

\$2 Million Funding for Community Languages Schools

Member for Bankstown, Tony Stewart, has welcomed the allocation of \$2 million by the NSW Government to help thousands of young people retain links with their languages and cultures. Mr Stewart said of the \$2 million, \$246,000 had been allocated to 17 community languages organisations in the Bankstown electorate. "This funding will be used by these community organisations to provide programs in a range of different languages," he said. "The Bankstown electorate embraces the opportunity to

learn different languages, and this is a welcome investment."

Among these schools are:

Greek Orthodox Church & Community of Bankstown & District St Euphemia Ltd - \$4,140

Hellenic Centre for Language and Culture of Australia Inc - \$10,080

"These organisations will utilise this funding to deliver language program classes outside of mainstream school hours."

"Community languages schools are open to children from Kindergarten to Year 12, from any cultural or language background and were originally formed to help children keep in touch with their heritage language and culture. "However, some of the most successful students study languages completely different from those familiar to their own background," Mr Stewart said.

**Tony Stewart BA, Dip.Ed, MP
MEMBER FOR BANKSTOWN**

Lord Mayor Clover Moore defends Sydney Council's Redfern record

Lord Mayor Clover Moore has hit back at claims that Redfern is being ignored while its neighbours enjoy "model village" status.

Cr Moore told Central that her political life started with Redfern and she was still working on the area.

"The work that City of Sydney has done in Redfern is fabulous. It will take time to rebuild confidence," Cr Moore said. "Over the past few years we've completed a \$20 million upgrade to Redfern and Regent streets, including widening, new paving, new street furniture and lighting.

"We have given Redfern Park and Oval a stunning \$32 million facelift which the Rabbitohs and local football clubs are using and where people walk their dogs, play touch football, practise tai-chi, have a barbecue with the neighbours or just enjoy the sunshine.

Cr Moore listed public art, special lighting for historic buildings, the planting of 189 new trees, and support for local businesses as among the council's achievements. "I'd like to see public art projects on the shop front shutters so a detractor can become an attractor."

Cr Moore said Redfern Railway Station needed an urgent upgrade but added that the State Government should not make an upgrade contingent on selling houses in Eveleigh.

CLOVER MOORE'S INSPIRING SPEECH AT REDFERN'S 150th BIRTHDAY PARTY, Redfern Town Hall on August 8:

"Good morning, everyone. What a pleasure to be here to celebrate 150 years of Redfern! I'd like firstly to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of this land.

That form acknowledgement always has a special resonance here, because Redfern is important symbolically for indigenous urban Australia. This is where, under the Whitlam Government, the Block was first handed back to indigenous people. And where we hope it will once again become a safe and dignified home with the proposed Pemulway Scheme.

Redfern Park was where people

Redfern has many layers, and many stories to tell. It has a very large number of public housing tenants in high/low rise flats, the Rabbit-ohs, and the waves of Greek, Lebanese, Portuguese and Russian migrants who made their homes here, or worked in the local factories.

gathered to hear Paul Keating's famous Redfern speech, and Redfern was where so many of us gathered to hear Prime Minister Rudd's Apology to the Stolen Generation.

But Redfern has many layers, and many stories to tell. It has a very large number of public housing tenants in high/low rise flats, the Rabbit-ohs, and the waves of Greek, Lebanese, Portuguese and Russian migrants who made their homes here, or worked in the local factories. It has its handful of grand residences, tiny workers' cottages and rows of terraces, it is a long time home of Gay and Lesbian Community and now home to artists and people working in the creative industries. It has great mix and form.

Our City Historian, Lisa Murray, will be telling some of those stories here today, as will Heidi Norman, the 2006 Indigenous History Fellow.

Lisa is especially interested to hear the tales of people who grew up here, who worked or went to school here because she's working on a history of the district - covering Redfern, Alexandria and Waterloo - that we will be publishing later next year.

It will look at the pre-European history, when this was a place of swamps and sandhills; it will trace the development of the local community and institutions, and it will look at the growth of industry here.

Early Redfern Councils were a progressive lot. This Town Hall was opened in 1870 - 10 years before Glebe, which had been formed at the same time, got around to building its own Town Hall.

