EMC welcomes new CEO

My first month at the EMC has been a particularly rewarding one beginning with the very warm welcome extended by the staff and volunteers, the Committee of Management and friends of EMC.

It was also a time for celebrating the launch of the history of the first thirty years, From Espresso Bar to EMC, with a visit of the Governor of Victoria, Sir James Gobbo, for the occasion. We welcomed over 100 friends and supporters to 161 Victoria Pde to celebrate past achievements and to acknowledge the efforts and diverse contributions of so many past workers and friends of EMC.

We would like to find a way of acknowledging all those many others who could not be with us for this occasion, but in the meantime, I am sure the meticulous efforts of the author, Michelle Langfield, will see her account of EMC’s history include the very many who have left their mark in some way on EMC’s story.

Many of you will be aware that the EMC is engaged in a process of renewal. Like so many community-based organisations, the EMC faces particular challenges during this phase of its history. Over the course of the past year, the Committee of Management and the staff have been working together on a strategic planning process to clearly articulate EMC’s direction, objectives and priorities for the short and longer term.

The process to date has included a skills audit of staff and committee members, the development of an agreed primary task statement and a renewed organisational structure to implement the planning priorities.

Taking on the newly-created Chief Executive Officer role at this time, I find the task ahead challenging but focused. I am working with the staff and in partnership with the Committee of Management to plan and implement a set of key initiatives aimed at securing the EMC’s future role. As part of this, I would welcome informal and more structured opportunities for discussion and consultation.

With the expertise and experience of the staff and volunteers and the broad range of friends, colleagues and supporters, I am confident that the EMC can reclaim a strong future in working for a just and inclusive society which embraces diversity and especially those who find themselves in circumstances of need.

Sarina Greco

The EMC’s newly appointed CEO, Ms Sarina Greco, comes to the EMC after twenty-five years in the education sector. With a background in education and training, Sarina’s areas of specialisation are interethnic studies and education. Sarina also possesses a keen interest in language and cultural issues, multicultural education and practice and Masters studies in Applied Linguistics.

She has worked as a teacher and subsequently as a consultant and trainer in ESL and LOTEs in the curriculum. She has written best-practice training courses and materials and has managed a number of projects aimed at helping school communities embrace cultural and linguistic diversity in both the immediate and broader communities.

Over the past seven years, Sarina has managed Commonwealth Access and Equity Programs in the non-Government Catholic School sector which included delivery of intensive English tuition for newly-arrived refugee and immigrant children, ESL provision as part of language and literacy teaching in schools, the promotion of a culturally inclusive curriculum, teaching of LOTEs in primary and post-primary education and the inclusion of Asian studies in the curriculum.
New Community Development Worker:
John Byrne

I am employed at the Ecumenical Migration Centre as a Community Development Worker for two days a week. This position allows me to utilise the knowledge and skills gained over the past twenty years working with refugees and newly arrived migrant communities. My particular focus has been on young people, especially those detached from their families.

For eleven of these years I was employed as a support worker at Maribyrnong Secondary College developing special services and programs to meet the needs of people from these recently settled communities.

In 1986, I established the Cambodian, Lao and Vietnamese Young People’s Support Group (Western Region) to create a broader support base and a more co-ordinated approach to responding to the great needs of young people from these three communities and to support those who worked with them.

In an attempt to bring their issues into the mainstream arena, I joined a Statewide organisation—the Ethnic Youth Issues Network. I was Chairperson of EYIN’s Management Committee for five years.

More recently, I have established a consultancy and training business in response to the need for cultural diversity training and the development of key strategies in working with particular communities.

Overall, I have developed a high level of knowledge and expertise in working with newly settled communities, direct service work, community development, community education and policy development.

At EMC I am continuing my focus on young people, on education and health issues, as well as providing training for government departments and community organisations. The needs of newly settled communities are of huge importance to me and I hope that my contribution to the Ecumenical Migration Centre will reflect my commitment and support for the most

Student placement

Hi, my name is Dominique Benoit. I am currently doing my fieldwork placement at the EMC with Azita Khademy-Deljo. I am studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Community Development (Asia/Pacific stream) at the Victoria University of Technology. For my fieldwork, I will be investigating the settlement needs of small migrant communities in Victoria. The aim of my research is to highlight the lack of public services available to small communities. I was inspired to research this area after I met with the Mar people of Djibouti and my research will focus primarily on their needs.

