

**School of Marketing**

**Culture, Change and Professionalism:  
A Case-Based Study of Volunteer Motivation in the Non-profit Sector**

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**This thesis is presented for the Degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
of  
Curtin University**

**June 2014**

## Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Signature.....

Date:.....

## Acknowledgments

A thesis takes more than one person in its making. To acknowledge everyone with whom I have had a conversation would be a thesis within itself, but know that you are acknowledged for all your insights and words of encouragement when things got tough.

Academically, I would like to thank Dr Christine Daymon who introduced me to the idea of an M.Phil. Whilst you were not around to see the finished product, it was your belief in me that led to this. Dr Nigel de Bussy whose extreme patience and guidance, repetitive lessons on SPSS and a good old kick-in-the-pants-when-needed attitude spurred me along. Chris Bright who helped me put the finishing touches to what was the longest three years of my life. You three were my inspiration - any mistakes or errors in this thesis I lay claim to personally.

Volunteers are an amazing bunch of people – your smiles and encouragement during my endless questions and your understanding of my mistakes were invaluable in providing the insights to this thesis. Thank you for accepting me into your kingdom and for your trust in my endeavours to understand the complexities of your world.

If they were alive my dad would say “That’s my girl” and my mum would smile knowing my tenacity came from her. God bless you both for giving me the values of hard work and the spirit to carry on in the face of adversity.

My neglected friends who realised just how much I needed to be left alone to do what I had to do. All the weekends, outings and dinner parties I missed out on because I had my nose stuck to the screen of my computer or buried under mounds of literature - thanks for your understanding and for not abandoning me.

Finally my family Jon, Hannah and Nicholas, for endless cups of tea, taking over the housework and feeding me so I would not fade away – this is as much your thesis as it is mine and I share all and any accolades with you.

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## Abstract

Volunteer organisations play a major role in developed economies worldwide contributing billions of dollars to the economy. Volunteerism has brought about innovation and economic efficiency as well as social cohesion, through the significant contribution that volunteers make. Often, receiving no monetary compensation, volunteers seek intangible rewards to fulfil different needs and motivations thus improving the efficiency of organisations, financially and socially.

This case study investigates the issue of volunteer motivation in the non-profit sector during times of organisational change in an adult learning Centre (which will remain anonymous). The study focuses on the preparation, dissemination and consequences of communication during a change management process involving actors associated with the running of the Centre, leading up to the Centre's relocation to new premises and the post-relocation settling-in period. In addition it examines potential communication barriers which may challenge the current culture of the volunteers involved in this organisation. It explores whether the adoption of a more professionalised approach to change management by the non-profit sector (i.e. adopting similar strategies to those used in the corporate sector) improves or impairs volunteer motivation.

Using a mixed methods research approach, the qualitative research addresses the communication between volunteers in administration, volunteer tutors and the management of the Centre through a Grunigian lens. It also investigates the motivations and fears of the volunteers. This enabled the researcher to understand the perceptions and the roles of the volunteers and their hopes and fears for the future. This was done through structured and semi-structured interviews before and after the relocation to new premises. In the role of participant/observer the researcher engendered trust, honesty and total interaction with the study participants' thoughts, emotions and feelings during a significant change i.e. the relocation of the Centre.

The quantitative research examined perceived service quality at the Centre before and after the relocation. Centre members (i.e. those who take courses offered at the Centre) were asked about their perceptions of the quality of service provided by the volunteers. Service quality levels were found to be the same or – in certain respects – improved following the relocation. This may be considered a valid proxy indicator of stable or enhanced volunteer morale. Hence, the quantitative data were used to triangulate the qualitative findings.

This thesis has three key findings. Firstly, the inherent complexity of change – even in a relatively small organisation – highlights the importance of change management as a strategic issue for non-profit organisations particularly those reliant on largely volunteer personnel. Secondly, the most prominent anxieties associated with change among the volunteers were found to be fear of bureaucracy and loss of autonomy.

Thirdly, the findings re-emphasise the importance of communication to reinforce values, highlighting the need for change managers to fully understand, acknowledge and be prepared to deal with the individual anxieties and emotions of volunteers. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the implications and limitations of this study along with recommendations for future researchers.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.0 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is three-fold:

Firstly, to study the contribution of developed communication strategies and their impact in a volunteer organisation during a time of change;

Secondly, to obtain a greater understanding of the applicability of professionalisation to non-profit organisations; and

Lastly as a case study in identifying and maintaining volunteer motivation and confidence in a non-profit organisation during a time of change.

The key themes I will address in this study include a consideration of volunteers and their motives to volunteer, the values common to volunteers which may help drive and influence organisational culture, and the communication strategies which may assist in developing a framework by which to underpin the maintenance of volunteer motivation and confidence. These themes will be addressed in the context of culture, change and professionalisation in the non-profit sector.

My research explores the consequences of a change management process being implemented in a non-profit, volunteer-run, adult learning Centre (“the Centre”) and specifically considers the potential communication barriers which may challenge the perceived volunteers’ culture and motivation. The change management process then focusses on increased professionalisation using similar strategies to those adopted in the corporate sector and is facilitated through the Centre undergoing organisational relocation and services expansion. The name of the Centre will not be divulged for privacy reasons.

### 1.1 Background to the Research

Volunteer organisations play a major role in developed countries worldwide. In Australia alone volunteering is estimated to contribute tens of billions of dollars to the economy each year, donated by a workforce of over 6.3 million individuals (Randle and Dolnicar 2009a). Other countries such as the US and the UK also benefit from a large volunteer workforce who inject US\$239b and £44b into their respective workforces (Dolnicar and Randle 2007, Randle and Dolnicar 2009a). Given the considerable investment in this sector of countries’ national workforces, the economic significance of volunteer workforces cannot be understated.

In recent years, non-profit organisations who are typified by volunteer workforces have come under increased pressure to conduct their affairs in a more professional manner and exhibit increased accountability for their actions. In the United Kingdom and Ireland for instance, research shows that non-profit organisations are

being made more accountable, by introducing processes more in tune with for-profit corporations with volunteers' activities in turn becoming more corporatized (Reisch and Wenocur 1982). As a consequence, the cultures of many non-profit organisations are beginning to closely resemble or are being steered towards a more corporate environment. The resulting impacts of these introduced, more corporatized changes in volunteer organisations have been grouped under the heading of professionalisation (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003, Geoghegan and Powell 2006).

While the benefits of greater professionalisation include improved efficiency and accountability (Haski-Leventhal 2009) it also has the potential to undermine the essential character of the non-profit industry and to de-motivate altruistic volunteers who remain the lifeblood of the sector (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). The reporting and managerial aspects of professionalisation may have negative implications for organisations that engage in such processes and may result in non-favourable outcomes for volunteers such as role differentiation (paid v unpaid), specialisation (qualified v unqualified) and functional loss (altruism) (Reisch and Wenocur 1982). Indeed, perceived professionalisation in the non-profit sector can be potentially de-motivating for volunteers in certain circumstances and lead to a decline in volunteer contribution of services (Reisch and Wenocur 1982). Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) considered that the implementation of change programs is not only costly in terms of financial resources, employee time investment and managerial time, but also in terms of employee morale. It is no wonder then that many non-profit organisations appear to handle internal communications on a 'need to know' basis as a means to effectively manage employees' (nee volunteers') morale (Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001, 23). In doing so however, these organisations inevitably impact volunteer enthusiasm in such a way that results in poor retention and decreased recruitment of new volunteers, the very results the organisation was originally looking to curtail (Barrett 2002). (See Chapter 2 for further detail).

A key concern then in organisations that rely upon volunteers, is the impact that change (such as professionalisation) has on the motivations of these individuals and their desire to continue to provide their services. However while existing research regarding volunteers has been comprehensive and covers many aspects of volunteering including trends, characteristics, supply, competition and behaviour (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Courtney 1994, Heidrich 1990, Mayer, Fraccastoro, and McNary 2007), understanding the volunteer market – the what, where, who and why of volunteering (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth 1996, Dolnicar and Randle 2007, Heidrich 1990, Johnson-Coffey 1997), retention of volunteers (Haski-Leventhal 2009, Garner and Garner 2011), motivation of volunteers (Clary and Snyder 1999, Okun and Schultz 2003, Phillips and Phillips 2010), trends in volunteering (Johnson-Coffey 1997), and the culture of volunteers (Hustinx et al. 2010, McIntosh and Zahra 2007, Randle and Dolnicar 2009a), there is a gap in the literature particularly around the impact of change on volunteers' motivation. In other words, issues

which affect volunteers (especially mature aged volunteers) during organisational change and change management communications, require considerably greater consideration in the research setting. (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Courtney 1994, Heidrich 1990, Mayer, Fraccastoro, and McNary 2007). In and of itself, this presents a significant opportunity and challenge for researchers in this field, particularly in light of the professionalisation movement already being observed in the non-profit sector.

Similarly, understanding volunteers and what they need in their role as a volunteer is another area which has yet to be researched more fully. This is of particular interest as Shin and Kleiner (2003) suggest that understanding volunteers' needs, wants and motivations will assist in better management of volunteers and ultimately in better recruitment and retention, particularly given the potential impacts of change management processes (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Indeed current findings highlight the significance of the social environment and influences which promote volunteerism, and which must by their nature also play a role in the outcomes of organisational change processes. For instance Okun and Schultz (2003) have observed that people volunteer because someone they value asks them to, reinforcing the theory that volunteers do so to feel useful or productive. Similarly Wymer (1997) asserts that volunteers are more likely to volunteer if they have a friend or family member in the organisation or are being/have been assisted by that particular organisation.

In the context of Australia with an ageing population and in turn a volunteer workforce that may experience potential growth into the future, the need for greater recognition of volunteers, many of whom will have experience and skills transferable across the boundary of paid work to unpaid volunteering, underpins the attraction and retention of such individuals in the non-profit sector. In addition, a consideration of the social factors that motivate these individuals to participate and engage in such volunteer activities, not the least of which may be impacted by organisational concerns regarding corporate imperatives also warrants further attention.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Research Questions**

The current research investigated the impacts of organisational change on volunteer motivation in the non-profit sector. In particular this study attempts to identify the extent to which methods of communication are effective for volunteers, before, during and after organisational change, in order to manage the transition to a more corporatized work environment. It explores the alignment between volunteers' personal versus organisational values during change as well as determining what factors may lead to volunteer alienation during the implementation of change communication programs and the professionalisation of the organisation. The overall objective of the research then is to explore how volunteers are affected by organisational change and in doing so examine the potential communication barriers which may challenge their personal values and

culture from the beginning of this study up to and including the Centre's relocation, and the relationship between internal communication and culture during a time of major organisational change in a non-profit environment.

Some of the issues addressed are:

- How can we communicate change to successfully implement it?
- What implications are there for the personal values, culture and motivation of volunteers in the non-profit sector?
- Will one of the consequences of organisational change dictate higher levels of professionalisation resulting in more bureaucracy and less autonomy? Will this in turn damage the culture, values and motivation of volunteers?

In addition it aimed to expand the understanding of the implications of professionalisation on non-profit organisations and their volunteer workforces. The specific objectives of this research were as follows:

- To examine volunteer motivation and factors affecting volunteer motivation during organisational change in the non-profit sector.
- To study the contribution of communication strategies used during organisational change and professionalisation to volunteer organisations in the non-profit sector including:
  - evaluating the impact of communication strategies on volunteer motivation, and
  - identifying appropriate and theoretically sound communication strategies that will effectively engage volunteers.
- To identify the common needs of volunteers in the context of organisational culture when performing a variety of administration roles.

The results of the study were used to develop recommendations regarding specific research questions:

- How could modern communication methods be adapted to cater for a volunteer workforce that is essentially of an ageing population?
- What strategies could be implemented to ensure ease of comprehension and decrease the levels of anxiety for volunteers during this period of change?
- What volunteer-driven strategies would be suitable for non-profit organisations wishing to optimise volunteer motivation, recruitment and retention?

### **1.3 Significance of the Research**

The importance of this research stems from the need to understand the ways in which to maintain the morale and motivation of volunteers in the non-profit sector. As previously highlighted, volunteer workforces are the focal point for significant economic and social investment, and by the nature of the individuals that volunteer, include experience and knowledge which is fundamental to the success of the organisations in which they

donate their time and human resources. It is with this in mind that the current study focuses on how volunteers are communicated with during a change process and what their needs are, as well as the suitability of the communication processes of the organisations in which they volunteer.

The outcomes of the current study have importance in terms of their applicability to similar volunteer organisations in other sectors and in other countries. In this respect the contributions of the respondents to the survey and interviews assisted greatly in understanding the roles played by the volunteers and in identifying what was currently lacking in the communication strategies being employed. From this information the researcher was able to commit to broader and more personal forms of communication strategies and to reflect on the efficacy of strategies and when they needed to be adjusted. For organisations that wish to undertake professionalisation the use of strategies that are effective in maintaining the integrity of their volunteer workforce presents a means by which significant resources on the parts of both the organisation and the volunteers can be salvaged.

Another important contribution of the study was to determine if the organisational culture would be impacted by the impending changes and if the level of service quality would deteriorate should the organisation need to employ more professional processes in its administration duties. While these issues were deemed to be premature, it was necessary to include these possibilities in the questions asked in the interviews in order to gauge reactions and plan for their eventuality. It was equally important for the researcher to validate the effects of the change program on the volunteers' emotions and their expectations of how the change would affect their values and beliefs, their perception of identity and the nature and aims of the organisational change (Alvesson and Bjorkman, 1992 and Carroll, 1995 in Eriksson 2004, 111).

#### **1.4 The Organisation**

The Centre is located in a suburb of Western Australia and has been operational since 1987, offering courses, activities, workshops and outings to a mature aged clientele (60 years and over). The Centre is staffed by a cohort of volunteers and employs one part-time paid administration person. Volunteers give half a day of their time in administration duties each week such as reception and client service duties. The volunteers are mostly mature aged (65+ years of age) and foster a culture of altruism, caring and sharing, friendliness and empathy amongst themselves. This is reflected in their service values and is welcomed and appreciated by the clients (See Chapter 4: Data Analysis for more detail).

The Centre is a local, community based, non-profit and volunteer led organisation with no shareholders, therefore any profit is used to provide facilities to carry out its operational activities.

In 2007 the Local Government Council (the "Council") proposed to re-house the Centre from its current venue to future refurbished accommodation within the Council's Civic Centre and invited the Centre's Executive Committee to participate in the future design of the accommodation to be completed by the end of 2010. The process of relocating the Centre was outside the scope of the part-time paid administration person and so a Transition Coordinator position was created, funded and advertised in order to plan and implement the relocation of the Centre and its volunteer workers. Preparations to relocate began in June 2010 with physical relocation commencing in January 2011 and a supervised settling in period following up to and including June 2011.

For the Centre, the relocation provided distinct opportunities including the advantage of larger premises which enabled the provision of more services to a greater number of clients. In order to handle the extra work that the increase in clients, services and administration would require and given the number, availability and experience of the existing volunteers, and the limited commitment on the part time paid administrator - both of whom were used to dealing with smaller groups of people – the relocation also provided the opportunity for the Centre to become more professional in executing its administrative functions (including the possibility of employing a more qualified and full-time administrator). Appendix I lists the definitions of the terminologies used in the organisation and ultimately in this thesis.

### **1.5 Research Methodology**

The current research employed both action research and mixed method theories (Carr 1989, Creswell 1998, 2003, Daymon and Holloway 2002, Herr and Anderson 2005, Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008, Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, Yin 2009). These theories allowed the author to approach the study as both the researcher (participant observer) and Transition Coordinator, and facilitated both physical and mental engagement with volunteers. This provided the researcher with the opportunity to gain unique insights into the organisation (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009) plus provided a research framework that was flexible, attempted to increase the level of objectivity and facilitated an inquisitive perspective, and minimised assumptions during the research process (Daymon and Holloway 2002). The approach adopted contributed to the ability of the researcher to retain objectivity and facilitated an inquisitive perspective.

The use of action research allowed constant reflection on the process of research and provided a key form of accountability on which to base a research framework. This method is invaluable when the research involves direct contact with individuals – in this case mature-aged volunteers with altruistic tendencies - the majority of whom are semi-retired or retired, have limited experience in technological demands and commerce. Action research has an applied, practical focus (Cresswell 2008), and explores real world problems with the aim of developing solutions. Action research takes its cue from the perceptions of practitioners within particular local

practice contexts (Herr and Anderson 2005) and involves continuous reflectivity - the 'action spiral' - which consists of 'plan, act, observe, reflect, plan, act, observe, reflect, etc.' (Altrichter et al. 2002). The communication strategies (central to the change management process implemented as part of the Centre's relocation and services expansion) were initially formulated and continuously adjusted using action research principles. In particular the researcher maintained a detailed diary during the transition year to record personal observations (Appendix VIII). This diary served as an action research tool for reflection on the effectiveness or otherwise of the communication initiatives implemented over the course of the year.

