Mission
North Sydney Community Centre is a not for profit Incorporated Association established in 1972 to promote creativity, self-development, education, co-operation and community awareness in a non-competitive environment.

Acknowledgement of Country
We acknowledge the Traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to Elders, both past and present.
The Centre is driven by a voluntary committee of local residents from all walks of life: teachers, psychologists, business and marketing consultants and community minded folk who pool their energies and skills to ensure the Centre answers to the needs of a changing community.

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**JOHN COFFEY PRESIDENT**

John has been a committee member since the mid 1980’s when resident in North Sydney and served as Treasurer for much of this time. John was elected President in 2013. He has done time cooking sausages and cleaning up rubbish at the markets and participated in many other activities at the Centre. John has thoroughly enjoyed his involvement with the Centre’s community over the many years, through both what he has been able to give, and receive. John has recently retired from the Environmental Protection Authority and enjoys being a part-time farmer.

**LYNN OSWALD VICE PRESIDENT**

Lynn Oswald was a North Sydney Market stallholder for over ten years giving it up in 2005 when she joined the committee. Lynn was elected Vice President in 2013. Lynn took a break from the committee over four years ago during which she spent two years volunteering in Tanzania at the School of St Jude where she enjoyed exploring her passion for all things African, including her love of animals. Lynn volunteers at North Sydney Markets to manage stallholder re-bookings.

**HELEN RITCHIE TREASURER**

Helen was contracted by the Centre to look after the accounts and she did so for over six years. During that time Helen enjoyed working with the staff and was able to put a lot into the centre. On retirement she was appointed to the committee and is contributing a great deal due to her accounting knowledge. Helen is married to David, has two married daughters and is a great deal due to her accounting knowledge. Helen was elected Treasurer in 2013.

**BEATE REINHARDT SECRETARY**

Beate brings to the committee skills from her professional background in accounting and bookkeeping as well as the perspective of an adult class student. You’ll often find Beate Latino dancing in the hallways and regularly attending Zumba classes, as well as many others. Beate takes care of stalholder bookings at North Sydney Markets as well as supporting other Centre activities, where her warmth and energy are always appreciated.

**SANDY BOYD**

Sandy Boyd has been on the committee for over seven years having retired as a bookkeeper in 2005. Sandy was Vice-President from 2011-2013. Sandy was delivering Meals on Wheels with the Crows Nest Community Centre (which she still does) when Carol Dettmann invited her along to a committee meeting. Having lived in Cremorne for over 30 years, Sandy was interested in helping maintain her community as a vibrant, interesting and compassionate area in which to live. Sandy says “through being on the committee to helping out at the markets I have been able to make a contribution to the Centre and my community - it’s a wonderful place to be part of”.

**ROSEMARY GARRETT**

Rosemary’s connection with the Centre began when she discovered Playgroup with her children and four other children she cared for. When they went to school Rosemary was asked to be coordinator of the Playgroup, a role she absolutely loved. The role allowed Rosemary to put her graphic design background and love of anything to do with paint and imagination to great use. Rosemary reluctantly retired after 17 years with Playgroup and now works in her family business. She has attended Life Drawing classes at the Centre for several years and has also joined in Latino Exercise and Italian language classes. Rosemary finds the Centre is a great place of warmth, fun, inspiration, education and friendship, and she says this is why she joined the Committee - to continue her connection with the Centre and be a voice for Playgroup and After School Care.

**BEARDA DE GRAFF**

Barbara joined the committee in 2015. Her involvement with the Centre began when her sons attended After School Care. They loved the Centre and everything that it offered their family. Barbara has over 30 years of marketing experience and is passionate about online marketing. She was raised in Albany, New York but considers herself a very lucky Albany, New York but considers herself a very lucky ‘happy transplant’. This is Barbara’s second stint on the committee and she remains one of the Centre’s loyal volunteers.

**ASHLEY MACPHERSON**

Ashley Macpherson joined the committee in 2014. Her working life has been characterised by generating ideas, creating opportunities and finding solutions to problems. She works as a Clinical Psychologist and as an International Development Consultant. In these roles she enjoys working therapeutically and providing technical input and strategic directions for organisations. As well as being an active participant in many of the wonderful courses on offer, Ashley enjoys being able to contribute to the activities of the Centre.

