

# SPYNS INC.

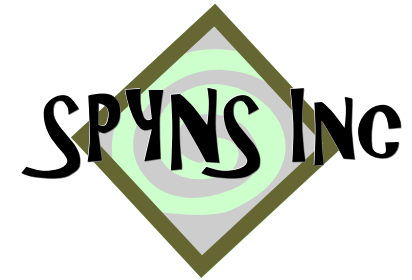
Annual Report 2005/2006



Out and About

SPYNS INC

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Our Vision—Self-determining communities that value respect, diversity and social justice



# Getting to Know Us...

Spyns is a community-based, not-for-profit, non-government organisation. We have no political or religious affiliations and are totally local and we care about Penrith. As an organisation we believe in empowering communities to be self-determining, respectful, diverse, safe places where families and individuals can enjoy equal access to opportunities, services and resources.

Most of our programs demonstrate our preference for working in an early intervention/preventative framework— giving individuals and groups (particularly those “at risk” or disadvantaged) the skills to make positive life choices. Both our work in direct service and our community development work is strongly evidence-based with an emphasis on developing resilience in individuals, families and communities.

We provide a range of direct services to young people, children, students, mums and dads and seniors. The range of Aboriginal-specific programs delivered by our PATSI team is very important to our organisation and to the Penrith Aboriginal community. Community development is as important as our direct service. It is the work that is done “behind the scenes” - developing structures, advocating, raising awareness, providing the skills and tools for communities to become strong and self-determining.

Our vision for the future is to further develop the programs we

# SPYNS INC.

## Spyns Management Committee

**Manager**

**PATSI Working Party**

### **PATSI**

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Team (PATSI)

Breakfast Club  
Youth Worker  
Elders Group  
Mens Group  
Sewing  
Family Support  
School Readiness  
NAIDOC  
Kids Activities

### **Youth**

Youth/Community Development  
Diverse Sexuality  
Employment  
Resource & Advocacy

In-School Programs  
Making Tracks  
Rock & Water  
Girls Can Do Anything  
WYSP

### **Neighbourhood Centres**

Neighbourhood Centres (South Penrith & Cranebrook)  
Community Development  
Local Issues  
Group Activities  
Capacity Building  
Community Projects  
Classes  
Neighbourhood Newsletters  
Supporting Families  
Children's Activities

### **Management**

Management Administration  
Finance  
Facilities  
Centre Hire

# Meet the Staff and Management Teams

## **South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre**

Manager: Maree McDermott  
Finance Officer: Adrian Fisher / Virginia Clarke  
Community Project Worker: Carolyn Dimeck  
Management Committee Chairperson: Mary Rigby

## **Kingston Place (Patsi headquarters)**

Aboriginal Team Leader: Julie Abdalla  
Aboriginal Youth Worker: Bob Gordon  
Aboriginal Early Intervention : Mona McFarlane  
Aboriginal Schools & Family Program : Victor Wood  
Connecting Cranebrook : Rebecca Galluzi

## **Casual Staff**

Cameron Vigor—Youth Program Facilitator  
Brenda King—Pottery Tutor  
Nerelle Dean—Childrens Drama Tutor  
Fiona Strachan—Heartmoves Instructor  
Nanette Perry—Creative Writing Tutor  
Teresa Morabito—Pilates Instructor  
Chellie Saul— Program Specialist Worker

## **Youth Services South Penrith**

Diverse Sexuality Project: Robert Reynolds  
Youth Resource & Development: Laura Williams  
Team Leader (Youth Programs): Sarala Porter  
Youth Programs: Belinda Rose/Kelly Watson  
Penrith Valley Youth Link: Joy Impiombato  
Aboriginal School Program : Victor Wood

## **Cranebrook Neighbourhood Centre**

Community Development : Ken Matthews / Jacqui Maynard.

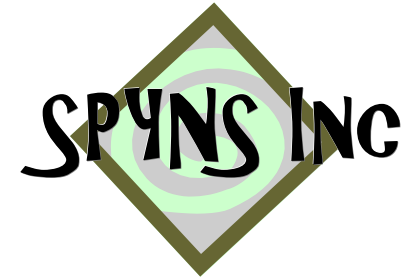
## **Management Committee**

Mary Rigby (Chairperson), Elizabeth Trist (Secretary, Carmen Bosario (Treasurer July-Dec 05), Sally Rogers, Barbara Shorthouse, Michelle Thomson (Treasurer Jan-Jun 06), Jessica Dodson.

## **ATSI Working Party**

Karen Cashman (Chairperson), Roger Bolt, Kyree Cooper, Linda Lewis, Patricia Field, Jenny Whitehouse, Michael Maher

# Management Committee Report



Welcome to the 2006 Annual Report on behalf of SPYNS Inc!

The most obvious change during the past year has been our change in name from *South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc* to **SPYNS Inc**. As part of an ongoing process of reflection regarding our values and future directions, the Management Committee and staff decided it was time to adopt a name that could embrace a diversity of locations and services. SPYNS Inc currently provides direct services to kids, Aboriginal people, school students, young people, mums and dads, seniors – pretty much everyone. And while we do provide services in South Penrith, our services actually cover all of Penrith and one of our projects is even Nepean wide.

A considerable amount of energy and effort was invested in addressing governance issues. Several planning workshops were held, which were skilfully facilitated by an external consultant, Anny Druett. These workshops provided Management Committee and staff members with an opportunity to spend time reflecting on, and further developing, SPYNS vision and purpose statements as well as core values and objectives. The aim of this process was to ensure that the organisation continued to move forward in line with current strategic plans and to protect the long-term well being of SPYNS.

Further organisational development is planned as we continue to review and develop policies and procedures that will support all aspects of SPYNS strategic plans.

The Management Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank SPYNS Manager, Maree McDermott, for the leadership and guidance she has provided to all SPYNS staff and volunteers. We also thank all the staff, PATSI working party and volunteers for their continuing hard work and professionalism.

Carmen Boserio, Pat Formosa, Mary Rigby, Sally Rogers, Barbara Shorthouse, Michelle Thomson, Elizabeth Trist.

# PATSI Working Party Chairpersons Report

The PATSI programs this year have been able to continue and grow from strength to strength, and all the workers should be praised for all their hard work and insight on the needs of the community and the programs they have developed.

