

Annual Report 2007 - 2008



Holdsworth Community Centre
64 Holdsworth Street,
Woollahra NSW 2025
Phone: 02 9302 3600
email: info@holdsworth.org.au
www.holdsworth.org.au

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Vision

The primary purpose of everything we do at Holdsworth is social inclusion. Our vision for the future is to continue our work in removing the barriers that prevent older people, carers, people living with disabilities and young families from participating in a connected community and maximising opportunities for healthy and happy life choices.

Our overall vision for the Centre can be summarised as:

Programs with purpose that change lives

The philosophy behind this is that everything we do must aim to make a qualitative improvement in the lives of our community. This requires considerable investment in goal setting with and for individual clients and groups of clients and then delivery of programs and services that match those goals. It also requires a secure financial base, appropriate facilities and a professional workforce that is being constantly up-skilled.

Chairperson's Report

This year has been a period of tremendous achievement for Holdsworth and in this report, I would like to highlight some of our successes and share our vision for the future.

Strong service ethic

Under the capable leadership of our Director, Michael Ryan, our strong and dedicated management team encourage all members of the staff to achieve their individual and collective potential. As a result, Holdsworth has developed a 'yes' culture. Staff are now focused not only on delivering excellent outcomes for existing clients, but on also working creatively and collaboratively across the various programs to be able to provide more services with the same resources.

This is demonstrated by positive feedback from our clients as well as our service delivery statistics which show a 27% increase in Community Transport trips, a 17.5% increase in Playgroup attendance, a 57% increase in our Volunteers and that we provide 20% more Disability services than required by our DADHAC funding, to mention just a few.

In addition, the Centre is working towards a new level of service provision, including being aware of the wider family units to which our clients

belong and the other services or programs with which they are engaging. Our approach to service delivery is increasingly focusing on all the life stages of our clients so that we can work in partnership with them and their carers to support them at significant transition points. Our aim is to assist them to live independent lives to the degree possible for each person.

Partnership with Council

My report would not be complete without acknowledging our enduring relationship with Woollahra Council and its valued input both at the operational level through the Director of Community Services, Kylie Walshe, and to our Management Committee through the recent participation of the Deputy Mayor, Cr Isabelle Shapiro, and our longstanding member, Cr David Shoebridge. We are heartened by the Council's tangible recognition of Holdsworth's contribution to our community by increasing our funding by \$50,000. We look forward to working with the newly elected Council in the year ahead.

Management Committee

Our skilled and cohesive Management Committee brings diverse talents and experience to the Centre.

Deputy Chairperson Lyndell Droga has continued to drive our fundraising efforts in the last year, Treasurer Roanne McGinley Knox has overseen new, more timely financial reporting and new committee member Robyn Watts has taken on the role of Secretary, replacing Keren Miller who gave birth to her second child during the year, but continues as a member of the committee. .

The way forward

Our future aim is to continue to increase the range and extent of the services that Holdsworth provides. We are limited only by our ability to retain and attract great staff, secure a broad external funding base and access and maintain appropriate community resources and facilities.

Our first step in this journey is a proposed restructure of our association which is necessary in order for us to seek endorsement by the Australian Tax Office as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) which in turn would be eligible to obtain Deductible Gift Recipient status. In order to do this we will be establishing a new incorporated association which will be responsible for all those programs and services that are not considered suitable for a PBI. This will require

careful management, but our intention is that this will only enhance the quality of client service from Holdsworth. These changes are vital if we wish to expand our philanthropic engagement and to be able to offer increased benefits to staff.

It is a privilege and a joy to be part of the team at Holdsworth. I commend to all our members and friends the tireless and enthusiastic work of everyone at the Centre in the last twelve months and look forward to the year ahead.

Claire Wivell Plater



Management Committee

Committee Members during 2007-2008

Chairperson:	Claire Wivell Plater
Deputy Chairperson:	Lyndell Droga
Treasurer:	Alison Payne (till August 2007) Roanne McGinley Knox (from August, previously as member)
Secretary:	Jan Rooke (till September 2007) Keren Miller (September 2007 to May 2008, then as member) Robyn Watts (from May 2008, member from September 2007)
Members:	Arahni Sont Yvonne Stewart Mark Jones (from September 2007)
Woollahra Councillors:	Cr David Shoebridge Cr Isabelle Shapiro (from October 2007)

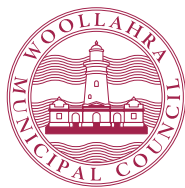
Acknowledgements

Our work would not be possible without the funding support and co-operation of many organisations. Our principal supporters are:

- Woollahra Municipal Council
- Home and Community Care Program (joint federal and state program) (HACC) administered by:
NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC); and
NSW Ministry of Transport (MoT)
- NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS)
- NSW Department of Health (SESAHS)



Partnership Report: Woollahra Council



It is with great pleasure that I submit this report to the Holdsworth Community Centre & Services Annual Report.

Council has been a supportive partner of Holdsworth Community Centre for over 35 years, encouraging its growth from a small neighbourhood centre with programs solely for children to the all encompassing service that it is today. The past year has seen the relationship between Council and Holdsworth Community Centre & Services continue to strengthen, with the collaborative working relationship resulting in the adoption of the Woollahra Social & Cultural Plan in July 2008. The Plan sets the direction for working together with organisations such as Holdsworth Community Centre & Services for a connected, liveable, vibrant and creative community for all.

