

# Retrospective Report

2005-2014



### **Our Vision**

Our vision is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their rich culture to be acknowledged, valued and embraced by Australian Society.

### **Our Mission**

The purpose of Woor-Dungin is to increase resources, build strong partnerships and share knowledge to fulfil the purpose of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

### **Our Principles**

- 1. **Self-determination:** Aboriginal organisations will determine their own future.
- 2. Community development: We work to empower the Aboriginal organisations we partner with. Rather than do things for organisations, such as write their grant applications, we provide training, assist with project development, give feedback and advice, provide information on sourcing funding, facilitate introductions to funders, help with acquitting, documenting impact and provide ongoing support.
- **3. Reconciliation:** Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people work together to enable Woor-Dungin to realise our shared vision.
- **4. Advocacy:** We tackle structural issues on a systemic level. Our direct work with Aboriginal organisations informs our advocacy and policy development.

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(03) 9639 9757 admin@woor-dungin.com.au www.woor-dungin.com.au Front cover: Miranda Madgwick , Treasurer, Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (left) and Anne Jenkins, former Woor-Dungin Chair and Manager, Community and Government Partnerships.

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Woor-Dungin is a capacity building initiative, building partnerships for change. We are a coalition consisting of Aboriginal organisations, philanthropy, pro bono providers and stakeholders, working in partnership to enable Aboriginal organisations to achieve self-determination and to access the resources and support needed to address issues affecting their communities.

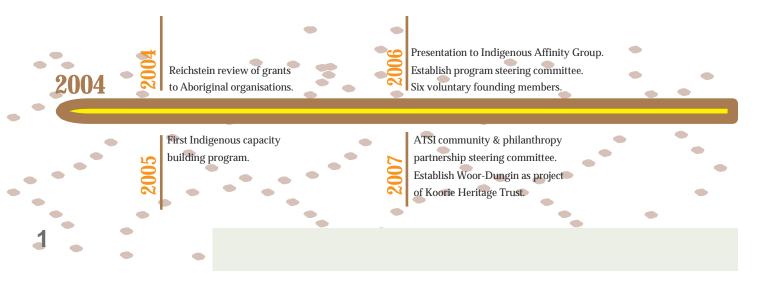
# **WELCOME TO WOOR-DUNGIN**

Woor-Dungin means "share" in the language of the Gunnai people of South Eastern Victoria, and sharing is the philosophy underpinning the Woor-Dungin model.

Beginning in 2004 as a capacity-building training program for Aboriginal organisations to learn how to access philanthropic support, Woor-Dungin has grown into a living model for successful partnerships between Aboriginal\* organisations, philanthropic and pro bono partners and the large number of skilled volunteers, several of whom are retirees, who make up the majority of the Woor-Dungin staff team.

\* The terms 'Aboriginal' and 'Indigenous' in this document refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers, please be warned that this report contains images of people who are now deceased.



### WELCOME TO WOOR-DUNGIN

### Our Mission is

**Simple:** to increase resources, build strong partnerships and share knowledge to fulfil the purpose of Aboriginal organisations.

2014 has brought exciting change and growth. As well as increasing the number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations we partner with, we will establish three additional Programs – The Aboriginal Community Worker Support Pilot, Social Enterprise and the Criminal Record Discrimination Project.

As we enter a new phase of expansion, it seems fitting to pause for reflection and take stock of where we have come from. This document, our

first Retrospective Report from our inception to 2014, celebrates our collective voices, shared understanding and achievements in improving the lives of Aboriginal peopleand communities.

We're proud to attest that Woor-Dungin serves as a model for improved access to philanthropic funds and strengthening partnerships and relationships – because itworks!

In the pages that follow, we recount how we came to be and tell the stories of our founders; we offer three case studies of Aboriginal organisations that have travelled with us from the

beginning and are going from strength to strength; and we offer our vision and plans for the future, so that others may join us and have their share.

Please enjoy, and feel free to share our stories!



Anne Jenkins, former Chairperson (left) and Christa Momot, Executive Officer, Community Development Coordinator.

2008

Planning & development of model by steering committee.



Formal MOU between Woor-Dungin & Koorie Heritage Trust.



Planning for Woor-Dungin to become independent entity.
Achieved incorporation.

5000

Approval to use Woor-Dungin name. Project worker employed, housed into the Reichstein Foundation.



Indigenous Capacity
Building Program delivered
in Mildura & Melbourne.
Moveto Koorie Heritage Trust.



Achieved Tax Concession Charity status. Move to Ross House. Conducted Strategic Review.

### What We Do

The Woor-Dungin model takes a community development approach, which has been developed over time by those participating in the program to create bridges, educating both parties to enable them to meet half-way.

Resource Aboriginal organisations to:	Encourage philanthropic & pro bono partners to:
Understand the language and practices of philanthropy	Engage more effectively with Aboriginal organisations
Become familiar with and confident in a business environment	Understand and be responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people
Plan and develop strong community projects, and write and submit good grant applications	Support capacity building and project development grants
Stay on track with their projects, and fulfil their acquittal obligations	Be flexible in their expectations, understanding of variations and realistic with their timelines

The support Woor-Dungin offers can take many forms, always determined by the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations themselves.

We offer Aboriginal organisations:

- Help to establish programs based on evidence-based solutions, as often organisations have good ideas but sometimes these ideas lack rigour and a successful evidence base.
- Help to identify and source philanthropic funding. We broker funding, promote projects to potential donors/funders and facilitate briefings to showcase the project to groups of trusts and foundations.
- After funding is received, we continue to provide practical support for program implementation, grant acquittal, evaluation and encourage the documentation of impact.

We can offer philanthropic funders and probono service providers:

- The opportunity for engagement with Aboriginal organisations on an equal footing, as partners in a shared endeavour
- Cultural education training for those wanting to engage more effectively with Aboriginal communities and issues.

The importance of strong and trusting relationships, and the value of genuine shared learning, cannot be over-estimated. Only by building these foundations can strong projects and effective community development happen.

### Who We Are

Our biggest assets are our volunteer staff and full members who commit to our mission and contribute their advice, skills, labour and resources.

"The partnership model is crucial. It's not an Indigenous organisation, it does not speak for us or represent any particular group. It's about people coming together to form a shared understanding and do something different to what was done before, that works better for everybody."

-Kirsty Allen, The Myer Foundation

Woor-Dungin comprises a thriving community of volunteers, each bringing high-level skills, understanding and commitment to making the organisation a success.

Five out of six founders, and a strong percentage of our full members, are Aboriginal people, each bringing broad links out to their own and neighbouring communities. The reach extends far across Aboriginal Australia, and every person assisted by Woor-Dungin takes their learning back to their communities and shares it.

Sharing knowledge is at the heart of Woor-Dungin and the majority of our staff are retirees or semi-retirees, donating their services pro bono. Often, once people reach retirement age, their value as a productive working citizen is seen as over. Yet these people have the skills, experience and most importantly time, exactly the key ingredients which Aboriginal people have requested..

The ongoing commitment of these volunteers to Woor-Dungin has been extraordinary.

Of the six founders, four remain actively involved a decade later.

Aunty Glenys Merry, one of the founders, died in 2010. At her funeral, it was stated that the last project Aunty Glenys was working on, "Was to crack open philanthropy so that small groups could get access".

Aunty Frances Bond, another founding member, died on 19 August 2014. Aunty Frances had been on the Committee of Management from 2009 until shortly before her death, both as Treasurer and a member of the Social Enterprise Working Group.



Aunty Glenys Merry



Aunty Frances Bond

### Why We Are Needed

"The work of Woor-Dungin is essential as in its short life it has often been at the epicentre of the exchange of knowledge and information between Indigenous people, philanthropists and professional service providers. This has been Woor-Dungin's most valuable legacy to date - its work is crucial to the success of these exchanges."

-Peter Seidel, Arnold Bloch Leibler

In Victoria there are approximately 170 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Whilst the issues affecting Aboriginal communities are well known, and statistics of Aboriginal disadvantage are well-documented, Aboriginal organisations continue to underutilise philanthropic funding opportunities. This is despite the fact that many trusts and foundations prioritise funding to them.<sup>1</sup>

"In Aboriginal communities there are very few people [in leadership positions] trying to manage with very few resources, for a large number of people who are in crisis, continually."

—Doseena Fergie, founding member

At Woor-Dungin the learning is very much a two-way partnership, designed to progress the recommendations and strategies listed in the "Closing the Gap" and "Reconciliation Australia" policy documents.

Both philanthropy and Indigenous organisations share a common aim to improve the health and strength of Aboriginal communities and the lives of Aboriginal people, and both need to learn about the other party in order to achieve this aim.