The qualitative research used in the current study focussed on how volunteers were communicated with before and after the relocation; what impacts the change may have on them, and if there are any changes to the culture of the Centre. The primary method of qualitative data collection was through semi-structured interviews, distributed before and after the relocation to the new premises. As the researcher was also employed as the Transition Coordinator, developing rapport and sound relationships with volunteers was essential to enabling a level of trust, honesty and interaction that would ensure valid and reliable findings (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). This approach provided an opportunity to consider the culture and social behaviours of the volunteers (at the time the study commenced in 2010), which formed the basis of their desire to contribute their services to a non-profit organisation. More importantly, it presented the potential for a greater shared understanding of cultural values between the Centre's administration and volunteers that could be used to enhance change communication strategies, along with current and future communications processes, enabling the organisation to maintain volunteer enthusiasm and facilitate smoother transition in times of change.

The average age of all respondents (volunteers, tutors and members) was 60 years and over. In total, 34 interviews were organised with volunteers, of which 11 were volunteer tutors and 23 were general administration volunteers. Interviews were applied pre and post-relocation. Of the 11 tutors interviewed, 6 were male and 5 were female and in common with the general support volunteers, all were aged over 60; Of the 23 general support volunteers, only three were male and only one of the females was marginally under the age of 60.

Quantitative research was also utilised to provide direct perceptions on the service quality at the Centre. Pre and post-relocation surveys of fee paying members of the Centre (clients who attend courses) were conducted. These surveys provided an insight into volunteer motivation at the Centre before and after the change, including identifying any aspects of the organisational change which may reflect a decrease in service levels or changes in the attitudes/behaviours of volunteers towards members.

This pencil-and-paper survey conducted with clients was also distributed pre and post-relocation with 153 and 195 usable responses received at each point from amongst the sample of 600 clients. This represented response rates of 26.4% and 32.7% respectively. The surveys were mailed to private addresses with reply-paid envelopes included. The data were analysed using SPSS 19 for the surveys and NVivo 9 for the interviews and other qualitative data.

## **1.6 Findings and Implications**

Organisational change is fraught with both opportunities and challenges. At best it can be an opportunity for growth for both the individual and organisation, and at worst it can be unsettling and demotivating, breeding fear, resistance and reluctance to embrace the inevitable (DiFonzo and Bordia 1998, Edmonds 2011, Eriksson 2004). From the data collected several key themes emerged. These included managerial implications (including relationship building, communication issues, and engagement with volunteers); volunteers' fears (including loss of identity and autonomy through professionalisation, potential local government bureaucracy, and feared loss of preservation of organisational culture and personal values); and lastly the need to keep volunteers motivated and enthusiastic.

In terms of the managerial implications of the current research findings, these were consistent with the observations of Liu and Perrewe (2005) in that many managers or facilitators of change struggle with the complexities of change and are mostly ill-equipped to deal with the emotional as well as practical issues of change (Liu and Perrewe 2005). In addition both managers and facilitator of change alike need to have a good understanding of the values and culture of volunteers in order to communicate effectively and to recognise the importance of building on relationships to enable trust and collaboration.

Furthermore, communications used in organisational change processes need to be deconstructed and reconstructed in a way that is palatable for those affected by the change process. In particular, it is important to understand and acknowledge an aged workforce, for whom modern day technology and communication methods may be a challenge or beyond comprehension. Communication needs to be interactive with consideration not only for what is said, but how it is said, and when it is said for successful implementation (Argenti 1998).

Secondly, fears expressed by volunteers need to be acted upon and negative perceptions explained and evidenced by facts. Reassurance on their perceptions of professionalisation, bureaucracy and assumed interference with their autonomy enables a clearer understanding of what is likely and what is not. However this is only possible once trust and credibility have been established through initiating and forming relationships, allowing volunteers to feel less threatened and able to engage with the change processes.

Lastly, once volunteers begin to accept the change process, they see the positive outcomes rather than the negatives. Their personal values are reinforced thus enhancing the organisational culture, and personal and collective (group) motivation is restored.

### **1.7 Limitations and Strengths**

Whilst the Centre enjoys the altruistic tendencies of many volunteers - currently in excess of 25 on the Centre's database - it was decided to only interview those volunteers who were actively engaged in the day to day running of the Centre and the volunteer tutors. Their regular weekly contribution in this capacity as well as their longevity and diversity of responsibilities, deemed them well qualified to participate in the semi-structured interviews and informal discussions in order to gain a good insight on their duties and of the Centre in its entirety. These volunteers had also been active in the old location and continued to be the driving force after the relocation.

Although the Centre boasts over 1,000 members on its database, only 600 were financial and active at the commencement of this study and remained so during the writing of this thesis. The decision to survey versus interview this cohort of financial and active members was based in part on the relative practicalities and advantages of using surveys over interview research techniques and also on varying participation times and days when members attended the Centre to participate in activities.

While the study was limited to Western Australia, the findings may be relevant and applicable to other similar non-profit organisations where unpaid volunteers form part of the workforce and where organisational change is taking place. Communication influences and empowers understanding and knowledge in a rapidly changing world, increasing the ability to diagnose any resistance to change and choosing the most appropriate methods to deal with it. Communication strategies for volunteers during times of change should not be restricted by boundaries of industry, country, tasks or operations. Strategies should be versatile and flexible enough to adapt to any organisation in or out of the non-profit sector. These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

### **1.8 Chapter Summary and Organisation of Thesis**

This thesis is comprised of five chapters with references and appendices included at the end of the thesis proper. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the research undertaken including background, research objectives, the significance of the research, a description of the organisation and its volunteer workforce, the research methodology employed, the findings, and the limitations and strengths of the research. Chapter 2 provides a critical review of extant literature on methods of communication extended towards volunteers, before during and after organisational change. Focusing on the management of the transition to a more professional work

environment, it explores the types of strategies used in change management and the effect change has on personal and organisational values, and the culture and motivation of volunteers. Chapter 3 provides details on the research methodology used in this thesis, with emphasis on the action research, case study method and taking into account the demographics of participants. Chapter 4 contains the qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and discusses the results and outcomes. Chapter 5 concludes with discussion of the implications of the research findings, reviews the limitations of the study and suggests recommendations for future research.

This chapter has laid the foundation of this thesis. It has established the research topic, problems and issues frequently seen in communicating organisational change with an emphasis on a particular group of volunteers that other research has not as yet covered. The research has been justified, definitions have been presented and the methodology briefly outlined, explained and defended. Limitations were also discussed outlining the specifics involved such as the volunteers, the capacity in which they work and the non-profit environment. Based on these foundations, this thesis now proceeds with a detailed description of the research.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0 Chapter Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a literature review that defines and clarifies key concepts relevant to volunteer driven organisations. In particular, the review will focus on volunteer motivation in the non-profit sector during organisational change, and will examine what communication barriers may challenge the successful achievement of such change. Extant research indicates that a lack of communication is a common problem among volunteer workers. Many non-profits communicate information on a need to know basis, which may have a negative impact on volunteers and their motivation. Challenges to change are often due to poor communications, when change communication strategies should be shaped, supported and managed by more open and frank processes. The potential to better manage these issues through specific communication strategies and in a more professional manner will be explored. However, there is a possibility that adopting a more corporate approach may be counter-productive if it clashes with volunteers' personal values and previous experiences. Hence, a shared cultural understanding between the organisation and its volunteers is necessary to facilitate more effective change communication approaches, enabling organisations to create strategies to sustain volunteer motivation during and after a time of change.

The literature review will also focus on defining and clarifying the processes of change management in the context of the culture in a volunteer organisation and the effects that change management may have on this culture. Specifically, the professionalisation of a volunteer organisation and what effects (if any) professionalisation may have on the organisation as a whole, will be considered as a particular format for change management.

#### **2.1 Introduction**

While much research has been carried out on many aspects of volunteering including trends, characteristics, supply, competition and behaviour (Heidrich, 1990; Mayer et al, 2007; Bussell and Forbes, 2001; Courtney, 2004), there is an identifiable gap in the literature on issues of motivating volunteers and change management communications in the non-profit sector (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Courtney 1994, Heidrich 1990, Mayer, Fraccastoro, and McNary 2007, Haski-Leventhal and Meijs 2011). There is even less when the issue of motivation and communication is directed at the mature-aged volunteer. Shin and Kleiner (2003) suggested that understanding volunteers' needs, wants, motivation and commitment will assist in better management of volunteers and ultimately in enhanced recruitment and retention. As such, a more in-depth investigation of these issues will assist in understanding emerging trends and their implications for non-profit organisations.

Many researchers suggest that successful change management should be driven by participative approaches through dialogue, open communication and recognition of resistance to organisational change (Barnett and Carroll 1995, Barrett 2002, Carnall 2007, Elving 2005, Huggett 1999, Johansson and Heide 2008, Kotter and Schlesinger 1979, Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001, Whitely 1995). In particular, Parker (2008) advocated the use of informal processes to facilitate and encourage change in the workplace with emphasis on delivery of communication to dispel feelings of anger (passive or active), fear, stress, cynicism, denial and change myopia. Tourish (1997) and Nixon (1994) both acknowledged that there might be conflict and strong resistance to change within an organisation, but emphasised that a greater commitment to internal communication by managers was needed to minimise this. Whilst Grunig (2006) advocates that this kind of communication should also build relationships as well as be informative. Liu and Perrew (2005) observed the difficulties that organisations experience during change in addition to the technicalities associated with implementing change, and that there is a need to consider what other impacts may occur in an organisation when change occurs, such as the impact on the culture, values and emotions of employees.

In recent years, non-profit organisations have come under increased pressure to conduct their affairs in a more professional manner (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). As a consequence, the cultures of many non-profit organisations have begun to more closely resemble corporate enterprises. Whilst greater professionalisation can deliver benefits in terms of efficiency and accountability, it also has the potential to undermine the essential character of the non-profit sector and to demotivate the altruistic tendencies of volunteers who remain the lifeblood of the sector (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003, Geoghegan and Powell 2006). The key objective of this research is therefore to investigate the impact that organisational change may have on volunteer motivation in the non-profit sector, and to identify the characteristics of communication with volunteers under normal circumstances and also during organisational change. The following section focuses on the challenges and diversity of the non-profit sector, as well as examining appropriate frameworks for maintaining alignment between volunteers' personal values and those embedded in the culture of the organisation during times of change. This will help to determine what factors may lead to the alienation of core volunteers during the implementation of change and any subsequent professionalisation. However, in order to appreciate the scope of this study, it is necessary to understand the non-profit sector which the following section will attempt to provide.

## **2.2 Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs)**

### **2.2.1 Introduction**

When examining non-profit organisations, an attempt to determine how best to define and classify these organisations is a starting point to the current thesis. To do this, it is necessary to look at established definitions which suggest that while most non-profit organisations have much in common, there are subtle

differences which need to be clarified. The non-profit sector is poorly understood because the data is so limited and the concepts used to depict its boundaries are so imprecise (Salamon and Anheier 1977, Gray, Bebbington, and Collison 2006, Moulton and Eckerd 2012). Definition lies at the heart of all social analysis, and without a set of agreed concepts on which to base these boundaries there is no way to group organisations or understand the reality of what they do (Salamon and Anheier 1997). Therefore the following section will endeavour to differentiate between the many definitions and descriptions of non-profit organisations and also to explain the acronyms and purpose behind the variations of name for what seem to be the same type of organisation.

The not for profit sector (NFP) is made up of a diverse range of entities. Called by many different names – third sector, voluntary sector and the social economy – the sector comprises organisations established for a community purpose, whether altruistic or mutual in nature (Productivity Commission 2010). Table 2.1 identifies the most common used terms and their acronyms.

**Table 2.1 Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP or NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NFPO	Not-For-Profit Organisation
VNPO	Voluntary Non-Profit Organisation
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation

### **2.2.2 Defining Non-Profit Organisations**

Defining the term non-profit as a concept is a challenge of itself, and is seen to be ‘so diverse and amorphous that it is difficult to have a generally acceptable definition of an NPO’ (Modi and Mishra 2010, 553). To add to the confusion there is a profusion of terms used to depict this range of institutions e.g. Charitable Sector, Independent Sector, Voluntary Sector, Tax-exempt Sector, Non-Governmental Organisation, Associational Sector and many more (Salamon and Anheier 1977, 12). Salamon and Anheier (1992) point out that each of these terms often emphasise only one aspect of the reality represented by these organisations at the expense of overlooking or downplaying other aspects, and so in turn are partly misleading. In general terms Hansmann (1980) defined a non-profit organisation as an organisation that is barred from distributing its net earnings to individuals who exercise control over it, such as members, officers, directors, or trustees. Net earnings are determined to mean profits or earnings in excess of the amount needed to pay for services rendered to the

organisation<sup>1</sup>. Most non-profits are incorporated and are distinguished from for-profit corporations primarily by the absence of stock or other indication of ownership that would result in stockholders or shareholders sharing in both profits and control. The ATO's (Australian Taxation Office 2012) official definition of a non-profit is as follows:

'A non-profit organisation is an organisation that does not operate for the profit or gain of its individual members, either directly or indirectly. This applies both whilst the organisation is operating and when it winds up.

Any profit made by the organisation goes back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purposes and is not distributed to any of its members.

Organisations are non-profit where their constituent or governing documents prevent them from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of particular persons – both while they are operating and on winding up. These documents should contain acceptable clauses to indicate no-profit character. The organisation's actions must be consistent with these clauses.

A non-profit organisation can still make a profit, but this profit must be used to carry out its purposes and must not be distributed to owners, members or other private people '

Hines (2004) notes that as researching non-profit organisations is a confusing exercise, limiting definitions to three major types of non-profits – charities, foundations and associations, maybe of some assistance. Dees (1998) however, stated that non-profit organisations were traditionally operative in the social sector to solve or ameliorate problems such as hunger, homelessness, environmental pollution, drug abuse and domestic violence, and they have also provided for education, the arts and health care that society believes the market place by itself will not adequately supply. The subject of this study is involved heavily in adult education. Hodgkinson (1999, 210) looked at the definitions of the non-profit sector at both a national and global level and described a non-profit organisation as:

'Organised – having some type of institutional reality; private – in that it is institutionally separate from government; non-profit distributing – does not return any profits earned to owners or directors; self-governed – controls its own activities; and voluntary – involved in some voluntary activities even if it has only a voluntary board of directors.'

In addition to these differing perspectives on definitions, for some there has been an interchangeability of nomenclature such that many non-profits are referred to as either Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs),

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that a non-profit organisation is not barred from earning a profit and that many non-profits do show an annual accounting surplus, it is only the distribution of the profits that is prohibited.

Non-profit (NP) or Not-for-profit (NFP) organisations (Dees 1998, Drucker 1990, Salamon and Anheier 1977). This results in a failure to provide any clear definition of non-profits, resulting in imprecision and confusion, and adding to the ambiguity of the terminology used (Hines 2004). As a consequence there is a lack of agreement on a standard set of characteristics for these organisations as differences may derive from difficulty in establishing the number of organisations which are termed as non-profit, not-for-profit or non-governmental, independent, charitable, voluntary, philanthropic, social and so on (Brower 2011); what distinguishes them from each other (if applicable); and what their levels of resources are and the degree of influence they exert (Adams and de Bussy 2008). In addition it is not easy to determine the size of the organisation, what percentage of the workforce is made up of volunteers, what political or governmental influences they may exert, or if part funding is relevant (Matsunaga, Yamauchi, and Okuyama 2010 ). Githens (2009, 414) attempted to define differences between non-profit organisations by size, by the following:

‘Small, all-volunteer organisations differ from larger non-profit organisations, community-based advocacy groups, and large scale professional groups, due to the differing goals, aims and dynamics of these types of organisations.’

In essence there are many terms used to differentiate non-profit organisations from their profit-making counterparts to the extent that at a conference in West Germany in 1987, the term ‘Third Sector’ was chosen to deliberately avoid terminological confusion such as non-profit organisations, non-government organisations, non-profit social service organisations, and non-profits (Barnes 2011). However, the notion of a third sector presupposes the existence of two others: the public sector (the state) and the for-profit private sector (the market). Irrespective of how many definitions researchers are able to find, there is still some difficulty in establishing a definition that encompasses the various traits of non-profit, not-for-profit and non-governmental organisations which makes them unique to each other.

### **2.2.3 NGOs and VNPOs**

Bies (2010) and James (1997) identified non-profits (respectively) in general terms as being self-regulating and generating their own funds from the direct sale of services or goods made available to patrons, adding that donations in-kind and/or of time from volunteers subsidise ongoing costs, the savings of which are passed on to their patrons. Organisations, that are classed as a non-profit rather than as NGO’s, appear to be different in that they are more flexible and diverse, less bureaucratic and costly to run, and produce services whose direct revenues do not cover their costs (James 1997). The organisation which this case study is based on meets this criteria. Alternatively with NGOs there is an assumption that they consist of the more well-known types of non-profits such as the RSPCA, UNICEF, Oxfam etc., which often have global visibility (Robinson 1994). Drucker (1990, 39) stated that the non-profit organisation is identified by its need to be a ‘doer’ rather

than a user and that 'it creates habits, vision, commitment, knowledge' by attempting to partner with the recipient rather than merely being a supplier. Organisations that are more local, community based, and deemed non-profit, are identified as being run by a workforce of altruistic volunteers who provide community services through philanthropic impulses and prefer to work within their local community (Dees 1998) as does the organisation referred to in this thesis.