I am also delighted to see that the annual subsidy provided by Council to Holdsworth Community Centre & Services has provided a basis for the attraction of additional funds from other funding sources to provide much needed services. The new services provided by Holdsworth Community Centre to children, families, seniors, and adults and children with disabilities are invaluable to the well being of our residents. As a community with a growing number of young families and people over the age of 60 years, the services provided by Holdsworth assist the people of Woollahra to remain connected to their community.

The substantial increase in service provision in nearly all programs over the past year is exceptional, and I would like to pass on my congratulations to the diligent Management Committee and committed staff and volunteers of Holdsworth Community Centre & Services. The entire Holdsworth team has worked tirelessly to strengthen the community spirit in Woollahra over the past year and improve the quality and quantity of programs on offer.

Congratulations on the achievements of the past year and I look forward to the continued success of Holdsworth Community Centre & Services in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoff Rundle".

Cr Geoff Rundle
MAYOR

Director's Report

2007-2008 has been a very happy year at Holdsworth. It has been a year of consolidation, growth and many new initiatives.

Finance and Compliance

During the year we have brought in-house our previously outsourced financial management. Reporting is now completed immediately following month-end and all acquittals and reports to WMC, DADHC, DOCS, MOT and SESIAHS were completed on time together with MDS reporting to DADHC. We successfully underwent quality audits by both DADHC and MOT and received the following feedback from our DADHC contract manager:

I just wanted to congratulate you on all the excellent work you have done at Holdsworth Street in the last 12 months, you have certainly turned the service around into a dynamic environment based on client needs and achievements!

In addition to CPI increases, we secured \$50,000 of new recurrent funding plus an extra \$50,000 from Woollahra Council for FY09 in addition to smaller amounts of non-recurrent funding. More significantly, because we were fully staffed and operating at capacity during the year, we utilised all of our external funding with no surplus to be returned to government.

Programs

Our outcomes this year have been much more than the quantitative improvements described in the attached program reports. What we are all particularly proud of are the qualitative improvements which in turn have contributed to the dramatic changes in demand for all our services. From the reports that follow I have picked out the following highlights for noting.

Community Relations

The appointment of Eric Scott in August has resulted in a re-focusing on Holdsworth's connection with the community. He was able to

build on the excellent work that had been put in by our Management Committee in rebranding and repositioning the Centre in the previous year.

Eric has been responsible for the launch and maintenance of our website, the production of all our marketing collateral, and, through his active engagement with the media, has been able to obtain wide coverage of our success stories. He has also overseen a number of successful community events and has helped us to connect to the wider Woollahra community. Eric's work has been instrumental in driving up demand for all our programs.

Family Services

Playgroup is booming. Growth has been higher than the explosion in the birth rate in Woollahra and most mothers seem to be arriving with at least double-decker prams. The introduction of more structured activities, including the very popular *Sports Fundamentals* more special information sessions and regular *Baby Days* have all led to its increased popularity. The appointment of a parenting support team-leader has further rounded out the value proposition to parents and carers using the service.

Volunteering

Following a good round of media coverage earlier in 2008, volunteering took off in the last half of the year, almost doubling from 40 to 74 active volunteers by year end. We are particularly proud of the growth of the *Community Links* program which now has 15 clients being visited for an average of 2½ hours per week, with no waiting list.

Establishing excellent links with a number of schools has really enhanced the volunteer program. The enthusiastic way the Sydney Grammar boys have embraced our *Funsworth* program is a model for future partnerships with schools. We have also been concentrating on improving the training and recognition of volunteers and creating experiences for volunteers that meet their needs.

Disability and Carer Services

Our disability and carer programs have never been stronger than they are under the management of Stefanie Holt, who has taken on the challenge of leading this group with energy and dedication. She is ably assisted by Sarah Sillar as Disability Coordinator. Between them they have spent the whole year pushing for new and improved services for all of our clients.

The philosophy of the team has moved from providing generic services to various pre-determined groups of clients to a quasi case management approach to individual family units, which makes the new closer ties with Carer Services even more important. Working with parents to establish individual goals for each client is a major change of approach. Stefanie has now structured her team in such a way that she can provide additional one-to-one support for particular clients from time to time where a small amount of intervention can make a huge difference, such as getting a couple of clients who have never been able to engage in group activities to the point where they are regularly attending our Art program.

Our partnership with Eastern Respite & Recreation is leading to major changes in quality as both services learn from each other and question why we do things in particular ways. *Funsworth* has brought life to the Centre each afternoon and the program now runs five days per week as a result of ERR's new funding from FaHCSIA for this service which has flow on effects for our clients.

We have been lucky to have been able to replace



Gloria Holland with our new Carer Services Coordinator, Wendy Imashev, working alongside Lindy Yoannidis. A structural change, having Carer Services report through to Stefanie Holt, reinforces the holistic approach we take to looking after families, including both carers and care recipients as well as other family members.

The project we are most proud of in Carer Services at the moment is the writing group which Lindy has been leading. We are aiming to launch the work of this group during Carers' Week in October and are looking at ways of promoting the work of carers to the wider public.