"They'd say "Don't waste your time going to them because you won't get anything from them." They'd obviously had bad experiences. It's probably still this way for a lot of organisations—philanthropic funding is not seen as achievable or accessible."

—Anne Jenkins, founding member

"When they asked me what I thought philanthropy was, I couldn't even say the word, let alone know what it is. It just sounded like something scary."

-Simone Spencer, founding member

For their part, philanthropic donors and foundation trustees are often intimidated by the complexities of Indigenous politics, and the overlay of historic injustices and cultural sensitivities.

Philanthropic donors and foundations have a strong desire to support Aboriginal communities, but are sometimes unsure of how to approach communities in a culturally appropriate manner, or navigate Indigenous politics. Sometimes they have been frightened away by stories of unsuccessful partnerships, or simply fail to attract many applications which meet their due diligence requirements.

"There are a lot of tricky questions that funders feel uncomfortable about asking of Indigenous organisations for fear of being seen as politically incorrect, or even racist. Hard questions they would ask of non-Indigenous organisations. We in philanthropy do need to be better skilled to understand the issues, and the political sensitivities, and how to ask those tricky questions in a respectful way. We also need to be able to ask – when we've seen a lot of government money going into communities and being badly managed or even wasted — should philanthropy follow?"

—Jill Reichstein. Reichstein Foundation

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

 $<sup>^1\,</sup>$  A worthwhile exchange: a guide to Indigenous philanthropy. [2010] page 19

For a multitude of reasons, less than 8% of Australian philanthropic funding goes to Indigenous communities. There seems to be a disconnect between the desire of donors and foundations to fund Indigenous communities, and the reality of grants made. Certainly the low number of funding applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations does not reflect the shocking level of disadvantage amongst Australia's Indigenous communities, or the enormous potential for self-determination and community-led social change.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Aboriginal communities (like many of their non-Aboriginal counterparts) are often unaware of the existence of philanthropic funds, or shy about approaching them.

"One of the women [participants] was protesting at the beginning of the workshop that she didn't feel comfortable in a corporate building and the workshop should have been held at an Indigenous place, and it was explained to her that she needed to be able to visit and feel okay in a corporate building because that is where you go for money.

Well, she got up at the end and put her arms around [our host] Mark Leibler and said "thank you so much, it's been fabulous to be here, I've learned so much". That in itself meant that it was worthwhile funding this project."

—Jill Reichstein, Reichstein Foundation



At the Indigenous Capacity Building Program in 2005 are Aunty Frances Bond (left) and Simone Spencer.

### **How Our Model Works**

Woor-Dungin's purpose is to increase resources, build strong partnerships and share knowledge in order to support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in their efforts to improve the lives of Aboriginal people and strengthen Aboriginal communities.

The Woor-Dungin model is a capacity building intitiative across two sectors – building partnerships for change. Woor-Dungin develops genuine partnerships with a small number of Aboriginal organisations based in Victoria, and assists them to engage effectively with the Australian philanthropic community.

We asked: how can we address this gap and start building cross-cultural partnerships? The word 'building' was, and remains, the key – building relationships and trust, building skills and capacity, building evidence and laying the foundations for change.

### **Four Key Principles**

### 1. Self-determination

Aboriginal organisations will determine their own future, rather than other people deciding what is best for them.

#### 2. Community development

Woor-Dungin will work to empower the Aboriginal organisations we partner with. We will not "do things for organisations" such as write their grant applications.

Instead, we will provide training, assist with project development, give feedback and advice, provide information on sourcing funding, facilitate introductions to funders, help with acquitting, documenting impact and provide ongoing support.

#### 3. Reconciliation

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people will work together to enable Woor-Dungin to realise our shared vision.

#### 4. Advocacy

Woor-Dungin will also tackle structural issues on a systemic level. Our direct work with Aboriginal organisations informs our advocacy and policy development.

### The Difference Explained

The Woor-Dungin model is different from the standard way that government and philanthropy 'deal with' Aboriginalissues and people.

#### In effect this means:

- We take time to establish and build relationships and trust – as long as is required.
- Our processes are largely structured around face-to-face conversations and getting together on country.
- We don't determine, at the start of the process, 'the problem' and 'the solution' and set a timeline for solving it. Rather Aboriginal organisations apply to be involved with Woor-Dungin, and we work according to their priorities. They set the agenda, and we support them as required and overthe long-term.
- We do not work in silos, for instance keeping youth employment projects separate from young mothers' projects or substance abuse projects. We understand that each community needs to tackle their particular issues in their own way, with varying priorities and timelines, which requires flexibility and long-term commitment.

- We help Aboriginal communities address the substantial health and other disadvantages which they face, in particular physical and sexual abuse, self harm, suicide, and drug and alcohol abuse. We acknowledge that these problems often need to be addressed prior to, or alongside, other capacity-building efforts. They cannot be swept aside to be dealt with separately, but need to be tackled from inside the partnership as an integral part of the capacity building project.
- We are volunteer-based, so don't incur heavy costs, yet have a wealth of skills and experience to draw upon over the life of the partnership.

# **Six Biggest Problems**

The traditional way philanthropy works often does not sit well with Aboriginal organisations and vice versa. Here are the six biggest problems that have come to light through our capacity building workshops.

 The written application process can be confronting and the language used intimidating

"Indigenous communities don't know when grants are available or when they looked into it the criteria was so hard to fathom, and too daunting to put together the necessary applications. Especially in a situation where there is multiple reporting, and very time poor people."

—Doseena Fergie, founding member

2. Timelines have been too inflexible to accommodate Aboriginal cultural needs.

"Within Aboriginal communities, family comes first. It doesn't matter what else is happening, if something is going on with family, that will be the first priority and get full attention. This is one of the main reasons why things get pushed out, because people don't turn up as they are looking after family."

—Anne Jenkins, founding member

Donors and trustees rarely visit Aboriginal communities and meet with elders face-to-face, and few even allow their program managers to travel to country on a site visit. The prevailing model is to commission research and then listen to a briefing.

"In business that is acceptable but to Aboriginal people it is disrespectful, you've got to sit and yarn – you've got to hear and smell and touch. Until you do that, you just have no idea. Until they leave their perch and come down and meet us you won't get anywhere."

—Doseena Fergie, founding member

4. Most philanthropy is outcomes driven – what have we achieved? Whereas the important thing to Aboriginal communities is process – have we done this in the right way?

"I don't know that philanthropy has the level of patience required to do what Christa [Momot] has done, to work with Aboriginal people over a long period of time to bring them along on the journey."

—Jill Reichstein, Reichstein Foundation

- 5. It is almost impossible to attribute short-term outcomes to specific interventions or programs, when the problems are multigenerational and extremely complex. While some foundations may be able to take a long-term view, few are willing to combine that with a framework that does not dictate what those outcomes and programs will look like.
- 6. Funding is often allocated to applications that have a prescribed pathway to a predetermined outcome, whereas community-driven initiatives often have a life of their own and any deviations or unplanned developments can add immeasurably to the impact and sustainability of the project.

"It was great that [the capacity building workshop] wasn't presented to us as a package, the program grew, and we were able to take on that knowledge a lot more because it was a journey of discovery."

—James Walker, Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative

3.

### Where We Are Headed

As we reach our first decade, what lies ahead? In a nutshell, change and growth. Having reduced direct service delivery in 2013 to focus on becoming an independent entity, evaluate and document our experiences, 2014 sees us launch a period of increased activity and expansion.

We aspire towards having at least 51% of full members being Aboriginal people who have a demonstrated commitment to working towards our Vision, Mission and Values.

# Expanded Partnerships With Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association and Ilbijerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre Company have graduated from the Aboriginal Partnerships Program. Both organisations are now more confident at sourcing and working with pro bono service providers and identifying and securing philanthropic funding.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services have applied to remain involved for a further three years.

In February 2014, we invited expressions of interest from new Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations based in Victoria to join the Aboriginal Partnerships program.

We are mindful, in taking on just six Aboriginal organisations that we expand sustainably.

"You don't want it to go really fast. You want ideas to procreate and grow. I'm hoping someone else will bring in another layer and another, over future generations. We're only small and we need to grow carefully."

—Doseena Fergie, founding

Organisations selected do not pay any fees to participate and we help the organisations to source funding to assist with travel and accommodation costs, if needed.

Organisations undertake a diagnostic 'health check' which identifies any areas in which the organisation requires assistance. A work plan is developed which lists the areas identified and the types of support and strategies which Woor- Dungin endeavours to provide.

Aboriginal organisations are also provided practical support, advice, training and access to mentoring to assist the organisation to develop expertise in sourcing philanthropic funding

as well as developing a strategy to enable the organisation to have sufficient and sustainable income to implement their strategic plans.