These organisations are sometimes known as voluntary non-profit organisations or VNPOs and have limited funds with which to operate. It is also understood that VNPOs usually involve a *meaningful* degree of voluntary participation either in administrative or management roles (Salamon and Anheier 1977, Buckmaster 1999) with volunteers also making up the majority of its staff working in other capacities. In addition, while most of its income is derived from voluntary contributions, the VNPO is usually self-funded and autonomous but is not precluded from one-off grants from governmental bodies, sponsorships or fee-for-services (Drucker 1990, Moulton and Eckerd 2012).

Dolnicar and Randle (2007) identified several kinds of VNPOs and categorised them into either 'altruistic', 'leisure', 'political' or 'religious'. Salamon and Sokolwski (2001) however identified only two primary categorisations - 'use-value' and 'expressive', which they described respectively as providing to society including education, health, social services and development and housing, and, serving to actualise values or preferences including culture, sports, recreation, environmental protection, political expression, advocacy, labour unions and professional and business associations. However there is no documented evidence which adequately describes exactly what a VNPO is, how many members it must have or what is the percentage of volunteers it needs (apart from the word 'meaningful' – see above) to identify as a VNPO.

Bies (2010) suggested that voluntary non-profit organisations on the whole are self-regulatory - meaning that the organisational drivers are related to establishing philanthropic and voluntary structures generally in the absence of public regulation. However, accountability pressures are leading to increased expectations that non-profit organisations will perform more like corporate enterprises in their governance and regulations. It was also suggested that the formulation of VNPOs' self-regulation system was affected by three key factors - the relationship between non-profits and key stakeholders; the organisations' access/non-access to resources and relationships within their environments; and internal characteristics of the non-profit sector itself, such as the perceived capacity of the non-profit sector, professional norms, and performance expectations (Bies 2010). This may be explained as the behaviours imposed on non-profits by external factors such as third-party evaluation and/or accreditation; the dependency the organisation has on resources including manpower or equipment, and lastly the professional regulatory models which the organisation has to abide by to justify their non-profit legitimacy, such as end of year audit and registration as a non-profit entity under the required

legislation to ensure accountability (Bies 2010). It was also noted that most non-profit organisations who are proactive in building relationships with key stakeholders, hold themselves responsible in terms of external demands and obligations, and are more responsive in adhering to some legal requirements to ensure their non-profit status (Moulton and Eckerd 2012). For the purpose of this thesis the term non-profit will be used throughout in reference to the organisation this case study is based on as it best describes the organisation and its compatibility with the descriptions of Bies (2010), Dolnicar and Randle (2007), Dees (1998) and Moulton and Eckerd (2012).

## **2.3 The Voluntary Workforce**

### **2.3.1 Overview**

Non-profit organisations represent a major economic sector in society and the importance of non-profit organisations is undeniable (Randle and Dolnicar 2009a). The last two decades have witnessed a period of 'tremendous growth' in this sector (Moulton and Eckerd 2012, 656). Statistics show that in the United States over 84 million individuals contribute more than US\$239 billion in value to the economy (Independent Sector, 2001 in Randle and Dolnicar 2009a). Similarly across the Atlantic, 23 million UK residents volunteer each year, injecting over £44 billion into the economy (European Volunteer Centre, 2006 in Randle and Dolnicar 2009a). In Australia, volunteering is estimated to contribute tens of billions of dollars to the economy each year, donated by a workforce of over 6.4 million individuals (Volunteering Australia, 2010). Given these statistics, volunteerism can quite rightly be considered as a force to be reckoned with.

It is not surprising then that research into volunteers and the reasons why people volunteer has been richly documented (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth 1996, Goodale 1992, Heidrich 1990, Hustinx et al. 2010, Karl 1998, Light 2002, MacNeela 2008, Okun and Schultz 2003, Phillips and Phillips 2010, Reisch and Wenocur 1982, Salamon and Sokolowski 2001, Wymer Jr 1997). However little has been written about change management practices in the non-profit arena. In particular it appears that the majority of literature examines organisational change in for-profit corporations and little attention has been applied to non-profits and their unpaid volunteer workforce (Akchin 2001, Dolnicar and Randle 2007). This presents as a significant gap in the literature. As such the current thesis provides an exploration of whether for-profit change management practices can be of benefit to non-profit organisations and the volunteers that they rely upon to work in these organisations.

### **2.3.2 Defining the Volunteer**

According to Bussell and Forbes (2002) it is extremely hard to define what is meant by a volunteer. The term volunteer cannot be applied to one homogenous group as volunteers operate in thousands of different organisations (non-profit and for profit), taking on a multitude of different roles and are of all ages,

backgrounds, skills and experiences (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Most definitions of volunteers usually relate to contributions of time without coercion or remuneration or any activity in which time is given freely (Wilson 2000). Cnaan et al. (1996) use continuums such as *free will to obligation* and *no pay to low pay* to determine what defines true volunteerism. A common understanding of volunteer suggests that “to volunteer” is to do so out of a sense of altruism, yet Johnson-Coffey (1997) would exclude those she refers to as involuntary volunteers such as corporate volunteers, government planned citizenship education and those involved in community service as part of a Community Service Order, who would perhaps be nearer to the obligation end of Cnaan et al.’s continuum.

Other understandings of volunteer include those who volunteer not so much to help individuals or improve quality of life but those who campaign to change laws or policies which affect them (Courtney 1994). A differentiation may also exist between those who provide help during emergency situations and those who take part in non-emergency helping behaviour (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Similarly there is the question of whether volunteers as time donors could be differentiated between those who donate other items such as money, goods, gifts in kind or anatomical parts. Yavas and Riecken (1985) found that time donors shared certain demographical and attitudinal characteristics with those who donated other items. Other theorists segment volunteers in order to better define them and use key categorising groups such as human service, arts and culture, religion, youth development, education and health (Wymer Jr 1997). Wilson and Pimm (1996) also refer to different volunteer groups such as charities, sports clubs, business associations, social clubs, health self-help groups, political groups, religious groups and supportive agencies. Cnaan et al (1996, 380) delineated the boundaries of the term volunteer and showed that widely used definitions of the term ranged from the ‘broadest to the purest of interpretations’. Their analysis found that the higher the amount of work done (cost), the lower the reward (benefit) and the contribution out of the normal sphere of the individual are what truly defines a volunteer.

A consideration of demographic variables also serves as a means to characterise volunteers. For instance, research and data shows that there are more female versus male volunteers (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010a, Bussell and Forbes 2002) , although this said, political volunteers specifically are more likely to be males (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Age related variables are also important with individuals over the age of 50 being more likely to volunteer than their younger counterparts (Wymer 1998, Okun and Schultz 2003). Volunteers who have a family background of volunteering or where other members of the family or friends have been involved are also far more likely to volunteer than those who have never been exposed to volunteering before (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Other factors identified with volunteers included those who donated their time as volunteers often being better educated, having higher or more disposable income, and being more willing to share their skills.

Extant research on volunteering in the non-profit sector highlights the social or group aspect of this activity (Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth 1996, Heidrich 1990). This is apparent in the Centre's demographic profile, with many of its members seeking the social interaction either by volunteering or by participation in the activities. For these older adults in particular, factors motivating volunteerism also stem from a sense of being needed, helpful and valued, as well as their altruistic tendencies and the desire for socialisation (Tang, Morrow-Howell, and Hong 2009, Callow 2004). MacNeela (2008) determined that the reasons why people volunteer were built on a basic disinterest of the self or ego, in other words they are essentially motivated by being altruistic. Given then the majority of volunteers are mostly acting on their altruistic tendencies, many researchers contend that there is something enormously powerful, motivating and distinctive about the voluntary sector that should be preserved and promoted in society (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Courtney 1994, Dolnicar and Randle 2007, Githens 2009). In view of the major role that the voluntary sector plays in developed economies worldwide, then it is incumbent on managers of change to recognise the value of volunteers and the value volunteers place on being communicated with, especially in times of organisational change. This proves their worth to the organisation and allows them to feel useful and needed.

Apart from altruistic tendencies, fulfilment, social interaction and personal values are also major factors in volunteering, and it has been noted that volunteers share certain attitudinal characteristics (Clary and Snyder 1999, Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth 1996, MacNeela 2008). These characteristics manifest themselves through their need to socialise, belong to a group, common interests and activities, identity as being useful, demographics, fear of isolation, desire to be needed and to give something back to the community in which they live. In particular, volunteering allows the individual to act on his or her underlying personal values and to be his or her true self (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Dolnicar and Randle 2007, Mayer, Fraccastoro, and McNary 2007).

### **2.3.3 Volunteers and Organisational Change**

It has already been stated that the communication and dissemination of information to volunteers in non-profit organisations is often poor and usually happens on a 'need to know' basis. However research shows that there is a great need to effectively communicate to volunteers (Shin and Kleiner 2003). This confirms to them that they are important, needed and appreciated as a highly involved volunteer workforce, and contributes to their good morale (Shin and Kleiner 2003). Indeed it is essential during organisational change for volunteers to be given the opportunity to voice their opinions, become involved in decision-making and be given autonomy in order to build a commitment to the organisation in order to embrace change (Bussell and Forbes 2002). Negligible and unsuccessful attempts to solicit input from volunteers on the other hand is responsible for decreasing morale and job satisfaction, ultimately decreasing volunteer retention according to Lewis (1999).

Non-profit managers face more sensitive issues in stakeholder engagement during organisational change, particularly when the majority of the workforce consists of volunteer workers (Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001, Salamon and Anheier 1977). Kanter and Summers (1987) suggested that the variety of stakeholders, clients, donors and others makes it difficult for non-profits to implement innovative change communication. Innovative change communication is difficult for volunteers whose rosters may be inconsistent or complicated, thereby receiving fewer opportunities to participate in an holistic change management program communication process (Lewis, 1999). This poses the question 'Do change implementers communicate differently (in terms of disseminating information and soliciting input) with paid versus volunteer staff regarding planned organisational change?' Both Lewis, Hamel and Richardson (2001) and Lewis (1999) contend that there were indeed significant differences in communication channels with paid staff as opposed to volunteer staff, and that these channels were used less often to communicate with volunteers. Therefore it may be assumed that communications with volunteers need to be more thorough, simple and consistent to produce a more coherent understanding and acceptance of why change needs to occur. Grunig and Hunt (1984) advocate the use of the 2-way symmetrical model to facilitate a dialogue rather than a monologue, thereby allowing a conversation through which attitudes, behaviours or actions may be modified and may assist in acceptance of change.

#### **2.3.4 Commitment, Motivating and Retaining Volunteers During Change**

Evidence points to the unbalanced treatment of volunteer workers in areas such as recognition, training and feedback (Amos-Wilson 1996, Daly, Teague, and Kitchen 2003). For instance research indicates that during management training in UK NGOs, out of a sample of 21 non-governmental organisations only six provided training for volunteers (Amos-Wilson 1996). It was found that a lack of understanding as to what motivates volunteers can have a significant impact not only on recruiting and training, but also retaining volunteers and is the main cause why volunteers leave organisations (Bussell & Forbes, 2001). In a dynamic, ever-changing environment where the number of volunteer organisations is growing there is the potential for organisations to focus on not only what motivates volunteers to join an organisation but also how to keep them interested – especially in times of change. Empowering volunteers through better recruitment and simple training will assist in retaining volunteers, keeping them interested and occupied, and subsequently the motivation of volunteers in the non-profit sector.

It has been suggested that to retain volunteer motivation during organisational change, it is first desirable to understand their organisational commitment (Dailey 1986), and have some understanding of their emotional reaction to change (Eriksson 2004). Many theorists have documented the effects of the types of commitment (affective, continuous and normative), and their effects on motivation (Dailey 1986, Herscovitch and Meyer 2002, Irving, Coleman, and Cooper 1997, Meyer and Herscovitch 2001). Although not specific to volunteers,

commitment can be easily related to the volunteer function and identified as part or all of their reasons as to why they volunteer in the first place. In defining these types of commitment, Irving et al (1986) described affective commitment as referring to a psychological attachment to the organisation - the individual stays with the organisation because they want to (in volunteer terms because there is a social need, location, interests etc); continuous commitment as referring to the costs associated with leaving the organisation - individuals stay with the organisation because they need to (volunteers may have monetary issues with travel and fees and/or the cost of losing friendships); and normative commitment as referring to a perceived obligation to remain with the organisation – because they feel they should (altruism, sense of duty, friendships). Commitment in volunteers is indicative of their attitude towards the organisation in which they volunteer and their willingness to dedicate a significant amount of time and effort without tangible compensation (Bang, Ross, and Reio Jr 2013). This is part of their volunteer culture.

### **2.3.5 The Attempt to Professionalise Volunteer Organisations**

Non-profit organisations have become the focus and attention of many academic researchers in the last decade (Martens 2002) and are recognised as significant players in local and global affairs. The success of a volunteer service organisation is to some extent reliant on the image it presents to the community it serves (Sparks and George 1984). In this respect there is a growing trend for volunteer organisations to be more professional and undergo a process of professionalisation. Guirguis-Younger, Kelley and McKee (2005) acknowledged that there may be many good reasons to try and professionalise the voluntary sector. These may include building frameworks for best practice guidelines, assisting in recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers and dealing with issues of liability, accountability, transparency and ethics. Voluntary organisations are not necessarily homogenous within themselves, and while part of an organisation can appear to be professional in adhering to rules, processes and regulations, other parts can be more relaxed giving the impression of amateur rather than professional (Tuffrey 1997). There is also the danger of thinking that being seen as a professional organisation means making a profit, when in fact being professional for many non-profit organisations has more to do with making the best of their resources to get the best outcomes for their organisation and not being dependent on the bottom line (Donovan 2009). Of course it is important to note that the reason why many non-profits may be viewed as non-professional might be due to the look of the premises, laissez-faire attitudes, poorly designed and printed leaflets or brochures and the *perceived* inefficiency of untrained (in the corporate sense) volunteers - many of whom may not have been employed in a corporate or business discipline (Tuffrey 1997). The question persists as to whether the emergence of this professionalisation will be at the expense of the volunteers that work in such organisations (Geoghegan and Powell 2006), and if the preservation of the autonomy, independence and self-sufficiency of volunteer organisations can prevail (Moulton and Eckerd 2012).

There is much ambiguity in determining what professionalisation is and what it is not, possibly due to the many different connotations placed on what is meant by profession, professional and professionalism in society. The definition of *profession* is based on specialisation, ultimate application of theory, transferability of skills, stability of employment and attachment to a discipline which relies on the existence of rules (Wilensky 1964). Consequently, being *professional* relies on two distinct criteria, (a) Systematic knowledge or doctrine acquired through long and extensive training, or (b) Adherence to a set of rules or norms (Wilensky 1964). In a functional capacity a professional organisation offers a service, performed outside of the 'cold logic of the market place ..... reliant on notions of ethics, service and duty' (Geoghegan and Powell 2006, 850). *Professionalism* then, indicates a form of authority which asserts linking exclusive skills and standards for unique trustworthiness (Wilensky 1964). It is even harder to define these terms when aimed at a non-profit organisation whose administration team consists mainly of volunteers, especially when it has been suggested that non-profits are seen as having 'non-lucrative claims and being non-professionalised societal groups' because they are viewed as 'voluntary organisations in which people engage for idealistic purposes or 'good' causes in their free time' (Martens 2002, 279).

However, differentiating between professional and amateur is of great importance to non-profit organisations as it raises issues that are at the heart of the non-profit identity and culture. To be an amateur is to be someone who engages in an activity for joy and love of what they are doing (Hwang and Powell 2009), whereas being professional means concentrating on making a profit which is seemingly at odds with the simple altruistic tendencies of volunteer culture. The pressure on non-profit organisations to be more efficient, transparent and accountable is understandable and in some cases necessary. It may lead to more respectability and standing in society and the organisation may be recognised as showing a professional attitude to their purpose. This said, it has also been suggested that the quest to thrust a corporate idea of professionalisation on volunteer organisations often leads to significant shifts in both the non-profit organisation's mission and structure, but it also detracts from its core vision and values which volunteerism is based on (Hwang and Powell 2009). Hwang and Powell (2009) further suggest that the professionalisation of the non-profit sector may have significant implications on their core identity - established as an arena for volunteerism and participation - its future development and the role volunteerism plays in society at large. Skocpol (2006, in Hwang and Powell 2009) contends that professionalisation may lead to diminished participation, as well as a move towards doing *for* others rather than *with* them. Indeed it has been noted that there are many challenges in the professionalisation of volunteer and non-profit organisations Haski-Leventhal (2009). In turn researchers and policy makers have begun to wake up to the dangers of inappropriate levels of formalisation in volunteer-led-and-run organisations (Hill and Stevens 2011).

### 2.3.6 Accountability of Non-Profit Organisations

Demands for accountability, transparency and efficiency over the last decade have been targeted at individuals and organisations in both the non-profit sector and the for-profit corporate entities (Espeland and Sauder 2007) and have gone hand in hand with the drive for professionalisation. Milbourne & Cushman (2013) and James (1990) documented that one of the most important strengths of non-profits are their perceived trustworthiness in the market place, reinforced by consumers' perceptions that if managers cannot benefit financially by receiving profits they are less likely to cheat patrons. Saxton (2004, 189) echoed those sentiments, reporting that trust and confidence is high in the non-profit sector even though:

'The public live in a rosy fog of ignorance about how these organisations do their job, envisioning that non-profits do good works, are run by nice people in small homely organisations, the sun always shines and they do fantastic work - all on a shoestring for little or no reward'.