Community Transport

Under Ian Jankovic's leadership Community Transport has continued to improve in reliability and quality of client care. Ian's inability to say 'no' to any client has seen a massive 26% growth in the number of trips provided this year. We were very lucky to have been able to grow the fleet this year in response to demand. We will be monitoring demand and availability of funding closely in planning for future fleet growth. The creation of a new position of Assessment Officer and centralising our bookings and confirmation systems through reception have also increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. We have a good core group of drivers and will be expanding our casual pool in the near future.

Aged Services

The greatest growth in services has occurred in Aged Services. Coordinator, Maya Jankovic and Program Officer, Valerie Fitzpatrick have spent the year continually trying to outdo themselves in the quality of the programs and service that they offer to clients. I have received a large amount of very positive feedback from clients of the service, many of whom have commented on the turnaround in this service. New programs *Music Appreciation* and *Saturday Night Fever* have proved to be hits and we will be aiming to make them permanent new additions, subject to funding.

Administration team

Keeping the show on the road is the responsibility of our Administration Coordinator, Cecilia Chong

Wilson, together with her team of Sarah Harwood, Brigitte Kirkpatrick, Annette Lang and Judy Renford. What makes this team special is not just what they do in running the business of the Centre, but the fact that each of them is actively engaged in client activities, from leading the dancing in a memory loss group, to participation in all our community events and activities.

Staffing

We have a strong team of dedicated, client-focused staff who deliver results. Our staffing has been very stable this year, with very little turnover and many staff being promoted into more senior positions to reflect their amazing skills and contributions. We finished the year with a full complement of staff, with turnover through the year limited to 15% of the permanent staff. At year end there were 16 full-time and 14 part-time (6 FTE) staff plus 20 regular casual staff, 50 people in total in the team.

During the year there has been an increased level of multi-skilling and the plan for the year ahead is to continue this process, with more cross over between disability, family and aged services extending into the transport team.

A number of staff have also combined field work and administrative roles giving them greater development opportunities. We created a number of new permanent roles by consolidating work previously done by casual staff. The casual team often become the source of future permanent staff and having a wide team to call upon means that programs never suffer through lack of availability of staff. Similarly, many of our former volunteers have gone on to become employees.

The Year Ahead

Keeping the momentum of change going will be the hardest task in the year ahead. The team has become accustomed to getting things done and moving on to the next adventure. In order to make the most of our funding we will need to be very creative to continue to feed everyone's appetite for improvement, but I am sure we will all rise to the challenge as we knock down barriers to social inclusion! I am in awe of the wonderful staff, volunteers and management committee with whom I work, but most of all I pay tribute to the fabulous community of people we serve.

Michael Ryan

Our Community

Central to everything at Holdsworth is a connected community. Keeping that community informed and engaged is the work of our Community Relations Manager, Eric Scott. During the year Eric has been instrumental in getting our message out and bringing the community in to Holdsworth.

Promotion

During the year we have been building our brand and actively promoting our services, with new look newsletters and brochures and a very full, up to date and informative website. We have had excellent relations with local media throughout the year with sustained editorial coverage in all the eastern suburbs media and targeted advertising which has really driven our volunteer campaigns in particular.

Events

Throughout the year we have participated in community events outside the Centre in addition to hosting our own. The opening of Pat Thompson Park, the Carols at Chiswick Gardens and end of year drinks for our neighbours were all opportunities to promote the Centre, as was our popular cake stall on federal election day.

We love to throw a party and our busiest days at the Centre were our special events, starting with our AGM which was anything but a staid association meeting. Food, drinks and song from *Door in the Wall* choir and a beautiful performance of Tosca's aria from our own Roanne McGinley Knox made for a very memorable night.

In February our *Community Fun Day* featured a Jazz band, a magician, stalls, drumming, beauty therapy, games, all day tea room and a very popular German sausage stand.

In conjunction with Council we hosted a Seniors Week expo in April with Glenmore Road School band, Woollahra Seniors Choir and music from *Viva the Band*. Complimentary food, transport and all day entertainment brought over 200 seniors to the Centre. Family Day in May boosted our usual Playgroup attendance with a jumping castle, stalls coffee and cake, followed up by another Fun Day in June with a petting farm, *Sports Fundamentals* and stalls.

Parties

Our big event of the year, and our major fundraising opportunity, was the Gala Cocktail Party held in October. With the support of many local businesses and the hard work of committee and staff, we hosted around 120 open-hearted guests in the beautiful home of one of our generous friends. In one night we managed to raise over \$25,000 which we used to give some incredible adventure experiences to some of our most in need clients.

Holdsworth is definitely party central with three children's parties most weekends and is an



important resource for other community groups with at least two external room bookings each week. We have continued to upgrade facilities, including new floors, whitegoods (all generously donated) and the dramatic new mural on the playground wall.

In the year ahead the initiatives and strategies mentioned above will continue as we increase engagement with the community, council, local businesses, schools, other community organisations and government agencies. Plans are already well advanced for our next major *Fundraising Cocktail Party* on 19 February 2009. This is not only aimed at raising money to enhance our services, it is also a great way to engage with people who may continue to support Holdsworth and to let them meet our staff, volunteers and committee in a friendly social setting while also hearing first-hand about our programs.