### Social Enterprise

We will establish a social enterprise to provide advice, professional development and examples of 'best practice' case studies to assist philanthropy to make their resources more accessible to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

It will deliver a range of fee-for-service support services for donors, trustees and foundation staff who want to work with Aboriginal organisations: offering research, advice, mentoring, professional development, as well as brokering funding and identifying potential funding partners.

We can develop grant guidelines, undertake due diligence, arrange site visits and assist in managing relationships and achieving good granting outcomes.

The Social Enterprise will form a strong bridge between philanthropy and Aboriginal organisations, redressing the current problems which see Aboriginal organisations unable to access philanthropic funding, and funders unsure of how to find or work effectively with Aboriginal groups.

# Aboriginal Community Worker Support Pilot

We have partnered with On the Line to establish a pilot to provide intensive, practical support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to Aboriginal community workers dealing with critical incidents.

This enables us to increase our support to the Aboriginal organisations with which we are partnering.

The Aboriginal Worker Support Pilot can provide immediate debriefing, internships, training, secondary consultation, mentoring of new workers, advice, support and supervision and a range of other services specifically tailored to assist workers dealing with these issues 'on the ground'.

A Working Group has been established to develop the Program Model. Participation includes the Aboriginal organisations involved in the Partnership Program as well as our Alumni and Mallee District Aboriginal Services. Stakeholders such as the National Indigenous Psychologists Association and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) will be consulted.

We will then seek funding to enable a five year pilot to be implemented and evaluated.

If the model is successful, it is anticipated that the Program will be offered to other Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations and be made available to Aboriginal Community members.

# Employment Mentoring and Training

Opportunities which lead to employment, particularly for young Aboriginal women are consistently requested. In response, Woor-Dungin offers computer training together with practical work experience, internships and student placements which provide on-the-job experience in a supportive community organisation which has several Aboriginal staff and committee members to act as role models.

Mentoring and training is provided by volunteers, the majority of whom are retirees and have the skills, experience and the time needed to support young people.

Woor-Dungin is also a registered work site for people serving a community based order.

# Criminal Record Discrimination Project

In Victoria, it is not unlawful to discriminate against someone on the basis of an irrelevant criminal record. The results of a criminal record check are believed to have negatively affected the ability of people to obtain voluntary work, apprenticeships, work experience and paid employment. Victoria does not have a spent convictions scheme. Therefore a person's previous criminal record, even if acquired at a young age, will continue to show up when a criminal record check is undertaken.

In collaboration with key stakeholders, Woor-Dungin is working on the issue. We aim to provide evidence to support an amendment to the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act for irrelevant criminal records to be included as a protected attribute so that it would be unlawful to discriminate against a person on this basis.

### A New Website

Rochelle Armstrong is a young Gamilaraay woman currently completing her Masters of Information Studies. Rochelle is employed as our Information Management Project Worker and is developing our new website which will be a clearinghouse of resources, information, training options, pro bono support and case studies. It will be available to all Aboriginal organisations and philanthropic trusts and foundations across Australia.

We are optimistic for the future of Aboriginal Australians and for the reconciliation process, and confident that Woor-Dungin has a unique role to play in facilitating philanthropic support.

"I have really big hopes. It requires other Aboriginal organisations coming on board and other philanthropic organisations too. It can be very powerful. It's a model that has preceded government – our model is working and worth replicating all over Australia."



Mallee District Aboriginal Services staff who participated in the Woor-Dungin Capacity Building training held in Mildura in 2011.

### The First Indigenous Capacity Building Program

In 2004, Reichstein Foundation undertook a review of the philanthropic grants it had made to community organisations in recent years. They found that they had made very few grants to Aboriginal organisations, even though they identified Aboriginal people as a priority group for funding.

They also found that when they did receive applications from Aboriginal organisations, the applications were often incomplete, with essential information and documents missing, although the project ideas themselves might be very worthwhile.

Christa Momot, Reichstein Foundation's Executive Officer at the time, proposed the development of a training program that would assist Aboriginal organisations to understand and access philanthropy. Over subsequent months she worked with RMIT and the Lumbu Indigenous Foundation, with additional funding from Reichstein Foundation, the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and The RE Ross Trust, to develop the Indigenous Capacity Building Program (ICBP).

Christa was clear that such a program would help Reichstein Foundation to receive more and stronger applications from Aboriginal organisations, and at the same time give Christa herself the chance to learn from participants the best ways to improve relationships between Aboriginal organisations and philanthropy.

Doseena Fergie, from the Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (HICSA), remembers hearing about the opportunity to participate in an accredited course that would assist organisations to access much needed funds:

"I got involved quite by accident. I wasn't working for an ACCO (Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation) at the time, but I heard about the program and I could see that the big picture was to help the community to find non-government money.

Simone Spencer, from the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation, remembers:

"I didn't know what I was there for. I was real shy and sat in the background. When they asked me what I thought philanthropy was, I couldn't even say the word, let alone know what it is. It just sounded like something scary."

Aunty Frances Bond, a Board Member with Ilbijerri Theatre Company, remembered that she and the late Aunty Glenys Merry were interested in the program because:

"We were two from the old school. It was time to get educated about philanthropy and how philanthropy works. No one in our community was really familiar with money or governance stuff. We did some other governance training around the same time. It was a stepping stone for our community."

The Indigenous Capacity Building Program began with a community educator visiting each of the organisations that registered for the program to find out about their achievements and strengths, and also about their challenges and hopes for the future. This information was used to help shape the content of the program that Reichstein Foundation, RMIT and the Lumbu Foundation put together.

The initial Indigenous Capacity Building Program ran for 17 days over a total period of six months in 2004-05, and included a focus on governance and infrastructure, project development, including submission writing, and an overview of philanthropy.

Presenters talked about how their funds and services could be accessed by Aboriginal organisations. These presenters included Reichstein Foundation, R.E. Ross Trust, The Myer Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, Foundation for Young Australians, ANZ Trustees, Telstra Foundation and Rio Tinto Aboriginal Foundation, and pro bono services such as VCOSS, the Public Interest Law Clearinghouse, Social Ventures Australia and Good Company.

"We were able to give feedback all the time. The speakers were informing us and we were informing them"

—Doseena Fergie, founding member

Judith Freidin, who participated in the program and ran a session on program budgeting, remembers being impressed with how the confidence of participants grew as:

"They realised that they had something to offer toothey could provide their experience. It became an exchange of information and learning, rather than a training program."

The program was evaluated very positively by its participants, but early on there were some problems. Doseena Fergie remembers:

"The first meetings held at RMIT were in a dingy, filthy room with wallpaper peeling off. For a capacity building program this is not respectful. Some of the participants spoke to the organisers about this, and Christa Momot worked to find a better venue, approaching Peter Seidel at law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler who kindly offered the firm's boardroom for the remaining sessions of the program."

A major task for participants in the program was to develop funding submissions focused on real and identified needs in their organisations and communities, and to submit them for feedback from a number of the philanthropic organisations involved.

Anne Jenkins remembers how pleased she was that the feedback suggested:

"There wasn't much to change and when we sent it off for funding, it was successful!"

Anne also worked with Aunty Glenys Merry on a submission for Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, and that was successful too.

Doseena Fergie says: "As some of us were successful with our submissions, it put more fire in us to create change in our communities."

Most participants remember the people and the camaraderie as the absolute highlights of participating in the program.

"It started out as an education program, but we all became really good friends, which meant we could be more honest about the challenges in what we were trying to achieve. By the end of the program people were actively contributing and excited about a future in which philanthropy were partners."

—Christa Momot, founding member

"It brought geographically dispersed Aboriginal people together so that we could yarn and learn from each other. We saw that we weren't just Healesville, we shared the same concerns. By the finish, we felt like a community in ourselves."

—Doseena Fergie, founding member

At the end of the first indigenous Capacity Building Program a number of participants wanted to build on the strengths of their time together and keep meeting. As Doseena Fergie remembers it, "The program put fire in our bellies about how philanthropy could help us."

Christa Momot remembers: "I didn't think that it would grow past the 11 weeks of the original program. I had no idea that during the course of the program people would talk about all the barriers and blocks to applying for funding. They found that much of philanthropy was quite inaccessible. I felt quite ashamed of my sector. I encouraged the group to speak to the Indigenous Affinity Group (a Philanthropy Australia member's group) about the challenges of accessing philanthropy. The meeting reinforced some of the challenges."

Initially, a group of participants from the ICBP met informally. Doseena Fergie, Denise Kickett, Anne Jenkins, Glenys Merry, Simone Spencer, Vicki Clarke, Frances Bond and Christa Momot wanted to maintain the momentum that the Capacity Building Program had given the group.