**NORMA MOLLOY**

Norma Molloy has been involved with the Centre since 1994 when she volunteered on market days selling beverages! At that time and until 2006 she was General Manager of a major photo agency, Australian Picture Library. Norma was appointed to the committee in 2004 and served as Management Committee President for five years from 2008 to 2013. Her sons attended After School Care throughout primary school and participated as volunteers, cleaning up after the markets during their high school years. These days she is employed as a carer for older people providing companionship and support in their day-to-day lives. Norma participates in a range of courses and events offered by the Centre.

**DREW TRUSLOVE**

Drew has been on the committee since 2012. He consults in psychology, helping companies with profiling and leadership advice. His kitchen is stocked primarily with goods from the produce market and his children are loud and enthusiastic contributors to the Centre’s Music, and Movement classes and Explores - Playgroup. He brings to the committee perspectives around staffing, team structures, business analysis and strategic planning.
## STAFF

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Joanna Jouin-Goodwin</td>
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<td>Administration &amp; Operations</td>
<td>Michelle Nixon</td>
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<td>Venue Hire &amp; Administration</td>
<td>Marta Scuccuglia</td>
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<td>Program Development &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>Anneke Barnes</td>
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<td>Social Media and Marketing Assistant</td>
<td>Mark Rowden</td>
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<td>Market Coordinator</td>
<td>Lisa MacDonald</td>
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<td>Graphic Designer</td>
<td>Ruby Grose</td>
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<td>Venue Hire Assistant</td>
<td>Surbhi Gandhi</td>
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<td>After School Care Coordinator</td>
<td>Peter Hogan</td>
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<td>After School Care Staff</td>
<td>Callum Boyd</td>
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<td>James Eriksson</td>
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<td>Luke Hyland</td>
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<td>Elsa Jara</td>
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<td>Alan Lopez</td>
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<td>Jenae O’Connor</td>
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<td>Sneh Villanova</td>
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<td>Playgroup Coordinator</td>
<td>Corinne Madden</td>
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<td>Playgroup Staff</td>
<td>Indu Kumari</td>
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<td>Maria Mansour</td>
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<td>Grace Nixon</td>
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<td>Debra Rifai</td>
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<td>Michelle Worthley</td>
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<td>Alex Turner</td>
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<td>Jackson Wylie</td>
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## VOLUNTEERS

The Centre wouldn’t survive without the support of our wonderful volunteers who fit service to our community into their own busy lives. Our volunteers, beautifully co-ordinated by Michelle Nixon, contribute to playgroup, After School Care, office administration, our markets and a range of events. For this we are most grateful as they not only lighten our load considerably and save much needed Centre funds, they add further diversity to our wonderful mix of staff and bring their wonderful energy to our range of activities.

### Administration
- Surbhi Gandhi
- Michael Landels
- Juan Roberson
- Nathalie Suet
- Minako Yoshimura

### Events
- Maggie Chegwyn
- Christine Gleitzman
- Leonora Gray
- Lorne MacArthur

### Markets
- Jill Gashler
- Irene Leigh
- Joyce Wang

### Playgroup
- Valentine Bullen
- Indu Kumari
- Chayya Tarachandani
- Pauline White
- Zoe (French student)
- Leyla (Turkish Student)

### School Students
- Olivia, Charlotte, Jenna, Megan and Louisa, Monte St Angelo Mercy College
- Andrew, Newington
- Stefan, Northern Beaches Secondary College
- Nicole, Roseville College
- Robbie, Matthew, Connor, Jacob, St Augustine’s College
- Madison, Wenona School

### Corporate Support
- NAB, North Sydney
- Laing O’Rourke
Another positive financial outcome has been achieved this year through a wide range of activities taking place across all areas of the Centre.

This year the successes were incremental with one of the more significant being the celebration of 15 years of the Northside Produce Market. The anniversary was marked by celebrations in Civic Park, a recipe swap and a post market ‘long table’ lunch with stallholders, staff and volunteers in the Centre. Under Lisa MacDonald’s passionate management and with the support of many other staff, numerous committee members and a band of volunteers the day was a great success.