The Future

Securing and building on corporate partnerships, getting our stories out in the media, increasing our contact with the neighbouring community and growing and nurturing a network of 'Friends of Holdsworth' will all be part of what we will be aiming to do in the coming year. Whether it be exciting new projects or the continuation and improvement of our established programs, our relationship with the community, business and the media is integral to our planning ■



Families

Moving from a solid base of long-standing popularity and very high numbers at *Playgroup*, the aim over the last year has been to provide a supportive service that engages people on general issues of parenting, emphasising the positive and normal challenges, without asking parents to come forward with problems.

We offer a universal approach that is useful to all parents and allows relationships to be established and the staff to be seen as a helpful and professional resource. In this way bridges are built that can be useful if families do need additional support or advice in difficult times.

This year has been very successful for *Family Services*. We have listened to feedback from our clients and increased programs and staff, under the leadership of Eric Scott. This has resulted in a higher quality of service delivery and in turn higher *Playgroup* participation, with average daily attendance lifting by 17.5% to 47 families per day.

Playgroup, supervised by Lucian Stoffell and Mary Simmonds, continues to have its main focus on a child's growth and development through free play. We encourage parents/carers to have meaningful interactions with their child as well as enjoying and being supported by the engagement with other parents/carers. We take great care in providing an ideal environment for relationships to flourish.



One of our most popular weekly activities is *Sports Fundamentals*, in which trained staff organise games and exercises with the older children (2½+) and their parents. This helps to promote exercise and gross motor skills development and offers a directive, facilitated activity. The buzz of excitement when Jamie from *Sports Fundamentals* is due, and the enthusiastic participation of the children, are evidence that this has been a big hit.

Parenting Support

Louise De Lorenzo has joined the team to provide parenting support and facilitates special *Baby Days* twice a week. These involve some structured activities, talks and free play and target much younger children (0-1) and their carers, supporting transition into *Playgroup* from local Early Childhood Centres which can only see mothers for the six week mothers groups and are not resourced to offer more. This is a very positive new addition to *Playgroup* and the numbers of younger children have grown.



In response to parents' feedback we have presented information sessions on topics such as diet and nutrition, relaxation, behavioural issues, NLP, speech development, developmental stages and First Aid, with more to come. These talks are regular events with fees only being levied where there are high external costs. Weekend family First Aid sessions were also popular.

Staff from Bondi Cottage presented a *Motherhood and Self Workshop*, based on a long-running



Future vision

Our vision for family services is to enhance the capacity of individuals and the community to look after children, build networks, promote positive parenting and provide resources for parents to access when they need them.

The principles of social inclusion and access apply just as much to young families as to our other clients. We will continue to provide a supported playgroup for young families as it builds community and helps young parents to connect and socialise and to obtain the information, advice and referral they need to give their children the best possible start in life ■



program which address issues of self esteem and reclaiming life after motherhood. The workshop offered support for mothers in isolation or facing other relationship issues.

Playgroup Plus, is a collaboration between Family Services and Disability Services and offers an opportunity for parents of children with special needs to meet and discuss parenting. This is a service that is appreciated by those who attend. We have room for more families on this program.

Volunteer Program

The volunteer and training program has developed a lot this year reflecting how much Holdsworth values its volunteer team. Our aim is to provide a safe, exciting, and continuous learning experience for all of our volunteers.

Information & recognition

Volunteer Coordinator Holly Brown introduced new information packs which contain all the necessary information and tools a member of the community would need when they are looking at volunteering, making it clear that volunteer positions are treated as every bit as important to us as our paid staff positions. Every volunteer has an individual position description and set of mutual expectations and obligations.

Recognition has been a priority too this year. Certificates for all volunteers highlighting their

support and achievements, and social events to meet each other and be made to feel special are just some of the ways our volunteers have been rewarded. In particular the Blue Mountains trip in May for *National Volunteers Week* was well received by those who attended. A lovely drive to the mountains, followed by lunch at Chapel Hill retreat was just the treat!

Partnerships/networking

The *Eastern Suburbs Volunteer Coordinators Forum* took off this year supporting the work of 95 workers across Eastern Sydney. Holdsworth and Woollahra Council have effectively worked together building on this network over the past year including production of a quarterly electronic newsletter. This forum offers training on volunteer management, networking opportunities, information sharing, and referrals of clients and



even volunteers. Networking through the Centre for Volunteering and the Inner Sydney Neighbour Aid Network has also helped us with skills development and new ideas.

The volunteer program has expanded well this year to include partnerships with local schools, TAFEs and some universities. Kambala, Ascham, and Sydney Grammar School are now well linked in with Holdsworth as a place for their students to complete their community service placements or do volunteering in their own time. The students from Sydney Grammar on average dedicate over 10 hrs per week to volunteer on the *Funsworth* program, in addition to school holiday programs. These links with local schools have greatly enhanced these programs.

Training Calendar

A monthly training calendar has been introduced this year to enhance the volunteer program. The calendar is now sent out to all volunteers once a month and includes in house training and also training provided by the Volunteer and Service Training Centre (VAST). The aim of the calendar is to provide an additional resource to give volunteers the tools and confidence to do their job. This calendar was another initiative that emerged from professionalising the program.