"We decided to have regular time to catch up and talk about projects and funding and stuff. We all wanted philanthropy to meet us half way."
—Simone Spencer, founding member

In 2006, the group continued to develop a model for building relationships between Indigenous organisations and communities, and the philanthropic sector. A working group was formed based on the ideas and thoughts raised. From this, in 2007, the ATSI Community and Philanthropy Partnership Steering Committee was formed.

To go from an idea to a project that could offer practical capacity building support to Indigenous organisations, the group first needed to consider their own capacity needs.

Doseena Fergie, Anne Jenkins, Simone Spencer, Aunty Glenys Merry, Aunty Frances Bond and Christa Momot went on to establish Woor-Dungin.

A number of volunteers were crucial in the early days of setting up whateventually became Woor-Dungin. Judith Freidin, Kristen Densley and Elizabeth Proctor lent their time and considerable skills, and Judith continues to volunteer for Woor-Dungin today.

The project formed a partnership with the Koorie Heritage Trust that provided an auspice to manage the finances and HR. Volunteers and staff were initially housed in Reichstein Foundation's office, and the management of the project was by the ATSI Community and Philanthropy Partnership Steering Committee.

Christa Momot says that a real strength of the Steering Committee was how many of the participants on the committee had been participants in the original Capacity Building Program, and thus had the passion and commitment to see real change in the way that Indigenous and philanthropic organisations related to each other.

Throughout 2007 and 2008, the Steering Committee and volunteers worked to develop and prioritise plans, further detail the overall model and apply for funding to employ a project worker.

Over 2009, several of these applications were successful (Reichstein Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, RE Ross Trust and the Rio Tinto Foundation) and finally the ideas and dreams a number of people had carried with them since 2005 began to be realised.

Elizabeth Proctor was employed as a part time project worker, to undertake further project development and administration. A governance sub-committee and a training sub-committee were established.

Mirroring the intent of the project as a whole, the membership of each committee included people from Indigenous organisations and from the philanthropic and pro bono sectors.

In 2009, the project received permission from the Yirruk Tinnor Gunnai Community Language Program and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) to use the Gunnai word "Woor-Dungin" as the project name. This name was confirmed in March 2010.

Woor-Dungin began to coalesce around a pilot model that would see the project providing capacity building support to four Aboriginal organisations - the Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (HICSA), Ilbijerri Theatre Company and the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation (MAC), all of which had had staff or community representatives involved in the original ICBP, and the Victorian Indigenous Youth Advisory Council (VIYAC).

The project would work with these four organisations to build their relationships with and access to philanthropic and pro bono organisations and the resources they offer, and also enhance the capacity of those philanthropic and pro bono organisations to work with Aboriginal organisations.

In 2010, Woor-Dungin received a considerable boost in funding which enabled the employment of a project manager. Al Webster was recruited in to the role. Office space was established at Reichstein Foundation, and later, at the Koorie Heritage Trust. The skills and dedicated time that Al brought to the role gave Woor-Dungin the opportunity to put many of its plans in to action.

A training program based on the original ICBP and further developed through the Koorie Heritage Trust Training Unit was delivered in Melbourne and Mildura.

The committee structure of Woor-Dungin has always been seen as an opportunity to model Aboriginal community participation and to strengthen the capacity of community members.

In 2011 a full-day Cultural Awareness program for philanthropic and pro bono organisations took place, delivered in partnership with the Koorie Heritage Trust. A number of representatives of philanthropic and pro bono organisations also attended a site visit at HICSA.

At the 2011 Philanthropy Australia Conference, Woor-Dungin Awards were given to acknowledge partnerships between philanthropic and Indigenous organisations. The first award recognised the partnership between Ilbijerri Theatre Company and the Helen MacPherson Smith Trust and the second to the partnership between Ganbina and law firm Allens Arthur Robinson.

Al Webster also provided mentoring support to staff in Woor-Dungin's Aboriginal partner organisations. Tim Kanoa, from VIYAC says that this support was a real strength in what Woor-Dungin offered. Ian Seal continued the provision of mentoring support in his role as acting project manager upon Al Webster's departure in late 2011.

Importantly, through this time, many of the original founders of Woor-Dungin remained

actively involved. Aunty Frances Bond, Doseena Fergie, Anne Jenkins, Simone Spencer and Christa Momot were all still active on Woor-Dungin committees. Sadly, Aunty Glenys Merry had passed away. She is remembered by others in Woor-Dungin as passionate about her community and committed to real and lasting change.



Participants of the inaugural Indigenous Capacity Building Program, held in 2005. Standing (from left): James Walker Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC), Sherry Balcome (BSL), Faye Van Der Paal (BADAC), Vicki Walker (Aboriginal Catholic Ministry), Steven Bowden (MDAS), Mark Morgan (MDAS), Simone Spencer (MDAS), Denise Kickett, Kaye Bratatich (Reichstein Foundation), Rob Johnson (MDAS), Aimee Brabazon (BADAC), Julian Silverman (RMIT) and Josephine Bourne (Foundation for Young Australians). Seated (from Left): Anne Jenkins (HICSA), Aunty Glenys Merry (Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place), Aunty Frances Bond and Christa Momot. Not pictured is Doseena Fergie.

### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

Woor-Dungin's dedication to genuine relationship building and long term partnerships has delivered outstanding results.

We are lucky to have the support of numerous skilled volunteers; the majority of whom are retirees/semi-retirees who demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation by contributing their time, skills and resources in working directly with Aboriginal people.

Following is a summary of our outcomes and impact.

### Aboriginal Partnerships Program

The Aboriginal community controlled organisations involved from 2009 to 2014 are:

- Mallee District Aboriginal Service (MDAS), formerly Mildura Aboriginal Corporation (MAC)
- Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (HICSA)
- Ilbijerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre Company (Ilbijerri)
- Victorian Indigenous Youth Advisory Committee (VIYAC) (2009 to 2011)

We chose organisations which had had little or no success in obtaining philanthropic funding and/or experience in identifying and working with pro bono service providers and where staff/board members had participated in the Indigenous Capacity Building Program run in 2005.

We provided organisations with practical support, advice, training and access to mentoring to assist them to develop expertise in sourcing philanthropic funding as well as accessing skilled volunteers and resources.

This support included brokering funding, introductions to potential funders, participation in donor briefings, information about up and coming funding, feedback on draft applications, support in preparing acquittals.

# Capacity Building Training Program

This was run in collaboration with Koorie Heritage Trust. Two units were run twice, once in Mildura and once in Melbourne. Across these, 27 Aboriginal staff participated. The program covered the following:

- Leadership in a community development context
- Undertaking community needs analyses
- Project design and management
- An introduction to the philanthropic sector

Of the 12 staff who participated from MDAS, 11 completed both units. An activity during the training was to write an actual funding application. One application to Mildura Council successfully resulted in funding to establish The Orange Spot Youth Centre.

# Mentoring and pro bono Support Programs

Woor-Dungin brokers and provides significant mentoring and support to staff and board members.

Following are some examples:

- A team of volunteers worked with 83 MDAS staff/board members over a two week period resulting in the development of a strategic plan.
- MDAS requested assistance in developing a business plan for the United Mildura Soccer Club as the club is well attended by many Aboriginal young people. Volunteers from Leadership Victoria were recruited and they developed the required documents and helped to broker funding.
- A team of volunteers from Leadership
   Victoria worked with HICSA on a strategy
   for the establishment of a purpose built or
   modified building for an Indigenous
   Belonging Place in Healesville.

### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- HICSA was provided with HR and governance advice by a Leadership Victoria Experience Bank volunteer.
- Skilled volunteers from Great Connections worked with Ilbijerri on human resource management, relationship development and management.
- Legal and strategy advice was provided to MDAS by Arnold Bloch Leibler and Justice Connect (formerly PILCH Connect).
- Skilled volunteers from Great Connections worked with VIYAC to develop a range of communication strategies using social media to engage and give voice to Aboriginal young people in Victoria.
- Justice Connect provided training to the MDAS Board and assisted MDAS to update their governance manual.
- IT expertise was provided by a Leadership Victoria Experience Bank volunteer to the IT manager and staff at MDAS.
- Al Webster, former Woor-Dungin
   Program Manager, established a working
   group that involved staff from Great
   Connections, Leadership Victoria and
   Volunteering Victoria to improve the
   ways they support Aboriginal
   community organisations.
- Our pro-bono partners completed a full day of cross-cultural training run by Koorie Heritage Trust. 20 people participated.
- A similar training program was later run for private donors and people working in philanthropy.

### Site Visits & Open Days

In 2011 Woor-Dungin, in collaboration with HICSA, organised a tour for 25 representatives from across the philanthropic sector in Healesville. The tour incorporated a brief history of the area, information on the many services supporting the Aboriginal community in Healesville as well as HICSA's plans for the development of the Gathering Place.