## **New Achievements to 2005-06:**

### **Women's Camp**

This year we were able to provide a women's camp as part of the Families First Early Intervention program. I was lucky enough to be able to provide a service for the children, and get to see first hand how the camp was run and the interaction between the staff and the women who attended. I believe these types of programs and services build the bonds between people and the community.

### **Touch Football after school program:**

This program was developed in partnership with PATSI and other SPYNS projects. The workers and the community come together on a Monday Afternoon to play touch and interact with each other. There is also a children's play and activity tent and we now have up to 30 to 40 children and parents involved in the activities on a regular basis.

### **Extension of the School sewing group at Cranebrook High School**

This program has proven itself to be very good for students at Cranebrook High. Due to the high demand from staff and students, as well as the great attendance record students have shown, we extended the program to cater for year 12 girls who attended the first ever group. The girls have been mentors for the new girls that have come into the group for the first time.

#### **I would like to thank the following staff:**

Julie Abdalla- Team Leader/ Aboriginal Family Worker  
Robert Gordon- Aboriginal Youth worker  
Mona Mc Farlane- Families First Early intervention Family Worker  
Cindy Shepherd- Childcare  
Victor Wood – Making Tracks Program

#### **And I would also like to welcome on board two new workers**

Pania Tahu- Families First Worker  
John Hunter- Making Tracks School Program

#### **Thank you to the PATSI Working Party Members**

Kyree Copper  
Roger bolt  
Patricia Field  
Jenny Whitehouse  
Linda Lewis

I would like to thank everyone for another successful year because without your passion and your commitment to the community we would never have come this far.

United We Stand.  
Karen Carhman, Chairpersonr

# Manager's Reflection 2006

Each year brings with it renewed successes and challenges—all part of being in the poorly –resourced community sector in a rapidly changing time. However, SPYNS is well placed to take up the challenges and has strengthened its planning and development processes.

A constant challenge for us is to be able to maintain our talented staff. Very poor wages means that many of our workers have to look outside the NGO community services sector to receive the financial rewards they should receive for their skill and experience. We can provide flexible work places, inspirational team mates and support lots of innovative programs but in the end that does not provide the financial support many people need. As Manager, I am constantly fearful that one of our mainstays will depart.

Recruitment to the sector is also a significant obstacle. These workforce issues must be addressed at a sector and government level if the community is going to receive the quality service it deserves. SPYNS is involved in working with others to voice our concerns.

To all our staff I say a very mighty ‘thank you’ and ‘congratulations’ to everything that has been achieved throughout the year. There have been very stressful times with gaps in workers but we have worked together to bring the community the standard of service they deserve. We are making a name for ourselves in many of our program service provision because of our innovative, responsive and quality program provision. Our staff are committed to ensuring evidence-based services that reflect the needs of a changing society and are willing to undertake pilot or demonstration projects to test out ideas.

This past year we have said goodbye to Virginia Clarke, Jacqui Maynard, Kelly Watson, Mona McFarlane and Victor Wood. We have also welcomed Adrian Fisher, Ken Matthews, Toni Trent and Rebecca Galluzzi.

As an organisation we have clarified governance issues between the management committee (organisational governance), manager (organisational development) and staff (service provision). This has streamlined internal processes and enabled us to look to build the internal management structure so that SPYNS remains a strong local community development agency and can look to a stable future should it wish to grow further in response to community demands. The management committee is a stable and vital support to myself as Manager and the backbone of the service. They have remained involved and up-to-date with the requirements of modern community governance. I would add my congratulations and thankyou to those dedicated people also.

## Manager's Reflection 2006 (continued)

Through our different programs we have made contact with organisations who are traditionally outside of the community services sector. We will continue to pursue some of these contacts as the knowledge gained from a wider pool of agencies, can only better serve the interests of our residents.

As a social action agency, it is becoming more and more evident to us that although many of us may be earning more money and are said to be benefiting from our growing economy, we are no happier or healthier and we are too often time poor and stressed by our inability to maintain our significant relationships in the way that we would like to. Something is amiss in our society when we amass more possessions but are still feeling an emptiness inside. Our connectedness with the things that truly matter has been damaged, hopefully not beyond repair and it is the role of organisations like SPYNS, to assist in the rebuilding of communities in a modern and fast-moving Australia.

Civic organisations like SPYNS will continue to maintain that we live in a community and that an economy's fundamental imperative is to assist people gain the benefits of a fair and decent life, not become its slave. It will be a fine day when we get to read a Well Street Index alongside the Wall Street Index. I live in hope.

Maree McDermott

# Facilities Reports

SPYNS Inc. manages South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre and South Penrith Youth Centre on behalf of Penrith City Council. Council buildings are a local asset to be utilised by community members to provide activities and groups at a reasonable cost to the community. This helps local people come together for a range of reasons all of which fosters a good sense of community.

Unfortunately we handed back the management of Cranebrook Neighbourhood Centre on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005 to Penrith City Council as we were unable to maintain the cost of running it. However, we still have staff based at the centre and use the building for many activities.

**South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre** is the main office of SPYNS Inc.. Our Manager, Financial Support worker and South Penrith Community Project worker are based there.

It is interesting that as the demographics of an area change so do the people who use the local facilities. We have noticed that the groups who use the centre now are changing from the previous parents with young children to now our older residents.

The centre continues to be used frequently for private functions.

We are hoping to make some progress on being able to afford a new floor for the large hall and also to undertake some internal painting to spruce the place up a bit. Funding from this usually comes from our internal reserves from successful renting.

**South Penrith Youth Centre.** The centre continues to age and is unable to be used as a drop in youth centre with local activities for young people. We currently house our youth services team in the building but there are ongoing maintenance and OH & S issues that need to be addressed. We are in consultation with Penrith City Council regarding the urgency of a new centre for use by local young people and adequate office space for the staff.

As the organisation continues to grow it will be necessary to find new premises to house our staff.

Mary Rigby  
Booking Officer

# **PENRITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (PATSI) NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKERS PROJECT**

Once again a busy with year with ongoing project commitments and new projects starting. We have settled into our premises in Kington Place, Cranebrook and are already running out of space for both workers and activities. We are discussing with Penrith City Council the need for increased office space at Cranebrook Neighbourhood Centre.

Breakfast Club – This project was funded by DOC's (Aboriginal Child Youth & Family Strategy) as a Community Nutrition Program, which had been planned to include work in the Community Garden and participation in Barnardo's FoodShare. The garden has been under reconstruction and FoodShare ceased -so we have managed to extend the life of the Breakfast Club and have kept it going for 2 years. The program has been very successful - increasing school attendance, enhancing learning ability and concentration levels for the 35 children from High School and Primary School who attend daily and are provided with a wholesome breakfast consisting of Cereal, Toast, Milk and Juice. We have stretched the funding but are now looking for potential sponsorships this year to ensure it remains an ongoing program.