Edwards (1994) saw the need to enlighten the general public and advocated more formalised processes in response to the increased pressures on voluntary organisations, which bring with them demands for more financial accountability related to handling organisational income. He more recently observed that non-profits are increasingly under attack as being self-selected, unaccountable and poorly rooted in society (Edwards 2000). The demand for more accountability has prompted a flood of measures designed to evaluate the performances of such organisations (Espeland and Sauder 2007). In the non-profit sector this has become the norm, (Hwang and Powell (2009), as key stakeholders - notably government and philanthropic funders and associations - have led the charge for greater efficiency and accountability in the non-profit sector.

Accountability may be defined as the means through which organisations are held both internally and externally to account for their actions (Ebrahim 2003). Cornwall et al (2000) questioned the meaning of accountability and its interpretation by focusing on its relationship to non-profit organisations. Cornwall et al (2000) acknowledge that there is a range of connotations regarding accountability such as giving an account to another party who has a stake in what has been done (external accountability); maintaining financial accounts (internal accountability); being held to account (internal and external accountability) and in the context of governance - holding bearers of office responsible for their performance, actions and decisions (internal and external accountability) (Cornwall, Lucas, and Pasteur 2000). A fundamental concern with non-profits is that the extent to which accountability is demanded by external bodies may not align with an organisation's strategy, and may therefore detract from its mission and core business (Dacombe 2011). In addition, while non-profits are accepting of the demand for more accountability, volunteers may balk when they are expected to adapt to more business-like methods of operation (Dees 1998), having been identified as organisations reliant on their own resources and not on external funding or support (Moulton and Eckerd

2012).

Ebrahim (2003) suggests that the diversity amongst non-profit organisations in regard to accountability processes is considerable, following on from Leat (1990) who proposed that accountability (normally only directed at for-profit corporate entities) only becomes an issue when power and resources are delegated implying that there is some inequality between those who delegate and those who are delegated to. This implies an issue for non-profit organisations, mainly due to the reluctance of anyone willing to delegate - especially when the organisation is run by volunteers - and produces a 'them and us' mentality foreign to the volunteer culture where everyone is seen as equal. Numerous papers have explored aspects of the management of non-profits, the use of volunteers and the issue of accountability (Anheier and Seibel 1990, Cnaan 1996, Drucker 1990, Ebrahim 2003, James 1997, Lawry 1995, Saxton 2004). However most of the theories were developed with the United States or United Kingdom contexts in mind, where many scandals have been reported at well-known organisations such as the United Way of America, Goodwill Industries, Head Start, the American Cancer Society and the American Red Cross (Ebrahim 2003), with little research available in Australia. Perhaps the population, number of non-profits and the size of these organisations in Australia prohibit similar scrutiny, or key stakeholders in Australian non-profits have been more trusting in the past, although it is interesting to note that recent corporate governance initiatives such as the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) are now focusing on non-profit organisations to provide more accountability.

### **2.3.7 The Value of Non-Profit Organisations in Australia**

The most recent statistics on the value of non-profit organisations in Australia show that 6.1million people in Australia (36% of the Australian population aged over 18 years of age) willingly gave unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills to an organisation or group (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010b). Further data taken from the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006/7) showed that there are 41,008 non-profit organisations in Australia<sup>2</sup>. Of this number, religious organisations accounted for 21.4% (8,786) and are also responsible for providing non-religious community services (e.g. soup kitchens, homeless accommodation, free second hand cloths etc.). This is followed by culture and recreation organisations which accounted for another 20.1% (8,258) of non-profit organisations. In total, non-profit organisations accounted for 889,919 paid employees with 2,182,476 people volunteering their time. Social service organisations accounted for 24.9% (221,549 people) of total employees in the sector, followed by education and research organisations (24.5% or 218,388 people). Permanent full-time employees accounted for 41.4% (368,514 people) of total paid employment in the non-profit sector and permanent part-time and casual employees 34.3% (305,332 people) and 24.3% (216,074 people) respectively. Volunteering contributes significantly to the Australian economy and is estimated to

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<sup>2</sup> ABS does not distinguish between NGOs, NFPs, or VNPOs

provide over \$14.6 billion of unpaid labour in 2006-07 (Volunteering Australia 2012). This estimate was based on 5.2million Australians who volunteered in 2007 and was estimated to increase to 6.1million Australians in 2010 (Volunteering Australia 2012).

The expansion of non-profit organisations has not been limited to Australia. The USA has also seen significant growth as has Western Europe and the UK (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Randle and Dolnicar 2009b). With this expansion, donors, governments, citizens, clients, and actors external to the non-profit sector have shown increased interest in and desire for scrutiny of operations and performance of this sector (Amos-Wilson 1996, Bies 2010, Cnaan 1996, Cornwall, Lucas, and Pasteur 2000) requiring non-profits to be more accountable in their management of funds (Moulton and Eckerd 2012).

### **2.3.8 Summary**

Non-profit organisations have been substantially researched since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Adams and de Bussy 2008) and research continues albeit centered around the larger more well-known NGOs such as Red Cross, Amnesty International, etc. There are still many and differing opinions on non-profit organisations and these relate to size, structure, success, accountability and objectives. Little literature has been found on other non-profit organisations, especially those run wholly by volunteers, and the impact of change within their midst. However, an effort has been made in this study to apply the available literature to garner an understanding of the implications on a volunteer based non-profit organization which can be classed as a smaller non-profit (in terms of its membership size, income, or activities) in comparison to the more well known NGOs (as mentioned above)..

The focal organisation described in this thesis may be identified as *'an (non-profit) organisation which derives little or no funding through local, state or federal government; is independent and predominantly staffed by volunteers with a volunteer Executive committee; relies on membership subscriptions and/or fee-for-services as its main source of income; bases its services within the local community and does not seek to influence governmental policy or become involved in the international arena'*. While this description clearly represents the case study on which this research is based, it should be noted that it does not provide an authoritative definition for non-profit organisations, nor does it attempt to claim that all non-profits operate under the same environment.

## **2.4 Organisational Culture and Volunteer Organisations**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

In most Western languages, culture commonly means 'civilisation' or 'refinement of mind' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 5), and in particular refers to such refinement as evidenced through education, art

and literature. This is culture in the narrow sense and in more recent times culture has been used in a much broader sense especially amongst sociologists and anthropologists (Lewis 1998) among whom the definition has come to represent the patterns of thinking, feeling and acting in accordance with the individual's social environment (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). Since the early 1980s organisational, or corporate culture has been a popular issue in management literature (Deal and Kennedy 1982, Lewis 1998).

Hofstede et al (2010, 47) defined corporate or organisational culture as a climate in which members of the organisation are contained – i.e., how the members have learned to think, feel and act. Corporate culture being defined as a 'soft, holistic concept with, however, presumed hard consequences' (Hofstede et al 2010, 47). Schein (2010) uses the terminologies of *organisational* culture and *corporate* culture interchangeably. However, non-profit organisations (such as the focal organisation in this study) are not corporations; hence there are contexts in which it is important to distinguish the terms. Alternatively, corporate culture has been defined as the assumptions that underlie the values and determine the behaviour patterns of an organisation (Bryman 1986). The term *culture* is much broader in scope and can refer to societies or even civilisations as a whole. Culture is commonly defined in terms of shared meanings/understandings, values and norms as expressed by people's behaviour, rituals, institutions, myths, beliefs and art (du Gay et al. 2013).

Consequently culture has taken a step away from the traditional definition commonly interpreted as 'civilisation' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 5), becoming a characteristic of the organisation manifested in and measured by the verbal and/or nonverbal behaviour of individuals (Hofstede 1998). This paradigm of corporate culture will be explored in more detail in subsequent sections of this thesis.

#### **2.4.2 The Evolution of Cultural Theory in Organisations**

English-language literature attributing cultures to organisations, first appeared in the 1960s, and the term corporate culture was coined in the 1970s, gaining popularity after the book *Corporate Cultures*, by Terrence Deal and Allan Kennedy, appeared in the United States in 1982 (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 343). Organisational, or corporate culture has become an integral part of organisational structure, strategy and control in today's world. There are many definitions of culture including myths, language, symbols, ideology, rituals and beliefs (Pettigrew 1979, Sopow 2006, Zamanou and Glaser 1994, Schein 1985), basic underlying assumptions (Buch and Wetzel 2001, McLaurin 2008, Schein 1983, 1984) and personality or identity (Cresie 2005, Ravasi and Schultz 2007). Many of these definitions overlap and/or lend themselves to certain commonalities as identified by Campbell (2004). Schein (2010, 28) proposed that basic assumptions are the core of an organisation's culture and guide behaviour on how to perceive, think and feel about things in the organisation. There are differing views amongst theorists as to whether culture is a variable and if it can be manipulated.

Pettigrew (1979) queried whether people create culture or culture creates people, but accepted that culture is a system of publicly and collectively accepted meanings by a group at any given time. One school of thought according to Ravasi and Schultz (2007) is that to explore the culture of an organisation helps to make sense of what an organisation is and what it stands for, reinforcing the relationship between culture, values and collective self-perceptions. A review at Bang and Olufsen in 1998 on organisational culture and values found that over time, there was little change in the organisational culture because organisational values had formed part of a collective heritage embraced by all members of the organisation, providing them with feelings of belonging and pride (Ravasi and Schultz 2007). In the same review, it was observed by top management that 'values must be found within the company, not defined....values cannot be discussed: they are there where we have found them' (Ravasi and Schultz 2007, 107). This view implies that culture is not a variable to be manipulated but simply 'is'.

In contrast, Schein (1984) proposed that culture is learned, passed on and changes over time and argued that an organisation must understand the dynamic evolutionary forces that govern how culture evolves before it can understand how it changes or can be changed. Hofstede et al. (2010, 469) observed that organisations need to study the evolution of their organisational culture as they would study their economic and business evolution, in order to understand the dynamic properties of culture in respect to the success and failure of the organisation. As culture evolves through the entry into the organisation of people with new assumptions and different experiences, backgrounds and skills, the need for today's leaders to become culture managers is now greater than ever as governments, technology, language and business continue to create a whole new set of cultural challenges (Schein 2010, 363). The following section will examine how organisational culture may be affected by change and how change may affect the culture of an organisation.

### **2.4.3 Identifying Culture in an Organisation**

To understand an organisation's culture, Schein (1990, 2010) insisted that the culture of an organisation must first be defined, analysed, observed and measured to provide sufficient insight into the organisation. An agreed upon definition of culture is difficult to find in the literature and there are a wide variety of perspective on what culture is. Culture is seen as a property of a group and is often formed through common experiences (Schein 1999). It is also seen as something that an organisation possesses and which can be created and managed (Deal and Kennedy 1982, Peters and Waterman Jr 1985, Schein 1985, 2010). Schein (1983, 2010) explored how culture is created in a defined environment by the founder of an organisation, who creates and shapes a group culture by force of his or her personality and uses deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching (Schein 2010). Schein also argued that a new group's culture will not develop until it has overcome various crises of growth and survival, providing solutions for coping with its problems in creating a workable set of relationship rules and thus establishing its culture. Linke and Zeffass (2011) found that culture results

from actions within the workplace and relies on the commitment of employees and managers, transparency of vision and the vitality and transmission of workable practices.

Another perspective on culture includes that of Thomas (1985) who saw culture as a forceful power in any organisation, and defined culture as an internal value system based on a set of assumptions about the nature of the business, the market place and competitive environment. In an organisation the identification of culture as 'a pattern of shared beliefs and values that give members of an institution meaning' provides the members with the rules for behaviour in their organisation (Davis 1984, 1). Hofstede et al (2010, 344) identified culture in the workplace as 'the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another'. Lewis (1998) and Schein (2010) argued that the difficulty in identifying culture in the workplace stems from the term being borrowed from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, anthropology and political science which adds to the problem of properly identifying what workplace culture is.

Schein (1999, 15) warned that the biggest danger in trying to understand culture is to 'oversimplify it' and his theory of three levels of culture – Artifacts, Espoused Values and Basic Underlying Assumptions - (Schein 2010) helps make sense in understanding culture by simplifying it so that it can be more fully understood and managed in organisations. These are further explained in section 2.4.7. Hofstede et al (2010, 345) argued that an organisation's culture is not only maintained in the minds of its members but also in the minds of its stakeholders – that is everyone who interacts with the organisation externally as well as internally including customers, suppliers, authorities, the press and other organisations. This then suggests that due to the imprecise definition of what is culture, many organisations may be misguided as to the exact nature of their organisational culture.

#### **2.4.4 Volunteerism and Culture**

Randle and Dolnicar (2009a) reported that Australian attitudes to volunteering were very positive and stemmed from the influence or behaviours of others, a sense of duty and a feeling that volunteering is a 'norm' by which to contribute to society.

However current research proposes that the mainstream approach to volunteering in Australia tends to exclude other cultural groups who do not share the same values and customs (Randle and Dolnicar 2009a) and this is reinforced by national surveys indicating that Australian born individuals are more likely to be involved in formal volunteering activities than those born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). Randle and Dolnicar (2009a) also noted that the lack of English-speaking skills may cause problems in attracting volunteers from countries where English is not a first language, and could be seen as a major barrier

to their possible involvement in volunteering for local community groups. Likewise the lack of indigenous language and cultural knowledge of volunteers with no other language except English may present the same difficulties in ethnic-centred volunteer groups.

Randle and Dolnicar (2009a) investigated cultural differences of volunteers through segmentation (e.g. race, religion, country of origin and socio-demographic backgrounds) and found that identification with original culture produced a variance in social norms and behaviour. This resulted in volunteers' attitude to volunteering being oriented to specific concepts such as the background of the organisation for which they were volunteering, and if it fit with their own cultural (and sometimes restricted) background. On this latter point Wilson (2012) observed that when parents volunteer they are acting as role models for their children and are able to embed a culture of volunteering in the family and in the home. This may then explain why volunteering is influenced by the positive effects on the individual's well-being from an early age, and allows for a cultural win-win for both the organisation and the volunteer (Tang, Choi, and Morrow-Howell 2010). Volunteering in this sense, makes a significant contribution to society, not only in providing economic efficiency and social cohesion, but in maintaining the spirit of giving back to society amongst like-minded individuals who share common values and beliefs.

#### **2.4.5 Culture and Leadership**

There are two major schools of thought on the question of culture and leadership. Some scholars argue that leaders create organisational culture (Cresie 2005, Deal and Kennedy 1982, Holden 2007, Huggett 1999, McLaurin 2008, Peters and Waterman Jr 1985, Rogers and Meehan 2007, Schein 1983, 1985, 2010), while others claim leaders have only a peripheral influence (Lewis 1998, MacIntosh and Doherty 2005, Smith and Shilbury 2004, Thomas 1985, Trice and Beyer 1993). One theory is that the key to achieving meaningful cultural change in an organisation is to align thoughts, actions and behaviours of the organisation (the manifestations of an organisation's culture) with clearly defined and communicated processes through good leadership (Huggett 1999). Cresie (2005) and Hugget (1999) stated that organisations develop culture through leadership and that good leadership influences behaviours, therefore when leadership changes so does the culture of the organisation. Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Schein (2010) argue that organisational leaders must possess and exercise the ability to shape corporate culture in order to be effective, and Schein (1983) attributed good leadership to establishing and maintaining organisational culture by firstly recognising what a number of people can accomplish as a collective rather than as individuals.

However, Trice and Beyer (1993) were less convinced about the ability of an individual to change organisational culture and MacIntosh and Doherty (2005, 3) stated that while organisational culture is a shared understanding accepted among staff members, it is not 'ultimately determined by the leader'. Thomas

(1985) stated that most organisational leaders tend to either ignore the culture, manage round it, attempt to change certain elements of the culture to fit the organisation's strategies or, change the strategy to fit the culture, agreeing that whilst it *may* be possible to change organisational culture, most leaders have neither the time or inclination to do so. The culture change debate is ongoing. Lewis (1998) stated that the culture concept for leaders remains problematic because culture cannot ultimately be defined, though many may try, and one cannot change something one does not fully understand, especially when organisations are made up of many cultures; an argument further supported by other researchers (Lucas 1987, Riley 1983, Martin and Siehl 1983, Saffold III 1988, Short and Ferratt 1984). As the debate on culture and change continues, the implications of cultural leadership reveal a capacity to positively influence organisational culture or negatively inhibit organisational change. This influence is dependent on leadership styles and skills. There are leaders who create purpose, build trust and encourage staff resulting in enhanced levels of commitment, whilst leaders who practice singular top-down control and are too removed from collaborating in a cultural collective resulting in confusion and hindering organisational change (Jogulu 2011).