Woor-Dungin also worked with Ilbijerri to provide an opportunity for people working in philanthropy to get to know the organisation and the work they do. We assisted with organising a briefing for philanthropy that was followed by a reading of Ilbijerri's theatre production Coranderrk.

# Income Generation and Resources Working Group

Peter Flanagan convenes this group and has a background as a business analyst, project manager, and strategic planner in large corporates such as Telstra and National Mutual. Peter's role is to identify governance resources and potential funding sources.

The group discusses key issues in applying for philanthropic funding, organises guest speakers from philanthropy and pro bono service providers to present information about their organisations and provides information about up and coming opportunities.

Practical training and support is provided on how and where to source funding, organise applications and secure resources from sources other than philanthropy.

### Aboriginal Partnerships Program Expansion

In February 2014, we invited expressions of interest from new Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations based in Victoria to join the Aboriginal Partnerships program. We received 28 enquiries and 12 written applications.

These were shortlisted, visits were undertaken and the following were selected:

- Willum Warrain, based in Hastings, and serving the Mornington Peninsula
- · Winda Mara, based in Heywood, Portland and Hamilton
- · Njernda based in Echuca

Aboriginal organisations selected do not pay any fees to participate and we help to source funding to assist with travel and accommodation costs, if needed.

### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

Existing Aboriginal partners were invited to reapply if they continued to require our support. MDAS had re-applied to continue.

HICSA and Ilbijerri have graduated from the Aboriginal Partnerships Program, as both organisations are now more confident at sourcing and working with pro bono service providers and identifying and securing philanthropic funding.

Both will remain involved as alumni and will help us to support philanthropy to increase access to Aboriginal organisations by participating in the social enterprise and other programs. They will also play a valuable role by providing advice and support to new Aboriginal organisations joining the program.

There is a dilemma for Aboriginal organisations throughout Australia in having to work within the Federal and State jurisdictions. Clearly, Aboriginal communities existed in their own geographical place prior to these modern divisions.

Often Victorian based organisations work with communities across borders but funding sources, philanthropic and government, are inflexible and only permit funds to be used within Victoria.

It is another example of how Aboriginal communities have to fit in with the status quo rather than the system trying to accommodate the Aboriginal experience. We plan to keep raising awareness of this issue and seek greater flexibility.

# Woor-Dungin Annual General Meeting

On 29 July 2014, Woor-Dungin held its Annual General meeting at the Casten and Cowen Boardrooms, Arnold Bloch Leibler, Collins Street, Melbourne.

Chaired by Anne Jenkins, it was attended by 16 full members and 26 guests.

Guest speaker Tim Goodwin spoke about how philanthropy could improve the way they worked with Aboriginal organisations. Tim is a barrister and a member of the Yuin people of the south east coast of New South Wales.

Retiring committee members were Anne Jenkins, Simone Spencer, Aunty Frances Bond, Trudy Wyse, Christa Momot, Bruce Argyle, Brad Spolding and Shantelle Thompson.

Elected to the new committee were Chris Clark, Trudy Wyse, Christa Momot, Esmai Manahan, Simone Spencer, Shantelle Thompson, Judith Freidin and Lorraine Langley.



At the Woor-Dungin AGM, Executive Officer Christa Momot makes a presentation to Anne Jenkins for being outgoing Chairperson of Woor-Dungin.

# HEALESVILLE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY SERVICES

By Anne Jenkins



HICSA is the Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association, which provides an Indigenous gathering place to serve the Aboriginal people of Healesville and the Yarra Ranges east of Melbourne. HICSA is a welcoming and culturally affirming place that provides a central point of contact for Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members, providing information, services and programs that are focused on building a healthy, strong and skilled community.

I am an Aboriginal woman from North West New South Wales. My family descends from the Kamilaroi Nation. I am now the Executive Officer, Health Promotion and formerly Manager, Community and Government Partnership at HICSA. I have worked in the Outer Eastern Melbourne region for 24 years now, and am a founding member of HICSA and a former Committee Member of Woor-Dungin. Here is the story of how HICSA, Woor-Dungin and I intersect.

In the late 90's our Indigenous Community in Healesville lost its co-operative and our services started being auspiced by mainstream organisations. This was a decision made by Government departments. This, along with other funding cuts and then the organisation placed into administration, led to the loss of community facilities one by one.

These actions threw our community into a state of shock and left a major gap.

Community had to go through a healing process and after a few years a group of workers got together and formed the Eastern Region Indigenous Community Workers Network. This group was set up to support each other in our roles and to work together collaboratively to deliver the best possible services to our community.

Through this network and community liaison we identified a need for a community centre: a place that was culturally safe and supportive where community could come and access services.

As a result a delegation from the Indigenous Support Network along with a group of Elders went to meet with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs who advised us that we would be in a better position to apply for funding if we had a community plan, and that if we wanted to write a community plan they would be able to provide us with funding to do so.

We came back to community and reported back and then tried to obtain funding from Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) to write our community plan. This was never forthcoming and our correspondence went unanswered.

In 2005 Aunty Glenys, Doseena, Aunty Francis and I participated in the Capacity Building program that was run by Reichstein Foundation, RMIT and other philanthropic partners. We were there to represent the inner and outer eastern Indigenous communities. Through this program we were given an insight and understanding of philanthropic trusts and encouraged to apply for funding for our projects. This was really exciting as it was the first time that we realised there was some alternative funding available that was independent of government.

HICSA Executive Officer, Health Promotion Anne Jenkins



# HEALESVILLE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY SERVICES



Anne Jenkins

With the guidance of Christa and her colleagues we at HICSA were successful in obtaining funding from Reichstein Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and Donkey Wheel which enabled us to engage a consultant to write our feasibility study to finally get our community centre off the ground.

Clare O'Kelly from All In Productions was appointed and she brought along her architect Greg Burges who assessed our community assets and advised on possible development options. Clare did extensive community consultation and her brief was to make contact with the traditional owners as well as all family groups and community organisations in the eastern region, and in particular those within Healesville as it was important that everyone felt part of the project and had the opportunity to have their say. It was also important that the community be kept updated on the progress so regular community forums were held to make this happen.

Whilst this was going on a number of our community members obtained their Certificate IV and Diploma of Business Governance as we felt this was important for board members to have.

Philanthropic funding also made it possible for us to develop our governance structure and visit other community organisations across the State to seek advice and look at other existing models to help us with the setting up of our organisation.

In 2009 HICSA was officially registered with CAV and we have been working towards realising our community's dream of one day having a Belonging Place.

Philanthropic organisations and individuals and Woor-Dungin have also provided us with advocacy and pro-bono support with HR, business and program development. This was invaluable to us because we did not have the financial capacity to do this, being a new organisation.

We have not only developed many partnerships within the philanthropic sector, and have secured funding from at least 9 philanthropic foundations, we are now much more confident about accessing funding and pro bono support ourselves. I have made genuine friendships along the way. None of this would have happened if it was not for the Capacity Building program and the establishment of Woor-Dungin.

I made the decision to become a board member of Woor-Dungin because I was grateful for what they have done for us and I wanted other community organisations to have access to the same supports that we did.

We are continuing to grow and prove ourselves and now attracting government funding that we were unable to in the past. We are keeping AAV informed of our work and hopefully they will see the difference it is make for our community and consider supporting us more in the future



Set in a rural environment is the home of HICSA.

### **ILBIJERRI THEATRE COMPANY**



By Brad Spolding

ILBIJERRI has been associated with Woor-Dungin since its in inception. Through our board member Aunty Frances Bond and through our Executive, John Harvey and then Brad Spolding. Our association with Woor-Dungin has enabled us to grow the organisation in a number of ways. In the years before our involvement with Woor-Dungin, ILBIJERRI had received little support from foundations or philanthropy. Over the period of our association we have been able to garner significant amounts of support and most importantly establish ongoing relationships with a number of foundations over longer periods of time.

Woor-Dungin has given us an unparalleled opportunity to promote ourselves in the philanthropic space. We could meet with people from foundations, invite program managers and trustees to come to see our shows, and get a sense from them of what they think of us, and whether ILBIJERRI is a good match for their granting programs.

The company received the inaugural Woor-Dungin Award in 2011 for our work *Jack Charles V The Crown* which was supported by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust. This established our reputation as a professional company in the view of a number of significant foundations, which was presented during the Philanthropy Australia conference.

In the following years we have been able to secure funding to employ a full time Development Manager, which then enabled us to really focus on the foundations we wanted to work with to present our program. A lot of work went into identifying foundations which we could work with, which we did with Woor-Dungin.

Our association with Woor-Dungin has meant we have been able to grow a network of connections into foundations and philanthropy. Woor-Dungin has introduced us to a number of foundations which have gone on to fund our program of work.