Elders Group - provides a social meeting place and support structure for local Aboriginal Elders. Our numbers have increased this year. This year the Elders attended the Seniors Luncheon provided through our partnerships with other SPYNS projects and Werrington and Central Penrith projects.

TAFE Outreach Sewing Classes at Cranebrook and Werrington – These groups have been well attended for many years now. Over the past year the women have become talented quilters. They have recently been preparing for the Welfare to Work changes by each making a dress jacket suitable for interviews and are about to make skirts and trousers to complete their suits. We have applied on two occasions for a WSAAS grant to establish a cooperative for the women to market and sell their sewing. However, we have been unsuccessful.

School Holiday program at Kingswood Park – this is a joint program with Central Penrith project. This is a highly successful school holiday program run at Kingswood Park Neighbourhood Centre for one week each school holidays. Around 40 children attend each day.

Cranebrook Touch Footy – this new program provides after school activities for children and their families every Monday of the school term. We have had as many as 80 children attend in the warmer summer months making this a popular but labor-intensive program.

Year 10 & 12 TAFE Sewing Group – This is the 3rd year for this project, so the group consists of both years 10 & 12 designing and making their Formal dresses. We have some wonderful results from this project with both the young women and the parents, very proud of the girl's achievements.

School Readiness Program – was an introduction to Preschool activities which took place while the parents participated in the Sewing classes. The children were taught basic requirements to prepare for school. This is an important program as it can make the difference to a child's first experience of learning. This project finished at the end of 2005, as funding was exhausted. With a small amount of extra funds we have been able to start this up again for 3 terms in 2006.

Men's Group – meets on the last Friday of each month in partnership with Department of Housing and Daruk Aboriginal Medical Service. The object is to provide a safe and friendly meeting place for Aboriginal Men. Cultural camps and outings have been conducted over the year. A Men and Boys Sports day was held in September 2005 aiming to encourage interaction between fathers and their children. We have been working with Relationships Australia to provide additional funding to support this group into the future - fingers crossed as this may be happening soon.

Families First Early Intervention Family Support – has been a very eventful project this year. Many referrals have been made from various sources such as – Health Social Workers, Department of Education, Department of Housing, etc. A weekly group 'Koori Cuppa Time' is held at Cranebrook. Group activities have included - Camp for mothers and their preschool children; scrapbooking project; parenting information; mosaic project and interactive children's craft. Unfortunately we have lost Mona McFarlane from the family support position as she has taken up employment opportunities with the Department of Education.

Making Tracks School Program and Making Tracks Family Program – are some of our new programs. The "Making Tracks" Schools Program is funded through Better Futures and aims to help students engage with their own education, gaining a stronger connection to the school environment as well as the community. The "Making Tracks" Family program assists the parents of the children attending the "Making Tracks" Schools program to support their children's educational development and attainment. We have been working on these Projects with both Braddock Primary School and Cranebrook High School. Both schools have been very supportive of the Project's aim to support students. The Family program is funded through the Aboriginal Child Youth & Family Strategy. Both projects are for two years duration only. While we welcome the opportunity to work with our local families, short term funding can be very problematic. The Making Tracks Schools program has been very successful but, we unfortunately have lost our Schools Worker Victor Wood to the Department of Education.

\*\*\*\*\* **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR** \*\*\*\*\*

**NAIDOC** – Again this has grown to become bigger and better each year. Big thanks to Bob for the huge effort he puts in every year and to all the staff and organizations who help on the day.

**CAMP TO CANBERRA** - PATSI staff combined with the Making Tracks project to conduct this camp to promote friendships between Year 6 & Year 7 children aimed at assisting their transition into High School. During the camp we visited the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, Parliament House, War Memorial and Questacon. A great time was had by all.

**WOMEN'S CAMP TO KURRAJONG** - This camp was held as part of Families First Early Intervention Project. The aim of the camp was to provide information, respite, interaction and fun for women and their preschool aged children. Maureen Silleri from Penrith City Council Children's Services department provided childcare and activities for the children while the mothers took part in their activities which included - Women's Health information; Basic First Aid training; Art & craft activities; Hand & feet massages; manicures. This camp was very successful for the children to participate in activities separate from their mothers and also gave the mothers free time to make connections, discuss problems and generally enjoy some free time.

As you can see above, we are a busy bunch of people. We are looking towards two new workers starting with our team this year as part of the new Early Intervention Project recently funded on which we are partners with Wesley Dalmar and a number of other community agencies.

I would like to thank SPYNS Management and staff for the support they have given this project over the year. The PATSI Working Party members and, in particular, the PATSI staff for their continued dedication, commitment and support throughout the year.

Julie Abdalla, Team Leader.

# Connecting Cranebrook

Connecting Cranebrook is a DoCs Families First Project that aims to strengthen connections between communities and families with children aged 0-8 years. There have been a few staff changes over that last year with Kelly Watson leaving us in September. Toni Trent commenced in November as the part-time Family Activities Worker and Rebecca Galluzzi, the Community Liaison Worker started in June 2006.

The project has been involved in some exciting and enjoyable events and activities over the past year including:

**Circus Skills for Kids** ran over 4 afternoons in Koolyangarra Park. On average 66 to 80 local kids, twirled, spun, hula-hooped and climbed their way to learn exciting new circus skills. The kids produced a grand finale performance for the estate Christmas Party to showcase their skills in stilt walking, spinning plates, unicycle, hula hoops, poi (twirling balls on rope) and human pyramids.

**Braddock Gala Day** held in April. Connecting Cranebrook held an information stall and distributed 78 showbags containing resources about local activities, parenting and children's books or crayons. The project also hired a baby animal farm that proved very popular with the teachers, parents and children.

**Braddock Playtime** is a support playgroup in partnership with Braddock Public School and Penrith City Council Children's Services. The playgroup operates from the school on a Monday and is attended by mums, dads, grandparents, carers and of course lots of kids. It provides kids an opportunity to get used to the school environment and helps prepare them for a smooth transition into primary school.

