue where our sessions are held. The centre is very nice and clean and there is a lot of parking space".*

## By Ly's story

*"I like this class and my teacher. She is a very, very good teacher.*

*She is always happy with study. She explain very clearly and talk all the time. I must say she is really a very good teacher. I love her and hope I learn more from her to make me better English.*

*Thank you very much, please help me."*

## Thanh's story

*"About one year ago, my friend introduced me to Springvale Literacy Centre. I stayed there to learn English until now. My teacher is very patient and speaks English very clearly. She explains everything for the students. We learn a lot of things from her. When I came to the class I couldn't hear and understand English very well. Now I can speak and understand English better. I would like to say thank you to her. In our class we have about fifteen students. All of them are very friendly. I am very happy and enjoy being with them. Sometimes, Robyn takes us out somewhere to learn somethings outside. We know the names of a lot of things outside."*

## Fatemah's story

*"I like my class. I'm enjoying my class. It makes me happy. My teacher's s very kind and loaded with energy. I love her because she tries to teach us the English language. She is a very good teacher. "*

# Out-of-Class Activities

Excursion/Activity	Highlights
Food fun days	This program was hosted by SLAC and students learnt how to make Russian Salad, Vietnamese pancakes and Moroccan tagine. The students also created dishes from their countries
Pizza counting	Pie graph activity for numbers 5/10 (enjoyed pizza slices).
Diversity Day SNH 2014	Kathy keen to win raffle tickets. They all enjoyed the meals and concert on that day.
Restaurant Excursion with Noble Park literacy parents	We strolled down into Noble Park town and enjoyed a meal together at Nando's (halal) restaurant.
Health day- focus on hepatitis and prevention	The students participated in healthy food preparation and presentation.
Gatorade Piggy Banks	We used craft paint and glue and ribbon
1000 Steps Café.	Students went up and down 1000 steps and then participated in an assessment task on transactional exchange at the café. It was a real life assessment experience!
Drum Theatre: July 2013	Students enjoying the comedy, the music and the entertainment /singing along 'I still call Australia Home'. (Paul Kelly Songbook) Gaslight Company's 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert - 'Tune into Tomorrow' The students went to a concert of songs by Peter Allen, Lloyd Webber to celebrate Gaslight 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show
Cranbourne Botanic Gardens	The clean air, the enjoyable walks the beautiful flowers and the spectacular views particularly the red desert, were wonderful..
Walker Street Art Gallery and morning tea at the Dandenong R.S.L.	First time experience for many students to appreciate art/war-history displays.
Walks around the City of Melbourne	Students saw the Welcome Stranger Nugget replica at the Old Treasury Building; the giant coin purse, the Block Arcade (tessellated tiles, Haigh's chocolates and the magnificent cakes in the window of the Hopetoun Tea Rooms) and the Royal Arcade (Gog and Magog). They also saw the Melbourne Star-Observation Deck, Rippon Lea, Federation Square and the Melbourne Museum
Heritage Hill Museum and Historic Gardens	Students enjoyed a guided tour to discover Dandenong's unique social history and historic gardens, visited the exhibition of artwork "My story, Our Future" by a Koori group displayed at Heritage Hill and explored Siri Hayes' studio with a large woven rug created by local residents.
Excursion to Yakult Factory	The students were given samples of Yakult to taste.
Springvale Library tour	Looking at resources available at the Library was worthwhile.
New Dandenong Library	The library staff gave us a tour around a fantastic facility with modern equipment, futuristic interior design and provided excellent customer service.

# Our Students

## Malika's story

Malika, who now has two children, came from Ethiopia in 1988. After completing a bridging course she worked on the line in a factory until she was retrenched.

When Malika married and had two children she stayed home to look after them and spoke very little English.

In 2013 Malika came to our English class consequently improving her reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, pronunciation and

most importantly understanding others.

