

# SOUTH SYDNEY COMMUNITY AID CO-OP

118 REGENT STREET, REDFERN, 2016. PH: 699-4073, 699-2260, 699-9391



Symbol of the METROPOLITAN LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 1985

## MEMBERS/SHAREHOLDERS

Viv Abraham, Ali Ahmed, Dr. John Baggott, William Baird, Margaret Barry, Marsha Barry, David Bassett, Dr. Ronald Beazley, Meropy Bernhard, Black Theatre Arts & Culture, Helen Bonanno, Lawrence Brereton, Ronald Brown, Margherita Bruce, David John Burns, John Joseph Butcher, Judith Cameron, Frank Catford, Cheryl Joy Cathles, Sandra Ceissman, Michael Anthony Clohesy, Jean Currell, Pamela Anne Denham, Ronald James Denham, Jeanette Dickson, Reyna Dight, Elsa Dixon, Khaled el Yatim, Pamela Joy Esdaile, Margaret Faunce, Terence Findlay, Judith Fleming, John Floyd, Terry Folan, Brian Foley, Nicholas Fotinos, Christine Gleeson, Thomas Gleeson, Thomas Hamerton, Sam Harakeh, Ellen Frances Huntley, Rita Hutchison, Gordon Raymond Ibbett, Jacques Gonthier, Inner City Parish, Inner City Regional Council, Irish Community Centre, Colin Leslie James, Lillian James, Angela Karakozis, Steve Karakozis, Ray Kelly, Poppy Keramea, Betty Kerameas, Ken Klippel, Con Koutsounadis, Irene Koutsounadis, John Koutsounadis, Rea Koutsounadis, Vivi Koutsounadis, Peter Koutsouvelis, Miles Herbert Lalor, Michael John Lane, David Charles Lloyd, Lea Judith Loeve, Brenda Maling, Dennis Mansfield, Patricia McDonnell, Beth Mitchell, Allan John Mithen, Monday Activities Group, Martin Mowbray, Pam Mowbray, Robert Charles Mowbray, Vladimir Navoev, Judith Nino, Nguu Chung, Severence Olsen, Susan Olsen, Janice Fay Pacey, Richard John Pacey, Kim Pavlovich, Norma Penglase, Jose Perez, Angelo Politis, Leslie Rambaldini, Robyn Rasdall, Redfern Legal Centre, Leslie Redwin, Bernette Redwood, Regas Feraios Greek Progressive Society, Iris Reynold, Rizk Abedelkarim, Elziabeth Sadlier, Norma Sanchez, Frank Sartor, N. Glazier Schofield, Arnold Seitz, Karine Shellshear, Marion Simon, Harold Smart, Kenneth Smith, P. Anthony Smith, Wynfred Snaith, Stephen Snook, Laurel Sommer, South Sydney Building Workers' Collective, Maurice Stewart, Neil Stuart, Sydney City Council, Sydney University Settlement, Tenants' Union of NSW, Susan Anette Treloar, Turanga Social Welfare Club, Edna May Turvey, Frederick Turvey, Mary Anne Veliscek, Bertha Ventura, Harvey Volke, Margaret Walker, Evelyn Webb, Mondalmi Whiting, Daphne Woodhouse, Julie Spies.

## GIVERS

South Sydney Community Aid wishes to thank the following persons, organisations or Government departments who have given money:

B. Oliver, C. Larsen, anonymous giver, Sydney City Council, Department of Youth and Community Services, Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

We acknowledge in particular the assistance given by the grant of \$18,233 in the current year from the Council of the City of Sydney.

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## OBJECTIVES

1. Primarily provide social welfare by assisting in the relief of poverty, distress, sickness, suffering, destitution or helplessness;
2. Provide an enquiry, answering, and advisory service to assist with the above project;
3. Co-operate with and assist in the co-ordination of groups and agencies working in the area;
4. Sponsor and encourage continued research into the needs of the community and apply those findings for the development of the programme;
5. Focus attention on any social needs in the area and enable local residents to meet these needs;
6. Stimulate and provide channels for individual and group participation in the development of services in the area;
7. Any other object consistent with community aid, the Board and/or members may adopt from time to time at meetings called pursuant to these rules.

## QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Every member shall hold at least one share;
2. Membership may be corporate or individual;
3. Agencies actively engaged in social services in the area may apply, or be invited to apply, for membership and shall be designated as "Agency Members";
4. Groups and organisations interested in social services in the area, but not actively engaged, may apply or be invited to apply, for membership and be designated "Society Members";
5. Corporate, agency, society or organisational members shall be represented by individuals nominated in writing by their organisation as their representative or alternate representative;
6. Each member, whether individual, corporate, agency, society or organisational, in attendance at meetings, shall have one vote only as per Rule 55, regardless of the number of shares held; and there shall be no proxy votes as per Section 86(9) of the Act;
7. There shall be no joint shareholding;
8. A member who has had no contact with the Society for a period of two years may have their share or shares forfeited as provided in Rule 22.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 1984-85

Margaret Barry  
 Helen Bonanno  
 Rita Bruce  
 Sandra Ceissman  
 Terry Folan  
 Brian Foley  
 Colin James  
 Lilian James  
 David Lloyd  
 Beth Mitchell  
 Kim Pavlovich  
 Norma Penglase  
 Harold Smart  
 Fred Turvey

1 Vacancy

COMMITTEES

Management Committee: Margaret Barry, Helen Bonanno, Sandra Ceissman, Harold Smart, Neil Stuart, Rita Bruce.

Migrant Committee: Helen Bonanno (Convenor) David Lloyd, Lil James, Kim Pavlovich, Evelyn Webb, Mijung Paik, Neil Stuart, Vivi Germanes.

Aboriginal Committee: Rita Bruce (Convenor), Colin James, Terry Folan, Sandra Ceissman, Brenda Maling, Meropy Bernhard, Neil Stuart, Sonya Maloney, Len Bolt.

Festival Committee: Brenda Maling, Beth Mitchell.

Environment Committee: Fred Turvey (Convenor), Colin James, Brian Foley, Norma Penglase.

WE ARE MEMBERS OF:

Australian Council of Social Services  
 Community Child Care Co-op Ltd.  
 Community Information Development Association  
 Co-operation Federation of NSW  
 Ethnic Communities Council of NSW  
 Inner Sydney Migrant Interagency  
 Inner Sydney Neighbourhood Centres Forum  
 Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development  
 Interagency Migration Group  
 Local Community Services Association  
 NSW Council of Social Services  
 NSW Grant-in-Aid Migrant Workers' & Agencies Co-op Ltd.  
 NSW Shelter Co-op Ltd.  
 People for Nuclear Disarmament  
 Radio Eastern Sydney  
 Redfern Aboriginal Community Youth Support Scheme

School-Community Liaison Committee of Cleveland St. High School  
 South Sydney Committee of the Australian Assistance Plan  
 South Sydney Community Transport Committee  
 South Sydney Youth Services Committee  
 South West Inner Sydney Housing Co-op Ltd.  
 Sydney University Settlement  
 Tenants' Union of NSW Co-op Ltd.  
 Workers' Health Centre

### STAFF (as at September, 1985)

Co-ordinator	Neil Stuart
Typist	Jean Currell (25 hrs per week)
Accounts Clerk	Laurel Sommer (16 hrs per week)
Cleaner	Lambrini Kakoliris

### Migrant Project

Grant-in-Aid Worker	Evelyn Webb
Ethnic Affairs Worker	Mijung Paik (18 hrs per week)
C.E.P. Worker	Christine Vergos (until Jan. 1985)

### Aboriginal Project

Senior Project Officer	Brenda Maling
Project Officer/Youth Worker	Len Bolt
Welfare Officer	Meropy Bernhard (4 days per week)
Secretary/Receptionist	Sonya Maloney

### Staff Changes

On February 25, 1985, Len Bolt took up the position of Project Officer/Aboriginal Detached Youth Worker.

Dennis Dunn took up the position of Trainee Youth Worker on January 2, 1985, and finished up in that position on March 20, 1985.

On April 9, 1984, Christine Vergos started as clerical assistant for the Migrant Project and finished up on January 9, 1985. Christine was employed for that fixed period on a grant from the Community Employment Programme.

### Staffing of Related Projects

South Sydney Community Aid sponsored a number of projects. Some are short-term, others are ongoing. Some operate as part of South Sydney Community Aid and others are autonomous to all intents and purposes.

Bernice Redman has continued as Detached Youth Worker for South Sydney Youth Services Committee, under a grant received from the Department of Youth and Community Services. South Sydney Community Aid administers the grant.

Between May 7, 1984, and September 7, 1984, South Sydney Community Aid administered for the Aboriginal Dance Theatre a grant from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, under which Glen Hennessy was employed by the Dance Theatre.