In 1864, a group of private citizens established the Albert Cricket Ground, which Lisa will be talking about this afternoon. One of the first bicycle races in Sydney was held here. The council established an electricity supply to Redfern, about 12 years before the City Council.

One of the great things about history is not only what it tells us about the past, but how it informs our present, how it reminds us that nothing is ever permanent but is the result of actions and inactions.

The municipality of Redfern went into a decline. It was for a long time neglected, a "safe" constituency, too tame or too downtrodden to be cared for. And it was that environment that I stumbled innocently into in 1980.

I was elected Redfern Ward Alderman in 1980. The area was bleak - treeless, parks were asphalted and surrounded by chain wire fences topped by barbed wire and the lamp lighter would come around to lock up the parks at night (and children used to go through the holes in the chain wire fence). There was speeding through traffic in every street particularly in East Redfern, and Redfern Park was neglected and in a sad state. There was nowhere for young mothers to take their children.

A year later Redfern was amalgamated into the city and over the next six years it was possible to achieve road closures in streets like Great Buckingham, Morehead, Young and Telopea Streets that stopped speeding traffic and enabled the creation of gardens and a safer environment. The asphalt footpaths were also changed to part concrete/part grass which softened the environment.

But real transformations of Redfern Park and our local parks and streets had to wait until 2004.

And like the earliest Redfern Councils, the City of Sydney is now progressive.

Over the past few years we've completed a \$20 million upgrade

to Redfern and Regent Streets, including widening, new paving, new street furniture and lighting; given Redfern Park and Oval a stunning \$32 million facelift which the Rabbitohs and local football clubs are using and where people walk their dogs, play touch football, practice tai-chi, have a barbecue with the neighbours or just enjoy the sunshine. There is wonderful public art - children play in the Indigenous inspired fountain. Aboriginal labourers and tradesmen worked on both these projects.

We have started the renewal of Prince Alfred Park and upgraded seven pocket parks and playgrounds, with improvements to Charles Kernan Reserve planned.

In 2004, the City built the Waterloo Skate Park and the Waterloo Youth Facility is having a further two million dollars spent on it as part of the Federal Government stimulus package.

We've installed special lighting for some of the wonderful historic buildings, like the Post Office and this Town Hall, and we've sponsored terrific new art works in the park and at Regent Street.

We have planted 189 new trees, we have Living Colour floral displays in spring and summer, and we're working to support small businesses in the area and an important project I hope will be exciting public art on the oppressive shutters in Redfern Street.

A Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming program is underway and it will further reduce the impacts of traffic.

We support the community, through a range of programs for young and old at the Redfern Community Centre, located in the Block. It is used by more than



40,000 people each year with wonderful programs particularly for Aunty and Uncles, and employment programs include Lights/Camera/Action for young Indigenous people, and we run services like the community shuttle buses that run to Woolloomooloo and to Glebe.

Over the past year, the City has awarded 82 Local Community Grants that the Inner South Community will directly benefit from.

Safety is an important issue and we have the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan 2004-2007 with Crime Prevention Van, Community BBQs, The Block family and culture days.

Our achievements include:

- Crime down across all major crime categories
- 4 additional specialist Safe City Staff
- New forums established - Liquor Accord, Community Drug Action Team and
- Anecdotally people feeling safer.

We have established better relationships with public housing communities through a Public Housing Liaison Officer who works with tenants and Housing NSW. We hold regular open meetings for public housing tenants, local Police Commands and Housing NSW. The City and Housing NSW have signed an MOU to work together in the interests of tenants.

The Federal Government's stimulus package will provide long overdue maintenance which should dramatically improve tenants lives.

The Indigenous Land Corporation is about to open a National Centre of Indigenous Excellence on the former Redfern Public School Site which will provide sporting, educational and leadership development opportunities for Indigenous Youth across Australia with facilities that can be used by locals.

Redfern is a special place and as a long-time resident of the area, I'm proud to see the changes that have been made, and proud to celebrate with you all today the 150th anniversary of a unique corner of our amazing city.

Thank you. Have a great day, everyone!