**School Holiday Family Outings** were held in the summer and winter holidays. Families enjoyed two free outings, the first was held in January to a puppet performance in Penrith then morning tea afterwards. The second outing was to a farm at Dural in July. Both outings provided opportunities for families to experience something different while interacting with their children and others from the same neighbourhood.

**Touch Footy and Family Fun** is a partnership project with PATSI, Making Tracks and Connecting Cranebrook. All activities are free and kids and their parents/carers are welcome to play footy, do craft, play with toys or read books. Parenting and other information is available too. This activity is run every Monday afternoon in Sherringham Park.

**Triple P Parenting Courses** were run from Braddock School Community Cottage and organised by CC. Seminars looking at Positive parenting, confident children and resilient children ran over 3 mornings.

**Reference Group** thank you for the drive, direction and support received from Jeni Pollard, Winifred Sadlier, Karen Van Woudenberg, Helen Sawle, Jacqui Maynard/Ken Matthews, Graham Smith, Joy Sneesby and Maree McDermott.

In the year ahead we will be running some new and exciting activities including an ADHD seminar in partnership with Relationships Australia and Braddock Public School, Children's Week activities, a pram walking group, and more activities in Koolyangarra Park. We are also looking to increase the involvement of parents in the running of our projects and to provide more activities specifically for fathers. We will continue to be involved in Playtime, Touch Footy and the Cranebrook estate Christmas party.

Toni Trent and Rebecca Galluzzi

# Cranebrook Community Development Project

Cranebrook Community development Project is located in the Cranebrook Neighbourhood Centre in Hosking Street and works collaboratively alongside of other SPYNS project as well as other local community groups.

While we have had a change of staff with Jacqui Maynard leaving and a gap of some months before a new worker was employed, the community development project has still been able to achieve a number of projects during this past year. SPYNS would like to thank Jacqui for her work in Cranebrook and making the neighbourhood centre itself such a welcoming place to come to as well as those other SPYNS team members who plugged the gap and worked to continue to provide a regular service. Thanks Bob, Cindy and Carolyn.

Programs and projects undertaken during the past year have been a cause for celebration.

Our Monday morning **Time Out for Women, after school program** provided through MACA's and our **Seniors Group** continues to meet at the Centre

## **Christmas Lights Competition**

Three years and shining bright – this Christmas was another outstanding Cranebrook celebration. A Very Special thanks go to Elders Real Estate at Cranebrook for donating the prize money and to all those competition committee members who cruised the streets looking for the winners. Also to Penrith City Council for the “Best Street” sign.

## **Other SPYNS Project involvement**

NAIDOC family day celebrations with PATSI

School Holiday program with Connecting Cranebrook – family outing to Golden Ridge Animal Farm

School Holiday program with PATSI, Werrington Community Project and Connecting Communities – Central Penrith project

Family Touch Footy – with Connecting Cranebrook, South Penrith Youth Service and PATSI

## **Wider community collaborations**

**Neighbourhood Centres Week** – with other Penrith Neighbourhood Centre workers

**Seniors Week** – another successful Seniors Luncheon with our local partners of South Penrith Community Project, Penrith ATSI Neighbourhood Worker Project, Werrington Community Project and the Connecting Communities – Central Penrith project.

**Bus Safety Week** – we participated in this again for a second year. Our partners were the local primary schools, Police Dept., Westbus and Department of Housing. We have spent considerable time working with others to ensure safety on local transport and this has paid off as there has been very little disruptive behaviour. We are continually working with other agencies and organisations including the TWU to ensure transport access for Cranebrook residents.

Participating in the **Cranebrook Neighbourhood Advisory Board**

## **A word from Ken**

As a relatively new worker (March this year) I would like to thank all those people, workers and residents who have made me welcome.

My first role is to revitalise the project through the building of the existing programs and the introduction of new activities. I would also like to see more interaction between groups at the Centre and to build relationships across age and cultural groups.

My aim is to make the Neighbourhood Centre a place that people will want to be, to have fun, to meet other people and to grow. Further priorities will be to highlight Child Protection Week with other SPYNS workers, to encourage the development of programs to support men and to represent Cranebrook to the broader community and Government to ensure that it receives a fair deal. This will be done in consultation with the people of Cranebrook.

Ken Matthews

# South Penrith Community Development Project

Over the past twelve months it has been our focus to assist the community become more physically active. The programs running which have a health and fitness focus include

- \* **Heartmoves** – a gentle exercise class for the other 50's,
- \* **Just Walk it** – a walking group which is sponsored by the heart foundation - this happy group leaves from the centre 8.30am Tuesday mornings,
- \* **Pilates** which improves strength, flexibility and balance.

Over all it has been a very successful year with around 35 residents enjoying the benefits of physical activity each week. Some residents also enjoy participating in more than one fitness activity here at the centre. Heartmoves for Seniors has become so popular that it is bursting at the seams; we are considering adding another class to cater for the growing numbers.

As well as enjoying health and fitness activities here at South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre, we also accommodate residents who have a creative flair:

- \* A **creative writing** group that meets Wednesday's at 9.30am - this group of budding writers enjoys 'the fascinating process of the written work; with imaginative exercises to stimulate and encourage the writer within us all. Guidance, encouragement and feedback are given every step of the process' (Dorothy Charnley).
- \* On a more hands-on, creative level we have our **pottery / craft group**, this group enjoys playing with clay and creating works of art. Recently the group decided to extend an invitation to people with other craft interests. Residents are invited to bring along anything they are currently working on and join in this fun group for a chat and a cuppa.

For all those residents who want to stimulate their mind and not get left behind in a hi-tech world - we have been running a **computer class** run by TAFE Outreach over the last two semesters. This group fills quickly as the word has spread quickly throughout South Penrith that our computer class is awesome. Thirty local residents this year have been touched by the technology bug through this class.

We would like to acknowledge the facilitators of the groups; special thanks go to Fiona Strachan – Heartmoves instructor. Brenda King – Pottery teacher. Nanette Perry – creative writing facilitator. Tess Morabito – Pilate's instructor. Virginia Jackson - TAFE Outreach computer teacher. Thank you all for your dedication and co-operation.

We are interested in all the issues that affect the lives of our community. Over the last 18 months local residents have worked **on transport issues** in the area. Bus services were changed which effected a number of residents living in this area - through consultation and discussion with Westbus and Government agencies, we were able to reinstate some routes. In May a resident and Carolyn met with the Transport Minister John Watkins to put a case forward for improvement of services in the South Penrith, Nepean Shores area. A request for our submission to be reviewed was granted and was lodged with Mr. Watkins Department. As yet we are still waiting on the results of the review.

