

New Ambassador for Holdsworth



How do people first hear about Holdsworth, especially if they are new to Woollahra or have difficulty in getting out very much? We figure one of the best referral sources should be local GPs, but we know GPs are busy and inundated with information.

One of our Volunteers, Dr Colin Mendelsohn, has

taken on the challenge as our Ambassador to the medical world to help us get our message to doctors so that they know whom to call.

You can help us too next time you visit your GP – just remind him/her that Holdsworth Transport dropped you off, or if one of our volunteers visits with you regularly or we help you with your shopping. The doctor might then recommend us to someone else who could do with a little help.



Annual General Meeting Invitation

Our AGM will be held at the Centre on **Thursday, 24 September**, and we would like to invite our members, friends and clients to join us as we celebrate another year. Members will find a formal Notice of the Meeting enclosed with this newsletter. Further details on the AGM can be downloaded from our website. Our Annual Report and audited financial reports will also be available on-line closer to the date of the AGM with hard copies available from the Centre.

Prior to the meeting we will be serving drinks and refreshments from 5.15 pm with a short concert, featuring the world premier public performance by *Rhythm of Life*, our very own Holdsworth Community Choir with musical director, Robert Teicher. Please RSVP by 18 September to Judy Renford on 9302 3600 if you would like to come and let her know if you require complimentary community transport on the evening.

From the Director

Spring and an AGM always fill us with lots of new ideas for the next twelve months and it is also a good time to reflect on the financial year just finished. It's going to be a hard year to top as we have been through a period of massive growth in demand for our programs. Our Playgroup numbers were up 17% on the previous year, reflecting Woollahra's mini-baby boom, Transport was up 28%, Aged Services almost doubled, and Disability and Carer services were much more diversified. Staffing has been very stable, with very little turnover, which allowed us to develop lots of new programs and initiatives and to continue programs piloted the year before. You can hear more about our achievements and plans by being part of the fun at our AGM on 24 September.

Gaining DGR status this year has also made a big difference to our ability to fundraise with over \$65,000 raised during the year due to the generosity of our many supporters. I particularly want to single out our two major charity partners, Westfield Bondi Junction and Sydney United Football Club, our goodwill Ambassador (and next-door neighbour) Donna Hay and our large number of corporate and individual donor supporters, all of whom are featured on our website. Donations are always greatly appreciated (see back page) and are used in our work with local families who care for children with disabilities or other frail or ill family members.

In this issue read about the great work of local school students, our new trampolining program, a top Dad, the work of our Carer team, fun at Playgroup, and farming adventures up the Hawkesbury. The Woollahra Link Shuttle pilot program has also been extended a little longer as we are hoping to be able to secure some on-going funding.

*Michael Ryan
September 2009*



Adam and his mother handing over the cheque from Sydney United



From Left: Magic Mic and his Recycle Show; Anthony from with the Python who visited Playgroup in July; Lewis Parter at our NAIDOC event; Julian meets Bubblegum the Blue Tongued Lizard

Culture, creatures and fun at Playgroup

In a busy few months at Playgroup we have had a great mix of events to add to the regular activities. North Queensland Indigenous singer Lewis Parter joined us for a NAIDOC celebration and the following week we had a lizard, snake, possum, crocodile and tawny frogmouth to show the children the beauty and variety of Australian wildlife. To start the new term, and to help get an important message across to children and parents, Magic Mic and his recycling show had the children enthralled with fun and magic. Our thanks go to Woollahra Council for arranging this.

New fees came into effect at the start of Term 3 and the small increase has been necessary to support the diverse and exciting activities as well as replacement of major and costly items such as pole padding and foam climbing block. Sadly our umbrella, bought to shelter staff from sun and rain, was stolen after a few weeks. We welcome all families and do not want to exclude anyone on the basis of cost so if this is an issue for you please talk to our staff and be aware that we offer a reduced rate for concession holders,

Two of our volunteers, Kazuko and Ellis, who had been visiting Australia have left our shores and their great contributions to Playgroup will be missed. We are fortunate to have a new group joining us so with at least one volunteer on most days, there will be some new faces around.

Disability Services start to

B^ou_nc^e!

Our first two *Bounce into Life* programs started trampolining in Miranda RSL Youth Club with up to ten clients per group. Everyone was very excited and had an enjoyable time. We returned to Holdsworth happy but exhausted after a good 1.5hrs workout.