Safe Home visiting

The *Community Links* program has expanded enormously this year to over 15 active placements from only 3 at the beginning of the year. As a result the need to assess the safety and quality of the program this past year has generated the development of a Safe Home visiting booklet and

more effective referral procedures through our Assessment Officer, and an emergency card for the volunteers to carry each time they visit a client.

Working within each program

As part of our cross-skilling and to ensure the best matching of volunteers with programs, Holly has been working with program coordinators alongside volunteers within the programs. In this way she has been able to see how they work together and is therefore able to support the volunteers and staff who supervise them.

Numbers

With some positive publicity and strategic advertising, the numbers of inquiries, interviews and successful placements have all risen. June 2008 sees us with over seventy active volunteers compared to around forty at the start of the year. In the *Community Links Program* the increase in volunteers has helped us to eliminate the waiting list.

Vision

This past year developing a program for volunteers that considers their needs as well as ours has been the priority. Closely matching the volunteer's aspirations with specific opportunities creates much greater ownership and satisfaction which in turn leads to greater commitment and reliability from volunteers and a better standard of service to our clients. A program that promotes volunteering as an activity which can contribute to an individual's lifelong learning and also gives them an opportunity to use their existing skills or experience works for the good of the whole community ■



A Diversity of Abilities

Under the passionate leadership of Manager, Stefanie Holt and Coordinator, Sarah Sillar, the work of the disability team embodies Holdsworth's agenda for social inclusion, removing the barriers that disable people with impairment from leading full and happy lives.

Holdsworth gives my daughter a social network, a group where she feels accepted and equal. This has been great for her self esteem. It's been good for me too, to meet other parents with disabled children. It is so good to come to a place with her where I don't feel I have to explain why she is different, because everyone here is just like her. Meeting other parents gives me access to their ideas and information.



Our principal long term goal for each client is to help improve independence in social settings. During the year we have worked with each client and their carer, and undertaken re-assessments with most, focusing on three main areas of life: communication, personal care and social skills. The main focus of our disability programs is to offer assisted recreational activities, giving our clients the chance to maximise their chances to develop skills and experience. By participating in social, fun activities, clients learn and increase independence.

Holdsworth gives essential opportunities for social networking with peers. These opportunities are very hard to come by for people with an intellectual disability.

As well, each social occasion is a life skills learning experience.

We are very proud to see that we have opened up many new possibilities for clients over the last year. We have worked on improving current programs and our service delivery, started three new programs and gained new or strengthened partnerships with partner organisations in the Eastern Sydney area. We have done this by really focussing on our communication, streamlining management of programs and having greater stability of staffing, including our permanent part-time team-leaders, Adrienne Colquhoun, Harry Fanakis, Marcel Hadden, Cathy Hoare, Brigette Kirkpatrick, Brian Lee and Michael Stieber; and extended group of regular casual staff.

As innovations we have started an afternoon program called *Funsworth* which is run in partnership with ERR and *Playgroup Plus* which we run together with Holdsworth Family Services.

Holdsworth allows my son to enjoy a range of experiences independently of family. It gives us time to do and share time with other family members without the worry of leaving him or having him with us 24/7. My son is happy and safe with Holdsworth and enjoying life experiences when with the group, which is a great comfort for us.

We also started a program which is called *Life Coaching* to give support to clients with more complex support needs. The life coaches, Brian and Marcel, are aiming to increase independence and support our clients to integrate into our existing programs.

Highlights of the year were the teenage and young adults camp and the family camp that





were held at Berry in December and June, made possible by the generosity of our many supporters at *The Heart of Woollahra* fundraiser event in October.

Holdsworth is currently servicing 65 adults and 64 children. Of these 23 clients (including 9 *Playgroup Plus*) accessed Holdsworth for the first time this year. Our biggest group of clients is aged between 18 and 25 years, hence the demand for our new *Adventure Club* (Independence group) starting in October 2008.

We delivered 17,500 social support hours on our on-going programs (20% over our contracted requirement from DADHC) and many more through our new initiatives *Funsworth*, *PlaygroupPlus*, *Life Coaching*, camps and *Creative Carers Respite*.

Saturday and school holiday activities continue as the mainstays of our children's programs and our adult programs include art, bowling, gym and the Wednesday and Saturday social groups.

Unfortunately our waiting list (which includes current clients looking for additional services) continues to grow with between 50 and 70 people who are looking for primary or additional programs from Holdsworth.

Feedback

Our parents group give us regular feedback from which we have compiled a very long wish list for the future of our services. In addition to "more of everything" the needs we hear about most are a desire for certainty for the future, family holidays, access to supported housing and ways of being included in all sorts of everyday activities that most people are able to take for granted. Lack of services for adult clients with high support needs right across the sector encourages us to look at opportunities for the future, especially for our current group of older teenagers, some of whom would not be suitable for the *Adventure Club* (independence program).

Future Vision

Our vision is to be aware of all the life stages of our clients and work in partnership with them and their carers to complement communication, socialisation and behavioural development. We aim to provide support at significant life transition points such as starting school, high school or transitioning to work and to enable clients to live independent lives to the degree possible for each person. We are our clients' advocates and our carers' advocates; we provide information and appropriate referral to other services.

We must continue to innovate constantly in our program delivery to make the most of clients' skills and abilities and to help them live full lives and up-skill all staff to match the dynamic development of our services.

