

Bunbury Multicultural Group Inc

Promoting Multiculturalism, Understanding and Friendship

PO BOX 1364

BUNBURY WA 6231

0400 645 572 Susanne Becker-Hamersley (Chairperson)

ABN 602 838 03553



Chairperson's Report 2022/2023

I am delighted to welcome you to our Bunbury Multicultural Group AGM and I am very happy to present my Chairperson's Report for the 2022/2023 annual year including the Auditor's Report completed by Ms Jennifer Creasey from 'Just Right Bookkeeping' for the year ended 30 June 2023.

I have been involved with the Bunbury Multicultural Group, as a Committee Member, Secretary, Vice Chairperson and Chairperson for about seven years, and I feel a great honour of being part of this dynamic and energetic group. The dedication of the management committee is inspiring for our whole community and makes it possible to organise versatile, welcoming, interesting, inclusive multicultural activities and events.

This 'little' committee, completely volunteer driven, is a wonderful example of how multiculturalism enriches our life and broadens our horizon: eight people from eight different countries from all walks of life, a wealth of experiences and ideas working together to promote our vision of a community that welcomes cultural diversity and fosters a spirit of friendship and understanding between cultural groups. This is so precious, especially in times like these with wars, riots and suppression all around the world and at home!

We believe that offering opportunities for migrants, refugees and anyone else to share their culture and learn about others is imperative to ensure that there is harmony and inclusion in our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow BMG Management Committee members for all the hard work that has been done but also for the fun and delicious food we had. Thank you to the office bearers, our Vice Chair Shizleen Aishath, our Secretary Shamara Williams, Denise Sara our Treasurer. Thank you, Ati Sadeghi, Widi Astuti, Chiedza Jasi. And last but certainly not least Montse Barrero who inspired us with a constant flow of great ideas, a highly trusted ambassador of our cause. Mon was a committee member and treasurer for many years and it is with a heavy heart that we say bye-bye to her because she will return to her home country Spain in a few weeks. We wish you all the best Mon!

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We are so thankful for all the support we received again this year through volunteers, the City of Bunbury, OMI, MSCWA, Don Punch, the Shire of Dardanup, South Bunbury Rotary Club and all our sponsors, supporters and friends.

The year 'after the pandemic' was full of activities and brought some big changes for our organisation.

We are very proud of our annual **South West Multicultural Festival** held on 18th February 2023, managed by Jo O'Dea and her team and overseen by the Management committee. It was a delight to see all the different cultural groups performing and participating in our flag parade, workshops or dancing the night away during the concert. The joy and fun it brought to the community was simply beautiful! Our festival is on the way to a multi-day event with activities in the lead up and new partnerships with other groups, organisations and artists.

Our sponsors made it all possible: Lotterywest, the City of Bunbury, Healthway, the Office of Multicultural Interest and local businesses Alcoa, MGM Bulk, Aqwest, Tronox and Southern Ports. A big THANK YOU to all of them. Please put the 24th Feb in your calendars for next year's festival.

We took our **Dine with Me** events to a next level when we introduced international food delights to our friends from the South Bunbury Rotary Club (more than 60 guests) accompanied by cultural performances from Spain and India. Two more events were hosted in January (as a picnic) and in August (with an international music quiz night) – a fantastic opportunity to bring people together and share food and stories.

Our project **Driving to make a Difference** in partnership with the Multicultural Services Centre WA is very popular and needed. This project gives CaLD women the opportunity to receive free driving lessons to assist with getting their licence. This year we have been fortunate to again receiving funding from the City of Bunbury and the Office of Multicultural Interests. Simcoa Operations sponsored this very important project as well and we were able to support 17 women with 5 free driving lessons per person with a professional driving instructor and help to prepare for the Practical Driving Assessment and, eventually, the WA license! Our long term project coordinator Cherie Musitano handed over to our new coordinator Jo O'Dea who puts a lot of effort into promoting the initiative and partnering with new sponsors to further extend the project. Thank you.

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This one Thing - our photo and audio exhibition- celebrates the stories and cultural identities of 16 people (who have found a new home in the South West) holding the one precious item they could never have left behind when they left their country of origin. It was on display at the Bunbury Forum Shopping Centre and the Dardanup Town Hall in partnership with the Shire of Dardanup. The visitors had the opportunity to experience the stories and cultural identities of the 16 migrants first hand; both combined with a **This is Me** panel discussion (as a breakfast and a dinner) where our storytellers shared their migration experiences with us and how they settled in the South West and visitors could ask questions. Thank you to Christin Svard, Nyanyul Aguer, Vimbai Madondo, Shizleen Aishat and Rachel Fernandez for letting us experience their culture and journey. A special Thank You goes to Dominique Bayens who was our wonderful, empathic host.

Thank you to Ash Hastie from the Bunbury Forum and Sam Atkinson from the Shire of Dardanup for developing the marketing material, the promotion of the event and providing the delicious catering.

Stories are the heart of what we do and who we are. They strengthen connections between people and encourage a more inclusive and informed community. In cooperation with the Centre of Stories in Perth and the Bunbury Museum & Heritage Centre the Backstories Bunbury event was created and our two committee members Widi Astuti and Shizleen Aishat gave the audience an insight into their lives and passions.

The Bunbury Multicultural Group was nominated for an award at the WA Multicultural Awards ceremony by the City of Bunbury. The awards recognise individuals and organisations for their outstanding contributions to multiculturalism and culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities in Western Australia. A huge honour!

This year we were again consulted by media, organisations and government to present information and offer comment to provide a multicultural perspective for various projects in our region. We shared our experiences with the medical system from a migrant perspective with e.g. the Bunbury Hospital or WA Country Health Service SW, Regional Consumer and Carer Engagement Network, we promoted multicultural activities of all organisations in Bunbury Geographe and built new relationships with other groups and local businesses.

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There is currently no other organisation in Bunbury Geographe that brings together the diversity of cultural groups to showcase their culture and to educate the community as does Bunbury Multicultural group. Our reputation and expertise led to the biggest transformation of our small group since the establishment in 1991. We were approached by OMI to apply for the Community Support Grant and formalise our work as an umbrella organisation in Bunbury Geographe.

The application was successful and due to the funding we were able to contract a project coordinator to address the needs of people from a CaLD background in our region. The funding allows us to properly expand and further establish activities, services and events for the benefit of the CaLD community in Bunbury Geographe.

The year ahead will bring some new tasks and initiatives, and we will continue delivering our vision of promoting multiculturalism, understanding and friendship in our community.

Susanne Becker-Hamersley

Chairperson

November 2023