On April 22, 1985, South Sydney Community Aid and the South Sydney Community Transport Committee entered an arrangement. The funds of the Transport Committee are administered by South Sydney Community Aid who supplies office space, some office equipment, telephone, typing and copying services. The Transport Committee employs John Rule as Co-ordinator.

### Volunteers

Ernie Ridding has continued to do handyman and repair jobs for the agency and clients.

The Coffee Shop/English Conversation Group on Thursday mornings has been maintained by Kim Pavlovich and Lilian James.

Volunteers have helped with the South Sydney Festival.

The work put in by Directors and members on Committees is all voluntary.

Vivienne Abraham continues as the honorary solicitor for the Co-operative.

### Student Placements

During the year two welfare work students each worked a 2-week placement with us - Hazel Moreton and Paul Pendergast. Hazel and Paul both assisted mainly in interviewing and assisting individual clients.

Vivienne Pusey, a final year social work student at Sydney University, worked with us for 12 weeks between August and November. Vivienne and a fellow student collaborated in working in the Waterloo community on youth work.

Two students from Cleveland St. High School each worked for one week with the co-operative.

## SERVICES AVAILABLE AT OUR PREMISES

### \* Social Welfare Service

Office Hours: Monday to Friday  
 9.30am - 12.30pm  
 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Telephone: 699-4073; 699-2260; 699-9391

Our staff are available to anyone to discuss in a friendly and informal atmosphere any matters which are of concern. If we cannot directly assist the person, then we will refer the person to someone who can assist. If we cannot provide the information which is sought, then we will get the information for the person.

### \* Tenants' Advice Service

As well as being available during the above office hours to provide advice to tenants, we attend to the Tenants' Union Hotline on one morning a week, when we provide immediate phone advice to tenants ringing in.

### \* Coffee Shop/English Conversation

On Thursdays, between 10.00am and 2.00pm, a group of mainly women come together for a social talk over coffee. In this informal and casual setting there is an opportunity to practise conversational, everyday English.

### \* Printing/Typing

At a very reasonable charge, we will do typing and photocopying jobs for individuals or groups.

### \* Repairs to Household Appliances

Ernie Ridding is the fellow who repairs household appliances, and other small jobs. Apply through our office.

### \* Food Co-operative

The Station Food Co-operative will provide and deliver to your home for \$5, plus a small service fee, a food parcel of excellent fresh vegetables, fruit and some meat. Apply through our office.



## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I am delighted to be associated with South Sydney Community Aid Co-op. As Chairman it is a pleasure to share with the Board of Management and the Co-ordinator and staff an infectious enthusiasm for caring for our community. Wherever I go through the Inner City area I find that the reputation and care of our organisation is recognised and respected.

As a Co-op we have set high standards in community support and financial integrity. This is due in no small measure to the efforts of our Co-ordinator, Neil Stuart, and our staff. Each of our staff members deserve special mention and I am sure that you will show your appreciation to them. Through them we have been able to contribute to auspicing community groups and to ally ourselves with a large network of welfare agencies seeking to aid folk in need of the care of the Sydney Metropolitan Region.

New opportunities for service to the community are available to us as we consider population increase in the area. The Housing Commission is rehabilitating old terraces and cottages in Waterloo and building units in the old Eveligh Railway Yard; whilst private residential and apartment construction is increasing. This will mean further calls on our time.

One disturbing factor which continues to bedevil our grants from Government bodies is their failure to provide administrative costs on behalf of the auspiced groups.

Co-operation between this and other agencies on the vexed question of Emergency Relief and on the wider issues of life in the metropolitan area, such as expressways, youth work, employment, and the paramount needs of the Aborigines and ethnic groups, has been rewarding.

I am sure that, despite the depressed outlook for 1986, our South Sydney Community Aid Co-op will go on, with your backing as members, to set the pace as an innovative and compassionate body.

REV. HAROLD G. SMART



## SECRETARY'S REPORT

During 1984-85 there has been no lessening on demands on South Sydney Community Aid, but at least the staff do not have to endure the physically crowded conditions of the past.

During the year Community Aid moved from the inadequate office space upstairs to the larger and refurbished downstairs section of St. Luke's. The larger space and more private interviewing section has seen the staff less tensioned and clients can relax in a friendly and more spacious atmosphere. No more sitting on top of each other.