Over the period we have been associated with Woor-Dungin we have been awarded:

- The inaugural Woor-Dungin Award
- The Sidney Myer Foundation Group Award
- Creative Partnerships Victorian Award

We have also had support from:

- Besen Foundation
- The Readings Foundation Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Aboriginal Benefits Foundation Eastweb Foundation
- Perpetual Trustees
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Sidney Myer Fund

As the Executive Producer of ILBIJERRI I have been a member of the board and before this of the working group. I have found this to be extremely beneficial in terms of extending my personal networks. I have gained a lot through my association with Christa Momot in her role at Woor-Dungin. Christa has a deep understanding of the way foundations operate and was generous in sharing this information with ILBIJERRI which enabled us to successfully apply for and receive foundation support.

Christa and I have met together with quite a few foundation people. We'd be there to talk about Woor-Dungin, but then I'd make a personal connection, and they would be able to put a face to the name, so it was very valuable for us at ILBIJERRI too.

### **ILBIJERRI THEATRE COMPANY**

We have found the partnership with Woor-Dungin to be beneficial to our organisation and would highly recommend them to other Aboriginal organisations. There will always be connections between Woor-Dungin and ILBIJERRI; we remain on the program working group, and will attend events and share our experience as part of the Woor-Dungin alumni. I have personally agreed to

become a presenter for Woor-Dungin's social enterprise, talking to donor groups about our perspective on Aboriginal groups engaging with philanthropy. Personally and for the company we look forward to continuing our relationship with Woor-Dungin.



Aunty Frances performs script at Black Writers Lab reading. Photographer Steven Rhall'



Beautiful One Day, 2013. Photographer Ponch Hawkes



Coranderrk, 2013. Photographer Patrick Boland

By Simone Spencer



The Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) provides a range of services for community, from health and family services, to elders' yarning circles and afterschool programs. We are community-controlled, with a board of community members, and more than 50 paid and voluntary staff.

I've worked in various roles at MDAS for 9 years, and volunteered as well, so it's been a big part of my life. Woor-Dungin (WD) and MDAS originally got together in 2005 when four of us staff went to a new Indigenous Capacity Building Program (ICBP) in Melbourne. We travelled from Mildura every fortnight during the 11 week course – 7.5 hours each way!

At the first session they asked each of us what we thought about philanthropy – I'd never even heard of it, barely knew how to pronounce the word, let alone know what it means! Over the weeks, as we made new friends, we gained confidence and new skills, such as writing submissions and public speaking.

After the 3rd or 4th trip I started to get

into the rhythm of it. We started brainstorming ideas of programs we want to run in our communities, and we created mock submissions for projects we thought would be good for our communities. I wrote one for a young women's leadership program in Mildura.

At the end of the course we got to present to a number of different philanthropic foundations. It was really nerve-wracking - we were at Arnold Bloch Leibler in a big board room with all these important people! But it was good because we got to show them the way we value relationships, to sit down together and actually listen to people - it was much more powerful than just a written submission.

After that program, my colleague Shantelle Thompson and I wrote a submission for the



Strategic Planning 2011

Step-Up Program, with help from WD mentor Robynne Nelson and Julian Silverman from RMIT. The Step-Up young women's leadership program was funded by Reichstein Foundation and the David Morawetz Social Justice Fund, and that felt fantastic!

As Step-Up was implemented it changed from our original plans - a lot of the women had such poor self-esteem that we had to address this issue, which took us down a different path - but in the end we had great outcomes. A few of the girls, who were so shy at the start, did a presentation to community on young leaders they had interviewed and recorded. It was a great achievement.

When the ICBP finished, I kept meeting with Doseena, Anne, Aunty Glenys, Vicki, Aunty Frances and Christa. We developed a program to help Aboriginal organisations get access to philanthropy and at the same time, change the way that philanthropy worked with Aboriginal groups.

When we received funding, I agreed to join the Steering Committee and later Derek Jones joined as well. I am still involved, now as Vice Chairperson. The ICBP was run again in 2011 in Mildura for MDAS staff. 12 staff participated and we talked about ideas for programs, and as a group picked one that everyone liked: the Orange Spot, so-called because it was on Orange Avenue.

The Orange Spot was a building owned by MDAS, and the idea was to set it up as a multipurpose Centre for community. As a part of the WD training we'd written a submission which we sent to the Mildura Council asking for \$10,000, and we were successful. That paid for renovating the building, buying a few supplies, and for a graphic designer /spraypainter artist to work with the young boys to create a mural on the outside of the building. Every Friday they run a young men's cultural group, and the boys use that shed for making didgeridoos and boomerangs and clap-sticks; they have all the tools and the boys are trained in using the equipment.

MDAS received support from WD in a number of ways: training for the Board from PILCH Connect and the VCOSS Clearinghouse; assistance updating their Governance manual; and legal advice to the Board.



Christa found mentors for Sally, the former Family Services Manager and Terrence our IT Manager. There was also substantial support from a team of volunteers in a comprehensive strategic planning process, at the end of which was a big celebration where we made a piece of artwork together.

MDAS also obtained support from WD on behalf of the Mildura United Soccer Club, a sporting association that assists disadvantaged Aboriginal children and young people to play sport and connect to education and health services. WD provided mentoring to members of the Club's Committee and sourced a volunteer through Leadership Victoria to develop a business plan to enable United to grow and support more children.

I have become a lot more confident through my involvement. At first I was very shy and not comfortable public speaking. Christa continually pushed me to 'Step up' and take on new challenges. I was really proud of myself when Donna Hunt, my Manager and I attended a Philanthropy Australia Indigenous Affinity group meeting and I did a presentation on the benefits for MDAS as a result of our involvement with WD. I have also represented WD in meetings with

funding bodies such as the RE Ross Trust.

MDAS, the Mildura community and WD are all very inter-connected. This is the heart of how it works – it's a way of working together on shared aims, with agreed processes which work for all of us, and a strong and trusting relationship.

Working within community there's never a simple problem or solution – there are always lots of issues, in the background or stemming from each other. At MDAS we work day-to-day on our programs, but we also work in partnership with others within our community, to heal the whole person or the whole family. That's the way WD works too, with the whole community, not one issue or one solution, taking a whole-of-community approach.

The backbone of Woor-Dungin's success is its ongoing relationships: the mentoring, the friendships, the connections, the networks that we've made over the years have been amazing. MDAS's story - the history and the relationships - has taken years to build, and without that I don't know where we would be.



The Orange Spot

By Shantelle Thompson



My name is Shantelle Thompson, I am a Barkindji woman, mother of three, Community Worker at Connecting Home, elite athlete, Kiilalaana program coordinator, qualified secondary school teacher, community role model and Committee of Management member with Woor-Dungin.

I first met Christa, in 2007 when I was working at Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) (formerly Mildura Aboriginal Corporation). My friend and coworker Simone and I became the first people from MDAS to apply for philanthropic funding. With Christa's support, I became co-founder of the Young Indigenous Women's Leadership Program 'Step up'. Unfortunately due to family reasons I left MDAS before the program commenced.

In 2010 I was diagnosed with postnatal depression after the birth of my twins. I used Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) as a form of physical therapy treatment. From this I started competition and I was also able to return to my studies. I found that I wanted to work in my community and eventually coordinate Youth Leadership and Women's Empowerment programs.

However, I needed to build my credibility and capacity to run these programs and this all lead to my desire to move to Melbourne to pursue training opportunities.

From this MDAS asked Woor-Dungin to support me to learn more about evidence based leadership programs because I continued to remain connected to community in Mildura and always plan to return to our community.

We moved to Melbourne in 2012 and being away from country, family and community has been very hard for my family and I. Throughout this time my community has experienced a lot of tragedy and trauma that has rippled throughout our whole community. In this time in early 2014 I also started in my new role as a support worker for members of the Stolen Generation and their families.

This has had a major impact both personally and professionally as I was coping with what was happening back home and also learning a new role. It is an amazing opportunity to learn and support members of the Aboriginal community that have survived so much. However, I also became aware that I am being triggered by this new role in a way that I never experienced before and I have to be consciously aware of the risk of vicarious trauma. Through my work with Woor-Dungin and my mentors I have been able to manage these new responsibilities, and also being away from home. Christa matched me up with several wonderful mentors, including Louise Doyle, co-author of 'An overview of approaches for philanthropic investment in Aboriginal women and girls', report, Trudy Wyse, Ian Seal, Peter Flanagan and Leslie Faulkner Rose.

I have worked with Woor-Dungin tirelessly to develop my skills, advocacy and leadership and have begun running workshops for young Indigenous women in Mildura during school holidays. I have learnt much already and my journey is only beginning. It has been frustrating at times and I have felt like giving up. Through support from Christa, Woor-Dungin and my mentors I have persevered, built my resilience and kept moving forward with my goals and dreams.

