

Taking Care of Business

Economic Development Unit Newsletter—Number 2 of 2011

EDM update

The last nine months have been an extremely busy time for the Marrickville Economic Development Unit.

Because the EDU has the personnel and expertise to undertake more challenging projects it is being sought out by both the federal and state governments as the preferred economic development body to deliver projects in the inner west. This is evidenced through the Unit's work with Enterprise Connect, Young Entrepreneurs and the manufacturers' cluster where additional resources and funding have been attracted.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my economic development officers; John Whelan for his excellent delivery of the 2011 Inner West Small Business Expo and Prue Foreman for her exemplary work on the Young Entrepreneurs program. These projects and others have placed considerable demands on team members to manage the logistics and concerns of the people involved in order to deliver meaningful and measurable outcomes. The ability to support each other and step into the other's shoes when required is a resource of immense value and a key success factor for this unit.

Duncan Gilchrist

Inner West Small Business Expo 2011—iBusiness

Council partnered with Ashfield, City of Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Strathfield Councils and Clearly Business BEC to present the third Inner West Small Business Expo. Marrickville coordinated the event. The theme was iBusiness and focused on social media marketing and technol-

ogy developments. The presenting partners, sponsors and 15 businesses made the exhibition space a busy hub.

One hundred and seventy-six individual delegates registered for the event and there were a number of 'walk-ups' on the day.

A mix 'n' mingle networking event closed the day's proceedings. Feedback indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the event.



Delegates listen to a speaker in the main auditorium



Delegates talk with exhibitors



A full house for Social Media 2 Go

The EDU facilitated the creation of a cluster of local independent newspapers to ensure promotion of the Expo throughout the region. The new cluster provided a cost effective advertising package with a significant footprint encompassing all of the presenting partners and adjacent areas.

An Evening with Ed Blakely

Marrickville Council hosted the Economic Development Australia NSW event, *An Evening with Ed Blakeley*.

Fifty two economic development practitioners, council staff and elected representatives came from across the state to hear eminent economic development practitioner and author Professor Ed Blakely.



Home Based Business Network

Marrickville Home Based Business Network was established in 2011. Two meetings have been held and the group will meet bi-monthly in 2012.

Home based businesses make up more than two thirds of the small business picture in Australia and comprise one of the fastest growing sectors.



Home Based Business Network members listen to speaker Robert Gerrish

Enterprise Connect

Federal government initiative Enterprise Connect assists manufacturing firms with comprehensive business reviews and matched funding to make improvements to operations.

The EDU has referred a number of businesses to Enterprise Connect for which business reviews have been conducted—a valuable resource for the business owners. One of those businesses, *Elegant Living* has recently been approved for a Tailored Advisory Service grant.

Enmore Theatre Parking

Talks are progressing well in regard to the use of the TAFE car park at Enmore on weekends for theatre and restaurant patrons. This win/win situation will provide much needed parking in a very congested area and a revenue stream for TAFE to enhance facilities and programs.

Leichhardt Economic Development Contract

In August the EDU commenced a twelve month contract with Leichhardt Council to provide economic development support, in particular, to facilitate the High Street Task Forces for the Rozelle/Balmain and Leichhardt/Annandale precincts. Leichhardt Council is preparing an *Employment and Economic Development Strategy* which will form the basis of its future economic development initiatives in the LGA. Feedback from local businesses has indicated a high level of support for the initiative and the anticipation of a more structured relationship between Council, local business and residents.

Made in Marrickville

The Marrickville Manufacturers Association—*Made in Marrickville* continues to make progress. The group has invested in branding and logos and participated in the Marrickville Festival at which these were utilised for the first time. Seven manufacturers participated and achieved sales for the day with follow up visits to the factory shops now being reported.



Investigating the Accelerator

Business accelerators or incubators provide a physical location in which a new business can start, in an environment supported by business advice and shared services.

Successful examples are located on the Central Coast of NSW and in the Sutherland Shire. The Sutherland Shire Hub for Economic Development (SSHED) has exported its model to a number of other Sydney Councils and regional areas. Businesses pay \$20 per hour to use a “hot desk”, \$180 per week for a shared office and \$279 per week for a 24/7 office. The SSHED’s web site contains a number of case studies where small businesses have grown to multimillion dollar operations in a relatively short time.

