



News from Engadine Community Services (March 2023)

Message from Mel – ECS Manager

We hit the ground running in January, after having an additional week off during the Christmas break and going straight into organising events to coincide with the Sutherland Shire Council Seniors Festival 2023. Consequently, this is our first newsletter for the year. We also have new ECS Team members involved. Liam is our new Communications Assistant on Wednesdays, who looks after the website and various 'IT stuff'; he wrote the article on page 2. Our new student is Michelle, who is helping with everything, but especially playgroups on Monday [for grandparents] and Tuesday mornings [general] both 9.30-11.30 am.



This month we are hoping to start work on our new storage annex for the Toy Library, courtesy of grants from the NSW Premier's Department and NSW Club Grants Infrastructure Program. The former occurred through great assistance from our local Member of Parliament Mr Lee Evans, who presented me with the official correspondence a few weeks ago. [Photo above]

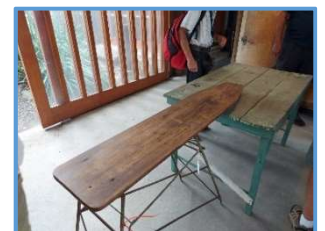
As many of you know, Sutherland Shire Toy Library has been providing affordable and safe indoor and outdoor toys and games to the children of this area for more than thirty five years.

Engadine Community Services has been the proud caretaker for over a decade now, and has expanded to over 600 items with the assistance of our amazing team of volunteers, led by Sandra Munn. During the height of COVID, we were able to restart borrowing very early, thanks to our online borrowing system, which was achieved through previous grants from Sutherland Shire Council. As well as baby toys, science, music and other themes, the Toy Library also features an extensive multicultural collection, paid for with a grant from Sutherland Shire Council.

Parents and grandparents can book toys to be borrowed after receiving their Members login, which they can keep for up to three weeks and up to nine items at a time. The Toy Library is open for pick up and deliveries every Monday and Thursday afternoon between 1-4pm and every second and fourth Saturday between 9-12noon.



The Seniors' Big Day Out in February to the Fairfield Community Museum was a raging success, with many photos taken of what life may have looked like for some of the clients when they were kids. Examples above are a general store and printing business and below are a washing machine, ironing board and tubs.



The museum visit was so popular as an activity that we are planning another for March [see a photo of some of our happy menfolk on the flyer].



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Meet Narelle: Aged Services Volunteer

The amazing volunteers at ECS are a diverse group of people, but they all have one thing in common; they're passionate about their community. They are the deliberate sort of person who invests time and energy in the people around them out of an abundance of generosity, not an obligation.

Volunteering helps maintain a community-minded spirit, and even though we are often busy, the positive effects on both volunteers and clients are plain to see.

Volunteers help ECS provide social support to seniors in the form of friendly home visits, shopping assistance and group social outings. These regular, scheduled services help make life a little easier and more enjoyable for the clients.

These services are partially funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and small fee from the client.



It takes a special sort of person to be a volunteer, like Narelle, who is one of the individual social support volunteers at ECS.

As an active member of her community, Narelle enjoys a busy lifestyle. She worked previously for a non-profit organisation in the past that relied heavily on volunteers to deliver its services, so when she walked past the window of Engadine Community Services and saw a sign asking for volunteers, she thought "why not?"

Now, Narelle sets aside two hours a week in her schedule to help her elderly client Irene with her shopping. After going over Irene's shopping list with her, she goes out and purchases all of the items on the list. Like all ECS volunteers in this individual social support role, she doesn't handle any cash or receive payment from the client directly, Narelle is reimbursed for her petrol expenses by ECS.

Of course, it's not just the joy of caring that has captured Narelle, but the friendly chats which are part of the client-volunteer relationship, according to Narelle.

"It may not seem like much, but a friendly chat and a familiar face every once in a while helps lift the spirits

of someone who may be feeling isolated and lacking confidence", she said.

"Social support is especially important after the isolation we all suffered during the pandemic".

ECS Aged Services Coordinator, Lynette Buss, believes that all volunteers in the ECS Team should feel immense pride and satisfaction for helping those who are in need, giving back to the community.

"Every one of amazing volunteers is really making a difference is that truly matters in a person's life".

Narelle, for one, enjoys volunteering with ECS, calling it a "wonderful organisation, great staff, very supportive". She says the service it provides is very important for strengthening community ties and forming intergenerational bonds.

"There are so many people out there who just need our help...one day we might be on the receiving end. If not us it might be a family member or a close friend."

SENIORS' **BIG DAY OUT** **SOCIAL BUS**

Date: Wednesday, March 29th, 2023

Times & Places:

about 9 am: Pick up
by the bus

11 am: **Australian
Communications
Museum
for morning tea
& tour**

1 pm: **Club Rivers
for lunch**

about 4 pm: Return home

Cost: \$32 per person [+ you pay for your own lunch]
due 22/3/23 [no refunds]

This activity receives assistance through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme. People not on My Aged Care will be required to complete a registration form to ensure that they are fit to attend & pay \$5 more.



Monday to Friday 9.30 am – 4 pm | 2nd & 4th Saturday each month 9 am – 12 noon

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