Therefore the level of commitment required to implement culture change in any organisation may be considerable, requiring a long-term commitment to the process and taking time to become effective (Cresie 2005). However while commitment to the change may be long-term, ordinary day-to-day decisions and actions must continue. McLaurin (2008) suggested that leaders should create a strong organisational culture which has values and norms to minimise adverse effects of cross-cultural differences and be influential in creating values that uphold the organisation's culture. Change by definition, requires creating a new system of leadership (Kotter 1995) and transformations often begin well when an organisation has a leader who sees the need for major change. According to Schein (2010, 312)

'leaders can impose new ways of doing things, can articulate new goals and means and can change reward and control systems, but none of those changes will produce culture change unless the new way of doing things actually works better and provides the members a new set of shared experiences that eventually lead to culture change.'

The debate on leaders and organisational culture change relies on individual perspectives. Some theorists (Holden 2007, Rogers and Meehan 2007) believe it is impossible to sustain culture in a time of change without leadership because it is a dual journey - the strategic initiative must go hand in hand with deep commitment and leadership - and that transforming a culture through organisational change requires influencing people's deepest beliefs and behaviours.

'Organisations have found they can change their cultures, provided leaders understand that change must start at the top...it takes strong leadership at every level of an organisation, determination and a willingness to make culture a top priority' (Rogers and Meehan 2007, 256).

In contrast, there are other theorists who argue that leadership cannot possess the necessary skills, knowledge, time or motivation to change or enhance a culture that is already present, and that any change in culture is up to the collective and not the individual (Lucas 1987, Martin and Siehl 1983, McIntosh and Zahra 2007, Riley 1983, Saffold III 1988, Short and Ferratt 1984, Trice and Beyer 1993). To this end, a volunteer based organisation will need a leader who is fully conversant and understanding of the volunteer culture; a leader who is in synch with the motivations of volunteers, and who understands that as a collective, volunteers are driven by altruistic tendencies to reach their objectives. As a collective they need to be cognisant that any leader shares the same collective culture to move forward in any change processes.

#### **2.4.6 Culture and Values**

Buch and Wetzel (2001) considered the differences between 'true culture' and 'espoused culture' noting that in many organisations the two types of culture are present simultaneously. Nixon (1994) pointed out that there is often a gap between the espoused culture, values and beliefs and actual behaviour. Espoused values according to Buch and Wetzel (2001) are values that are audible or written. They may be expressed through actions and behaviours, and justified through goals, philosophies, sayings, slogans and strategies; they may be included in stories, myths and legends and may even persist in acronyms, greetings and small talk (Buch and Wetzel 2001). Schein (2010, 24) agreed that espoused beliefs and values also encompass ideals, goals, aspirations, ideologies and rationalisation, yet admitted they may or may not be congruent with behaviour and other artefacts, although they reflect original beliefs and values of what ought to be, as distinct from what is.

Pettigrew (1979) saw the purpose of ideologies as playing a significant role in the processes of organisational culture because they have the potential to link attitude (beliefs and values) and action (behaviour). In contrast rituals and myths have significant functional consequences for the organisation in that they express and articulate meaning, raising consciousness and inciting actions which align with general ethical principles (Deal and Kennedy 1982, Schein 2010). Carnall (2007) compared espoused beliefs to what is perceived to be important in an organisation, an aspect of culture professed and participated in by the members of the organisation. Espoused values are further defined and put into context in Schein's (1999, 2010) three levels of culture defined below.

Volunteers share values that are the core and visible part of an organisation's culture, and volunteering gives the individuals an opportunity to express those core values and to pass them on to others (Bussell and Forbes

2002, Hofstede 1998, MacNeela 2008). If these values are not passed on to new members then they could not be defined as part of the culture (Schein 1984, 1990) and it is this sharing of values which embodies the construct of a volunteer group. Schein (1984) interpreted culture as the socially constructed environment of the organisation, and this theme is consistent with the idea that a volunteer-friendly environment would support the retention of individuals in such a group. According to Shye (2010) and Bussell and Forbes (2001), in a dynamic, ever-changing environment the onus is on organisations to understand not only what motivates volunteers, but also how to retain them. Establishing meaningful segments of the volunteer market could lead to more effective targeting of particular groups and therefore more effective recruitment and retention strategies (Bussell and Forbes 2001). In addition, a more specific knowledge and a deeper understanding of the motivation to volunteer could be useful to effectively place volunteers into appropriate positions (Shye 2010). This may be of special interest to non-profits when attempting to increase their volunteer base, especially given the emergence of the newly retired baby-boomer generation, who anticipate a busy retirement and who may seek volunteer activities that make use of their experience and skills (Culp 2009).

Wilson and Musick (1997) note that volunteerism is a productive activity based on social networks or social ties. These include friendship networks and organisational memberships, supplying information, fostering trust, making contacts, providing support, setting guidelines and creating obligations (Rook and Sorkin 2003). Parsons (1991) and Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) stated that most social exchanges are guided by value imperatives that provide motives for behaviour other than naked greed. Thus demonstrating the link to Schein's theory (2010) indicating that volunteers as a group are influenced through leadership, beliefs, values, assumptions, learning experiences and interaction within the organisation. The culture of volunteers then draws on human, social and cultural needs, the encouragement to participate and being offered opportunities to volunteer as motivated by similar values, norms, attitudes, knowledge and preferences which fulfill their altruistic tendencies.

#### **2.4.7 Schein's Three Levels of Culture**

In expanding his theory that levels of culture ranged from:

'[T]he very tangible overt manifestations that can be seen and felt to the deeply embedded, unconscious, basic assumptions that are defined as the essence of culture there are various espoused beliefs, values, norms and rules of behaviour that members of the culture use as a way of depicting the culture to themselves and others' (Schein 1999, 23).

Schein (2010) identified these three levels as (i) artefacts, (ii) espoused values and (iii) basic underlying assumptions (as illustrated in Figure 2.1). This can be related to the subject of this study (the Centre) and the

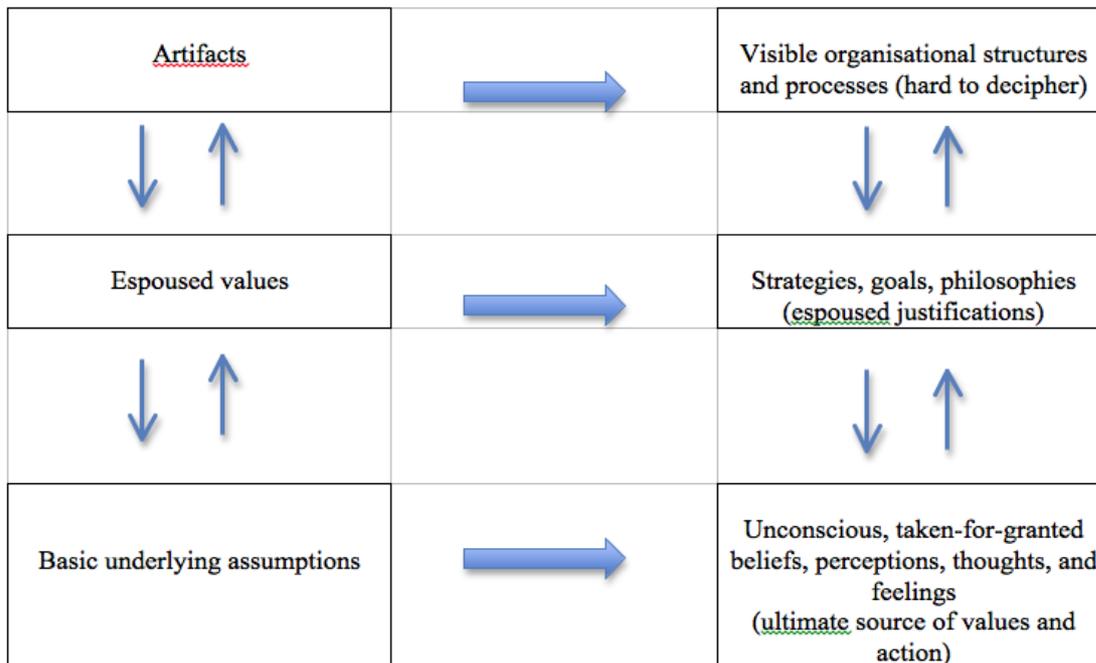
importance of the strategies employed in facilitating the relocation. For example, the making of a community quilt depicting the activities of the Centre over time, the commissioned painting of the old venue and the retention of the logo, became significant artefacts. The espoused values stemming from the altruistic tendencies of the volunteers and their resolve to 'give something back to the community' in which they reside. And lastly, the basic underlying assumptions that the Centre will remain autonomous, independent and identifiable as a continuous entity and not as a new one.

Other theorists (Buch and Wetzel 2001, Campbell 2004, Pettigrew 1979) agree with Schein's definitions of visible and physical artefacts (Schein 1984, 1990, 1991, 1999) and have added some of their own e.g. dress codes, physical settings (architecture, offices and status symbols), newsletters, signs and banners amongst others. In agreeing with Schein that the *basic underlying assumptions* were not only the last level of culture but the 'deepest level of culture and its essence', McLaurin (2008) stated that they are important because they allow the organisation to:

'Build its own integrity, identity and autonomy, differentiating itself from other groups and preventing uncertainty as the culture is driven from the deep basic assumptions, values and norms to the surface where artefacts can be seen.' (McLaurin 2008, 54)

Lewis (1998) accepted that the three layered nature of organisational culture as originally defined by Schein in 1991 (Figure 2.1) can be replicated for different organisations, stating that the culture concept can be problematic because it is hard to define in its entirety, and may cause problems when managers try to link the culture concept to behaviour. However, these levels of culture must not be seen as the only determinant of behaviour. MacIntosh and Doherty (2007) further argued that the understanding of culture on all three levels plays a key factor in creating a social order and coordination of member behaviour. The growing body of research in this area has demonstrated how organisational culture impacts directly on important factors such as staff satisfaction and commitment (Lok and Crawford 1999), turnover intentions (MacIntosh and Doherty 2005), morale and teamwork (Goffee and Jones 1996) and organisational performance (Carmeli and Tishler 2004, Chan, Shaffer, and Snape 2004). It is further contended that the external perception of an organisation's culture will be a key factor in shaping its corporate image and professionalism (MacIntosh and Doherty 2007).

**Figure 2.1: Schein's Three Levels of Culture**



*Source: Schein (1999, 16.)*

Figure 2.1 shows that culture is manifested at different levels, allowing understanding of the basic assumptions of each group. The most central issue for facilitators of change is to assess the functionality of each level's assumptions and to deal with any challenges as a consequence of change (Schein 2010). Therefore during the relocation, it was important to clearly identify the levels on which the volunteers were based, and this became evident through the interviews, informal discussions and listening to their expectations. The role as facilitator of change enabled a focus on the human side of the organisation allowing a better understanding of the complexities of the individuals.

## 2.5 Change Management

### 2.5.1 Introduction

Organisations face many challenges when implementing change in terms of both process and content. Not least is the challenge to maintain a high morale and a human touch to the prescribed change process. There is still much to learn about anxiety and stress during change. Indeed change may be seen as disruptive, negative, unnecessary and complex, particularly when faced with today's uncertain economic climate. Resistance to change which is brought about by fear often results in decreased morale, a de-motivated workforce and/or loss of employees. Keeping these points in mind, this section reviews the literature on change management processes and their relevance to non-profit, voluntary organisations.

## **2.5.2 Defining Change**

'The only constant within organisations is the continual change of these organisations', (Elving 2005, 129). Organisational change has become a topic of many textbooks and other scientific and management literature. Caruth, Middlebrook and Rachel (1985) noted more than 25 years ago that change was an important part of everyday life, and that without it companies could not keep pace with their competitors in the marketplace. This is just as true today. Change in any organisation may be about renewal, reframing or re-negotiation and potentially involves every part of the organisation including structures, processes, values, culture, relationships and stakeholders (Whitely and Whitely 2007). Stroh and Jaatinen (2001, 149) defined change as 'the shift in behaviour of the whole organisation, to one degree or another' and Johansson and Heide (2008) noted that change is often driven by conditions in the surrounding environment(s) but may also be triggered by needs within the organisation. Theorists and analysts of organisational change seek to explain why organisations change and what the consequences are, however Barnett and Carroll (1995, 217) described how organisational change can be usefully 'conceptualised in terms of its process (how change occurs) and content (what actually changes in the organisation)', explaining that models of change which consider both the process and content show the greatest potential for success.

Ford and Ford (1995, 543) defined change as 'the difference(s) between two (or more) successive conditions, states, or moments of time' and differentiated between intentional change, that is planned and produced with intent, and unintentional change - manifested as a side effect either by accident, secondary effect, or unanticipated consequences of action. Barrett (2002) and Edmonds (2011) noted that whether organisational change results from a merger, acquisition, new venture, new process improvement approach or modern day technology, change in government or legislation, global markets, exit strategies or strategic re-organisation - the challenges that lie ahead and how they are managed will determine success or failure.

## **2.5.3 The Challenge of Change**

Some theorists have observed that managing change is demanding, difficult to administer, hard to predict and track (Caruth, Middlebrook, and Rachel 1985, DiFonzo and Bordia 1998, Edmonds 2011, Kello 2011), and not always as successful as it promises to be (Eriksson 2004). Yet there are others who believe that the world in which we live is constantly changing due to productivity, technology, brand, image and reputation and that managing change has become the ultimate managerial responsibility to ensure success (Ford and Ford 1995, Luscher and Lewis 2008). It would appear then that on the surface there is a meaningful degree of ambiguity to change, as more and more managers deal with new regulations, products, growth, competition, technology and an ever-changing workforce, and are compelled to undertake moderate changes at least once a year and major changes every four to five years (Carnall 2007, Huy 1999, Luscher and Lewis 2008, Adamson et al. 2006, Edmonds 2011).

The traditional view of management during organisational change was framed by internal political tensions that inhibited and controlled information, fed information to employees in small doses and slowed down progress (Hay et al. 2001). For some time this method was accepted and reflected the status quo of the times i.e. the slower pace of life, employees unwilling to challenge authority, jobs were entered into for life and the environment was seemingly more stable. Today, managers deal with more and more change including government regulations, new products and technology, and an ever-changing workforce (Edmonds 2011). There are many challenges that face organisations due to such change ranging from the need to overcome frustration, anger and fear among staff (Luscher and Lewis 2008, Kotter and Schlesinger 1979, Caruth, Middlebrook, and Rachel 1985, Stroh and Jaatinen 2001) to the manifestation of various forms of disassociation or resistance. However resistance to change is mainly a consequence of the process of handling and managing change and does not arise from change itself (Parker 2008, Parish, Cadwallader, and Busch 2008).

While few organisational change efforts tend to be complete failures, few tend to be entirely successful, often encountering problems that take longer than expected and desired, damaging morale, costing managerial resources and creating emotional upheaval (Carnall 2007). Organisational changes may flounder because not enough strategic thought is put into communicating rationale, progress and analysis on the impact(s) that the change(s) is/are producing (Kotter and Schlesinger 1979, Liu and Perrewe 2005). Other challenges that face organisations include overcoming the *emotional* impact change may have on change recipients as well as the technological aspects of the reason for the change (Klein 1996, Eriksson 2004, Liu and Perrewe 2005). Thus understanding and managing the emotions of those affected by change is a key focus for success. Research has been devoted to understanding what emotions are present when change occurs and how they may affect organisational change (Liu and Perrewe 2005). The inability to manage the elements and intensity of emotions evoked by change events is a key reason why some change programs fail (George and Jones 2001, Huy 1999, Mossholder et al. 2000, Parker 2008).

#### **2.5.4 Culture and Change**

Currently there is considerable disagreement and many schools of thought about the extent to which organisational culture can be changed (Campbell 2004). This debate focuses on whether culture can be created, managed and changed realising that cultural theory is a complex issue (Bate 1995, Deal and Kennedy 1982, Feldman 1991, Parker 2000, Schein 1991, 2010). It has been argued by some researchers that all organisational culture is composed of 'integrated sub-cultures' (Riley 1983, Schein 2010), however others such as Lewis (1998) argue that little progress has been made in defining and understanding the significance of culture in the organisation. Many authors treat culture as a single entity and in doing so build a

case that good leaders can create and drive change in culture (Buch and Wetzel 2001, Cresie 2005, Holden 2007, Huggett 1999, Lewis 1998, MacIntosh and Doherty 2007, McLaurin 2008, Rogers and Meehan 2007). One of the weaknesses in addressing culture is the imprecise understanding of its component, the inability to define each one (Lewis 1998) and the lengthy process of change management. Buch and Wetzel (2001) and Eriksson (2004) proposed that change to organisational culture can take ten years or longer and often requires significant resources and adjustments to core values as they are often linked to significant strategic and emotional changes. As organisations and the people in them face uncertainty, changing times and the demand for higher quality and value for money, it is even more important to be aware of the impact that change will have on the culture of an organisation (Saxton 2004).

Schein (1985, 1996) warned that researchers have underestimated the extent to which culture plays a part in the effectiveness of an organisation during change, and Hofstede (1998) claimed that the importance of culture in an organisation might be a decisive influence in the future survival or failure of the organisation when change occurs. Thomas (1985) suggested that strong cultures – where staff respond to stimuli because of their alignment to *organisational* values - can be a brake on change, and cautioned that when implementing any changes likely to violate current cultural rules and values, an understanding of how the culture has been formed is invaluable in helping the process of shaping change strategies. Change involves unlearning as well as relearning and according to Schein (2010, 313) is by definition, 'a transformative process requiring a specific model to overcome resistance and anxiety'. However, McLaurin (2008) proposed that incremental change is much preferred over radical change as radical transformations destroy rather than enhance organisational culture.