This approach, which has already started, will take us to a new level of service provision, including being aware of the wider family units to which our clients belong and the other services or programs with which they are engaging ■

Carer Services

Central to our work with aged and disability services is supporting the people who care for others. We have integrated our carer services with all our other programs to ensure that we are looking after the needs of whole family units. What we do ranges from the basics of ensuring that our people are in touch with all the other services and entitlements they require through to individual intervention at times of crises. We also devote considerable resources to support groups and advocacy on behalf of carers.

Support groups

During the year Lindy Yoannidis, our former Carer Officer, Gloria Holland and our new Coordinator, Wendy Imashev, ran, resourced or supported up to ten diverse support groups specific to the needs of carers across Woollahra, Randwick, Waverley, Botany and the City of Sydney. These groups meet either fortnightly or monthly and include:

Creative Carers is a support group for parents of children with disabilities, while our newest group *Carers Plus*, is for parents of babies and children under five with special needs. Both these groups run in conjunction with programs for the children so the parents are free to meet separately.

East Enders is a support group for carers of people with memory loss and meets to socialise over lunch with both other carers and those for whom they care. They are linked into needed services and develop informal support networks between themselves.

We support a *Chinese Carers Group* in conjunction the Ultimo Community Centre. We play an important role with this very self reliant community, especially by raising their awareness of available services and connecting them with a wide range of guest speakers. We also partner with Randwick Council in supporting a small group of carers of people with Acquired Brain Injury.

We jointly run the *Magnolia Group*, which is a self-funded, open group of carers which meets monthly in Rose Bay, and provide support to the parent run *Aspire* group that meets in Maroubra.

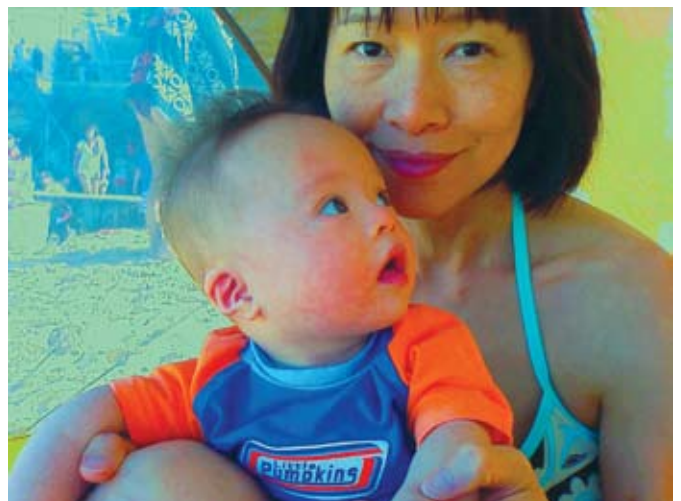
Writing project

One of the really beneficial projects open to all our carers this year has been our *Carer Stories* project. Two professional writers, Lyndall Hough and Sarah Brill, volunteered their time to run writing workshops to support carers in writing their stories. Kate Allnut volunteered to design the book which will be launched in October and sold through Holdsworth and Gleebooks.

This project aims to raise the profile of carers in the general community while putting carers in touch with the valuable role they fulfil. It has been a very cathartic process and the stories make a wonderful collection that reflect the many aspects of being a carer. This has been such a positive experience that we are looking at how we can continue this creative outlet for carers beyond the current project.

Getting out

In June we took thirteen carers and their children, both children with disabilities and their siblings, to the Department of Sport & Recreation camp at Berry. It was a great chance to be together without the pressures of work, domestic duties and other demands. Sharing tips on socialisation and behaviour management and just seeing how other families cope was inspirational. For example, in one instance a carer supported another carer with ways to get her child to eat. Having our staff there meant that the parents could have time out as well over the week-end.



During the year we organised a number of great social outings for carers, often with their children. We were able to obtain heavily discounted tickets through the generosity of organisations such as the Balnaves Foundation which assisted us on four separate occasions, including a memorable performance of *Edward Scissorhands*.

Carers Week

Carers Australia provided funds for us to take three of our groups on outings during *Carers Week*, the most memorable of which was taking the *Chinese Carers Group*, at their insistence, to an exhibition of British royal family memorabilia!

NSW Health

SESIAHS made it possible for us to help launch a new carer group in Waverley, celebrate carers in Randwick, purchase a collection of carer resource material and will be funding the launch of our carer stories.

NSW Health held a consultation with carers from Holdsworth to gauge ways in which the health system could better provide for the needs of carers. Issues included Nursing Home care, access to a care recipient's doctor rather than a



local doctor when they are out of area such as respite care and the identification of carers on intake to a hospital.

Future

Because we are one of the few services in eastern Sydney with specific funding to support carers we are currently reaching out to a range of other NGOs to initiate joint projects and to identify other support groups targeted at specific groups of carers to ensure good connections for carers as well as an efficient allocation of these resources ■

Community Transport

Transport remains a mainstay of Holdsworth's aged and disability services with the constant juggling act of Manager Ian Jankovic, who ensures the maximum use of our fleet of buses and cars, and leadership of our growing team of permanent and casual drivers, with the assistance of team leader and back-up driver, Joe Baleinagusui.