I have joined Woor-Dungin Committee of Management and got involved in the development of the Aboriginal Community Worker Support Pilot. This pilot is being established to provide practical support to community workers `on the ground' to deal with critical incidents. Once established, it would be available 24 hours a day/7days a week. It has involved `stepping up' and advocating for funding to various trusts, foundations and private donors and I'm happy to say that so far, this has been successful.

I am very committed to helping to establish the Aboriginal Community Worker Support Pilot because Aboriginal workers don't clock off at 5pm and often have the challenge of family, friends and community members using the services of the organisation you work for.

I am so happy to be working with Woor-Dungin and MDAS and am excited for what the future holds. I am looking forward to working with the new Aboriginal organisations that have joined Woor-Dungin and will do my best to support and mentor them in the same way I received support way back in 2007.

### **OUR FOUNDERS**



Aunty Frances Bond

Aunty Frances Bond was a proud Waka Waka/Kuku Yalanji woman whose grandfather's country was in Far North Queensland. She made Victoria her second home, having first visited here with the Harold Blair Children's Project for a holiday. Her principal goals were to educate and heal and she undertook many activities toward this end.

Plunging into community service following her retirement in 2003, Aunty Frances was involved in a number of Indigenous initiatives. She supported the Whitehorse Friends for Reconciliation and helped set up the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place. She served on the Board of the Ilbijerri Theatre Company for a number of years, bringing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and stories to a wider public.

Aunty Frances worked in formal settings with government and was involved in building the Victorian government's 10 Year Plan to address Indigenous Family Violence (launched in 2008). The related "Strong Culture, Strong Peoples and Strong Families" Program can be found on the DPCD website.

For Aunty Frances, family, culture and language were vital to giving people strength. She wanted people to feel safe emotionally and culturally and believed that empowerment of communities and skilling of people could give them the ability to do anything.

Aunty Frances passed away on 18 August 2014.



Doseena Fergie

Doseena Fergie has lived in Victoria for the past 20 years with her family. Born and raised on Thursday Island her Torres Strait ancestry comes from Mabuiag Island, her Aboriginal heritage from Wuthati country, Cape York and her Asian ancestry from Ambon in Indonesia.

Trained as a nurse, midwife and maternal and child health nurse she now works as an academic and PhD candidate in the Health Sciences faculty of the Australian Catholic University in Fitzroy.

Doseena participated in the inaugural Indigenous Capacity Building Program in 2005 where, amongst other Aboriginal participants from across Victoria, she developed her understanding of project development, philanthropy and fund-raising. At the time she was the Coordinator of the Yarra Valley Community Health Service, Aboriginal Health Team in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

This Capacity Building Program provided further impetus and development of the Healesville Belonging Place through the provision of funding and support from a number of philanthropic trusts. An achievement from that inaugural group was the formation of Woor-Dungin whereupon Doseena acted as Co-Chair in 2010, bringing to the table her knowledge of Victorian Aboriginal communities and health networks.

### **OUR FOUNDERS**



Anne Jenkins

Anne Jenkins is a Kamilaroi woman from North West New South Wales. She has worked with the Indigenous community in the Yarra Valley for 23 years, and is a founder a former Chair of Woor-Dungin.

Anne was the Senior Indigenous Education Officer with Swinburne University of Technology TAFE for 17 years. She codelivered the national Capacity Building Training for those who are part of the Stolen Generation, and worked on the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry training needs analysis project.

In 2005 Anne took a secondment to the Shire of Yarra Ranges as Indigenous Development Officer, which was extended to a full time position. During her time there Anne was instrumental in the development of their Reconciliation Strategy and the establishment of an Indigenous Garden in Healesville.

Anne is a founding member of the Healesville Indigenous Arts Enterprise Co-operative and Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association. She has also been a member of a number of advisory boards including Maroondah Hospital, Eastern Health's Yarra Valley Community Health Service, and the Department of Human Services Box Hill Aboriginal Reference Group.

She is particularly interested in the development and maintenance of educational and support programs for Indigenous people, with the aim of encouraging them to embrace self- determination. Anne's commitment to Indigenous Community has been acknowledged by her receiving 4 awards for Community Person of the Year for the Eastern Region NAIDOC Awards, Women in Education Award from Koori Women Mean Business and being selected to carry the Queens Baton in the Queens Baton Relay for the Commonwealth Games.



Aunty Glenys Merry

Aunty Glenys Merry, who sadly passed away in 2010, was a proud Taungerong woman and tireless worker, advocate, lobbyist and fighter for Aboriginal rights and recognition for her community. She was recognized as an Elder for her family (Franklin-Hamilton) and community. She was born and raised in Yea and she lived the later part of her life in Lilydale in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

Aunty Glenys was involved in many community organisations both as member and board member. She became involved in Woor-Dungin through her work with the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place. This initial involvement was as a participant in the first

Indigenous Capacity Building Program. Aunty Glenys completed that program and gained her Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment.

Aunty Glenys went on to become a founding member of Woor-Dungin and was very proud that she was contributing to the breaking down of barriers between the Aboriginal Community and philanthropy. She is fondly remembered for her commitment to the vision of true partnership between Aboriginal community organisations and philanthropy, which was clearly recognised in the eulogy her son delivered at her funeral: "Not long before she died she was still trying to crack open philanthropy".

### **OUR FOUNDERS**



Christa Momot

Christa Momot is the current Executive Officer of Woor-Dungin, and was Co-Chair from 2007 to 2012.

Christa was formerly the Executive Officer of Reichstein Foundation and it was in this capacity that she developed the Indigenous Capacity Building Program which went on to establish Woor-Dungin.

Christa has had more than 30 years of experience in community sector management, together with policy and program development, advocacy, mediation, community development, teaching and mentoring experience.

Christa is an Indigenous Community Volunteer

and director of Momot Mentoring, a consultancy providing advice, support, research, facilitation, project management and mentoring for individuals and organisations working for social justice.

Christa has qualifications in Community Development, Mediation, Adult Education and Workplace Training.

In 2009, Christa was inducted into the Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres Honour Roll that was initiated to recognise people who have made a significant contribution to the Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre sector.



Simone Spencer

Simone Spencer grew up in Dareton in NSW, 15 km north of Mildura. After completing school she went to Charles Sturt University, embarking on a Bachelor of Social Science in Justice Studies. Increasingly her focus shifted to youth work, and while at university she volunteered at the local youth centre.

After leaving university Simone started work at the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation (now called Mallee District Aboriginal Service, or MDAS) as a Family Support Worker. Her current role at MDAS is the Senior Caseworker for the Prevention and Early Intervention Team.

Simone has continued to volunteer at the youth sporting groups and holiday programs. She is involved with the Mildura United Soccer Club and the Coomealla Basketball and Netball teams, in various playing, mentoring and coaching roles.

Simone is passionate about Leadership Programs for young Aboriginal women, believing our next generation of young Indigenous people has the capacity to stand up and be heard on what is needed for our culture and our families to strive for a better and healthier future.

She is a founding member of Woor-Dungin and the current Vice Chairperson, a journey which she acknowledges has been a great experience and has changed her vision and direction in life.

### **OUR COMMITTEE**

Woor-Dungin's new Committee of Management was elected at our Annual General Meeting on 29 July 2014.

### **COMMITTEE**

Chris Clark, the Chair, has a background in the not-for-profit, government, service and manufacturing industries extending over 30 years.

Lorraine Langley who has more than 25 years experience in Victorian Public Service senior police and project manager roles.

Esmai Manahan is a Yorta Yorta woman with 20 years leadership experience in evaluating developing, managing and evaluating a range of successful projects and programs. (resigned)

**Christa Momot** is Executive Officer of Woor-Dungin with 30 years experience in community sector management.

**Trudy Wyse** is a social policy analyst and consultant with expertise in program design, implementation and review.

**Judith Freidin** is a researcher and finance professional who has been working in the non-profit/philanthropic sector for 15 years.

**Simone Spencer**, a founding member of Woor-Dungin and vice-Chair, is the Senior Caseworker for the Prevention and Early Intervention Team at Mallee District Aboriginal Services.

**Shantelle Thompson** is a Barkindji woman who is a qualified secondary school teacher and Community Worker at Community Homes.

# FORMER COMMITTEE/STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

Anne Jenkins

**Aunty Frances Bond** 

Bruce Argyle

**Brad Spolding** 

Doseena Fergie

Kirsty Allen

**Derek Jones** 

Tony Kelly

Sunita Varlamos

Sharon Paten

Marina Henley

Tim Kanoa

**Joy Love** 

Chris Wootton

Jason Eades

Marie Murfett

Aunty Glenys Merry

Jan Mahoney



At the AGM are Back row (from left) Chris Clark, Lorraine Langley, Eddie Chisholm, Bruce Argyle, Alick Weber. Front row (from left) Simone Spencer, Shantelle Thompson and Anne Jenkins.