The ability to incubate, foster and accelerate the growth of local entrepreneurial businesses is a great advantage for any area. It en-

ables new businesses to be created that already have an affinity with the local area and local demands.

The EDU is interested in creating a business accelerator in either the heritage houses on the old Marrickville Hospital site or the Marrickville Town Hall when it is vacated. Such an enterprise would be commercially viable and not only promote economic growth but also be a valuable connector to other activities being undertaken by the community and Council in this precinct. The cost of acquiring and developing purpose built buildings to house a business accelerator is quite high, so when opportunities present themselves to retrofit existing buildings they should be explored as a viable alternative use.

Young Entrepreneurs Business Mentoring Program

Council received a \$20,000 grant from NSW Trade and Investment to run the Young Entrepreneurs' Program in the inner west. Seventeen young business owners completed the 3 month program. Participants attended workshops to enhance their fundamental knowledge on topics which included finance, marketing, sales, social media and web and business planning. A key component was the men-

toring experience—participants were matched with an experienced local business person who guided them in applying the skills learned throughout the program.

The graduation event on 25 November 2011 was hosted by local manufacturer, wholesaler and exporter *New Directions*.



Participants meet their mentors



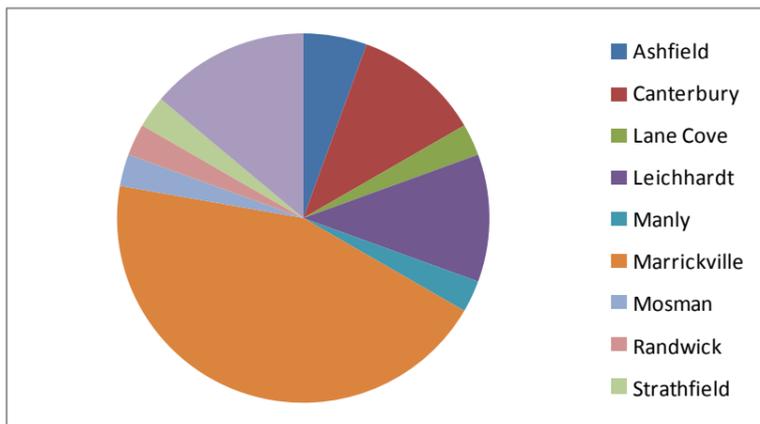
Graduation certificate presentation



Networking night



Participants and Mentors at the Graduation



Graph showing LGA of origin for participants and mentors

The grant was obtained to run the program in the inner west however the majority of participants and mentors were from Marrickville.

Women's Business Network

Council facilitated the establishment of the Women's Business Network *She Business*. Three meetings of the new Marrickville chapter were held in Council's function room in 2011. Monthly meetings are scheduled for 2012.



She Business women meet in the function room

Urban Centre Promotions

Christmas in the Urban Centres

The Marrickville Chamber of Commerce and Council have invested in a new set of decorations for Marrickville and Illawarra Roads. These comprise garlands to dress the awnings and a new Christmas tree which sits atop the structure in Alex Trevallion Plaza. The new tree ensures that the public space of the Plaza is available for use during the trading period.

The Chamber has arranged for The Salvation Army Band from the local temple to lead *Carols by Candlelight* on the Thursday before Christmas. Other entertainment will include local musicians, buskers and the popular Kidz Zoo which will be held on Christmas Eve. The Chamber is running a window dressing competition with a prize for the best submission.

Petersham's decorations comprise under-awning garlands along the main streets and trees above the awnings at the gateways to the centre. These were well received when first introduced in 2010.

Dulwich Hill launched its Christmas trading period at the Community Fair on 4 December. The EDU worked with Council's Events section which produced the event, to incorporate a 'Dulwich Hill passport' to encourage visitors to discover Dulwich Hill especially the shops and businesses on the periphery such as those on New Canterbury Road.

The Newtown Precinct Business Association will be decorating the Precinct's streets. A tree has been erected in Newtown Square.