Our thanks to Harold Smart and the Uniting Church in making the move a reality and special thanks to Col James, Brian Foley, Mark Wright, Don Williams and Keith Maling in the refurbishing of the downstairs area.

Over the last few years, we have taken time out to reflect and evaluate what we are doing, to ensure our actions result in the transference of resources, knowledge and skills to the people with whom we are working so they may better handle their own affairs, thus strengthening their local communities.

The continued increase in the number of clients seeking basic help, i.e. food and money, takes the time and monetary resources of the agency but the dedicated staff have been advancing community development projects, especially those that are youth orientated, this being International Year of the Youth.

Our agency has continued its traditions of responding to community needs with initiatives in housing, environment, transport, employment as well as expanding the Aboriginal and Migrant Projects.

One major problem of the agency, which is continual, is the difficulty in finding voluntary workers, who have been "killed off" by the increasing shift of government responsibilities onto their shoulders. However, we continue to supplement our programs with student placements, who gain considerable experience in their chosen field.

The past year has been a very busy one for staff and on behalf of the Board I would like to thank them for their patience with changes, increased workloads and continued dedication. Also, the various groups the agency has been working with, and our hardworking Co-ordinator, Neil Stuart.

SANDRA CEISSMAN

TREASURER'S REPORT

Following last year's 'great leap forward', South Sydney Community Aid is fast settling back into its earlier 'hand-to-mouth' existence, and the financial trends indicate that the prospects for the upcoming year will be gloomy indeed.

Our windfall of 1983/84 has enabled us to carry out the Leasehold Improvements and upgrade our equipment as planned. It has also enabled us to channel \$13,500 of earlier accumulated surpluses to reserves to undertake a feasibility study into a Youth Employment Scheme at The Settlement, and to contribute significantly towards the printing of the South Sydney Community Profile and an updated South Sydney Community Directory. Both of these publications will bring together the work of students on placement in the area over several years in a much-needed published form.

And this research will be critical to South Sydney and South Sydney Community Aid, in particular, in looking to new directions following its decision to pull out of the distribution of Emergency Relief.

In the year just gone, however, the agency still managed to come out in front with an overall surplus of \$9,861, contributed principally through the non-filling of a staff vacancy for some six months while the improvements were being carried out. This, in turn, secured higher interest earnings than were anticipated particularly through the careful deployment of funds with the centralised banking system offered by the Co-operative Federation.

It is of continuing concern that certain programmes continue to be subsidised by other programmes, eg the migrant programmes (Grant-in-Aid and Ethnic Affairs) and Neighbourhood Centre, which together absorbed \$11,238 of the surpluses contributed by the Aboriginal, Festival and Administration programmes. The Administration costs, in the past, have been generously supported by the local municipal councils, initially South Sydney Municipal Council and in more recent years by the amalgamated Council of the City of Sydney, but this grant will be severely cut back next year in view of the increased number of organisations seeking Council support in line with the general cutbacks to the sector through 'maintenance funding' policies of government departments.

In 1984/85 we have continued to receive funding support from the Federal Departments of Aboriginal Affairs and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the NSW Departments of Youth and Community Services, the Housing Commission and the Ethnic Affairs Commission, and the Council of the City of Sydney. With the incorporation of SWISH, the Community Tenancy Scheme is now out on its own, as it should be. 'Oncer' funding was attracted from the Community Employment Programme. We continue to administer funds for unincorporated organisations like the Detached Youth Worker and the South Sydney Community Transport Committee.

In conclusion, I must express my thanks to the Management Committee, and the staff, particularly those members of staff who are involved in the handling of the moneys, Co-Ordinator Neil Stuart and Laurel Sommer, and to Helen McCall, our Accountant, and Ron Brown, our Auditor.

MARGARET BARRY

## CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Reporting on the work of South Sydney Community Aid can be done from several perspectives. One approach is to report on what has been done within each of the projects of South Sydney Community Aid. That is done elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Another approach is that of reporting on the overall thrusts of the Co-operative, especially the integrating and support role provided by the Neighbourhood Centre project and the co-operative as a whole. Although each of the projects operates with a great deal of autonomy, the same ethos and the same processes are common to each project. That gives a great deal of coherence and unity to South Sydney Community Aid while at the same time allowing for an extraordinary flexibility and versatility.

I report here from the above perspective.

### DIRECT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE CO-OPERATIVE

The figures listed towards the back of this Annual Report record the details of direct assistance given during the year. Overall, there was an increase on the previous year, as we predicted in last year's report.