We continue to support local networks and sector development by involvement in a number of community development initiatives:

**Neighbourhood Centres Week, joint Seniors Week luncheon, capacity building for community services through network and management participation and student placements.**

Probably our most uplifting experience this year has been via one of the local residents who visits the neighbourhood centre regularly. She became aware of the shortage of hats and beanies at Nepean's hospital cancer ward. She asked that the community project use its networks here at the centre to ask people if they were interested in knitting beanies for the hospital. Well the response has been outstanding, in just over 4 weeks I have received 60 knitted hats and beanies. Thank you sincerely to all the wonderful people who have responded with such care and generosity to this particular request; it may seem like such a small thing but this is a very practical gift which will uplift the spirit of someone going through an emotional and stressful time. It's a nice reminder of the genuine spirit of community. Examples like this make being a community worker a very privileged occupation.

**CAROLYN DIMECK / MAREE McDERMOTT**

# Youth Resource & Development Project

Well what a year it's been, Industrial Relations have been wiped off the map and young people will be further disadvantaged as a result of the sweeping changes brought about by the Federal Government's IR Reform.

A large proportion of time has been spent on networking and advocacy to firmly establish myself in the youthwork sector as a worker who will go the extra mile to ensure that young people and the issues that affect their lives are brought to the fore.

The Federal Government abolished the Minister for Youth, Centrelink Welfare to Work reforms have come on line and Centrelink has abolished the Youth liaison position and amalgamated it with the generalist position. Young people are struggling to be heard in the current climate. Due to this state of affairs I have attempted to be strategic in my work to bring about the best outcome for the young people of Penrith LGA.

Current network meetings I have been involved with include: Penrith Youth Interagency (PYI), as well as all the sub committees emanating from this Interagency such as the steering committee, Dual Diagnosis s/c, Direct Service s/c, GLBTIQ interagency, Employment and Education S/c. All are relevant to gaining a broader perspective on issues facing young people in terms of mental health, issues affecting youth centres, issues affecting young people of diverse sexualities and issues affecting young people in transition from school to work.

## Project steering committees and youth representation

I currently sit on the Better Futures, (BF), regional steering committee looking at young people at risk and transitions for young people from Primary to High school, (Middle school pathway projects). I have been a member representing PYI for Penrith Valley Community Safety Partnership and provided written support for a project proposal for a Night Street worker for the Cranebrook area from the Attorney General's Department, I have recently been asked to join the steering committee for this position as it was successfully funded.

## Community Development Networks

I have participated where possible in the Cranebrook Neighbourhood Advisory Board (NAB), sharing knowledge and attempting to raise the issue of the importance of coordination of services to adequately service a community and bring longitudinal sustainability and success. The Cranebrook Youth Services Forum has been dwindling and I have asked for this forum to return to the NAB due to lack of interest.

The Connecting Communities Central Penrith Project Network meeting has highlighted issues for backlog areas of Kingswood Park, Kingswood, Lemongrove and Penrith. These areas are impoverished, have few services that are based in the area and therefore access to services for local residents particularly young people and older people is difficult.

## Sector Support

I have recently joined the Nepean organizations DoCS Dialogue (NODD), which is a forum for bringing issues for the sector to the attention of Nepean Network Office and the Director of Partnerships and Planning (DPP), two issues which have been raised recently include the State Government's Commitment to funding the SACS award increase and the impacts of the new DoCS Funding policy on CSGP funded youth organizations.

I am the Secretary on TRI Community Exchange Inc Management Committee and have supported their application to WSAAS for a Resource and Network coordination service for Penrith. I am currently a member of the WSAAS local ranking committee for the next year (a two year position), and have supported several WSAAS applications for youth services ranging from Disability positions to CALD youth Development positions, (as yet no news on funding these), of course conflict of interest was raised and I withdrew from voting within the ranking committee.

Organizationally I have participated on the OH&S committee representing the youth centre and have recently joined the Policy sub-committee. I have contributed to Newsletters and provided material for the youth section of the SPYNS website.

Training undertaken over the past year includes Kinks n bends a program aimed at raising the issue of sexual violence and consent and allowing young people to explore these issues in a safe environment. Keyfund awareness training provided by Better Futures and attended BF conference as well as the heart of Community Development Conference. I have passed on some of the information gained to PYI such as Discussion of the Resilience Doughnut and Industrial Relations information.

In terms of direct service I am continuing support and attendance at Young Mum's group each Wednesday morning a very valuable and necessary group for the girls and important to me, the group sustains itself through a partnership of four local youth services. I have spent a good deal of time attending activities with young people in Cranebrook to gain a feel for the community - these have included BBQ's with Fusion WS and Footy on Sherringham Oval with the PATSI team as well as various Youth week activities in a variety of locations. All in all a good year for getting a feeling for the youth sector and the various areas of the LGA that require advocacy and support.

# Diverse Sexualities Access Project

## **'A Year of Getting Queer'**

The main aim of the Diverse Sexualities Access Project is to make local services more accessible to young gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people and as Project Worker I liaise closely with youth and community services. However, over the past two years I have learned that making a real difference to young GLBT people's lives involves more than just putting on anti-homophobia trainings and getting neighbourhood centres to display rainbow flags or gay & lesbian friendly posters. Young GLBT people need a strong sense of self worth and belonging and this usually involves them being able to be a part of their own local GLBT community. Because of this much of my work has taken more of a community development focus in the following core areas:

## **GLBTIQ Interagency**

In November 2005, I established a new gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, Intersex, Queer (GLBTIQ) Interagency. Members of the Interagency include workers from a diverse range of organisations and meet monthly on a rotating basis in the Penrith, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury areas. Working groups have been set up to look at particular issues such as homophobia in schools, needs of older GLBTIQ people and the availability of support groups and services in our local area. My role has been to convene the meetings, organise the venue, take and distribute minutes and encourage new members to join and participate in our work.

## **Queer Perspectives**

At the beginning of 2006, I worked with Penrith City Council, the Aids Council of N.S.W., the Queerspace Collective and a number of local community members to put on an exhibition of artwork by local young GLBT people at the Joan Sutherland Exhibition Centre. The exhibition ran over one weekend around the time of the 2006 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. It was attended by over 220 people including the Mayor of Penrith City Council and a number of councillors.