The challenge of cultural change should not focus on 'resistance to change' but rather 'resistance to uncertainty' (Carnall 2007, 3) and therefore reflects the need for adequate competencies to alleviate these concerns (Carnall 2007, 169). Cameron and Quinn (1999) proposed that change in organisations is pervasive due to the degree and rapidity of change in the external environment and that without a change in culture there is little hope of enduring improvement in the organisation's future. Schein (1984) observed that over time, managed change can be a painful process which elicits strong resistance, however there is no single model of change that exists. Leaders therefore, may successfully manage change through the use of a wide variety of techniques, from outright coercion to subtle seduction and may even have to replace numbers of people who wish to hold on to all of the original culture.

### **2.5.5 Theories of Change**

There are two key paradigms which have been identified within the change management literature, namely intended (or planned) and unintended (or emergent) change (George and Jones 2001, Huy 1999). A widely

used example of intended change is Lewin's theory of change (1951) involving 'unfreezing, moving and refreezing' and is a constant basis for other theorists on the subject of change. However this model is viewed as a linear process and controlled by a management underestimating the impact of increasingly changing environments. For the purpose of this study it was important to understand Lewin's theory and if/how it could be applied for maximum impact under the circumstances the organisation faced (planned change).

Other examples of change theory are provided by Stroh and Jaatinen (2001) who comment on three different models of change – the action research model, the three-step model and the phased model. The action research model is designed to address social and organisational issues through participation and personal involvement by the researcher. While the second model, the three-step model, involves unfreezing, moving and refreezing as is evidenced in Lewin's theory. The three step model requires identifying old behaviours which need to be discarded before new ways can be adopted successfully. The last model or phased model allows the organisation to move through distinct states and processes to enable change and is mainly concentrated around structural changes. Criticisms of Stroh and Jaatinen's (2001) approach to change have been varied and include the following comments: they are too rigid; phases cannot be so distinct or chronological due to the turbulence of the environment; the emphasis on incremental change focuses on isolated aspects and not a radical transformation; and there is too much reliance on management. In this respect, these criticisms highlight that no one theory of change can effectively work for all organisations (Burnes 1996 cited in Stroh and Jaatinen 2001). For the purpose of this study, action research was deemed to be more suitable as it focused more on the participants rather than a rigid change process.

#### **2.5.5.1 Intended Change**

The specific characteristics of an intended approach to change include that it places emphasis on processes and deals with change over a significant period of time. As such, change 'cannot be wholly managed without a conscious approach to planning long before the change is going to take place' as stated by Edmonds (2011, 350). Given the nature of change, Lewis (1999) notes that intended change processes involve a multitude of issues which are directed not just at individuals, teams and management, but also the processes they engage with. These can include the analysis and reorganization of services; customer services, relationships and quality management; employee recruitment, selection and training as well as:

'strategic and transformational management, technological systems, finance and accounting procedures, benchmarking, reengineered production methods, mergers, electronic systems, volunteer recruitment processes, reward systems, software installation, goal-setting efforts, production technologies, voice-response technology, computer system conversion and database management systems.' (Lewis 1999, 58)

The planned nature of the change influenced the use of action research in this study. It provided an applied, practical focus of research. This assisted with exploring 'real world problems with the aim of developing a solution to a problem' (Creswell 2008, 596). In addition it addressed Lewis' issues (as mentioned above), in a multi-stage process involving ongoing review, reflection and revision of findings. In this instance, action research allowed for a collection of techniques including: *experiencing* - through observations and field notes; *enquiring* - asking people for information, and *examining* - using and making records (Creswell 2008, 611). However, while it can be time consuming, action research addresses the people/emotional issues of organisational change and is an inherently and explicitly values-imbued practice (Brydon-Millar 2009). The human approach of action research was the key element in ensuring the success of this study in order that the planned change was effective and as least disruptive as possible to the participants and the day to day running of the organisation.

Kotter (1995) stated that the most successful changes are those that are planned and phased but agreed that planned change usually requires a considerable length of time. He also observed that organisations which do not establish a great enough sense of urgency are often doomed to fail by becoming 'paralysed by the downside possibilities' instead of taking up the challenge by being less defensive and more reactive (Kotter 1995, 60). In comparison, inconsistent strategies in any organisational change also tend to run into predictable problems. This is due to efforts which are not clearly planned in advance, are implemented too quickly and in turn tend to become bogged down through unanticipated problems. Similarly efforts that involve a large number of people, but are also implemented quickly usually become either stalled or less participative (Kotter and Schlesinger 1979). Action research helped in this instance to enable full participation of everyone involved and the flexibility to facilitate change as per the action research spiral – plan, act, observe, reflect, plan, act, observe, reflect.

#### **2.5.5.2 Unintended Change**

The paradigm of unintended change recognises that the external environment may be changing too quickly and dynamically for a planned (intended) approach to be appropriate, and recognises the complexities of change (Worthington 2003, Stroh and Jaatinen 2001, Sharpe 2009). Change is an open ended process and emergent theorists recognise that highly dynamic environments demand more contingent approaches to achieve maximum fit with the ever-altering environment (Burnes 2000). Stroh and Jaatinen (2001) saw that the developments in information technology, better informed employees, globalisation, longer working days and changes to family life would cause a revolutionary turbulence in society through uncertainty and complexity, forcing organisations to move towards new approaches and worldviews.

It has been theorised that emergent change is better suited to relatively small-scale, decentralised organisations aimed at improving performance and changing behaviour (Burnes 2004). Burnes (2004) argued that emergent change has over the past 20 years superseded planned change as the most appropriate approach, but argued that both intended and unintended change could be allies rather than competitors. Unintended change has an emphasis on bottom up action rather than top down (Bamford and Forrester 2004). By comparison, planned change is more driven from the top with clear objectives and a longer timescale. Whether change is planned or not, for not-for-profit organisations the number of stakeholders and the pressures in terms of political, fiscal and social concerns makes any change implementation, an already arduous task, even more complex (Lewis et al., 2001). Therefore the type of change approach used is dependent on the factors pertinent to the organisation, the objectives of the change and the time frame in which it must be delivered. This may also be linked to the varying expectations of stakeholders (e.g. clients, donors, members, volunteers and others), which adds another layer of complexity to implementing change. For instance, in recent years, many countries around the world have experienced a dramatic expansion of the 'third sector'. This growth in the number of non-profit organisations has been attributed to a number of factors, including the shift of responsibility for services previously provided by governments to this sector (Kingfisher 2002). In turn this has brought more responsibility to non-profit organisations and with it a demand for higher accountability as a growing group of stakeholders show increasing interest in these organisations and their activities. The result of this trend has seen the non-profit sector put under more pressure to conform to a more corporatized environment.

Brewer (1995) tabled the impacts of change over the last century. She noted that from the early 1900s there was minimal government interference in businesses, negligible consumer resistance, little diversification of markets and a compliant workforce involving the expansion of government intervention, commercialism and increased consumer pressure and protection (Brewer 1995). These issues have today forced organisations to face the challenges of limited resources, competitive pressure and consumer demand and to respond quickly and decisively in order to be effective and remain viable. Emergent approaches to change are driven by the continuous processes linked to the complexities of the ever changing market, the changing nature of work environments, new management approaches and redefined organisational relationships and boundaries which continually drive organisations to survive and ensure their growth and success (Stroh and Jaatinen 2001). Burnes (2004) believes that emergent and planned change can live side by side and demonstrated this where emergent change was used to change attitudes, behaviour and performance whilst planned change was needed to change organisational structure. Bamford and Forrester (2004) conclude that there is no 'one best way' to manage change, but managers should understand what they are trying to achieve and utilise the most appropriate method by which to do so. Planned change therefore was evident in this study, involving a

multitude of issues directed at individuals and groups as well as the process (Lewis 1999) over the period of the preparation, physical relocation and the settling in period.

### **2.5.6 Strategies for Successful Change**

Strategies for change are derived from many different perspectives based on a diverse range of definitions of strategic change. For instance, Quinn (1980) referred to strategies (in general) as relating to a pattern or plan that integrates an organisation's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. Whitley and Whitley (2007) stated that strategies are shared understandings of what the organisation should be doing in an imagined future. Brewer (1995) saw change strategies as reliant on the adaptability of the organisation to the influence of the external environment capable of imposing change. However, Burnes (2000) warned that strategies are elusive and abstract concepts which need to be constantly addressed in this ever developing area of change, and are individual to each organisation stating there is no one universal strategy that fits all.

Many attempts have been made both theoretically and empirically, to develop models of strategic change (Lewis 1998, Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001, Elving 2005, Nixon 1994, Parker 2008). Nixon (1994) and Parker (2000) argued that successful change is only possible through empowerment of employees, the use of interventions and the assistance of a change agent. Elving (2005) focused on the role of communication as a vital strategy in organisational change, and other theorists agree that communication is also vital to the effective implementation of any organisational change (DiFonzo and Bordia 1998, Schweiger and DeNisi 1991, van Vuuren and Elving 2008). It has also been stated that the general importance of communication during planned change is empirically demonstrated and generally agreed amongst practitioners (Lewis 1999). Parish, Cadwallader and Busch (2008) and Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) proposed that strategies for change also need to focus on the antecedents and consequences of the commitment of the workforce through any organisational change before implementing any strategies. Non-profit organisations therefore, need to ensure that during the change process, it is important to maintain the goodwill of their volunteer workforce. It is also important to understand that the commitment volunteers bring to their role can still fit comfortably with changes imposed although these should not clash with their reasons for volunteering which stem from the moral and ethical framework underpinning (older) volunteer's values and tendencies (Lie and Baines 2007).

### **2.5.7 Implementing Change**

Lewis, Hamel and Richardson (2001) described implementation as the translation of any tool, technique, process or method used to facilitate change and implementers as those individuals who carry out the installation of change processes. Lewis (1999) warned that one critical point in change is implementation, and Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) argued that implementation of change programs can be costly in terms of financial resources, employee time investment, managerial time and often in employee morale. Implementing

change does not only address the process, policies and procedures of change but also gives rise to the achievement of certain desired outcomes from which the levels of success can be gauged (Carnall 2007).

Lewis, et al (2001) also described three strategic models of implementation which focus on authority, power and decision making (who controls the implementation effort); the degree of planning versus flexibility that guides the effort; and the scope and timing of the effort (breadth strategies versus depth strategies; incremental versus transformational approaches). It was also noted that previous studies of implementation tactics relied heavily on influencers within the organisation, supported by the relationships built between the implementer and the workforce (Lewis and Seibold 1998). However managing the pressures of economic and social concerns as well as paying attention to stakeholder groups makes change implementation in non-profits a more complex and arduous task (Lewis et al., (2001). Kanter and Summers (1994) suggested that the variety of stakeholders such as clients and donors amongst others, make it difficult for non-profits to innovate and implement change, whereas Caruth, Middlebroom and Rachel(1985) suggested that successful implementation of any change is dependent on the relationship and credibility of the change manager with the workforce, the ability to communicate on their level, and the reciprocal personal attitude toward the organisation and its objectives.

Implementing change calls for considerable attention to sequence and content yet there is little literature on the subject. Covin and Kilmann (1993) stated that the general importance of communication during planned change has been empirically demonstrated and generally agreed amongst practitioners to be a significant factor in change implementation, even though specific actions taken by implementers have been left unexplained and have rarely been studied. Lüscher and Lewis (2008) saw that the implementation of change strategies is often left to middle managers who struggle with the process whilst attempting to manage their subordinates' emotions, anxieties and defensiveness. Huy (2002) blamed unsuccessful change implementation on managerial inability to cope and shifting organisational expectations that dramatically alter cognitive and behavioural interactions. For non-profit organisations this may pose significant problems as many managers are also volunteers and have had little or no experience in the complexities of change implementation. This of course can be overcome by the organisation employing a paid facilitator, however unless this person has knowledge of the organisation and its ethos, culture and values of the volunteer staff, they may still find difficulty in the implementation of change.

### **2.5.8 Complexities of Change**

The growing frequency and complexities of workplace change require organisations to adapt to change with minimal disruption even though resistance to change is one of the more common reactions (Parish, Cadwallader, and Busch 2008). Black (2000) contends that change is the natural state of being of the complex

system, and further states that trying to define complexity means being able to define and understand what constitutes information in any organisational system. Given the number of complexities involved in organisational change then, it is easy to see why there is a large and growing literature on the causes, consequences and strategies of organisational change but very little on volunteer reaction to change (Herscovitch and Meyer 2002). However there is much literature on complexity theory and the concerns of dynamic non-linear systems (Burnes 2000, Black 2000, Boje 2000, Houchin and MacLean 2005, Choi, Dooley, and Rungtusanatham 2001). The most common of these complexities addressed in these theories are sensitivity to change, negative and positive feedback processes, the feeling of disequilibrium and emergent order (Houchin and MacLean 2005, 149). The study of non-linear dynamics has led to the development of complexity theory dealing with the nature of emergence, innovation, learning and adaption of implementing strategies during change (Houchin and MacLean 2005) offering valuable insight into management and strategic issues. A number of theorists over the last decade have examined organisations through the lens of complexity theories on organisational change (Black 2000, Luscher and Lewis 2008, Stacey 1995, Stroh and Jaatinen 2001, Houchin and MacLean 2005) and found that the theory provided a different perspective on how order emerges overcoming defensive behaviours and anxieties of the workforce.

Since Peters and Waterman (1985) presented their theories on successful management, based on entrepreneurship, autonomy, hands on management and plain good old common sense, other writers have been arguing that managers need to abandon top-down, command-and-control styles and embrace more flatter and flexible processes. Greater employee involvement is essential for success when addressing the complexities of change (Handy 1989, Kotter 1995, Peters and Waterman Jr 1985, Pryor et al. 2011). Top-down change efforts often fail because stakeholders get alienated from decision making processes. This is because these processes unsuccessfully reflect the learning activities that guide the change process which would normally lead to innovative solutions and continuous improvement (Stroh, Byrne, and Grigoleit 2007) . Quinn (1980) raised the issue that the more complex the change, the more elaborate the change strategies must be, and used analogies of historic battle strategies to further identify action sequences into a cohesive whole to 'marshall and allocate an organisation's resources..... in order to anticipate the complexities..... and shape the true goals of the enterprise' (Quinn 1980, 7). Boje (2000) suggested that in terms of change, complexity theory practices logical positivism in terms of realism, rationalism, reductionism and relativism, adding that in a multiplicity of perspectives there is no conclusive solution which fits all organisations. It would seem then that complexity theory needs to be applied with more understanding of human behaviour and to take into account a range of issues to produce an interactive and integrated framework for understanding organisational change (Houchin and MacLean 2005).

### **2.5.9 Managing Change**

Pryor, Toombs, Taneja and Odom (2011) raised several issues which need to be managed correctly to facilitate change. Most important of these were employee involvement and process improvement. While they saw that there could be a trusting relationship between management and employees during routine and day-to-day operations, during times of change this did not seem to be true when applied to management and there was an unhealthy scepticism towards employees' handling of change - especially during the transition period between unfreezing and refreezing (Pryor et al. 2011). Elving (2005) proposed that if organisational change is about 'how' to change the tasks of the employees, then specific communicative action is needed to manage those changes. This should be with the least disruption and as an integrative part of the change efforts and strategies, allowing awareness and understanding by all parties of the changes in the organisational direction (van Vuuren and Elving 2008).

Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two-way symmetrical model allows for this. The general consensus is that clear and simple two-way communication to reduce resistance to change is a key factor during the change process (Kotter 2012) enabling better management and acceptance of change (Alexander, Lindsay-Smith, and Joerin 2009, Barrett 2002, Clampitt, DeKoch, and Cashman 2000, Elving 2005). Parker (2008) proposed giving employees the opportunity to articulate concerns to understand and accept a better management process. This enables employees to create their own journey through the change labyrinth and empowers employees to take some ownership of the change management process. By increasing employee involvement, there is a better likelihood of enhancing their learning skills and approach to leadership (Nixon 1994). In addition, the publicising of successes was also considered an important issue when managing change as it assists morale, enthusiasm, motivation and momentum, and encourages the positive changes taking place rather than focusing on negative feelings (Kello 2011, Klein 1996, Macdonald, Sprenger, and Dubel 1997, Parker 2008, Burnes 1996). Managing change therefore, is not for the weak-hearted. It involves cultural diversity and an emotionally charged workforce. Change managers need to be flexible and understanding of anxieties. They need to be able to organise, implement and control the speed of change as opposed to just developing the processes of change (Romano 1995) and be in constant communication with their workers in order for change to be successful.