Malika likes coming to class *"because I can understand the teacher and she makes it interesting - not boring. I learn something every day. I enjoy talking with friends and I get a chance to speak English. The course has helped me explain things to my children and I'm more self-confident."*

Malika plans to study child care and get a job when her English improves further.



## Evelyn's story

**Evelyn** is a quietly spoken African student and the mother of three children. Her baby daughter attends English Beginners class too and is a fast learner listening and speaking well.

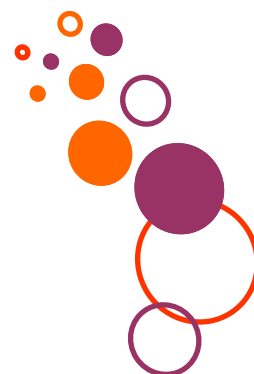
She easily outstrips her peers in the lessons, but continues because she can bring her toddler to class like many other parents. Evelyn is being provided further skills by way of homework, so that she can increase her level and progress in her English learning.

Evelyn has adapted from a difficult life in her former homeland Africa after arriving in Australia and supports two sons, 19 and 15 years of age respectively

who also study.

She impresses me with her can-do attitude at all lessons, and her kindly spirit, eagerly socializing with her peers. She helps in the physical organization of the classroom, smiling and taking the initiative without being asked to do so, and with her baby harnessed on her back.

She remains a valuable and aspiring member of my parent literacy beginners' group and I know she will be an asset in her community. I wish her great success in her future endeavors, especially if further learning with Springvale literacy centre can lead to career gains for her.



## Pricilla's story



Priscilla is a CIALN Life-skills student, who is a kind, considerate and generous student, yet is sometimes misunderstood by other teachers. She accomplishes set tasks in English and mixes well with most affable students whilst strategically adjusting to others.

Priscilla's English skills have improved two-fold since February this year, and she is progressing with all undertaken courses at this time. She socializes very well with her peers and is helpful in the classroom.

Priscilla is an adult English student who is from

Mauritius. She has performed cultural dances at the House, sings and also sports an inoperable brain tumor. She has very recently revealed an extremely sad and traumatic childhood & early adult life, yet she has characteristically managed to overcome those conflicts. She retains an optimistic and positive mindset. She has exemplary attributes and is occasionally troubled by her medical condition.

We wish Priscilla the very best in any future courses she undertakes or any career she gains after she studies with the Springvale Literacy Centre.



# Our Staff

## Neighbourhood House Staff

Melanie Virtue	House Coordinator
Rebekah O'Loughlin	Literacy Centre Coordinator
Mystica Perera	Assistant Literacy Centre Coordinator
Subha Sriram	Student Information & Statistics
Sonia Hernandez	Bookkeeper
Rosemary McLeod	Administration Assistant
Duc Nguyen	IT Support Officer
Robert Shepherd	MYOB consultant
Hawaa Fikak	Cleaner

## Literacy Centre Tutors

Bach Nguyen	Julia Smirnova	Duc Nguyen
Bee Ling Goh	Kasia Malinowski	Rani Pilai
Graciela Kuzu	Elizabeth Warr	Robyn Egerton
Jo Scott	Mystica Perera	Subha Sriram
Rukiah Othman	Melinda Hamilton	Maria Fairweather