There was an increase in attendance in Playgroup and an associated improvement in financial performance. Our thanks to Corinne Madden, with her staff of Debra Rifai, Michelle Worthley, Maria Mansour, Indu Kumari and Grace Nixon, supported by volunteers Valentine, Pauline and Surfhi. The team delivered another constructive, engaging and innovative program of activities this year. Work was put into broadening the engagement with attending parents and carers. This program continues to be one of the highest standard playgroups available.

After School Care also grew in both attendance and income, contributing a very significant surplus to the Centre. Peter Hogan’s staff (James Eriksson, Elsa Jara, Sneh Villanova, Callum Boyd, Luke Hyland, Alan Lopez and Jenae O’Connor) are a great team who deliver a veritable cornucopia of activities for the children. This year saw increased offerings in sport, languages and creative activities. No wonder we have such a waiting list for participation in this program.

The Adult Class program participation continues to blossom leading to income that is now approaching half a million dollars. Lead by Anneke Barnes and our Director, Joanna Jourin, the range and choice of courses is always being refreshed with new, vibrant and innovative ideas, although some of the old tried and true courses remain ever popular. The addition of a second pottery kiln to support both the Adult Class and After School programs was a great milestone for the Centre. This year we enjoyed the Student and Tutor Opening Evening Drinks with about 140 participants, young and old. There was a great feeling of energy, enthusiasm and joy on the night as well as a delightful choral performance from both tutors and students. It is with regret that we see Anneke Barnes departing the Centre for new opportunities, but we thank her for her contribution and wish her well.

The Markets continue to provide a great service to our local community and Lisa MacDonald has put significant effort into keeping the market refreshed, engaging with our stallholders and assessing our customers’ needs. A suite of volunteers who help make it all possible also supports both markets. And then there are the creative exhibitions such as Changeable Art, In Conversation events and so much more.

To make all of this possible we have our great administrative staff, Michelle Nixon keeps the wheels turning and the phones answered. Marta Scuccuglia does wonders with our data collection and processing and venue hire and has now stepped up to take on Anneke’s role of Program Development and Marketing. Ruby Grose does much of our graphics work and Surfhi Gandhi assists with Venue Hire. This team is supported by a volunteer team which includes Michael, Nathalie and a number of school students. Overseeing all of the staff and activities is our Director Joanna Jourin-Goodwin, who has again delivered a great, innovative and financially successful program.

I would also like to acknowledge the guidance and volunteer effort given by all of the members of the Management Committee. This year the committee was joined by former Playgroup staffers Rosemary Garrett and Barbara de Graff, a former committee member. Ongoing membership includes Lynn Oswald, Sandy Boyd, Helen Ritchie, Drew Truslove, Beate Reinhardt, Ashley MacPherson and Norma Molloy. A great team!

All of this activity would not be possible without the ever present support of North Sydney Council. This is delivered in many different ways and includes significant financial contribution, a broad range of input and guidance from council staff and ever ready maintenance to say the least of the provision of our wonderful venue. We continue to enjoy a respectful and constructive relationship with council.

We aim to have all of our activities contribute to what we refer to as our community, which is both geographically and demographically diverse but to us means anyone who walks through our doors. This year we expanded our engagement with the different segments of this community and we will continue to do more, realising the importance of this to people’s wellbeing. We take great pride in being part of the North Sydney community.
DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Joanna Jouin-Goodwin

North Sydney Community Centre is a vibrant hub with a natural inclination towards creativity, conversation, courage and collaboration among students, visitors, participants, staff and volunteers.

Last year I declared 2014-2015 would be a year of ‘consolidation’ but I’ve now realised there is no consolidation: we just keep expanding! This is a trend that will need to be addressed with some strategic planning and re-visioning of where we are going over the next three years. Our After School Care program is full on most days, Explorer’s Playgroup is doing well despite numbers fluctuating depending on the weather and our adult classes and workshops are going better than ever. The Northside Produce Market is at capacity and the North Sydney Market, despite being one of our core programs for over 30 years, continues to be reviewed and revived.

