

History of Our Centre

1974

- In August, local women at home want to get involved and do things in their local community. Several form a group to lobby for a community facility to have craft programs and discussion groups to help stimulate women at home with young children

1975

- 'Community Outreach' is established, as a Sub Committee of North Williamstown Primary School
- Establishment of the first Migrant English class in Williamstown

1976

- Coffee morning for the local mums and the establishment of the first community playgroup in Williamstown

1978

- The Centre gained funding to run the first After School Program. A joint submission with North Williamstown Primary School saw the construction of the multi-purpose hall in the grounds of the Primary School.

1982

- The first Community Services Group is established, which today is known as the Interagency Network.

1986

- TAFE funding enabled the Centre to employ a Coordinator to run Adult Education, Leisure and Recreation programs for local residents

1987

- The organisation becomes incorporated (20/7/87) – name changes from 'Community Outreach' to 'Outreach Community Centre Inc', and no longer operates as a sub-committee of Williamstown North Primary School
- The organisation relocates to the Caretakers residence on the corner of Freyer Street and Melbourne Road, 139 Melbourne Road, North Williamstown

1988

- Computer classes begin at Newport TAFE
- Childcare is available for women enrolling in courses to improve their employment options
- A craft group called Pins and Needles attracts up to thirty women weekly

1991

- The Centre attracts large amounts of Federal funding for Migrant English and Literacy classes. Most of this funding supports the running of classes in Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North and Spotswood

1992

- Opening of the new Childcare / Multipurpose extension
- Mobil starts donating to our Centre. These donations continue until the present day
- Funding gained for holiday programs for disabled adults

1993

- Centre runs a Career Information Session for job seekers over 45 years of age at the Williamstown Town hall. Over 350 people attend the activities
- The Geenhouse Cleaning Training Program for isolated community members with limited skills expands to Greenhouse Cleaning and is registered as a business

1994

- Council amalgamations – Williamstown Council and Altona Council amalgamate under the name Hobsons Bay City Council
- Due to commitment to assisting those with disabilities, Centre gains official Public Benevolent Institution status. This status is very rare in the sector.

1995

- In response to high local unemployment and living in an area fast becoming an important Tourist Precinct, the Centre begins the first Training sessions in Tourist Guiding

1998

- Centre gets a new name. 'Outreach Community Centre' becomes 'Williamstown Community and Education Centre'. Rationale is due in part to establish Registered Training Organisation status
- Centre receives Outstanding Provider of the Year Award from ACFE during Adult Learners Week

1999

- Victoria University Work for the Dole scheme—beautification of the house and gardens at Spotswood Community House. The Premier Steve Bracks officially opens the newly refurbished House.
- Delivery of programs extends to the Migrant Resource Centre, Dulcie Shaw House, The Circle, Altona Primary School, Altona North Tech and Altona Library as well as the Senior Citizens Club in Williamstown

2000

- The Centre is looking for a new venue as our existing venue is too small to cater for all the demands we have from the wider Hobsons Bay residents
- A Debutante Ball for young adults with an intellectual disability is held at the Williamstown Town Hall attended by over three hundred friends and family. Sixteen young adults were presented to the mayor of Hobsons Bay Cr Carl Marsich. Mobil Altona Refinery gave a donation of \$6,000 toward the cost of the evening

2001

- Spotswood Community House undergoes a complete indoor and outdoor refurbishment through the Victoria University Work for the Dole scheme
- The Centre celebrates International Disability Day, through a Disco evening. Funding was gained through the International Disability Grants Program
- The Centre meets with the Department of Treasury and Finance and City of Hobsons Bay to discuss the possibility of the Centre managing the former Williamstown Courthouse in Thompson Street
- Centre celebrates the International Year of the Volunteer through a certificate presentation and lunch. More than forty people attended the day. Guest speaker was Mr Alistair Harkness from the Electoral Office of the Premier Mr Steve Bracks

2002

- Successful \$200,000 Submission written to State Government for Capital Works Program for the refurbishment of the Williamstown Court House. The City of Hobsons Bay matched this contribution, totalling \$400,000 to contribute toward the cost of the Courthouse refurbishment
- New Federal Government Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program commences
- The Migrant English class create a three monthly newsletter
- A farewell to site at 139 Melbourne Rd, Williamstown. Plans start for moving into the disused Williamstown Court House which was originally opened in 1856, burnt down in 1971, rebuilt in 1973, then decommissioned in 1991 and was unoccupied for 10 years

2003

- Staff move into the Courthouse
- The official opening of the new Courthouse venue was held on the 21st of March. The Premier the Hon Steve Bracks officially launched the event and called on Mrs Kirner, the former Premier of Victoria to receive the honour of the site being named after her, to recognise the excellent work she has done for Victoria and the local community.