The aim of the service is to ensure that lack of transport is never the reason to deny any member of our community proper access to social interaction, health resources, shopping or participation in Holdsworth programs. This applies particularly to those who have physical and intellectual disabilities and to frail elderly people whose opportunities to get out and about are severely restricted by lack of mobility.

This last year has seen an explosion in demand for transport services with the number of individual trips up by 27%. We were very lucky to have expanded our fleet early in the year to meet this increased demand. We continue to monitor demand as we plan for future expansion.

Highlights

In response to increased demand in Individual Transport a third back up car was purchased at the beginning of the year for this service. We provided the equivalent of about 11 trips per car per day averaged over the year. We are far more than a taxi service. Our highly trained drivers all develop close connections with the many clients we pick up from their front doors and escort right to their hospital, medical or other health appointments,

and then come back again to take them home afterwards. Visits to many of these appointments can be quite traumatic and a friendly arm to lean on makes a huge difference. Punctuality, safety and reliability are the hallmarks of our service. Waiting time for service has been dramatically reduced to a maximum of just 30 minutes after call for return trip. When time allows during the week, and on Saturdays, we also provide individual transport for non-medical needs.

The shopping bus services have been increasingly popular, leading to demand for a fourth shopping bus per fortnight from February 2008. About 32 clients regularly use this service, with our bus assistants helping to carry shopping bags right into our clients' kitchens.

We listen to our clients and quickly respond to their transport needs. In addition to individual transport and shopping buses Community Transport works closely with Disability and Aged Services to meet their ever increasing needs.



Assessment

As part of our service our Assessment Officer, Kathleen Hanstein meets with potential new clients to ensure that we can provide them with appropriate services, or else refer on to other organisations. We assess clients' individual mobility and basic care needs. About 15% of new assessments result in a referral to other services, but the majority is accommodated in our Transport and Aged Services programs. We are often the first service that many isolated seniors might

think of accessing and sometimes we have been able to identify that they have significantly higher needs for care and are able to connect them with appropriate resources.

Meeting clients in their homes is very important as many people are reluctant to admit that they really do need help from others, especially when they have not made a personal connection with service providers. Older people can also sound much healthier than the really are when spoken to by telephone alone.

The wider community

Having a large fleet puts us in the unique position of being able to reach out to other service organisations in the community in order to provide transport services, at cost, which leads towards social inclusion. This is already happening, but as the only community transport organisation in Woollahra we need to do more out-reach to develop this resource in the medium term.

Another role of community transport is continued advocacy for suitable access and parking for people with mobility issues.

The role of drivers is also evolving and we are continuing to up-skill drivers so that they can play a wider role in service provision, interchangeable with support-workers and team-leaders in aged and disability services ■



Services for Seniors

Dramatic changes have occurred at Holdsworth in the last year. Existing programs have been revamped, new programs have been introduced and stronger client contacts have been maintained. Our most recent statistics show that we are providing over 100 hours of individual client service per day, which is double what we were doing just twelve months ago.

Full credit for this goes to our Coordinator, Maya Jankovic, and Program Officer, Valerie Fitzpatrick, who treat every client as members of their extended Holdsworth family. They have now got to the stage that demand for most of our programs far outstrips supply, with between ten to fifteen clients accessing each of our five weekly, and three fortnightly programs, and up to three busloads of clients joining in our monthly *Discovery Tours*. We have also doubled the number of house-bound clients for whom we provide individual shopping and home visiting.

Our team now includes Sarah Harwood, Brian Lee and Andrea Szanto as permanent part-timers in addition to regular casual staff and up to 16 volunteers and of course our drivers who are integral to most of our programs.

Quality and Content

We have aimed for a significant improvement in the *Weekly Bus Outing* programming this year, with thorough research responding to clients' input. Programs are now specifically client focussed and aim to meet their cultural and social



interests. Frequently we have already managed to include great new destinations ahead of clients requesting them.

We continue to include national parks and beaches on our programs but these are no longer the mainstay and where possible we have a café stop en route – our clients do love their espresso coffee!

Since joining Holdsworth my whole life has changed. I'm no longer a couch potato – I'm getting out of the house, mixing with new people and feeling positive about me again. I do so enjoy going on your trips, getting outdoors and sharing meals with friends. I feel better about myself and more interested in life generally.

Saturday Fever was introduced late 2007 and offers clients a dining experience followed by a concert, theatre or movie on a Saturday evening. It has been an absolute success allowing clients to socialise and see Sydney by night and has met a very real need in our community.

Our *Discovery Tours* have been a real hit this year as we have offered exciting destinations and implemented effective promotional strategies. We have streamlined administration of this program and we liaise regularly with our clients to maintain their interest and stay in touch with their needs. Average numbers for this program are between 25-30.

I have seen more of Sydney in the past 12 months than I have seen in 56 years of living here. It is such a pleasure to meet with friends



each week and discover new destinations or revisit favourite places. I especially enjoyed visiting Lakemba Mosque, the Indian and Bahá'í Temples and all of the beautiful waterfront locations we have been to for lunch.

Fortnightly *Movie Matinees* are again popular, especially since we have added transport services. Golden oldies provide the ideal excuse for a get together and discussion.