Over the past couple of years the gradually increasing demand for direct assistance reflects both the increased availability of direct assistance in the form of emergency relief (food orders mainly) and the continuing, in some cases worsening, state of need of those persons seeking assistance.

The average figures at the end of the Annual Report do not tell the true story about so-called emergency relief. The period covered by the report includes two periods when we received emergency relief grants from the Commonwealth Government. We had sort of two wet and dry seasons in the one year - two times when we had emergency relief assistance to give and two times when we had virtually none to give. If we had continuous emergency relief assistance to give, then the number of persons assisted per month would have continued to increase - we had already reached the 400 mark in one month before the grant ran out.

Official Government statements that emergency relief funds are to be used for one-off crises are a deliberate fabric of deception. Our own information tells us that emergency relief is being used to supplement an inadequate level of income support - especially to single parents (mainly women) and long-term unemployed.

This kind of emergency relief is an obscenity in our society. It is demeaning to those who receive it and it is demeaning to those who make it happen. It is unjust and not equitable.

Your directors decided that when the current grant runs out, we will accept no further grants. That was a significant decision. But even more significant were the decisions to commit resources to a campaign for gaining equitable income support and to initiatives to create jobs in the community.

As in previous years, about 50% of the persons helped were Aborigines, about 25% were of migrant background, and about 25% were white Australian-born.

### DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING STRUCTURES DEALING WITH SOCIAL NEEDS

Directly helping individual persons is one way by which we set about achieving our aims. But the other major way by which we act to achieve our aims is by working with groups of people who have common needs. In the best sense, this achieves more than just a provision of needed services. It achieves the development of the community itself. The community - or that group brought together - become equipped with knowledge and skills which enable them to deal effectively with changes yet to come. Usually the process involves setting up a structure which continues over time, despite the comings and goings of individual persons. The key to the whole process is that it is decided and carried through by those persons themselves.

South Sydney Community Aid is itself an instance of community development. The two great dangers are from within - one is the structure itself. It can become the be-all and end-all. It can become resistant to change, oppressive and alienating. The other is the desire to "own" the structures developed.

Some of the community development work of South Sydney Community Aid is reported elsewhere in Project reports. It's not easy to get nice neat packages, in compartments, to report on because staff work in a team-like way - there is at time overlap and back-up support.

Other than those reported elsewhere the major tasks have been:

(a) South West Inner Sydney Housing Co-operative (SWISH)

SWISH shares premises and an accountant with us, but otherwise they do their thing and do it well, and we work together on several accommodation projects for youth which were being developed by the South Sydney Youth Services Committee but which now are under the umbrella of SWISH. From being primarily a shell for the functioning of the local Community Tenancy Scheme, SWISH has quickly become a much more extensive community organisation - that brings problems of that kind. The development of the youth accommodation projects has required continued resourcing by South Sydney Community Aid and others - hanging in there at times without much to show for it. Members will be glad to know these projects are now a reality.

(b) Youth Work

Although the co-operative made a major commitment to youth work by deciding to employ an Aboriginal Detached Youth Worker in May, 1984, it was not until February, 1985, that we were able to appoint a worker, Len Bolt. That appointment has quickly enabled the co-operative to resource the development and extension of work with Aboriginal youth, which has been and still is a great need.

Together with several other agencies, part of the South Sydney Youth Services interagency, and with the resources of two social work students, we were able to start a process of development of the Waterloo community centred around youth. Two thrusts emerged from that process. One has not yet been taken up and is linked to the other, which was a major review of the existing community structure, the South Sydney Youth Services Committee. That review is basically complete - the fruits will emerge in the coming year, if that inter-agency wishes it.

(c) Community Involvement in High School

A structure comprising parents, staff of the school and representatives of the community, and at times students - calling itself the School-Community Liaison Committee for Cleveland St. High School - has continued to exercise a significant role in the community. South Sydney Community Aid has maintained its involvement in that process, at times being a major advocate and gatekeeper for ensuring that the process is right. We have resourced that committee, as well as making major contributions to two other structures - the Participation and Equity Programme Committee, and the Disadvantaged Schools Programme Committee.

(d) Employment Creation

The co-operative has been looking at ways by which it can encourage development of jobs locally. We are represented on the Employment Advisory Committee of City Council. Two specific projects we have been involved in - one is with South Sydney Building Workers' Collective, providing resources to help them get stabilised. The other, in collaboration with the University Settlement, involves assisting with start-up and some continuing resources for a cluster of small co-operative enterprises.