Whilst we juggle the governance of the Centre, building maintenance and financial sustainability we are also mindful of the need for people to play, to be supported and to grow. It is the stories of these people, our community, that keep us vibrant and evolving. It’s the grandfather bringing his young grandchild to playgroup for the first time, a parent trying to find their way through challenges of working full-time and needing child care in the afternoons, a senior who has decided that now they’ve retired they would like to learn the violin, or be brave enough to finally join a choir.

Our markets bring us stories from further afield – that of a young entrepreneurial farmer wishing to be a part of the Northside Produce Market, or a designer showcasing a new range of designs at the North Sydney Market. We see such an incredible cross-section of people expanding their minds and comfort zones and I personally am inspired by them all.

Our considerable and continued investment in upgrading our database system and website has definitely been a time-consuming but utterly worthwhile exercise. With the on-going support of David Stone of D-Revolution, who provides us with computer support, we seem to be running smoothly in the office. We have also invested in a second kiln in order to expand our pottery classes, which are now all full – again!

Thank you to our staff and committee who at times go beyond the call of duty with energy, enthusiasm and panache! We can all get our hands dirty, and then sparkle for a special occasion. We couldn’t do without a constant stream of volunteers who lighten the load, and for their assistance we are truly grateful. Thank you!

A special thanks to North Sydney Council - to Mayor Jilly Gibson, to Councillors and staff for their support across a number of areas, I think we attempt to tap into every resource we can find! We wouldn’t survive without our annual operating grant, and are equally grateful for our wonderful building, not to mention: discounted parking; the ability to use Civic Park for the markets; contributions for one-off free community workshops; our behind the scenes tours; bicycle maintenance workshops and tune-ups at the markets as well as occasional access to the Coal Loader for some of our workshops. We are blessed to have such a supportive Council to assist us in providing many ways for our community to participate in our programs.

How we manage the programs with a demographic from 0-5 year olds, through to our most senior of seniors is a source of much reflection on how to engage with and grow our audience, without losing our sense of community, and while keeping ourselves accessible. There is a strong sense of identity and ownership amongst our regulars and as an independent not for profit organisation with a history of grass roots activism and community engagement we seem to have struck a good balance of being able to provide something for everyone.

There are many factors, building on foundations of the past 43 years, that contribute to this balance: a committed management committee, long-term staff and very low staff turnover; years of experience and relationship building; our long term teaching staff as well as our many new tutors who come to us to try new ideas to educate, to inspire and to empower. Hopefully we’ll be able to continue in this vein for many years to come.
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING

Anneke Barnes

It has been a year of breaking records with fantastic attendance across a wide range of classes, workshops and events. We aimed to offer a diversity of classes and events to reflect the wide-ranging interests of our audience while also tapping into those events taking place in our North Sydney community.

Enrolments for Term 1 2015 exceeded past records by 8.5% and Term 2 exceeded past records by 7%. Online enrolments have increased since the implementation of the Centre’s new website in January 2014. This significant increase in online enrolments has impacted office productivity with time now available to direct to other areas. However, a large number of our long time regular students still prefer to enrol in person or by phone.

As part of our commitment to being environmentally aware and our focus on driving online enrolments, we have reduced the number of course guides printed from 30,000 to 21,000. We have reduced distribution to residential letterboxes and increased the number of course guides placed in cafes, local businesses and social settings.

MARKETING

With limited resources we are constantly reviewing our marketing strategy, and this year Social Media, predominately Facebook and Instagram, was identified as the most significant part of the marketing mix to pay attention to. In late April we engaged Mark Rowden to work with us one day a week to help grow social media. He is working systematically to build our online community with the intention of making us a hub of information and a destination for people to come to.

Key milestones reached across social media this past year included: The setting up of Instagram and Twitter accounts and development of these audiences; Creation of an Explorers Playgroup Facebook page and maximising tools within Facebook for optimal customer interaction and to direct people back to our website. Engagement with existing customers continues with our weekly E-Newsletter that performs above average maximising tools within Facebook for optimal customer interaction and to direct people back to our website.