### **OUR STAFF**

The work of Woor-Dungin would not be possible without the dedication, skills and generosity of our staff, most of whom provide their time and expertise on a voluntary basis.

—Christa Momot Executive Officer and Community Development Co-ordinator

### PAID STAFF (as of November 2014)

Christa Momot Executive Officer and Community Development Coordinator
Geethika Hettiarachchi Administration and Finance Worker
Rochelle Armstrong Information Management Project Worker
Cheryl Vickery Aboriginal Liaison Worker



A staff meeting held in 2013.

### **OUR STAFF**

Woor-Dungin is fortunate to have a number of highly-skilled volunteer staff:

### **UNPAID STAFF**

Peter Flanagan Philanthropy/Income Generation

Ian Gould Governance, Evaluation and Maintenance

Dwight Smith Computers/Communications

Louise Arkles Communications
Agnes Cusack Communications

Chris Clark Strategy

Evelyn Flitman Computer Training
Paul O'Shea Social Enterprise Convenor

Malcolm Flitman Database
Lorraine Langley Governance
Kaushal Mananayaka Audit Preparation
Bernie Wood Operations
Denis O'Hara Mentor

Janny Ryan Administration/Database Selma Sali Volunteer Management

Finance Judith Freidin Margaret Pimblett Mentor Denise Chevalier Mentor Leslie Falkiner-Rose Mentor Louise Doyle Mentor Trudy Wyse Mentor Andrew McIntosh Mentor Simon Lewis Mentor

### STUDENTS ON PLACEMENT

Kristel Schmitt Joyce Harris Bruce Zhou

### FORMER STAFF (PAID AND UNPAID)

Maria Burchell

Karin Zafir

Mike Dawson-Smith

Peter Horsley

Kristen Densley

Elizabeth Proctor

Cath Rutten

Alastair Webster

Fran Westmore

Jan Mahoney

Chris Bradley

Ian Seal

Emma Robbins

Eva Domsek

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

One of Woor-Dungin's great strengths is that we are a very frugal organisation. We pride ourselves on being able to match our grant income with volunteer labour and skills. We have sourced desks and cabinets second-hand from Gumtree. Shelves, filing cabinets and our initial computers were donated. Our refrigerator was donated by Cr Richard Foster. Our large meeting table and chairs are on loan from our Executive Officer, and we have a camera that was provided by our Communications and IT Officer.

Our initial donated computers have been replaced with new equipment, which we purchased with a grant from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. These are the only items we have bought new.

Software was purchased through Connecting Up at a discounted price. Four computer monitors and a desk were donated by Carringbush.Net of Fitzroy and sourced by Ian Gould. Desks and a filing cabinet were donated by HAAG.

Over the 2013-2014 financial year, we estimate that we have received \$60,000 worth of volunteer labour and \$92,000 worth of pro bono consulting services.

We have also received pro bono legal advice from Arnold Bloch Leibler at an estimated value of \$50,000 and pro bono auditing services from Pitcher Partners at an estimated value of \$7,200.

### **INCOME FROM 2009 TO 2014**

Grantsfromphilanthropy	\$469,000
Private donations	\$11,000
Government funding	\$0
Total income	\$480,000

### IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS (2013-14 FINANCIAL YEAR)

Volunteers (2000 hours @\$30ph)	\$60,000
Pro Bono	\$92,000
Legal Advice	\$50,000
Audit	\$7,200
Office equipment & furniture	\$9,300
Total in-kind contributions	\$218,500

# FINANCIAL AUDIT

As a small organisation, Woor-Dungin is not required to have its finances audited. However, as part of establishing ourselves as an independent entity, we felt that it was a good due diligence measure.

Our finances for the 2012-13 financial year were audited by Pitcher Partners.

### Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period ended 30 June 2013

Revenue Other revenue	Notes 2 2	\$ <u>142,584</u> <u>142,584</u>
Less: expenses Employee benefits expense Occupancy expense Advertising expense Other expenses		(42,540) (14,388) (99) (23,013) (80,040)
Profit before income tax expense Other comprehensive income for the year Total comprehensive income		62,544
Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2013		
Current assets Cash and cash equivalents Other assets Total current assets Total assets	<b>Notes</b> 4  5	\$ 64,623 929 65,552 65,552
Cash and cash equivalents Other assets Total current assets	4	64,623 929 65,552

### Statement of Changes in Members Funds for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Contributed equity	Reserves	Retained earnings	Total equity
Balance as at 10 January 2013 Profit for the period Total comprehensive income	- 		62,544	62,544
for the period Balance as at 30 June 2013			62,544 62,544	$\frac{62,544}{62,544}$

### FINANCIAL AUDIT

### Statement of Cash Flows for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Notes	\$
Cash flow from operating activities		
Operating grant receipts		78,420
Donations received		63,962
Payments to suppliers and employees		(77,944)
Interest received		185
Net cash provided by operating activities		64,623
Reconciliation of cash		
Net increase in cash held		64,623
Cash at end of financial year	7(a)	64,623

### Notes to Financial Statements for the period ended 30 June 2013

### Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements, Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the Associations Incorporations Reform Act 2012 (and its associated Regulations).

### (a) Basis of preparation of the financial report

Historical Cost Convention

The financial report has been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by revaluations to fair value for certain classes of assets as described in the accounting policies.

#### (b) Going concern

The financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis.

#### (c) Revenue

Grant income is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when there is reasonable certainty that the grant will be received and all grant conditions have been met. Where this is not the case the relevant funding is considered to be received in advance of entitlement and is recognised as a liability in the statement of financial position.

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

Interest revenue is recognised when it becomes receivable on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

### (d) Income tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

#### (e) Comparatives

Woor-Dungin was incorporated on 10 January 2013 and accordingly no comparatives are available.

### FINANCIAL AUDIT

#### Note 2: Revenue

Other revenue	185
Interest income	63,962
Donations	78,420
Grants	142,382
Other revenue	<u>17</u>
	142,584
Note 3: Operating profit	
Profit/(losses) before income tax has been determined after:	
Employee benefits:	10.710
- Other employee benefits	42,540
Note 4: Cash and cash equivalents	
Cash on hand	2,006
Cash on deposit	62,617
	$\overline{64.623}$
Note 5: Other assets	
CURRENT	
Other current assets	929
Note 6: Payables	

#### Note 7: Cash flow information

### (a) Reconciliation of cash

CURRENT Unsecured liabilities

Trade creditors

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position is as follows:

Cash on hand	2,006
At call deposits with financial institutions	<u>62,617</u>
•	64.623

3,008

### Note 8: Related party transactions

### (a) Transactions with other related parties

The Woor-Dungin Committee Members are Anne Jenkins, Christa Momot, Simone Spencer, Trudy Wyse, Brad Spolding, Bruce Argyle and Aunty Frances Bond.

They are not remunerated and there were no amounts paid or payable, or otherwise made available to the Committee Members.

### Note 9: Events subsequent to reporting date

There has been no matter or circumstance, which has arisen since 30 June 2013 that has significantly or may significantly affect:

- (a) the operations, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2013, of the association, or
- (b) the results of those operations, or
- (c) the state of affairs, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2013, of the association

### **OUR SUPPORTERS**

Woor-Dungin gratefully acknowledges the support of the following funders:





























Woor-Dungin also extends its gratitude to the following other supporters:



















In addition to the above, we would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their support and contributions:

Kirsty Allen
Louise Arkles
Jing Chang
Denise Chevalier
Chris Clark
Eva Domsek
Louise Doyle
Sue Fitzpatrick
Peter Flanagan
Evelyn Flitman
Malcolm Flitman
Cr Richard Foster
Tim Goodwin
Ian Gould

Marina Henley
Peter Horner
Housing for the
Aged Action
Group (HAAG)
Tony Kelly
Lorraine Langley
Simon Lewis
Esmai Manahan
Kaushal Mananayaka
William Marshall
Ben Marshall
Lyn McDonald

Andrew McIntosh
Alyson Miller
Jenni Mitchell
Eva Momot
Fiona Moore
David Morawetz
Randall Newton-John
Paul O'Shea
Mary Pearce
Margaret Pimblett
Adam Plunkett
Leslie Faulkner Rose

Ian Seal

Peter Seidel
Mike Dawson Smith
Fleur Spitzer
Sandy Taggart
Venetia Taylor
Samantha Thornton
Gavin Tye
Sunita Varlamos
Alick Weber
Rachael Wilken
Trudy Wyse
Jackie Yowell

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