(e) Various Inter-Agency or Regional Structures

Our co-operative takes part in a large number of inter-agency or regional structures, as well as several advisory councils. The benefits from such participation are in the exchange and sharing of resources, and, in some cases, by enabling us to collaborate with others in development of services or in development of the community.

The inter-agency or regional structures with whom we work are listed in the front of this Annual Report.

AUSPICING/SPONSORING OTHER GROUPS

We administer the funds of South Sydney Youth Services Committee, which is an unincorporated structure.

For a time we administered some of the funds of the Aboriginal Dance Theatre.

We have entered into an arrangement with the South Sydney Community Transport Committee whereby we administer their funds and provide services such as accommodation, telephone and typing for a fee.

As mentioned above, many of the inter-agency or regional structures we take part in are resourced entirely by the contributions of the groups taking part. We contribute our share. The contributions include person-input, stationery, printing, meeting place, etc.

### MANAGEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Under policy decisions made by the Directors the overall day-to-day management is undertaken by the co-ordinator but reflects frequent shared decision-making by staff. Staff meet weekly for a couple of hours. The staff are capable of organising their tasks and time with minimal supervision.

Last year's report indicated that the Board had allocated funds for expanding our accommodation in St. Luke's. That has been achieved in the current year. That has been a very positive decision by the co-operative. We are just able to work so much better.

Despite the above expenditure of approx. \$27,000 out of interest earnings (over past years), we have been able to prudently manage our funds, mainly through the centralised banking scheme of the Co-operative Federation, so that we benefit from interest earnings.

We have lived within our income, mainly through expenditure foregone on wages, since we had a staff vacancy for 6 months. However, the next year will be different. There is no real increase in income expected, other than what extra the co-operative may commit itself to doing. Staff have agreed to accept current wage rates, apart from National Wage adjustments. Members need to be aware of that.

### CONCLUSION

If South Sydney Community Aid accepts its role as pioneer, innovator, resourcer, there is no end to tasks to be worked on. The challenge for the community, and the members in particular, is to keep the cutting edge sharp and to gather the resources sufficient for the tasks. Our greatest - indeed our single - asset is our human resources. That starts and ends with the members.

NEIL STUART

SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER

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Aboriginal Project

South Sydney has had many changes in the past 12 months. Industry had died, we've had a dramatic fire, and floods late last year. The Housing Commission has finally decided to make good with all the housing stock in Waterloo, and the Shopping Bus to Eastlakes has eventuated.

Here at South Sydney Community Aid the problems we're faced with are still the same only more of them. While we had the Emergency Relief monies we were all pretty well run off our feet. Although, thanks to everyone, I was still able to do a lot of community development work. Most of the work has been with various Aboriginal organisations.

With the Green Paper on Land Rights being pushed through Parliament so quickly, Land Councils throughout New South Wales have been set. I am Secretary of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, whose area consists of the Sydney Metropolitan Area and north to Spencer. Therefore, a lot of my time earlier this year was spent with the setting up of the Land Council office which is at 72 Renwick Street, Redfern.

I am still very involved with the running of Camp Wollemi which is a camp for Koories at St. Albans.

A few of the workers in the area have had meetings with tenants of the Housing Company houses in applying for money for housing through the Community Tenancy Scheme to house single Aborigines.

I have spoken on Aboriginal issues and needs to Youth & Community Services training programmes for District Officers who are to be placed throughout the State. I personally feel these sessions are very useful and are giving workers within the Government structure more understanding of the Aboriginal people.

South Sydney Festival happened again last year somewhat dampened by the wet weather. We are all heavily into organising Festival 85.

I am still taking a big interest in the South Sydney Women's Centre and try to give, the Aboriginal worker, all the support she needs.

I attended meetings with the City of Sydney Council with representatives from Aboriginal organisations re trying to upgrade the Aboriginal Housing Company area. The meetings have since stopped and so has the upgrading of the area.

Congratulations must go to David Hill and the State Rail Authority for the employment of 700 Aborigines throughout the State.

BRENDA MALING



WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT - Aboriginal Project

The highlight of the last twelve months was our relocation to new premises downstairs just before Xmas. A wonderful boost to morale. All that light and space and comparative luxury has made a big difference to workers and clients alike.