The *Music Club* was introduced as a direct result of client interest and feedback. We engage guest presenters/performers to come to Holdsworth or we attend off-site concerts. Clients can also bring their own music to share with the group and discuss.

The *Individual Shopping Service* is becoming more popular as awareness of this service grows and with a new stream of funding from DADHC. We now have 17 clients receiving this service either weekly or fortnightly. Special mention must be made of Helen Haag, who developed many of our programs at Holdsworth during the 1980s and 1990s, and now runs this service along with Sarah Harwood.

Our Wednesday and Friday *Memory Loss Groups* are also running at capacity. As much as possible we integrate many of the same activities and outings as our more active seniors enjoy and aim to provide as much stimulation and pleasure as we can to these much loved clients.

Publicity

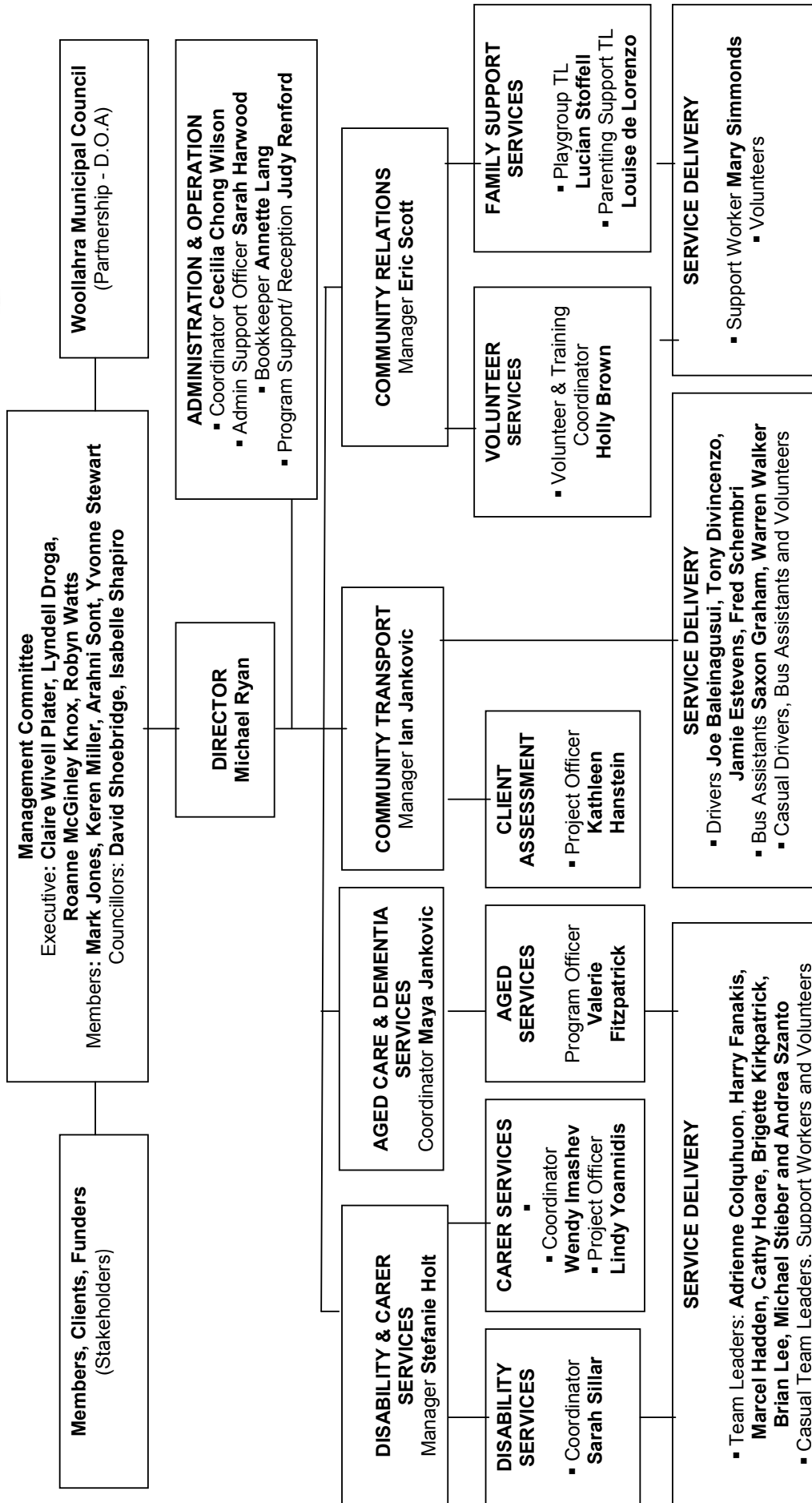
We have released our second edition of the *Four Seasons* Newsletter. The newsletter is proving to be a very effective promotional tool and reaches a wider audience than just its recipients. The document is shared amongst friends and creates interest and enquiries from the general community and has led to increased demand for services.

Vision

Some of the determinants of social inclusion for older people are the extent to which they know other people in the community and regularly connect with them; have access to health services, shopping, social and cultural activities, and healthy physical activities; and have the power to make their own decisions about the way they live their lives. This is what we want for all older members of our community and use as our benchmarks in assessing the success of our programs ■



Organisational Chart



Organisation Chart as at June 2008

www.holdsworth.org.au