### **2.5.10 Communicating Change**

Change management cannot be successful without effective communication, and effective communication depends on an understanding of the important role culture plays in any change program (Barrett 2000). It has long been thought that it is insufficient for managers to view communication as just a method, a message or a strategy (Daymon and Holloway 2002, Deetz, Tracy, and Simpson 2000, Ford and Ford 1995). Account also needs to be taken of the broader cultural context (Nixon 1994) during a time of change to relieve uncertainty,

complexity and the pressure of change. Managers need to be sensitive to issues such as how and why employees misinterpret, resist or reject communication during organisational change (Sopow 2006). Culture provides the forum for managers to dispel resistance, rumours, myths and innuendo which are widely associated with unsuccessful change communication efforts (Daymon 2000, Barrett 2002, Elving 2005, DiFonzo and Bordia 1998). Establishing two-way dialogue with employees during change management processes is invaluable not only in providing information but also to listening to responses, issues and fears and taking them seriously (Burnes 1996, van Vuuren and Elving 2008).

Encouraging regular two-way communication during the change process, rather than a sporadic or intermittent “need to know” approach can have a number of benefits. It enables managers to pick up quickly on significant reactions and concerns allowing them to respond and address them quickly, or to deal with issues that may have been overlooked or assumptions which have been made, to be tested and challenged (Burnes 1996, Parish, Cadwallader, and Busch 2008). Communication and dissemination of information has in the past been downward driven and one-way, was often poor, subject to a need-to-know basis or fed to employees in little doses resulting in a loss of confidence in the organisation and potentially unhappy and/or uninformed employees (Lewis 1999, Stroh and Jaatinen 2001, Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001). The emerging literature in regard to change communication emphasises the need to engage employees and employ them in the decision making process (Alexander, Lindsay-Smith, and Joerin 2009, Argenti 1998, Elving 2005). Two-way communication therefore enables mutual understanding, two-way balanced effect, and formative and evaluative understanding of all parties involved in the communication process Grunig and Hunt 1984).

Robson and Tourish (2005) documented a wealth of empirical evidence demonstrating a frequent gulf between how much information employees need in their jobs and what they receive - mainly due to problems with the sources from which they receive it, the channels through which it is transmitted and how much information is sent out (Robson and Tourish 2005). Schweiger and DeNisi (1991) reported that management’s reluctance to involve employees in the communication process was associated with heightened levels of dysfunctional outcomes. They also warned that failure to do so may cause negative reactions from employees which in turn will hinder the change process.

Elving (2005) suggests that prescriptions for effectively managing change communication as an important change strategy must include encouraging participation from as many employees as possible to address concerns and ensure leaders act as role models. DiFonzo and Bordia (1998) evidenced that change communication addressing uncertainty also reduced rumours and that the immediate announcement of change in the organisation, the preparation of a communication time-line and producing comments on progress illustrated elements of a successful communication change process built on a culture of trust. In this

regard it can be argued that culture and communication are inextricably linked and that problems in communication arise from the tendency of communicators to 'concentrate solely on the structure and form of communication overlooking the tacit dimensions of communication i.e. the cultural context which gives meaning to communication messages' (Daymon 2000, 241).

Successful communication strategies are as much about what is *not* said as they are about what *is* said, with the underlying culture of the organisation influencing and shaping employee responses (Clampitt, DeKoch, and Cashman 2000). Many authors have attested to the importance of communication during periods of change (Clampitt, DeKoch, and Cashman 2000, Daly, Teague, and Kitchen 2003, Daymon 2000, Elving 2005, Garnett and Kouzmin 2000, Harshman and Harshman 1999, Ihator 2004, Johansson and Heide 2008). While most of this research has focussed on organisations who employ paid workers, with few considering the volunteer workforces in non-profit organisations, much of what has been reviewed previously may also be applicable to volunteers.

### **2.5.11 Summary**

As we have seen, change by its very nature is a challenge to the status quo, and perceived by many employees as a threat, manifesting itself in many ways: anger (passive or active), fear, stress, cynicism and denial resultant from organisational, cultural or psychological barriers to change (Parker 2008, Sharpe 2009). Working with employees to facilitate change should focus on the reduction of resistance in ways that employees can understand, accept and embrace. Inevitably this will result in a more positive post change relationship (Stroh and Jaatinen 2001). Communication of change as part of the overall change strategy presents a new paradigm that emerges as a response to opposing factions and treats communication as a more receiver-centered process based on stakeholders, oriented to relationship building and of strategic importance (Stroh and Jaatinen 2001). Evidence suggests that key components in strategies for change are positively bound in the dissemination of information and may include stories, myths and legends as powerful forms of communication, not simply reflections of organisational meanings but as ongoing processes that constitute organisational life (Garnett and Kouzmin 2000, Ihator 2004, Johansson and Heide 2008).

The absence of change communication aimed at volunteers has been a focus in the broader context of this research. This has shown a tendency to undermine the maintenance of motivation in volunteers in times of major change, and has been described above as an identifiable gap in the literature.

## **2.6 Implications of Professionalisation**

### **2.6.1 Introduction**

As we have previously seen it is difficult to contextualise what is 'Profession', 'Professional' and 'Professionalism' when it is directed towards a non-profit organisation. However, it is essential to consider any

impact of professionalisation on a non-profit organisation. This includes whether the values or culture of the volunteers and the organization will change as an adaptation to professionalisation and what effect it may have on volunteers and the organization alike. This section will attempt to define why the professionalisation of an organisation may be a benefit or a detriment, and what, if any, values are added to non-profit organisations and their stakeholders as an outcome of this process.

### **2.6.2 Professional as a Classification**

The four 'true' professions have in the past been defined as the Church, the army, medicine and law, with emphasis on their deep historical roots for purposes of legitimation (Hwang and Powell 2009). Newer professions have been seen to imitate these traditions for more ideological (what they would like to be seen as) than structural (purposeful and sequential qualification) reasons to legitimise the continuity of the professional status (Larson 1977, quoted in Abel 1979, L'Etang and Pieczka 2001). According to Wilensky (1964) the effect of this has been to devalue the traditional definition of being a professional by loosely applying this title to the increasing specialisation and transferability of skill, in industries where a licence or certificate is mandatory to practice as a member of that industry, and the growth of service occupations. What was once an elite application of skill, stability and authority and which earned the title 'professional' now has the ability to be conferred to many services from 'real estate agents and laboratory technicians' to personalised service functionaries (Wilensky 1964, 138).

A more recent interpretation of professionalism focuses on three main issues – being paid, being a member of a specific work community and being competent and business-like (Goodall 2000). Pieczka and L'Etang (2001) stated that organisations need to look beyond the homogeneity implied by the professional labels of lawyer, doctor and clergyman (often built on hard and exploitative apprenticeships) because the pursuit of professional status and recognition is set to continue. The expansion of education, higher education in particular, and the growth of organisational populations has paved the way for more professional work environments where high levels of education and formal knowledge are now the norm rather than the exception (Hwang and Powell 2009).

Beyond the numerical expansion of professionals, more diffuse notions of professionalism such as commitment to work and dedication to improve one's capabilities, have become pervasive in contemporary society (Hwang and Powell 2009). This is evidenced by the growing number of domains for which required qualifications are now deemed necessary and typical for management and staff alike. The recent growth of managerial professionals has emanated through

*...higher education, a body of knowledge, a professional society, a code of ethics, a system for*

*accreditation of practitioners by examination, a process for reporting violations including reviewing and censuring, a foundation for further research and education, and specified curricula at university level* (Wright, 1979 in L'Etang and Pieczka 2001, 434)

and represents a profound change in what was the traditional limited arena of being classed as a professional.

Suddaby & Greenwood (2005) defined professionalism as drawing on 19th century archetypes of power and expertise between professionals and clients. However, Brint (1994) suggested the logic of professionalism as a social trustee ideal that links expert knowledge with higher social purpose, and advocates fulfilling consumers' needs through expertise and by knowledge. Larson (1977) however, stated that traditional professional identities were based on a logic in which the overt commercialism of professionalism takes precedence over espoused values of service and society.

Expanded professionalism has affected many sectors of society, one in particular is the non-profit sector known for its use of amateurs and volunteers (Karl 1998). Guirguis-Younger, Kelly and McKee (2005) questioned the effect that being more professional may have on volunteers and if volunteers will find their work more or less satisfying. They also raise the question of volunteers having the same amount of autonomy, and whether having a professional framework will facilitate or be a barrier to recruitment of new volunteers. Simultaneously, non-profit organisations at both individual and organisational levels, are now expected to be more professional through efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in order to satisfy increasing demands (Hwang and Powell 2009, Suarez 2010).

### **2.6.3 Professionalisation as a Concept**

In its simplest sense, professionalisation occurs when an activity ceases to be delivered through voluntary work (Geoghegan and Powell 2006) or is delivered closer in line with the systems and workings of the state (Cumming 2008). However the concept of professionalisation can go significantly beyond this understanding. Hodges (2006) noted that a significant question which has emerged from the professional discourse in many fields is the extent to which an occupation is directed at solving and meeting real human problems and needs traditionally claimed to serve society. Over the last 20 years the operations of non-profit organisations in the UK have changed beyond all recognition, with many now operating as a corporate entity would (Saxton 2004). The ongoing discussion on the professionalisation of the non-profit sector has highlighted the challenges faced by modern non-profit organisations and raises questions about their ability to retain their reason for being (Saxton 2004). It is the idea of professionalisation and what it means in terms of higher income, being profit-driven, increase in direction and impact that have posed a perception problem, as most non-profits portray a

more informal, friendly atmosphere devoid of bureaucracy and resulting in a comfortable, simple, cheap and non-threatening environment (Saxton 2004).

The non-profit sector is evolving rapidly as organisations are pushed to expand their focus on efficiency, sustainability and accountability (Suarez 2010). Government reforms in accountability and transparency threaten to undermine the independence and confidence of non-profit organisations, by pushing reforms which may well work in corporate or public sectors but are alien to voluntary organisations and the contexts in which they operate (Donovan 2009). Professionalisation of non-profit organisations too often ignores, or is in opposition to the core values of the non-profit organisation. In addition they detract from the focus of how the organisation is run. One example is using volunteer staff to concentrate on the extra administrative work instead of building relationships with its stakeholders and is further hampered by the increase and interchangeability of paid and volunteer labour (Handy, Mook, and Quarter 2008). While the concept of the professionalisation of the non-profit sector may appear to improve the legislative desire for more accountable administrative practices and processes, it is less clear how this might change the experience of the volunteers themselves and the experiences of the communities they serve (Guirguis-Younger, Kelley, and McKee 2005).

There has been a great deal of discussion on the changing nature of work resulting from government initiatives, new technology and other sources. As these changes occur, the skills required for performing work also change. To keep pace with these changes, many organisations have initiated professionalisation programs to maintain and enhance workers' skills (Curnow and McGonigle 2006). Key stakeholders, notably government and philanthropic funders and associations have led the charge for greater efficiency and accountability in the non-profit sector and political pressure on non-profits to increase their accountability has grown considerably (Hwang and Powell 2009). It has been documented that at the level of individual organisations, professionalisation often leads to significant shifts in both the non-profit organisation's mission and structure (Minkoff and Powell 2006, in Hwang and Powell 2009).

#### **2.6.4 Possible Effects on Volunteers**

Professionalisation in the non-profit sector has far reaching consequences with a key concern being that the move towards professionalisation arguably ignores other aspects of the culture of charitable organisations. This too reflects practices used in the corporate sector which may encompass image reinforcement, standardisation, segmentation and specialisation - aspects which may be unfamiliar in a volunteer culture (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). The possibility of supplementing and/or replacing volunteers with paid staff indicates a more commercially driven organisation with increasing sophistication in processes and big business profits (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). If volunteers are supplemented with or replaced by paid professionals then the core business (and values) of the non-profit organisation may change (Sharp and Brock

2010). Many non-profits structure their fees and charges in order to break-even rather than make substantial profits to cover additional costs such as wages, superannuation, leave, tax etc., subsequently the prime motivation of the voluntary workforce – altruism – may be lost in lieu of profit-driven outcomes or motivations.

The requirement for volunteers to be more professional raises many concerns, one issue being a decrease in social interaction between volunteers, members and visitors (Parsons 2004b). Such interactions may be greatly reduced due to time constraints brought about by corporate type requirements of the volunteers. In addition, while the majority of volunteers have traditionally been motivated by altruism or through having a personal affiliation with the organisation, they may feel less able to do so if administrative tasks interfere with or create tension between generating profits and maintaining social relations (Parsons 2004a). Another problem lies in volunteers' lack of associative experience with the increasing commercial aspects of the organisation. Some volunteers may even experience difficulties coming to terms with the idea of becoming a more professionalised entity in all or any of its forms (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003).

In the non-profit sector, professionalisation may also lead to social exclusion if volunteers motivated by social interaction or altruistic tendencies are replaced by paid professionals (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). However, while there is an argument for volunteer organisations to be introduced to, and embrace more professional processes and procedures in order to be seen to be more accountable, there may be some resistance to this (Sharp and Brock 2010). Although little research has been conducted in the sector in regard to the professionalisation of non-profit organisations, the question arises regarding how the move towards professionalisation ignores other cultural aspects of non-profit organisations and what impact this may have (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). Non-profit organisations will need to decide if and how they will implement these new reforms – will they rely solely on volunteers, engage paid employees or continue to exist utilising both options? Volunteers may then continue to provide the social aspects of relationship building while the paid employees carry out the more accountable and administration practices.

Both Broadbridge and Parsons (2003) and Geoghegan and Powell (2006) questioned the impact that professionalisation has on the values and motivations of those involved in the voluntary sector. Tonkiss and Passey (1999) found that it was what voluntary organisations stood for that had a greater currency with the general public than the processes by which they operated. While it is hard to define what professionalisation means in a volunteer environment (Cumming 2008), Tonkiss and Passey (1999) referred to it as a strategy to secure status based on expertise, and that professionalisation in the for-profit sense was intended to maximise accountability within an organisation in order to confer a more corporate and profit-minded status. However, this may also disempower volunteers in deference to *experts* as stated by Geoghegan and Powell (1999). The impact of professionalisation in a community development centre in Ireland illustrated that professionalisation

can lead to the loss of altruistic tendencies, estrangement of volunteers and a breakdown in the community rank and file (Geoghegan and Powell 1999). Indeed professionalisation and bureaucratic processes may have an adverse impact on the volunteer organisation, its community and services if paid expertise is brought into the organisation or volunteers are made to be more process and profit driven. This threatens not only volunteers' autonomy but also the roles they play in the organisation, and may be interpreted as reflecting a genuine shift in the balance of power against volunteer groups (Meade and O'Donovan 2002).

The emergence of this professionalisation approach aimed at volunteer organisations involves complex, consultative and time consuming exercises (Geoghegan and Powell 2006). The move by governments to reform the non-profit sector means that volunteers need to excel in technical areas such as strategic planning, policy analysis and financial projection, managed by the introduction of paid staff who rarely share the same community objectives as those whose interest they seek to assist (Meade and O'Donovan 2002). As volunteer work tends to be mainly based on altruistic tendencies and social needs, the organisation is less driven by calculative or top down governance (Meade and O'Donovan 2002). Organisations relying on volunteer labour usually adopt a flat organisational structure and if this was to change then volunteers will feel disconnected, especially if the professionalising of their organisation means being supplemented with, replaced by or employing more paid workers (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003). With the expansion of non-profit organisations in scope, number and assets, comes an increased interest in and scrutiny over the operations and performance by all stakeholders including donors, governments, citizens and other actors relevant to the non-profit sector (Bies 2010). The possible effects of professionalisation of non-profits are two-fold. Firstly the decrease in social interaction of the volunteers, including benefits such as providing them with a structure, meaning and purpose to their lives; a sense of belonging to a larger entity alongside like-minded people; satisfaction, enjoyment and personal fulfilment through the work and relationships they have fostered (Lie and Baines 2007). Secondly, it allows for mobility and preservation, autonomy and independence, preservation of identity and dignity; choice and control, and the ability to participate in the community of their choosing, supporting other members of the community and adding to the well-being of the overall community (Craig 2004) without bureaucratic corporatism stifling their *raison d'être*.

### **2.6.5 Summary**

The voluntary sector has not been immune to organisational reforms (Tonkiss and Passey 1999) which are mandating more thorough process driven accountability and transparency. Voluntary organisations are expected to be more highly regulated, more competitive and more output-driven through these reforms thereby devaluing the culture and altruistic tendencies of non-profit organisations (Hwang and Powell 2009). Geoghegan and Powell (2006) noted that one rationale for professionalisation is to secure social status based on profit. Forcing non-profits to maximise financial reward to secure social status raises the question of

whether this aspect of the professionalisation of community volunteers would be detrimental to volunteers, clients, patrons or members. Guirguis-Younger, Kelly and McKee (2005) debated whether the role of the volunteer and the relationships they build will be compromised by professionalisation and if the volunteers will find the trend to professionalise incompatible with their altruistic tendencies.

The pressures of professionalisation and the challenges in implementing this concept in the non-profit sector will force volunteers to re-assess their reasons for volunteering. It has been evidenced that while there is a motivation for voluntary organisations to provide quality services, volunteers may find forced professionalisation incompatible with their expectations and interests. Many volunteers bring a commitment to the organisation based on the relationships they build within that organisation as well as their desire to give something back to the community. Volunteers may feel their independence and autonomy is at risk if forced to work alongside paid employees who may be seen to have authority over them.