## Literacy Centre Volunteer Tutors

Abu Nasir	Jeanette Podolsky	Olive Lesley Menon
Ajitha Vithana	Jennifer Dumas	Philbert Lay
Amanda Yoong	Jim Grosset	Philip Tero
Ann Truscot	John Brunt	Rita Romano
Anthony Jones Scully	June Talbert	Robyn Egerton
Amy Tsai	Kim Lan	Robert Marion
Babes Sevilla	Lavang Nguyen	Roma Connell
Bhagyalakshmi	Liliana Mangoni	Sally Ta
Bruce McDonald	Liz Maklin	Sarah Lanin
Colleen Mckechnie	Liz Cavell	Shaista Veremeenco
Debra Rowland	Mahesh Ram Bhandary	Sharon Clifford
Dorothea Kassell	Maryam Farooqui	Sita Balaraman
Erika Stahr	Maria Fairweather	Stephani Wickramarachchi
Enza Imbrogno	Martin Pettit	Sumanda Jayasinghe
Fay Hickman	Mary Chau	Sue Mountford
Fatima Yari	Matatuu Kora	Susan Shand
Gerry McKellar	Melinda Hamilton	Tracey James
Grace St. John	Murray Farrel	Tse Ha Chai
Harikle Nguyen	Michael Moore	Tran Thi Thuy Hong
Ingrid Besnard	Naryphol Thach	Vikki Laskowski
Janice Wilson	Natalie Irvine	Yvonne Jenkins

# Our Groups 2013-14

## **AA Resurreccion**

Support group

## **ADEC**

Arabic Carers' Support Group

Turkish Carers' Support Group

Vietnamese Carers' Support Group

## **Aitutaki Enea Society Victoria.**

South Pacific music & social support group

## **Al-Ehssan Support Group**

Support & social group for Muslim women

## **Al-Ekhlās Support Group**

Social & support group for young Muslim women

## **Al-Emaan Muslim Women's Support Group**

Support and social group for Muslim women

## **Alex Bourio**

Anatolies performance group

## **Arabic Women's Group**

Multicultural Arabic women's support & social group

## **Association of Hazaras in Australia**

## **Australian Chinese Musical Band**

Chinese musical group

## **Blue Lagoon Polynesian Arts**

Pacific culture, music & dance group

## **Cook Islander's Welfare Association**

Support and social group

## **Druze Community Charity of Victoria**

Support and social group

## **Enterprise Hostel History Project**

Enterprise Hostel historical preservation group

## **Friends of Springvale Neighbourhood House**

Individuals who support the vision and mission of Springvale Neighbourhood House

## **Hararian Organization Inc.**

Social and Support Group

## **Huong Que**

Vietnamese Cultural Music and Dance.

## **Jewish, Christian & Muslim Assoc**

Multi-faith association

## **Kaafur Community Group**

Social and support group

## **Kofale**

Support and social group

## **La Voz Femenina**

Central & South American women's support and social group

## **Lakhanda Elderly Group**

Sri Lankan elderly support and social group

## **Las Iluminados**

Support and social group for Spanish-speaking elderly people

## **Little Hobby Group**

Multicultural craft group

## **Madda Borkana**

Support and social group

## **Maya Dance Group**

Cultural dance group from El Salvador

## **Multicultural Women's Group**

Support and social group for Italian-speaking women

## **Multicultural Women's Sewing Group**

Multicultural social support and sewing group

## **Rhythms of the Pacific**

South Pacific music

## **S.E.R.M.O.C.A.V.A.**

Oromo cultural, support and social group

## **SEAAC (PIE) Project**

Multicultural drama group for young people

## **SEEAC Homework Group**

Multicultural homework support for students aged 12 to 25 years

## **Seven Valley Ensemble**

Persian classical music group

## **Slavic Womens Group**

Social and support group for elderly women from Slavic backgrounds

## **Slavic Multi Ethnic Refugees Women's Group Relaxum**

Social and support group for multi-ethnic Slavic refugee women

## **Springvale Mandarin Network**

Social, cultural and support group for people of Chinese background

## **Springvale Mandarin Network Mandolin Group**

Chinese cultural music, singing and dance group

## **United Filipino Elderly Group Inc**

Social support group for elderly Filipinos

## **Ventana Hispana (Spanish Window)**

Support and Social Group

## **Victoria Myanmar Muslim Community Inc.**

Support and social group

## **Victorian Eritrean Community Association**

Support and Social Group





# Our Supporters

Springvale Neighbourhood House acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government, the City of Greater Dandenong, Victorian Multicultural Commission, the Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres, and the Learn Local Network.