## **Project Planning Day**

The project recently hit the half-way mark in its four year funded lifetime and I organised a planning day to make sure the time we have left is used effectively. While convening the GLBTIQ Interagency continues to be the project's core activity, other priorities have been set including developing a 'Best Practice' kit for youth and community services which I am hoping to launch in early 2007 and a planning model for ensuring the achievements so far are built upon and not lost when the project ends in April 2008.

Let's continue to celebrate diversity in our communities.  
Robert Reynolds, Diverse Sexualities Access Worker.

# Working with Young people in Schools Project & Making Tracks

This year saw the increased development of our Working with Schools approach to providing programs for young people, with the commencement of 2 new projects: the Working with Young people in Schools Project (WYSP), and Making Tracks – supporting Aboriginal young people at school.

We have successfully weathered some dramatic staff changes during the year and are still growing our work with young people in schools. We welcomed Belinda Rose in March, who is now part of our SPYNS “Dream Team” of dedicated professionals, with a distinct yet complementary contribution to make to improving the lives of young people in Penrith. More recently we welcomed John Hunter who will be taking up the role of Aboriginal Schools Program Worker for Making Tracks, following on from the solid work put in by Victor Wood to establish and build the project since November 2005. Victor has just accepted a teaching position with the Department of Education and Training, and we thank him for his energetic contribution and wish him more success in his new position.

## Working with Young people in Schools Project (WYSP)

# Wysp



Working with  
Young People in  
Schools Project

WYSP is a 2 year project funded by the Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme to support closer working contact between schools and community agencies to benefit young people at school. Strategies include: providing professional development activities for teachers and youth workers; developing and contributing to pilot and demonstration projects; establishing area wide protocols; and producing a resource to support teachers and youth workers to work more effectively, both with each other in partnerships, and with young people in schools.

WYSP was launched through the *Penrith Youth Interagency* and a presentation at the *Youth Action Policy Association Conference* last year. We successfully generated interest in WYSP and established a focus for initial professional development activities through a workshop held for facilitators of programs for young women. “Working with Schools” workshops were delivered for 30 teachers and community/youth workers at the Better Futures *Growing Ideas* Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006. Youth and community workers were surveyed to gain further information about their needs and zones of interest in relation to working with young people in schools.

In April we ran a professional development workshop based on our successful *Girls Can Do Anything* program for 23 community and youth workers. Participants from this and a second activity funded under CDSE (Emu Plains Sporting and Recreation Club) have considerably increased membership of our peer support network. There is on-going interest in us running further professional development workshops.

Throughout the year, I have been a steering committee member of the highly successful “Hopscotch” project, a partnership between WESDARC (Western Sydney Drug and Alcohol Resource Centre), Kingswood Public School and Sydney Western Area Health Service. I am also the current chairperson of WESDARC. For more information on *Hopscotch*, see [www.wesdarc.org.au](http://www.wesdarc.org.au)

### Coming Soon...

*Girls Talk* is a monthly electronic publication we started in December to share information and support others who work with young women. There was a break due to changes in staff at SPYNS, however *Girls Talk* will soon be back on track now we have Leanne Martin on the job. Leanne is also working on what will be a terrific resource for working with young people in Penrith with fact sheets on the major issues affecting them during adolescence and including local referral options and useful links.

# Making Tracks

Making Tracks is a 2 year project (July 05-Jun 07) funded by the Department of Community Services' *Better Futures* Strategy to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people at school. It's an early intervention program aimed at increasing participation and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 4 – 9. Focus is on developing the young person's connection with school and community through: hands-on learning, resilience building, family support and ATSI cultural programs.

Making Tracks involves providing regular weekly sessions for ATSI young people and their peers attending Cranebrook High and Braddock Public Schools as well as specific resilience-building and reconciliation-promoting programs for integrated students at each school and special occasion activities. Examples of projects undertaken as part of the hands-on learning include Aboriginal 3D clay model making, Aboriginal Mosaics, Aboriginal symbol art work, digital photography, bead making and woodwork. Resilience building activities have included, Rock and Water, reflection cards / games, Resilience Doughnut, communication cards / games, behaviour cards / games, rock climbing and drama workshops. Cultural activities have included a Canberra Camp, outings with Aboriginal Elders group, outings with Aboriginal Men's group, school holiday excursions and parent / student luncheons. Families have been involved through regular information sessions, newsletters, luncheons, invitations to all excursions and the establishment of a Parents' Reference Group.

Successes to date include:

- gaining the full support of Cranebrook High and Braddock Public Schools
- the in-kind contribution of a permanent room at Braddock Public School, which is utilised for primary school and high school Making Tracks groups
- students willingness to participate in program activities
- support of parents and parent involvement
- increased levels of students' self confidence and self esteem
- positive communication and relationship between students and staff involved in Making Tracks
- improvement in students' behaviour (in classroom and school)
- improvement in students' attendance
- students thinking of their career options
- students engaged in whole school environment
- use of a 12 seater bus, funded through Better Futures and Variety, the Children's Charity, to transport children to and from activities and excursions

Making Tracks is a unique and innovative program which can respond to students' interests and needs and involve their parents and relatives in school life. Unfortunately the funding is only for the two year period, however we have already demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach to supporting Aboriginal young people at school. Hopefully the success factors and learning we are documenting through running Making Tracks will enable similar projects to be provided in the future.

Short term funding arrangements and other constraints bring inevitable changes, however we have managed to maintain a constancy of team energy to prevent this excessively impacting on our clients. It is an ongoing privilege and pleasure to be working with SPYNS' team of youth project specialists. It benefits all our projects to have the interaction and support of professional colleagues committed to doing such great work for the benefit of young people in the Nepean.

Sarala Porter –Team Leader, Youth Programs





# SPYNS *Youth Programs 2005-2006*



What an exciting year! Full of change and growth! Our focus on running resilience-building programs in schools has taken off in a big way and more and more schools and program participants are recognising *and* reaping the benefits of the service we provide.

As I've only been here a few months, most of the credit for this year's achievements goes to Sarala Porter and Kelly Watson who put amazing effort into program delivery and the development of ongoing relationships / partnerships with schools and other agencies. As a result, many educators and youth workers have gained experience working alongside us in schools. Many have also participated in our professional development / training days with a view to continuing the work we started. As a lack of funding and people-power is often 'par for the course' in this sector, this 'rein handing over' is a vital part of the ongoing success of our programs.