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EVENTS

In Conversation Talks

Over the past year we held six In Conversation events with many reaching capacity. These events continue to offer a rich diversity in topics. This year we held: Downsizing with Style (an Architecture on Show event, in collaboration with RAIA); The Life and Times of Marion Mahoney Griffin with Karen McCartney in Conversation with Glenda Korporaal during The Sydney Architecture Festival; Cinematography and Australian Film in the 1970’s with guest Russell Boyd, interviewed by Andrew Urban; The Gretta Anna Cookbook launch event, with Martin Teplitzky and Valli Little; Travel Without Tears with journalists and writers Sally Webb and Sarah MacDonald and our annual House of Welcome fundraising evening, this year featuring Professor Munjed Al Muderis In Conversation with ABC journalist Scott Bevan.

VENUE HIRE

Marta Scuccuglia

Our Community Centre’s spaces have been in great demand again this year, solidly booked for children’s parties, fundraisers, cooking classes, pop up dinners and training workshops. Our venue hire service has ensured our Centre is kept abuzz with joyful events day-to-day, week-to-week, throughout the year.

We sustained positive relationships with our regular hirers such as Harbour City Church, Laughter Yoga and The International Yoga Teachers Association. We delivered a delightful and smooth venue hire service to our customers thanks to the outstanding support of the Centre’s team, particularly our Weekend Venue Hire Manager, Surbhi. Employing Surbhi has improved the quality of service we have been able to provide to our weekend venue hirers as well as preventing unforeseeable issues arising after hours. This has been a positive step in terms of customer service and also in regards to the security and maintenance of the Centre.

"Just a polite note to thank you sincerely for all your assistance regarding our venue hire on Saturday – most appreciated. Please be assured that you have clearly impressed about 10+ parents in the local area over the weekend" - Marita, Casual Hirer

"Hi Marta, Surbhi was fantastic as usual re having the room and notes ready for me. Cheers!" - Steve Hogwood, Fermenting Class Tutor

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MARKETS
Lisa MacDonald

North Sydney Market on Miller

North Sydney Market on Miller kicked off with a bang this financial year with our French themed July Bastille Day market, held for the third year in a row. The market drew a record crowd - Vive La France!

Visitors who frequent the market enjoy the diverse range of stalls, the quality of which has been constantly improving. Our stallholders often comment that this is their favourite market - not that we're biased! This year we introduced our free Behind the Scenes Artisan Market Tours offering the public the chance to meet the creators of the market’s products and hear their stories. We continue to offer Bicycle Tune In and Check Ups courtesy of North Sydney Council, giving bicycle owners a free assessment and short tune up of their bike as well as ongoing maintenance advice.

We once again finished the year participating in the Guringai Festival as part of the June market. It was a wonderful addition having the Jannawi Dance Clan begin the day after the Welcome to Country by Neil Evers. The feedback we received regarding the free traditional basket weaving class with Karleen Green was that it was thoroughly enjoyed by participants wanting to come back for more.

North Sydney Market continues to face the challenge of being in a location which of a weekend is very quiet, however, with the efforts of the great team from the Centre, the volunteers who so kindly give their time, an incredibly supportive Committee and Council, we will endeavour to find a way for the market to thrive.

Northside Produce Market

We continued celebrating 15 years of the Produce Market across the second half of 2014, culminating in a lunch inviting current stall holders, market and Centre staff, committee members past and present, North Sydney Council representatives and volunteers to enjoy a wonderful spread of our delicious market produce. It was a wonderful way to pay homage to the market and thank those involved in bringing it to North Sydney over the years.

Our book launch event, The Best of Gretta Anna with Martin Teplitzky, facilitated by Valli Little, Food Director of Delicious magazine was another highlight of the past year. We were blessed by great weather for the outdoor event attended by over 100 people. Many books were purchased and signed and the audience enjoyed listening to Martin’s stories. It was obvious how much Gretta Anna had touched everybody in one way or another.

In a market filled with regular stallholders it can be a juggling act to introduce new stalls, particularly to support fledgling businesses and seasonal produce. We enjoy feedback from our customers who provide positive comments on what these new stalls bring to the market.

We endeavour to offer a Produce Market of the highest quality, showcasing stallholders committed to their produce and who enjoy sharing their story with the public.
The process included reviewing our Quality Improvement Plan for the Department and I’m pleased to report we fared well in the seven quality areas with five Meeting National Standards and two Exceeding National Standards.