Dulwich Hill Community Fair—2011 (Photos by Michael Kery)

Sydney Fringe Festival

The Newtown Precinct Business Association partnered with the Sydney Fringe Festival to provide benefits and special offers to Festival goers. Thirty-nine businesses took an active part in the promotion and were listed in the Fringe Guide.



Coordinators

The Marrickville Chamber of Commerce is recruiting a new Coordinator for its Urban Centre activities.

The Newtown Precinct Business Association has recently engaged new Coordinator Maree Pagano who is busy meeting all the business owners and operators in Newtown Precinct.

Crave Sydney International Food Festival

Crave, held in October each year, provides an excellent opportunity to promote the unique cuisine and dining experiences of Marrickville's urban centres.

The EDU assisted the Committees, Chambers and Business Associations of Newtown, Petersham and Marrickville to participate in the festival.

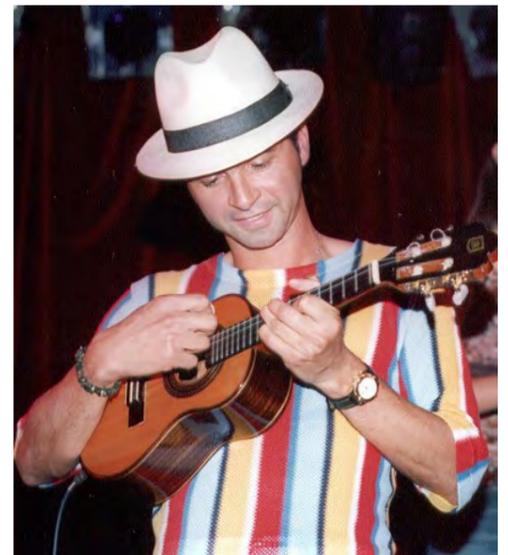
Marrickville's Great Eastern Grill

Marrickville Chamber along with the Australian Federation of Chinese Organisations celebrated with *The Great Eastern Grill*, an Eastern BBQ.



Portuguese Please

Petersham provided live music attractions to encourage visitors. Restaurants in New Canterbury Road and Audley Street turned on the traditional music and dance of Portugal and South America to enhance the Petersham dining experience.



Newtown

Newtown took part in the Destination Dining and 'Let's Do Brunch' categories.



Economic Development Forums

The second Economic Development Forum was held in late May, focussing on Newtown. Existing and potential partners from state government agencies, business associations and local businesses attended to discuss future economic development initiatives for this important urban centre.

One of the highlights of the Forum was the commitment by the owners of the HUB Theatre to refurbish and reopen the venue as a theatre which can cater for a variety of performance types plus provide performance and industry development space in the lower area. The EDU has already received a number of enquiries about purchasing and/or

leasing the building and while the owners are not prepared to sell they are willing to talk to potential operators once the final cost of reopening is known. The EDU received wholehearted support for initiatives to retain the area around Newtown Square as a significant infrastructure hub for creative industries.

The third forum was held on Friday 9 December with a focus on Tempe, Sydenham and St Peters. Cirs Hanna and O'Sullivan addressed the business owners who attended.

Community feedback

The EDU is committed to engaging with our business community in order to discover its needs and tailor our programs and strategies accordingly. Both formal and informal evaluations are undertaken.

Here is a sample of some of the feedback to date:

"I have high hopes for Marrickville Council's involvement in the business community, they've been a very community minded Council for so long."

SHE Business member

"I really enjoyed the program very much. It was inspiring, uplifting, informative and helpful. I feel very satisfied all-round with the way everything went and will certainly recommend it to others."

Young Entrepreneurs Program participant

"Thrilled that Marrickville Council has recognised the support home based businesses in the community need and want"

"Happy that Marrickville Council is starting to recognise microbiz within the community"

Home Based Business Network members

"I would like to commend you on your organisation of the event and the tireless work that went into bringing it to fruition. The festival brought a lot of joy to the community and showcased the inclusive spirit of Marrickville. I attended with my elderly parents and they had a wonderful time."

Crave Marrickville—*The Great Eastern Grill* patron

EDU planning session 2012

The EDU is holding a team planning session for next year in December and looks forward to bringing more fantastic economic development projects to Marrickville in 2012.