With Sarala now in the position of Youth Project Team Leader and Kelly having moved on, I am proud to take up the challenge of helping to strengthen and connect those individuals, families and school communities that make up our wonderful 'Nepean'.

## *What Programs? What Schools?*

**Well over 500 young people participated in SPYNS youth programs in the last year.**

**GIRLS CAN DO ANYTHING**, which offers young women a unique way to get to know themselves and their strengths, has been offered to a wider range of groups and schools during this period. Schools we have worked with to offer *Girls Can Do Anything* include: St Clair High School, Dunheved High School, Cambridge Park High School, Nepean High School, and Cranebrook High School (with combined ATSI & non-ATSI participants).

In addition we were able to offer ***Girls Can Do Anything* in partnership with Glenmore Park Youth Service** to 60 young women from Glenmore Park High School and Caroline Chisholm Catholic High School due to funding we received from Penrith City Council, under CIGS. The additional money permitted specialist facilitators to offer drama workshops and rock climbing and also provided for the production of a 'girls journal' produced in a fun format and containing useful information and contacts for relevant local support services. The journal was made available following the program to many more young women visiting the Glenmore Park Youth Centre.

We also received funding through CDSE (Emu Plains Sporting and Recreation Club) for a ***Girls Can Do Anything* professional development workshop** attended by 20 youth workers and teachers, who all received a program manual. This approach to sharing our experience enables others to take up our ideas and offer similar programs to more young women over a broader geographical area.



**SPYNS**  
**Youth Programs 2005-2006**



**ROCK & WATER** is another program that *SPYNS Youth Project* uses to work with young people in schools to build resilience. *Rock and Water* effectively engages young people (especially boys) using physical games and exercises in order to learn important social skills, such as respect for others' boundaries and empathy. We provided Rock and Water programs in the following schools: St Clair High School, Jamison High School, Claremont Meadows Public School and Cranebrook High School (as part of Making Tracks).

**RAP (Resourceful Adolescent Program)** was this year offered as a universal program to Year 9 girls at Jamison High School. Our ongoing strategy is to provide RAP as a useful approach to building resilience for the girls at Jamison High School, whilst *Rock and Water* is offered to the boys. We would like to thank Rose Warren, the School Counsellor at Jamison high School for all the energy and time she contributes to making our partnership with Jamison High School so successful, and enduring! We have been working together delivering RAP for over 4 years now.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge all those who helped with the success of this project throughout the year. Special thanks goes to my work colleagues for their ongoing help and support; our casual program facilitators - Cam Vigor, Carlie Green, Chellie Saul and Kelly Watson and; all the principals, school counsellors, year advisors and teachers who helped to make our work in schools possible. I also wish to acknowledge the Department of Community Services for funding us under their Community Services Grants Program.

### **The Road Forward**

Although SPYNS Youth Programs will continue to provide support to those young people most at risk in our community, our broader aim this coming year will be to focus our attentions more preventatively by offering universal programs on a whole-of-school basis. As current research indicates that the next window of 'preventative' opportunity (i.e. after early childhood) exists in the transitional period between primary and high school, this is where we next intend to focus our efforts.

**Belinda Rose—Youth Programs**

# Penrith Valley Youth Link Project

This Project was aimed at developing stronger links between the various organisations and sectors involved in young people making a successful transition from school to employment or training. These include the schools, training organisations, job network providers, JPET, Youth Pathways, Centrelink, DEWR, group training organisations as well as the youth and community sector. The employment and transition landscape is now so complicated, it's difficult even for workers in the field to keep up with it. It's no wonder that so many kids and parents struggle! To assist young people and their families understand and negotiate their way to a successful transition, a website was developed by the Project::

## **Www.want2know.com.au**

Want2know.com.au was developed by the Project and will be hosted and maintained by Penrith City Council. It provides young people with a virtual one-stop-shop of information on jobs and training, with links to all the best web resources and importantly, it tells you **who to see in Penrith to help you**. This information extends beyond vocational to include all the youth support services available locally. Visitors to the site can locate services through a downloadable pdf listing or through a detailed interactive map that will show them exactly where they can find specific services and also allows you to click directly to their website. The site has lots of relevant stuff such as budgeting tools, mobile phone info, legal stuff, fantastic free downloadable songs from local bands, and a home work help section. Feedback has been excellent and we are already getting very good responses from young people as well as teachers.

## **PYI Employment & Education Subcommittee**

The challenge of short-term projects is in building genuine sustainability so that the benefits continue beyond the life of the Project. I consider the PYI Employment & Education Subcommittee to have enormous potential for the community. I have expanded the group from a small membership, to now being truly representative of the employment/training/transition landscape. All the stakeholders are there (55 members) now, and I would like to see action groups develop to tackle specific, local issues. The potential of having a group that has all the key people there and with the ability to be responsive is enormous. I have prepared a handover plan and truly hope to see the benefits of true collaboration in the future.

I wish to thank for their support the Project's Steering Committee members—Narelle Wheatland, Katerina Tahija, , Ian Palmer, Maree McDermott, Laura Williams, Fiona Burgess and also to Vesna Kapetanovic who made it all happen by originally setting up the PYI Employ & Ed Subcommittee and working hard to get this Project funded.

Acknowledgement should also be made to the Project partners who are Department of Transport and Regional Services, Grow Sydney ACC, Office of Children and Young People, and Penrith City Council.

Thanks also to the original core members of PYI Employment & Education Subcommittee—who have been consistent and supportive along the way.

The Penrith Valley Youth Link Project has now finished—a final report will be prepared and made available on the Spyns Inc. website. Happily, I will be continuing at Spyns (2 days per week) in a new role utilising my IT, enterprise and marketing experience.

**Joy Impiombato**

# Treasurers Report

I am pleased to present my first report as Treasurer of SPYNS, and in doing so wish to acknowledge the support and efforts of Carmen Bosario, who held the position of Treasurer until March 2006.

It has been a privilege to work as part of the SPYNS management committee during a period of substantial growth and change. While it has been exciting to see several new projects being funded during the year, these additional projects also placed additional strain on SPYNS existing administrative systems. As a result, much effort has been put into reviewing the financial administration function. The management committee have also taken steps to ensure that their financial responsibilities are properly carried out.

I would also like to acknowledge Adrian Fisher, Finance and Administration Worker, for his efforts throughout the year to ensure that the management committee was kept informed regarding SPYNS financial position. At the same time, Adrian has worked tirelessly to further develop SPYNS accounting system. Taking time to develop sound organisational structures is essential for SPYNS to continue to grow and achieve the vision contained in our Strategic Plan.