We have four permanent staff members: James Eriksson, Elsa Jara, Sneh Villanova and myself as well as Luke Hyland and Callum Boyd on term by term contracts. Two casual staff members, Alan Lopez and Jenae O’Conner work regularly each week.

Our 2015 enrolment was the largest we have ever experienced. At one stage we had 22 children on the waiting list for Monday to Wednesday, which is quite staggering. Even midway through the year we were running at capacity with vacancies only on Fridays.

This year all staff had the opportunity to spend time in the office to gain a little behind the scenes experience dealing with parents and paperwork. The role reversal gave me the opportunity to free myself from the office and enjoy the fun side of After School Care, dealing with children.

This year we hosted a welcome BBQ for parents and children and it was a huge success. We had a jumping castle for the kids and the After School Care staff prepared and cooked the BBQ. Our President, John Coffey, gave a magnificent speech (as always) outlining all the things we do at our Centre other than After School Care as well as sharing some of the Centre’s history. He concluded with a brief insight into our After School Care staff. The feedback we received from parents was great, who were amazed at the diversity and talent of the staff looking after their children.

We had our Year 6 Farewell Movie and Pizza Night for those children moving on to high school, although they never really leave with many coming back to visit us for years. I believe this is a reflection of the Centre and what it means to children and their families.

Some of the wonderful activities we offered to the children this year were: Pottery; Spanish Language Classes; Sewing Club; Mandarin Language Classes; Knitting Club; Running Club; 20/20 Cricket; World Cup Soccer; Martial Arts; Mosaics; Cooking Classes and every parents favourite, Homework Club which runs every day. I could fill a few pages with the amazing activities our staff come up with as well as the suggestions from children who then run such programs themselves.

As always there are many people we need to thank for supporting ASC throughout the year - Joanna, Michelle, Marta, Lisa, Anneke, Julie and Corinne and her Playgroup team. Thank you to our Committee who volunteer their time each month for meetings, time at the markets and much more. They do a fantastic job and we could not survive without their time and effort.

This year the Centre’s After School Care achieved accreditation under the new Department of Education and Communities guidelines and framework – an achievement we have been working towards for four years.

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This year we hosted a welcome BBQ for parents and children and it was a huge success. We had a jumping castle for the kids and the After School Care staff prepared and cooked the BBQ. Our President, John Coffey, gave a magnificent speech (as always) outlining all the things we do at our Centre other than After School Care as well as sharing some of the Centre’s history. He concluded with a brief insight into our After School Care staff. The feedback we received from parents was great, who were amazed at the diversity and talent of the staff looking after their children.

We had our Year 6 Farewell Movie and Pizza Night for those children moving on to high school, although they never really leave with many coming back to visit us for years. I believe this is a reflection of the Centre and what it means to children and their families.

Some of the wonderful activities we offered to the children this year were: Pottery; Spanish Language Classes; Sewing Club; Mandarin Language Classes; Knitting Club; Running Club; 20/20 Cricket; World Cup Soccer; Martial Arts; Mosaics; Cooking Classes and every parents favourite, Homework Club which runs every day. I could fill a few pages with the amazing activities our staff come up with as well as the suggestions from children who then run such programs themselves.

As always there are many people we need to thank for supporting ASC throughout the year - Joanna, Michelle, Marta, Lisa, Anneke, Julie and Corinne and her Playgroup team. Thank you to our Committee who volunteer their time each month for meetings, time at the markets and much more. They do a fantastic job and we could not survive without their time and effort.

This year the Centre’s After School Care achieved accreditation under the new Department of Education and Communities guidelines and framework – an achievement we have been working towards for four years.

The process included reviewing our Quality Improvement Plan for the Department and I’m pleased to report we fared well in the seven quality areas with five Meeting National Standards and two Exceeding National Standards.

We have four permanent staff members: James Eriksson, Elsa Jara, Sneh Villanova and myself as well as Luke Hyland and Callum Boyd on term by term contracts. Two casual staff members, Alan Lopez and Jenae O’Conner work regularly each week.

