



Williamstown
Community
and Education
Centre Inc

Newsletter January 2019

Joan Kirner House and Spotswood
Community House

For Members, Committee, Staff, Volunteers, Students, Parents,
Stakeholders, Centre users, Partners, Sponsors and Our Community

Find us on 



Centre Xmas Lunch. Friday 14 December

Upcoming Birthdays

Gemila, Childcare, January 1 / Maria, Volunteer, January 3 / Caroline, Volunteer, January 12.

Coming Up...

- Thursday 10 January 2019. Skills for Education and Employment classes commence.
- Tuesday January 29, 2019 start of Term 1.
- Wednesday January 30. Welcome Back Morning Tea at 11.00 am at Joan Kirner House.

NEW Computer Class for Beginners in Altona North

At Altona North Library, Corner Millers and Mc Arthurs roads, Altona North. Wednesdays from 9.30 am to 11.30 am.

- Computers for absolute beginners.
- Word, Excel and Outlook.
- Creating an email address and using the internet.
- Creating and editing spreadsheets, documents and cards, etc.
- Enquires to Lynne on 9397 6168.



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Childcare for 2019

- Tuesday 2 ½ + Year Old Activity Group. 9.15 am to 2.15 pm – **Full.**
- Wednesday 3 Year Old Activity Group. 9.15 am to 2.15 pm – **Places still available.**
- Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays Occasional Care. 9.15 am to 12.15 pm - **Places still available.**

Details of programs [HERE](#). Any questions, EOIs or bookings, please call Penny on 9397 6168.



NEW Adult French Classes at Joan Kirner House

Adult French Classes Term One, 2019.

Beginners and Improvers.

Native-speaking teacher.

Fun and informal, we'll help you build a conversational toolkit for authentic contexts.

For enquiries call Jim on 0432 719 034



Hobsons Bay City Council Community Grants Program 2018 Celebration

Our Vice President Sonja Ilievska attended this event at Council on December 1.

'It was great to be recognised and appreciated by Council for the hard work our staff and volunteers do to ensure positive local community engagement.

Councils support is always appreciated, and we could not do what we do well, without their support.

Sonja'



**Mayor Councillor Jonathon Marsden,
Councillor Colleen Gates, Councillor Sandra
Wilson and our Sonja!**

In the Media

Jodie Whitehurst, our Scholarship winning English Teacher, recently had her work published in the **Fine Print**, the Journal of the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council (VALBEC). (November 2018, Volume 31, No. 3, Pages 17 to 18).

It is a great reflection and insight into her teaching practice at our Centre.

It is reproduced here with permission from VALBEC.

'Jodie - From silence to song: phase one of a plurilingual journey

Like most language teachers, I have always embraced multiculturalism in my adult English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes, encouraging students to share their stories, cultures, recipes, photos and beliefs.

Welcoming the rich tapestry of cultures is undoubtedly one of the great joys of being an EAL teacher, not to mention a wonderful springboard for communication between members of the class.

However, upon recent reflection, inspired by Julie's Teaching English Internationally course, I realised that this sharing of cultures within my classroom had largely been done in a monolingual way.

Despite greatly valuing the world's languages, it became apparent to me that I was not actively encouraging students to share their languages in the classroom.

This realisation has since led me to examine my approach more closely, to gauge how my students' myriad linguistic resources could be welcomed and effectively utilised within the learning space.

In order to make this shift, I first had to ascertain the key factors that had prevented me from establishing a plurilingual classroom. The two main factors I identified were:

a) *Perceived student expectations—one student's complaint about her classmates in a former class who always spoke their first language, alongside the request from another group of students to introduce a penalty jar for any non-English utterances, had contributed to my impression that an English-only space was what my students desired.*



b) *My doubt regarding my ability to teach in a plurilingual manner, given that I don't speak or understand the first languages of most of my students.*

My next step was to reverse these English-only expectations, by drawing upon the suggestions of scholars such as Adoniou (2015) and Cross (2012), who maintain that sharing the first language of one's students is not a prerequisite to creating a plurilingual space.

In the last few months, I have made some simple yet significant changes to my approach, to ensure that my students understand that their languages are not only welcome but also valuable resources for learning English.

In contrast to my former habit of mixing up students of the same first language when setting group work or pair tasks, I have made a point of keeping them together, particularly where I could see this would be helpful to a student with less English.

Additionally, I have taken every opportunity to ask students to teach us all key words and phrases in their home languages.

This has really engaged and encouraged students by placing them as experts and acknowledging their pre-existing language skills.

As an extension of this idea, I asked my students to co-write a song with me to perform at a Refugee Week community event.

In addition to telling their collective migration stories, the song contained the strong plurilingual element of a call-and-response chorus in which the students taught the audience how to say 'Hello' in each of their languages.



At the end of the song, they invited the audience to do the same.

In addition to this being a deeply moving and enriching shared experience for my students and many others who attended the event, it opened up a plurilingual dialogue within and beyond the classroom.

It is clear to me that, as a teacher, there is so much more I can do to embrace and promote plurilingualism within and beyond the learning space.

However, after introducing these changes since my shift in perspective, I can already see enormous benefits, not the least of which is establishing a greater sense of respect for the linguistic rights of all.'



Creative Student!

Below are portraits of Classmates, painted by Malgorzata (Gosia) Blaszczyk.

Gosia is a Student in the English Conversation Class at Spotswood Community House.

Council will be displaying them in public places around Hobsons Bay, so keep an eye out for them!



This Month's Profiled People

Roger Hersey – Computer Teacher

Roger started with us in 2018 and takes the Introduction to Computer classes for Wednesday afternoons, Thursday mornings and Thursday afternoons at Joan Kirner House.

He is also delivering a Computer class at Altona North Library on Wednesday mornings.

Roger has had significant experience in the IT field, working on large, complex projects around the world.

Roger has a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.



Kay Reay - Volunteer

Kay started with us in 2015 and helps out in the Mild Intellectually Disability Art Class on Monday afternoons.

She has been a Bookkeeper, Receptionist and Administrator in the medical sector.

Kay has a keen interest in sewing, arts and crafts.



Lynne Hewet - Education and Training Coordinator

Lynne has been at the Centre since 1992. During this time, she has worked in a variety of roles including Volunteer, Committee Member, Manager, teacher and tutor.

Aside from Coordination, Lynne is also our teacher in the Dulcie Shaw House Course.

Lynne has a Bachelor of Arts and Graduate Diploma of Teaching.



Managers Musings

2019 sees our Centre starting a range of new programs, initiatives and welcoming some new staff.

We are starting, for the first time, five-hour Occasional Care sessions.

We have a new Computer class with Roger at Altona North Library, more Yoga Classes will be running, a new Adult French Language Class and new Childcare staff.

Also, significant improvements to Spotswood Community House, an upgrade to the Staff Room kitchen at Joan Kirner House and a second portable Digital Projector, Laptop and Hovercam set up for teachers.

We are also aiming to launch a much-needed updated website.

We will be continuing several projects sponsored by Hobsons Bay Community Foundation, Hobsons Bay City Council, Toyota and The Good Things Foundation.

An exciting year ahead.

Thanks,

Mark.

Mark Brophy, PhD
Manager
Williamstown Community and Education Centre Inc