We are very pleased to be able to offer this new program due to the funds we received from NSW Sport and Recreation and our charity partnership with *Sydney United Football Club*. We are thrilled to offer something which has so many positive effects . . . not only for the fitness aspect of it but for the new skills that will be developed, the sensory stimulation and the pure joy. We are looking forward to bouncing from strength to strength as far as our funding takes us!



We are pleased to welcome four new casual staff whom you will see on the weekend programs - Will, Philippa, Brooke and Andrew. We are sure they will have a great time with our wonderful groups.

The 2009 Holdsworth Art Exhibition featuring works by our Gunya group and others will be here at the Centre on 7 and 8 November. More details will be provided nearer the time but mark that weekend in your diary because it will also be the weekend of the Woollahra festival, featuring literary and musical experiences around the neighbourhood and the Woollahra Council Eco Fair in our playground.

Top Dad

Paddington local and regular visitor to our Playgroup, Matthew Callahan, has been chosen as Woollahra's Father of the Year. Matthew goes into the state finals of the event run by the *Shepherd Centre* and *Courier Newspapers* with the winner being announced at NSW Parliament House.



School volunteers help Holdsworth

There are now 26 school students volunteering at Holdsworth. The majority work in the disability programs for kids and come from Sydney Grammar, SCEGGS and Cranbrook. The support from these youngsters and their schools has enabled more children with disabilities to be included in the Funsworth program.



The Bowling program and Funky Sundays would not be as successful without the support of students and teachers from Waverley College.

Additionally, eight students from Ascham have been visiting Community Links clients. They will be replaced by six more in the next term. The positive reaction from clients is a testament to the girls' enthusiasm and maturity.

The close relationship between Holdsworth and the teachers at Sydney Grammar and Ascham has led to a new initiative for the next year. Students will be interviewing older clients with the aim of writing up life stories for a book that Holdsworth hopes to publish in 2010. Not only will this be a record of some fascinating lives, but also enables the younger people to interact with those of more advanced years.

Carry on Caring

Carers Services at Holdsworth provides regular carer support groups and an email network on information and services for carers. The *Eastenders* group meets monthly over lunch for people with memory loss and their carers. We are looking forward to *Dementia Awareness Week* on 15-24 September. We will be supporting Carers to visit the *Magnolia Healing Centre* in Rose Bay for a day of tai-chi, yoga, meditation, exercise and morning tea with funding from *Alzheimer's Australia* in an effort to increase awareness of the onset of Dementia. We are also hoping to join in the *Memory Walk* on Sunday 27 Sept. Parramatta Park to promote understanding of Dementia. It starts at 8.30am with warm ups at 9.15 followed by a 2km or 5km walk. *Carers and Beyond* meets on Tuesdays fortnightly,

supporting carers of adults with special needs. Housing options have been the major focus. *Creative Carers*, all of whom have children under 21, meet on the alternate Tuesday afternoons. Both are lively, animated groups with a lot of resources and support between the carers, guest speakers and workshops. In June we held a *Safety Strategies* workshop teaching skills to manage violent and aggressive behaviour. For some this was a real insight and turn around in their relationship with their child. Other speakers have been from the NSW Federation of Housing Association and Centrelink. We are looking at a session for siblings of children with special needs and a speaker on managing difficult behaviours. We had to postpone "*Care and Understanding for Families and Carers-a life plan*" as the dates did not suit our carers. We are hoping that a one day workshop on a Saturday may suit Carers better. Please contact us if you are interested.

Men at Work, our men's carer group, meets on the last Thursday of each month. They often meet at the Clovelly Hotel and sometimes enter the Trivia night. Recently Stephen Booth spoke on legal issues related to disability. We are also very active in arranging guest speakers for a *Chinese Carers Group* which meets at the Ultimo Community Centre monthly.

Carers Week is coming up in October 18th-23rd. We have applied for funding through Carers NSW to run special pamper activities in recognition of the enormous contribution each carer makes every day of their life to support their family member/s.

The *Carers Resource Library* at the Waverley Library will soon be in operation with the books having been ordered and a launch being planned. This will mean Carers will have access to important information and resources that are often difficult to access at a book shop, or too expensive to buy. Look out for more information about the Carers Library and launch.



If you or someone you know is providing care and would like to be linked into services and support, call Louise Gourley or Lindy Yoannidis or email carer@holdsworth.org.au

Shuttle Bus Service Has a Loyal Following

The loyal users of the new free Shuttle Bus have nothing but praise about the safe, friendly, and comfortable service. Recent survey results reveal this service bridges a gap between public transport and other transport services provided by Holdsworth Community Centre, offering a free and punctual