So far, my work at EMC has involved gathering information on issues affecting the Afur people back in their home country. This was not an easy task as few resources on the Afur are available in Australia. During the course of my research I am hoping to work closely with members of that community. This working relationship is not only crucial to my understanding of their needs as a small community (comprising of six families), but also to the development of my research. I am hoping to have my research report ready by the end of September.

Pauline Meany was appointed manager of the CHOMI Bookshop in April 1996 in a part-time, one and a half day position. However, Pauline became much more than the Bookshop manager. We quickly came to know that this very resourceful individual had an extraordinary commitment to human rights and a strong personal social conscience. Pauline herself became a very useful resource. Whether it was a discussion about Timorese students during a staff meeting or organising the EMC history book launch, Pauline was there to contribute and assist. In her previous lives Pauline had been a teacher and a librarian, always with an enormous commitment to multicultural issues. Her great love of people and the many cultures represented in Australia was nurtured by travelling and living for extended periods abroad. Pauline’s presence at EMC will be missed and we wish her well in her future endeavours.

The Committee and staff would like to thank Steve and Pauline for their contributions and friendship.

Two say goodbye

Since the last newsletter EMC has had to say goodbye to two valued staff members. Steve Francis has moved on to study for a PhD at the University of Melbourne where he will be continuing his interest in issues facing Pacific Island communities. Steve was the driving force behind the Frankston Link Project which is currently being considered as a model for liaison between Community Services and young people within the Juvenile Justice System. Steve also worked with Gail Price on the On-Arrival Accommodation Project which was launched by the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Mr Phillip Ruddock M.P.. Steve will be sorely missed for his ability to gather staff for informal lunch meetings every Monday at the Prince Pat. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Steve on his engagement to Titian, whom we have all come to love as Bunny!

Maureen Ryan is a Professor and Head of the Department of Education at the Victorian University of Technology. Her research interests include families, youth at risk, inter-professional collaboration and teachers’ careers. Maureen is a member of the Australian Psychological Society, Executive Member of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Treasurer of the Victorian Institute for Educational Research and Secretary of the Ecumenical Migration Centre.

£Me News • June 1997 •
Treasurer awarded DAM

The Committee and staff of the EMC congratulate Dr Nouria Salehi on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours. Nouria is well known for her work across a wide section of the community including her efforts with the Afghan community, Amnesty International, Austcare and the International Campaign Against Landmines. Nouria's work with refugee women and her tireless dedication to human rights issues are testimony to her dynamic and tenacious personality. Nouria is a nuclear physicist and has worked at the Royal Women's Hospital for the past fourteen years. Nouria has had a long and supportive relationship with the EMC, and currently holds the position of Treasurer on the COM.

National Network on Refugee Women's Issues

I had such a hard time when I first came that I decided to help other women and families when they first arrived in Australia. So I have helped five families... they have stayed for a while with me, I have helped them to go to Social Security... I know what it is like to be so isolated...

The biggest problem for us women is that we do not know English... we are isolated... even if our community has been here for over two years, not knowing English, being single parents—that means isolation...

Just little practical things are hard. Getting onto public transport when you have a lot of small children and you can’t speak English. I also know one woman who wasted a lot of money when each time she got on a train or bus or tram she bought a full day ticket. She ended up buying many full day tickets on the same day.

All I wanted to do was study... All I wanted to do was to be able to work in my old profession... My husband supports me to do all this... Vietnamese women are very isolated, they are used to being in families, they are not used to being in Women’s Groups.

These are some of the comments made by women attending a meeting seeking support for a Victorian chapter of the National Network on Refugee Women’s Issues. The meeting was held at EMC and facilitated by Senior Community Development Worker Jen Couch. After a dynamic two-hour meeting, Jen said that it was obvious that an accessible network and newsletter were a start in relieving the isolation felt by refugee women regardless of their language or culture. Developing this network is all part of the community development work that is a major component of EMC’s commitment to new and emerging communities.