We also take this opportunity to thank all of the agencies, clubs and other organisations that have provided, and continue to provide, funding for the many projects and activities carried out by SPYNS staff and volunteers.

Finally, thanks must be extended to our auditor, Stephen Sproates, for the provision of audit services as well as giving us the benefit of his advice as we fine tune SPYNS financial reporting systems. The financial statements and auditor's report for 2005/06 are attached and confirm that SPYNS finished the year in a sound financial position.

**Michelle Thomson**  
Treasurer

**Annual General Meeting 2004-2005**  
**South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood services Inc**  
**29/9/05**

**Theme – Growing Our Values!**

**Attendance:** Carmen Bosario – WCP, Mary Rigby, Robert Reynolds, Joy impiombato, Jacqui Maynard, Kelly Watson, Laura Williams, Robert Gordon, Mona McFaulane, Maureen Silleri, Pat Formosa, Sal Rogers, Maeve Dunnett, Jessica Dodson, Linda Sack, Katerina Tahija, Pat Field, Jeni Pollard, Kyree Cooper, Michael Mahr, Vesna Kapetanovic, Karyn Paluzzano, Elizabeth Trist, Karen Cashman, Julieanne Formosa, Virginia Clarke.

**Apologies:** Jennifer Hollingsworth Western Sydney Carers, Margaret Streeter PCC, Joyce Neesby DOH, Julie Abdulla PATSI, Tony Jarrett PCC, Deb Dare DOCS, Roslyn Cotto WSAHS, Heather Chaffey The Warehouse, Clr Mark Davies, Denise Gibson PCC, Winfried Sadlier PCC, Peter Fisher Anglicare, Maree McDermott, Carolyn Dimeck, Jackie Kelly Member for Lindsey, Keith Miles Cranebrook High School Principal, John Hunter PCC, Graham and Evelyn Munro, Barry Samson DOH, Sue Richards DOH.

Robert Introduced himself and gave Maree's apologies.

Robert handed over to Mary to open proceedings:

Mary welcomed the State Member for Penrith, Karen Paluzzano

Mary Welcomed everyone to Country and to meeting on Darug land.

Mary informed those in attendance that copies of last year's minutes were available in the rear of the Annual Report

Mary asked someone to accept those minutes as a true and accurate record of the last AGM.

Carmen Passed and Barbara Seconded

Mary asked if there was any business arising for the current minutes and then moved on to reports, Mary informed everyone that copies of all the workers reports were included in the annual report and asked people to read the document in their own time.

Mary read the Management Committee report for the 04-05 year

See report – Management Committee

Mary thanked passed workers and welcomed new staff and lobbied for new premises to be provided.

Mary asked for Karen to read the PATSI report, but Michael Mahr (DOH) a member of the PATSI reference committee stepped forward to read the report in Karen's place.

Highlights included: PATSI team continuing to do fantastic work, many achievements, see report in annual report

Mary called on Carmen to read the Treasurers Report

Carmen stated that a revised financial report was available at the back table  
SPYNS is financially viable, Financial Management Accounts, Spreadsheet included, Revenue and expenditure correct  
Acknowledge funding contributions, Clubs and organizations acknowledged, Acknowledge Virginia  
SPYNS financially complex a credit to Virginia making Carmen's and Maree's job easier, Welcomed Adrian to SPYNS, Carmen acknowledges PVYLP not included as a different reporting time and Carmen Thanked all for their input.

Mary moved to accept the auditors report

Mary Moved and Pat Seconded

Mary asked if someone could accept all reports  
Elizabeth Moved and Pat and Barbara seconded

Mary handed over to Robert and pointed out that we are reporting differently this year by poster presentation on each project and that those attending were invited to peruse posters at their leisure.

Robert introduced all the staff to the guests.

Mary explained that Maree, Caroline, Sarala, and Julie were unable to be here today.

Mary invited everyone to read report

Mary asked Karen Paluzzano to present certificates to all volunteers

Ms Paluzzano commented on the size of SPYNS, the fantastic work they do and commented that she is here to support us and thanks us very much for what we do. Ms Paluzzano suggested that she would invite the new Minister The Hon Milton Orkopoulos MP Minister for Aboriginal Affairs out to meet Mr PATSI (Michael Mahr).

Ms Paluzzano thanked Mary for all her hard work and presented Certificates to all volunteers

Ms Paluzzano gave out all certificates and asked all to give applause of support.

Ms Paluzzano went through and read out Certificates for Volunteers that were not present and asked for a round of applause then handed back to Mary.

Mary asked Katerina to be returning officer and all cheered.

Katerina spoke about SPYNS and gave a great rave about challenges and risks and congratulated the whole organization and new areas of work such as Diverse Sexualities Worker and the PATSI programs. Katerina stated that SPYNS is a fantastic example of an NGO organization with vision.

Council work with organizations in partnership and the work will be on-going. Katerina also spoke highly about the website partnership and congratulated the Management committee for their long service and dedication.

Katerina dissolved all positions from the committee.

12 positions available Katerina has the names and asked to nominate and second from the floor.

Election of ordinary members nominations from the floor

Elizabeth nominates Mary and Barbara seconds - Mary accepts

Carmen nominates Barbara seconded by Pat – Barbara accepts

Carmen nominated by Barbara seconded by Elizabeth – Carmen accepts

Barbara nominated by Pat and seconded by Carmen – Barbara accepts

Barbara nominated Elizabeth seconded by Mary – Elizabeth accepts

Pat Nominated Sally seconded by Elizabeth – Sally accepts

Jessica nominated by Mary and seconded by Barbara – Jessica accepted

Any other nominations – No

Katerina declares new committee for 05-06 Mary Rigby, Barbara Shorthouse, Carmen Bosario, Patricia Formosa, Elizabeth Trist, Sally Rogers and Jessica Dodson as the new SPYNS management committee for 05-06.

Elizabeth stood and spoke to thank staff for all their hard work and how she was proud of the job they have done. All staff thanked by Sally and a big round of applause for the staff.

Mary asked Barbara and Carmen to move outside and conduct a ceremony to plant a tree then break for afternoon tea. Mary asked everyone to now move out to plant the tree.

Mary also told all attendees that they would each be receiving a tree which was donated by Muru Mittigar and spoke about helping SPYNS to grow our values.

Meeting closed for the tree planting ceremony at 2.45pm.