For two periods during the year we had emergency relief funds available which were given out mainly in the form of food vouchers for Flemings, the Black Market and East Coast Providores. During these periods, the number of clients rose dramatically, especially on off-pension weeks, and many times we had to close our doors with the waiting area already filled to capacity. Welfare workers were often under a lot of pressure with clients equally frustrated. The extra paperwork connected with the emergency relief funds caused even more hassles. In the month of July I had a total of 245 interviews and, of those, 202 involved requests for food assistance.

With no more food vouchers available, the number of clients is dropping accordingly and we are back to referring clients to other agencies and organisations for food, e.g. Youth and Community Services, St. Vincent de Paul, Careforce, Smith Family, Food For Babies.

Until now we've always had on hand a small amount of welfare money to assist clients fares, prescriptions or small amounts of food, but this money is also running out and apparently will not be replenished. This will be the first time in my 15 years at Community Aid that funds for this purpose will not be available.

Housing continues to be a major problem in the area with the diminishing availability of reasonable rental accommodation. It's now almost impossible to find a 3-bedroom house for under \$120 per week and this rental is way beyond the capacity of single parents and low-income families.

Close liaison has been maintained during the year with the Department of Social Security which has held a number of seminars to advise workers in the area of policy changes and to clarify any problems concerning Social Security matters. We are grateful to the Departmental Social Workers who have always been most co-operative whenever we contact them on behalf of clients.

The criteria for establishing identification of Social Security applicants and those applying for counter cheques changed positively to allow a more flexible means of identification. Instead of issuing Statutory Declarations for this purpose, we now issue clients with a letter of identification specifying how long the client has been known to the agency.

The new Social Security policy of direct bank deposits has led to some problems when monies aren't deposited on time or bank books are lost. But, overall, the system seems successful, alleviating the previous problem of stolen cheques.

South Sydney Community Aid is still on the Tenants' Hotline roster one morning a week. During our busier periods it was sometimes difficult trying to cope with tenancy calls as well as interviewing large numbers of clients.

The Aboriginal Project has been fortunate to have Sonya on the reception desk to brighten up our lives. Sonya has been a wonderful asset to the agency and is much appreciated by staff and clients.

MEROPY BERNHARD  
14/8/85

YOUTH WORKER/PROJECT OFFICER

## -- Aboriginal Project

I began working with South Sydney Community Aid in February of this year. My activities to date have been to firstly re-establish community support with local Aboriginal community organisations and relevant Government departments, and also with the wider community organisations and inter-agencies. I plan to develop aims and gather resources in anticipation of services to the Aboriginal community and youth oriented projects.

My first impressions of the local Inner City area was that there was an overwhelming need for Aboriginal youth services in the Redfern area, which highlighted the racial tensions and discrimination, drawing on the ever high unemployment, health, education, welfare, arrest and conviction rate - all of which showed the direction of need and where energies might best be spent.

The main organisations with whom I initially made contact were:

- . International Youth Year Committee
- . Youth & Community Services (Gullama)
- . City Council Youth Advisory Committee
- . South Sydney Youth Services Committee
- . Aboriginal Employment & Training Branch (NESA)
- . Department of Aboriginal Affairs
- . Department of Social Security
- . Eloura Centre (Aboriginal Housing Co.)
- . Aboriginal Children's, Medical and Legal Services
- . Anti Discrimination Board - Equal Opportunities
- . Cleveland St. High School
- . The Settlement

Following a good deal of street work talking with local youth, I found that the hardest thing to do was to encourage Aboriginal youth to take advantage of resources and services available to them - e.g. Social Security benefits, job applications, organisational involvement, traineeships (NESA), submissions (IYY, YACS), development and constitution of an Aboriginal Youth Services Committee and support group.

These activities eventually led to my current involvement in the Aboriginal Medical Service Youth Hostel proposal, which means the demolition and reconstruction of the Presbytery building in Redfern Street, which in turn will generate employment opportunities and community input by Aboriginal youth. Other current youth employment projects include:

- . Employment of two other trainee youth workers through Aboriginal Employment & Training Branch with an option of doing Certificate or Diploma in Welfare Studies;
- . Aboriginal Youth Employment Scheme in liaison with South Sydney Community Aid/Settlement proposal, incorporating:
  - (a) Metal Fabrication skills (security screens)
  - (b) Market gardening
  - (c) Catering service
- . Christian Youth Organisation (Dick Blair);