- Key Handover Ceremony. The Premier of Victoria, the Hon Steve Bracks handed the key to the original court house over to the Chairperson of the Williamstown Community and Education Centre
- With so much more space, the Centre is able to increase all its programs and activities. The Centre commences a new After School Program, Mini Maestro's Music Program, Kumon and many more local groups.
- Mobil Altona Refinery donates \$11,000 to the Centre to cover the cost of leasing computers. Minister Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training officially opens the Mobil Computer Room with Mr Mike McGrath, Manager of Mobil Altona Refinery
- The After School Program for Williamstown and St Marys Primary School uses Joan Kirner House as its new home. The Centre expands its childcare and playgroup activities. Hundreds of children use the childcare room each week
- The Federal funded Migrant English and Literacy classes grow rapidly in numbers. More classes are developed
- Spotswood Community House receives a new and continuing Coordination grant from the Department of Human Services.
- Lynne receives Williamstown Rotary Club Vocational Excellence Award

2004

- A shade cloth is erected over the childcare outdoor play area
- Signage at the front of Joan Kirner House installed
- Floydies Social Support Program commences at Floyd Lodge, catering for 20 disabled and elderly frail adults
- Funding from our Centre and a contribution from Council has enabled the development of the Hobsons Bay Network of Community Centres

2005

- Federal funded programs bring over 30 nationalities to our Centre to improve English and Literacy levels
- Pelicans Three Year Old Activity Group commences
- Spotswood Community House and Joan Kirner House staff, develops a Men's Shed in the Spotswood area. This project provides activities to support socially isolated and disabled older men
- The back block of Joan Kirner House is soil tested and planning starts for the development of a playground for Centre run activities

- A Carers painting group starts, to support the carers of the elderly frail and disabled, to give carers a break
- Joan Kirner House gets a disabled toilet.
- Men's Shed is established in Ann Street Williamstown, with support from Yarraville Community Centre, Council, Laverton Community Centre and Victoria University.

2006

- Emergency Relief begins
- Playgroups include Gumnuts and Children with Disabilities.
- Bone Boosters, Yoga and Pilates commence
- Lynne receives Good Access Award for Disabled from Council

2007

- Holiday Program for disabled
- Award winning Wakety Pals Program, for Mild Disabled, commences

2008

- Hobson Bay Community Grant results in Centre, with ISIS Primary Care, Williamstown Primary School and the Men's Shed developing a Community Garden at Floyd Lodge

2009

- Centre continues delivering Pre – Accredited and Accredited training for State Government
- Free Public Access computer set up at Joan Kirner House

2010

- State Government funding, compliance and regulatory environment requires sector to adapt quickly
- 'Sailability – The Next Step'. Sailing Program for people with disabilities. A partnership with Hobsons Bay City Council, Yachting Victoria and the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria.
- Emergency Relief Program grows to over 20 volunteers and over 2,000 clients.

2011

- New Logo introduced
- Association membership increases from 6 to over 50

- State Library Grant for ICT courses
- Mobil donates 12 iPads

2012

- Dr Mark Brophy commences as CEO
- Scholarships through VET Development Centre for all teachers to upgrade qualifications
- Successful State Government grant to improve pre – training reviews, enrolment process, etc to increase efficiencies
- Paula is Nominee for Star Newspaper Volunteer of the Year Award
- All teachers receive scholarship to upgrade qualifications
- Increase of 35 per cent in pre- accredited delivery
- Program delivery extends from Spotswood Community House and Joan Kirner House in Williamstown to Dulcie Shaw House, Migrant Resource Centre and Library, all in Altona North

2013

- Cathy receives Inspirational Woman Award from Council
- Centre receives three year Federal Government Skills for Education and Employment Program contract
- Launch of Conversations for the Curious
- Foyer at Joan Kirner House painted, new flooring in childcare and reception, classroom extended. Upgrade for Spotswood Community Centre

2014

- 40th Anniversary Celebration with Joan Kirner and local politicians attending
- Foyer at Joan Kirner House upgraded. New chairs, tables, seating, credenzas, etc
- Increase in Skills for Education and Employment program
- iPad for Mature Learners Program
- Increase in Three Year Old Program
- Spotswood Community House upgrade

- Two more staff, Lynne and Jenny win Inspirational Women's Award

2015

- Finalist in Council Business Excellence Award
- Winner of Neighbourhood Houses People Choice Award for promotional video
- Commenced 12 month plan of Annual Themed Events
- Four years of continued surplus
- Centre passes VRQA Audit
- Learn Local Corridor Partnership research published
- More upgrades to classrooms at Joan Kirner House and Spotswood Community Centre
- Two year R E Ross Trust Grant to run extracurricular activities for students
- Mobil Day of Caring
- Grant to run English courses for refugees ineligible for Government subsidised training
- Joan Kirner's passing on June 1

2016

- Complete upgrade of Childcare
- Willi Walking Group established
- Grow, Cook, Create and Share Program launched
- Financial Literacy Program launched
- Pink Ribbon fundraiser
- Development of Garden Bed
- Winner of Neighbourhood Houses People Choice Award for photo competition
- Opening of Joan's Garden by Victorian Governor, Linda Dessau on June 1
- New branding and logo
- Pre-accredited training increases

- Five years in a row of surpluses
- Successful grants with Sidney Myer Foundation, EastWeb and Victorian Multicultural Commission

2017

- New professional brochures produced
- Range of sustainability initiatives launched. I.e. Planet Ark Cartridge rRecycle, Mobile Phone Muster, Seed Swap, Produce Swap, worm towers, CD and DVD Swap, Clothes Swap, etc
- New carpet in Room One at Joan Kirner House
- Successful Slater and Gordon grant application
- Upgrade of Computer Room
- Upgrade of Office area
- Hobsons Bay Community Centres Research Project Report published
- Solar panels installed at Joan Kirner house care of successful Powershop grant
- Spotswood Community House repaired and repainted inside
- Sixth year of surpluses
- Pelicans Three Year Old Activity Program turns ten years old