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The Music and Movement program at the Centre continued to thrive this year. The mix of parents attending with their children, who are from every walk of life, including professional musicians, ensures that the integrity of the program must be always at the forefront of lesson planning, while maintaining a joyful experience for the children. We continue to find most of the children once enrolled continue with the program over the years.

Music education in early childhood is more vital than ever given that music education in teacher training is virtually non-existent now, even though research clearly shows the extraordinary impact that music has on the brain when a child is interacting with music at a multi-task level.

So a huge thank you to everyone – the After School Care staff who bring the mats and tables down, to Jo, Michelle and all the wonderful office staff who are always like a breath of fresh air and to George and Maya (our wonderful cleaners!) who often help me with the chairs and tables when setting up.

I look forward to many more years of happy music making at the North Sydney Community Centre.

Last year was filled with many exciting playgroup events. We created play dough bugs at our children’s festival’s stall in October and celebrated the end of 2014 with a visit from Fairy La La. In May we raised $668 for the Cancer Council’s Biggest Morning Tea and in June Playgroup participated in the Guringai Festival.

Our team is always looking for new ways to improve and strengthen playgroup and this year Joanna, Debra, Michelle and I conducted appraisals for all coordinators, casuals and volunteers. This proved constructive in determining areas each team member enjoys as well as those they wish to develop. Our volunteers Valentine, Pauline, uni student Charles, four year old boys and Indu (who later became a casual worker) were all a great help.

This year we developed a Playgroup Policies and Procedures Manual that we hope to be an invaluable point of reference in the years ahead. Thanks to Michelle for her admin support on the project. To help maintain our beautiful Centre, we developed action lists to keep the Centre clean and inviting. These lists include tasks to be carried out on rotation such as washing down walls, repairing toys and cleaning chairs. In June four new easels were purchased for the children’s creative activities.

On top of thanking our team I would also like to thank our members and children, without whom, playgroup wouldn’t exist. Mums, dad, grandparents, nannies, new mums, special needs children, single parents, foreign families all join in our Playgroup making it so beautifully unique in its diversity! Here are some of their stories:

Tara Creedy Family Day Care Carer
Tara discovered NSCC playgroup 7 years ago and a couple of times a week she brings along 5-6 children aged between 11 months and 5 years. Tara is a great asset to our playgroup, always discussing new ideas, giving constructive feedback and donating toys, puzzles and craft materials.

Heather Gaskell Grandmother and Nanny
Heather originally frequented playgroup as a parent with her son Thomas (now 21). She now joins us as nanny of 20-month old Sam. As a single mother, 21 years ago Heather found NSCC playgroup a wonderful way for both her and Thomas to connect and make friends. Heather loves the space the Centre provides for Sam to play and develop his skills independently. We love Heather’s warmth and willingness to help and her steady supply of recycling materials for our craft corner!

Rhiana Long Term Member
Rhiana, mother of Ava (5) and Will (2), has been coming to playgroup for over four years. Rhiana values playgroup’s community feel, great price and the opportunity to interact with other carers. She loves watching her children get stuck into the messy activities she’s reluctant to tackle at home. Rhiana regularly donates beautiful toys and it is a delight to have her family at playgroup.

Martine Nanny
For the past 18 months, Martine has been looking after Angel (5) and her brother Nate (4). Angel has a rare chromosome disorder that affects her motor and processing skills. Martine believes playgroup is fantastic for accommodating both children’s needs. Martine is an exceptional nanny providing loving care to both Angel and Nate and we are privileged to have them among us.

A big thank you to our special team of Valentine, Pauline, Indu, Grace, Maria, Michelle and Debra for making playgroup a pleasure to be part of this past year. Thank you to all Centre staff for respectfully sharing this beautiful space, to our Centre Director, Joanna, who is always approachable, full of ideas and constructive feedback and to our committee for their friendship and support.

THE MUSIC AND MOVEMENT PROGRAM

Jane Boyd

The Music and Movement program at the Centre continued to thrive this year. The mix of parents attending with their children, who are from every walk of life, including professional musicians, ensures that the integrity of the program must be always at the forefront of lesson planning, while maintaining a joyful experience for the children. We continue to find most of the children once enrolled continue with the program over the years.

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