Media Skills Seminars

The EMC has recently received funding from the Stegley Foundation and an anonymous donor to provide a series of seminars in media education. The project is based on material designed and presented by consultants at Deakin University who have worked with EMC on the Community Relations in Media Education Project.

Non-English Speaking Background women are frequently the subject of media stories including reports in areas of health, law, immigration, employment and religious or cultural issues. Representations of NESB women in the media constantly highlight the cultural differences obvious in dress and appearance. For example, in reports of outworkers in the garment industry, women are usually shown as a groups of Asian immigrants desperate for money and unable to express any informed opinion. Rarely are the women involved invited to tell their stories, and the images presented suggest an homogeneity that precludes any political, social, religious or educational differences.

The absence of NESB women commentators in the media only strengthens any narrow views that may continue to exist in the wider community. The Media Skills Seminars are designed to encourage women to be confident enough to either respond to media enquires or contact the media when an issue arises. Another important feature of the seminars is that they will be conducted across the State providing access to training for women from isolated and regional areas.

The Media Skills Seminars continue the work of EMC in areas of community development involving both journalists and community representatives. With the current cuts in funds in most areas of funding, it is important that communities possess the skills to develop ties with the media that can promote their role in multicultural Australia. The skills gained will also support ethnic and religious communities engaged in the networking and advocacy work necessary to sustain cultural diversity.

If you know of anyone interested in participating in the seminars please contact Lanni Smith at EMC.
On May 23 the Governor of Victoria The Hon. Sir James Gobbo AO, launched *From Espresso Bar to EMC*, a history of the first thirty years of this organisation. The event was well attended by community and government representatives, volunteers, workers, members and others associated with EMC.

The proceedings commenced with the author, Dr Langfield, describing her initial involvement with the scheme to write a history of one of Australia's most enduring and productive migrant welfare agencies. After originally proposing to find an author, Dr Langfield became entranced by a history of such diversity, dedication and foresight. Dr Langfield went on to recount her trials and pleasures in compiling the history and wished the EMC a long life of continuing service to many immigrant communities.

The Chair of EMC, Mr Basil N. Varghese, then introduced His Excellency Sir James Gobbo. The Governor began by citing his long involvement with multiculturalism as a good grounding for understanding the complexities of EMC beginning with what he referred to as the "pioneering role for anybody to go into the area [of migrant welfare]."

He praised the work of Dr Langfield saying that "[it] was a formidable task for the author to attempt to set down ... the story of a multi-purpose agency like EMC." Some of the long-term workers and associates were mentioned, including the contributions of David Cox, Alan Matheson and Johnny Kalisperis who is still working with the EMC. Sir James was also fulsome in his praise of the volunteers, many of whom attended the launch. He applauded the way in which the dedication of the many volunteers was detailed in the history.

Recognising some faces, he said "I think it is a marvellous thing that so many former volunteers are here to see how your story is told in the book. ..".

The Governor also mentioned references in the history to some of the policy problems that continue to challenge agencies like EMC: "do we provide a direct service to the communities which really needed it? .. Do we concentrate on casework or do we get into community development and go out and do only advisory and liaison work and stimulate others to provide the service? That dilemma is always there with any agency. It is never totally and satisfactorily resolved whichever way you go."

He then congratulated EMC on achieving 30 years and wished it well in the future as he launched the book.

The formal part of the evening was concluded with long-time volunteer Rona Jenkins presenting Lady Gobbo with flowers. The Governor and guests then renewed old acquaintances and reminisced about the beginnings of EMC in the Coffee Shop on Nicholson Street.

The Committee and staff of EMC would like to thank all who attended and contributed to the launch, with special thanks to Pauline Meaney for her organisational brilliance.
Johnny Kalisperis, Michele Langfield, Sir James Gobbo and Basil Varghese

Anne Seitz, Johnny K, Lady Gobbo, Sir James, Basil and Nilufer Yaman.

Library workers: Harry Smith, Pauline Meaney, Rona Jenkins and Jam', Horn

EMC News • June 1997 •
# EMC

## AN OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL BUDGET</th>
<th>FUNDING BODIES</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| On-Arrival Accommodation Project          | $9,000       | Reichstein ANZ Trustees            | • Launch Oct 96  
• Follow up distribution in light of additional Govt funding for Settlement |
| Frankston Link: Multicultural Juvenile Justice Project (Lebanese, Vietnamese, Pacific Islanders) | $79,100      | H&CS Dept of Justice               | • Report with Seafood Juvenile Justice Dept.  
• Potential for other Communities to be explored once evaluated |
| Community Relations in Media Education Project (CRIME) | $101,000     | OMA OIEA! DIMA                     | • Final stages of Dissemination  
• Training opportunities to be developed |
| Refugee Young People's Tutoring Program in City of Yarra | $4,800       | City of Yarra Community Grants Prog | • Richmond Community Health Centre, Red Cross and EMC managing the program |
| Media Skills Seminars for Refugee Women    | $11,500      | Stegley and anonymous donor        | • Training in progress  
• Complementary multimedia access project being developed |
| Community and Media Database (Ethnic Media Database) | $21,675      | Australian Multicultural Foundation | • $3,000 requested for Pilot over 2 months  
• Preliminary work started |
| Sexual Health Information Kit for Horn of Africa Women | $10,000      | Victorian Women’s Trust            | • Stage 2 submission under consideration |
| The Burmese Community in Victoria: A Community Study of Settlement | $32,865      | Stegley Myer Reichstein            | • TBA over next 3 months  
• Pilot to commence |
| Pacific Islanders in Victoria: A Community Study of Polynesian Settlement | $39,865      | AMF; Myer: VMC Reichstein          | • $3,000 received from AMF  
• $10,000 to be contributed by Myer conditional upon full amount |
| Combating Racism in Schools               | $20,000      | Pratt Ian Potter Trust             | • Under consideration |
| Refugee Children in Primary Schools Project | $57,190     | Community Support Fund             | • Under consideration |
MIGRATION ACTION

AUSTRALIA'S LEADING COMMUNITY JOURNAL ON
MIGRANT, MULTICULTURAL, AND REFUGEE ISSUES

Migration Action aims to generate informed debate and discussion on contemporary social and political issues in Multicultural Australia and to provide a valuable meeting-ground for both national and community-based comment and perspective.

Subscription Form 1997

Name .
Institution/Organisation(if applicable) .
Address .
Postcode .

Subscription Rates * (per volume of 3 issues):
O $20 EMC Members
O $25 Students
O $36 Individuals
O $45 Institutions
O $50 Abroad

*New subscribers will receive all 1995 issues free

Send to:
Ecumenical Migration Centre
161 Victoria Parade
(PO Box 1389)
COLLINGWOOD VIC 3066

EMC News June 1997

Payment method:
Cheque**/Money Order for: $ .
Please charge my credit card:
Bankcard [ ]
Mastercard [ ]
Visa [ ]
Diner's Club [ ]
American Express [ ]
Card Number .
Expiry date / / .
Signature .

**Cheques made payable to: Ecumenical Migration Centre Inc.
EMC NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

Become a member
to support the work of the EMC and you will be entitled to a subscription discount for "Migration Action".

D I wish to support the EMC through my tax deductible gift of:
0$50 0$100 0$250 0$500
Other $ 

D I wish to become a member of the Ecumenical Migration Centre
15 individuals 0$50 organisations

D I wish to subscribe to the EMC journal "Migration Action"
0$20 EMC members 0$45 institutions
0$25 students 0$50 overseas
36 individuals

D Please find enclosed cheque of $ payable to Ecumenical Migration Centre or

O Please charge to my
OBankcard DVisa OMastercard

Name : 
Institution/Organisation (if applicable) : 
Address : 
Telephone : 
Fax : 

Send to EMC, PO Box 1389, Collingwood 3066. All donations to EMC are tax deductible.

---

If undelivered return to:

EMC
PO BOX 1389
COLLINGWOOD 3066

EMC News
Print post approved
PP306181/0001