## **2.7 Chapter Summary - Literature Review**

This chapter reviewed the literature covering the subjects of culture, change and possible professionalisation in the context of the non-profit sector. It is the starting point on which this study and its objectives based and developed. It provides the knowledge on which a framework may be built to assist non-profit volunteer based organisations embarking on a period of organisational change, and for coordinators to design effective and sustainable change communication programs. The literature in this chapter draws on research covering the relevant topics and introduces emergent literature for the development of this framework.

While presenting this research applicable to issues of culture, change and professionalisation largely documented with the for-profit or corporate sector in mind, there is scope to compare how the literature may be applicable in the non-profit sector, focusing on the specific constraints faced by volunteer-led, non-profit organisations. Each section takes into consideration local, national and global perspectives in relation to other non-profit organisational issues including consequences, and scope for further research. It also highlights key principles to be considered in the development of strategies to assist in further research. These include volunteers' personal values, commitment and motivation, the challenge of change and the organizational culture.

The next chapter considers the research methodology. This involves both qualitative and quantitative research and includes the challenges of the mixed method approach, case study research and role of the researcher as participant observer. It introduces the concept of confidentiality and bias as well as validity and reliability.

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

#### 3.0 Chapter Overview

On completion of the literature review and having identified viable areas to address, it is now appropriate to discuss the methodology of this research. Reasons for using both qualitative and quantitative research will be discussed with a greater emphasis on action research, taking into consideration the role of the researcher in action as *participant observer*. This chapter examines both the advantages and challenges of that role. As with all case-based study research, this chapter includes procedures central to all types of research methods including threats to validity, maintaining the chain of evidence and testing explanations. The action research component will provide constant reflection on those processes ensuring the reliability of the outcomes. The selection of interviewees, arrangements and guides for interviews, the manner of contact and other processes will be covered. The conclusion of the methodology section thus provides a solid basis for the following chapters – findings and analysis, implications and conclusions, and implications and recommendations for future research.

#### 3.1 Introduction

With mixed method research becoming increasingly popular in the fields of sociology, psychology, education and health sciences the basis for this research will focus on the 'integration of quantitative and qualitative research methods' (Molina Azorin and Cameron 2010, 95). It is further acknowledged that as mixed method research practice is becoming increasingly articulated, its attachment to research practice is highly recognised as the 'third major research approach or research paradigm' (Johnson, Onwegbuzie, and Turner 2007, 112). Whilst acknowledging that a mixed method approach is not intrinsically superior to research that relies on a single method (Molina Azorin and Cameron 2010), an important consideration in the use of a mixed method study is whether mixed methods best address the research problem and the research question. Creswell & Piano Clark (2007) pointed out that conducting mixed method research is not easy. Mixed method studies are a challenge because they require more work and financial resources and take up more time. Mixed method research also requires researchers to develop a broader set of skills that span both qualitative and traditional quantitative aspects. In determining the methodology for this study, the advantages of using a mixed method, action research approach in a small non-profit community Centre as a case-based study were considered to bring more richness and vigour into the research and provide a better context in which to achieve the objectives of this study.

#### 3.2 Context

This study concentrates on a local community adult learning Centre, a non-profit organisation run by volunteers and one part-time paid administrator. A key aspect to this study was a consideration of the changes

that occurred during the relocation of the Centre from old run-down premises to purpose-built new premises. The study focuses on how the change was managed, the effect(s) on the culture and motivation of the volunteers and any subsequent impacts on the professionalism of this non-profit organisation. The study incorporates qualitative data from in-depth and structured interviews with the Centre's tutors and unstructured discussions and interactions with the Centre's volunteers both pre and post relocation; and quantitative research from its members pre and post relocation by way of surveys. Using action research as the research strategy allows reflection on the process as well as the findings, and allows the research to be more collaborative and respectful to important stakeholders, such as volunteers, clients and other community members (Herr and Anderson 2005). An action research approach respects the knowledge and experience of the research subjects, by recognising their input, exploring and documenting the information available at the Centre and acknowledging their opinions and values.

This research was undertaken while the researcher was on contract as Transition Coordinator (TC) to a local community adult learning centre. The transition required the physical relocation of the Centre from an old run down house to a new purpose-built venue. Both premises belonged to the local Council and were leased/to be leased at a peppercorn rent. The former building was becoming un-inhabitable, too small for the Centre's progress and had also been earmarked for redevelopment by the Council. The role of TC was to extend over a period of twelve months, through a government funded grant to relocate, settle in and assist in the growth of the Centre.

The challenges for this researcher (as the TC) included preparing volunteers for the changes occurring before, during and after the relocation and included the acceptability of the new location of the Centre, its facilities and operation of state of the art equipment to Centre staff. As the majority of the members and volunteers are of mature age it was a priority to ensure that instructions were clearly explained and documented. The role involved, but was not restricted to:

- communicating and disseminating information to all stakeholders (members, volunteers, suppliers, tutors)
- identifying, purchasing and submitting grants for equipment and furniture needed to furnish the new premises
- developing mutually beneficial partnerships with other community organisations
- developing and implementing a marketing plan
- surveying members and others to initiate new courses
- ensuring sustainable growth
- organising milestone celebrations to promote the Centre and keep morale high
- relocation of all furniture from old to new Centre

- purchasing and organising delivery of new furniture
- updating old systems and establishing new ones to ensure smooth running of new Centre
- reviewing and revising the business plan during settling in and strengthening phases, and
- keeping volunteers updated, motivated and committed.

The major challenges as TC were to keep morale high during the period of change and to add a human touch to the prescribed changes. This approach enabled the researcher to observe, question and document the actions, attitudes and feelings of the volunteers and their level of motivation throughout the change management process, as well as any changes in the organisational values and culture. It is hoped that a better understanding of change communication in a non-profit organisation will benefit other organisations in similar situations in the future.

### **3.3 Justification of the Approach**

Researchers often feel the need to justify their approach. This may be even more important when the choice of approach is a mixed method approach on the basis that it allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon they are studying more completely than would be possible with a single method (Mertens 2011). It was with this concept in mind that a mixed method approach was deemed most suitable to use in this study. In establishing the rationale for a mixed method study it was noted that researchers today give 'increasing attention to a class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study' (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p62 in Yin 2009).

It has also been argued that the primary philosophy of mixed method research is pragmatism, in that it attempts to respect fully the wisdom of both quantitative and qualitative viewpoints and methods in addressing research questions. In general terms, mixed method research is described as an 'approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions and standpoints - both qualitative and quantitative' (Johnson, Onwegbuzie, and Turner 2007, 113). This relates to the rationale for including action research into this study. While the choice of mixed method research provides a solid base for the researcher to explore the challenges of this thesis, introducing action research makes the *action* central to the research enterprise and 'sets up nicely a tension with traditional research, which tends to take a more distanced approach to research settings' (Herr and Anderson 2005, 3). In conjunction with both quantitative and qualitative research of the issues, action research will afford a better insight into any problems which may arise and allow exposure to the social structure and implications of change, due to the participation and the ability of the researcher to continuously reflect on the events occurring within the organisational study.

### 3.4 Mixed Method Research: A Brief Overview

The mixed method approach also provides more in-depth opportunities to better evaluate research findings, because the complexity of this research calls for answers beyond simple numbers in a quantitative sense and words in a qualitative sense (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2007). The use of surveys for quantitative analysis and interviews for qualitative analysis has enabled the researcher to explore more rigorous meanings expressed through descriptive and inferential data and words, systematic observation, perception of feelings, and roles played by key participants (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The use of interviews is considered to be one of the central tools of qualitative research in that they are more than just a conversation, they allow a more collaborative transmission of knowledge through the ability to understand the perspective of the interviewees, are relatively non-directive, and enable the researcher to guide the interview focus to provide an evolving conversation (Daymon and Holloway 2002).

Dey (1993, quoted in Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 482) drew three distinctive differences between qualitative versus quantitative data as evidenced in the table below.

**Table 3.1 Quantitative v Qualitative Data**

<b>Quantitative data</b>	<b>Qualitative data</b>
Based on meaning derived from numbers	Based on meanings expressed through words
Collection results in numerical and standardised data	Collection results in non-standardised data requiring classification into categories
Analysis conducted through the use of diagrams and statistics	Analysis conducted through the use of conceptualisation

*Source: Saunders et al 2009*

Contrast may be drawn between the abstraction that results from quantitative data collection and the more thorough description associated with qualitative data, in turn this allows for a richer contextual framework upon which to base analysis.

### 3.5 Action Research

The use of action research in this case-based study is threefold. Firstly action research is an applied, practical focus of research, exploring practical problems with the aim of developing a solution to a problem (Cresswell 2008). Secondly, it is a multi-stage process involving ongoing review, reflection and revision of findings. McKernon (1988 in Herr and Anderson 2005, 4) describes action research as a form of self-reflective problem-solving, enabling practitioners to better understand and solve pressing problems in social settings. Lastly, reflection is part of this process ensuring the quality of the research and is ongoing throughout the life of the

research. Action research has traditionally enabled professionals to learn and develop through engaging and reflecting on their experiences as they seek to solve real-life problems in an organisational setting (Coghlan and Coughlan 2010). Brown and Tandon (1983) found that action researchers work best in client systems that have a consensus about goals and values, like to work collaboratively in problem solving situations and are dependent on acceptance of the researcher within the group.

Action research provides the best theatre for applying both quantitative and qualitative methods and has been described as an enquiry with people, rather than research on people because it includes investigation of the 'pedagogical assumptions of the researcher, who is also a participant' (Altrichter et al. 2002, 125). It is also inclusive in its relationship with many other research frameworks and is ongoing as it attempts to reflect on its findings throughout the research process (Altrichter et al. 2002). Action research explores the variety of meanings participants hold and challenges the qualities that influence thinking and behavior (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). It involves a process of building understanding through reality by clarifying, analysing and interpreting participants' understanding of the process of the research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). Perhaps the best definition of action research was framed by Rappaport (1970, p.499 in Brown and Tandon 1983).

*Action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework.*

In applying action research to this study there are four themes to focus on: the purpose of the research; the involvement of the researcher in a collaborative partnership with the subjects of the study; the iterative nature of the process of diagnosing, planning, taking action and evaluating (the action research spiral – discussed further in this chapter) and the eventuality that the findings may have implications beyond the immediate project (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). In turn, by integrating action research with case-based study, this research allows empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomena within a real life context due to the 'collaborative nature of action learning research' (Coghlan and Coughlan 2010, 201).

### **3.6 Case Study Research**

The case-based study approach is used in many situations to contribute to research knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social and political research (Yin 2009) and is usually associated with intensive investigations of a location, organisation or campaign (Daymon and Holloway 2002). The case-based study method allows researchers to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as life cycles, small group behaviour, organisational and managerial processes, community changes, strategy and maturation of the industry (Yin 2009). Case-based study is often referred to as 'a qualitative constructivist

paradigm' and is used when the researcher 'identifies a distinctive need and significance arising out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena' (Yin 2009, 4). Research involving case data can usually get much closer to theoretical constructs and provide more persuasive argument about causal forces than broad empirical research can (Siggelkow 2007).

Case-based study offers rich, empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon that are typically based on a variety of data sources (Yin 2009) and can be either historical accounts or contemporary descriptions of recent events (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The central notion is to use case-based study as the basis from which to develop theory inductively, that is to build theory from cases, producing new theory from data which is emergent in the sense that it is situated in and developed by recognising patterns of relationships (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). This study then represents the worldview of the researcher based on a constructivist paradigm focusing on understanding the dynamics present within the organisation under study (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007, Siggelkow 2007).

Daymon and Holloway (2002) offered several rationales for when case studies are applicable and effective. Case studies are applicable when there is a need for intensive examination using multiple sources of evidence – qualitative, quantitative or both – of an entity bound by time and place; Case studies are effective for exploring an organisation, a set of people, a community, an event, a process, an issue or a campaign (Daymon and Holloway 2002). For this research, using a case study enabled the collection of rich and detailed information highlighting numerous factors governing managed communications in a particular setting, portraying something of the uniqueness of the organisation and the process it was going through (Daymon and Holloway 2002).

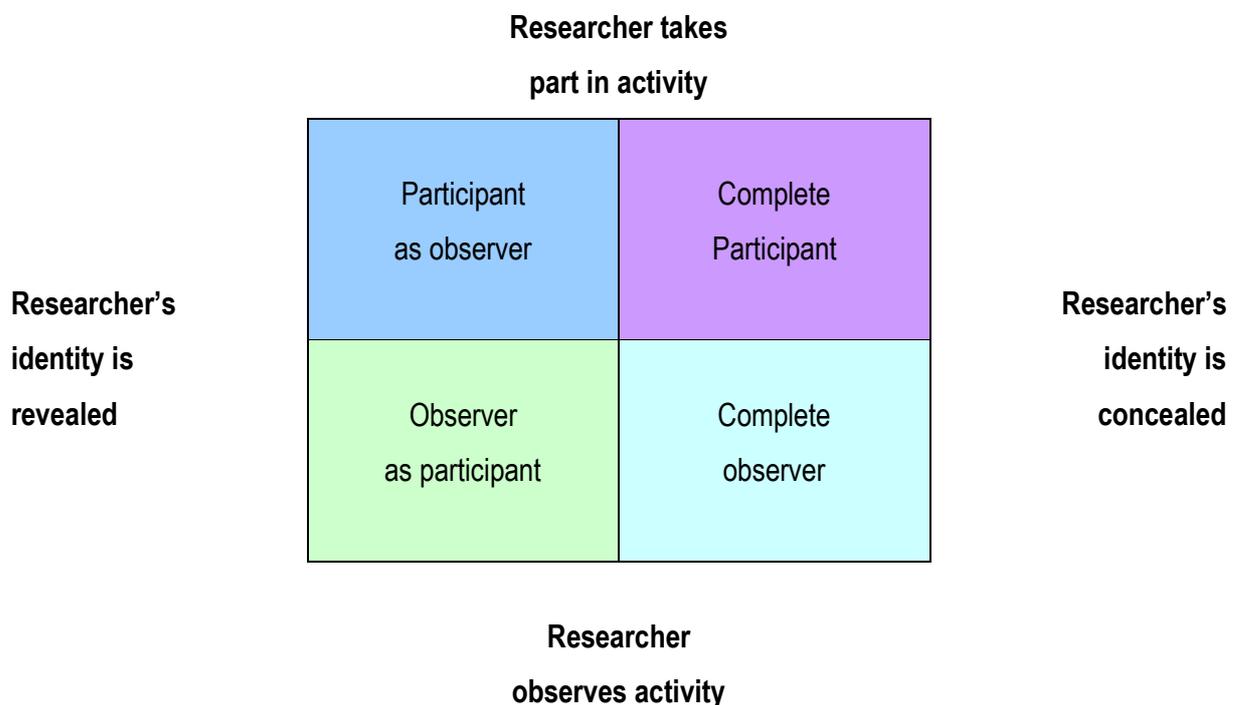
According to Yin (2009) the purpose of case study research is a way of investigating an empirical topic following a set of pre-specified procedures in an holistic and systematic approach. Yin also advocates five rationales for conducting single case studies – *critical, unique, typical, revelatory and longitudinal*. In the first rationale, a critical case tests a well formulated theory. The second rationale is where a case represents an extreme or unique case. Conversely the third rationale is when the case is typical or representative. The fourth rationale proposes a revelatory case, as used in this case study where the researcher has the opportunity to 'participate and observe a phenomenon previously inaccessible' (Yin 2009, 48). The fifth rationale refers to a single case study that is longitudinal – that is the study of the same single case at two or more different points in time. The application of case study research allows the collection of rich, detailed information across a wide range of dimensions about one particular case (Yin 2009).

This case study began in 2010 and ended in 2012. It focused on an adult learning centre which was approaching major change and concluded just as the organisation opened its doors in a newly refurbished building, quite different from where it has resided for the previous 22 years.

### 3.7 The Role of the Researcher (as Participant Observer)

For action research to take place the researcher must take on a specific role. As a participant and researcher these roles vary in how the researcher may be cast (see figure below), yet the role of participant as observer in action research, allows the flexibility to reveal the role of a researcher in a fieldwork relationship with the subjects of the research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009).

**Figure 3.1 Role of Researcher**



*Source: (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, 293)*

Because the identity of the researcher is clear, there is the ability to ask questions to enhance understanding of the organisation and to work collaboratively with key stakeholders. It also assists in gaining the trust of the group/organisation and permits admission to activities that otherwise would have been out of bounds (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009, Yin 2009). As the transition coordinator (participant) and researcher (observer) I was privy to daily, weekly and monthly interactions (face to face and all other forms of communication) with the variety of stakeholders involved in the Centre, including members, volunteers, committee, suppliers, tutors etc. In this manner I was able to take advantage of the benefits of both roles as part of this research.

In my role as the TC, a chain of command had to be initiated to preserve continuity and to ensure messages regarding the relocation process were not confusing for part-time paid employees, the Executive Committee and the volunteers (Caruth, Middlebrook, and Rachel 1985). In addition, daily contact and presence at the Centre was needed to ensure sound implementation of the relocation plans and the communication strategies needed to ensure its success. As TC, it was necessary to be on hand to solve problems quickly and satisfactorily to all concerned and was paramount to the success of the relocation. As the change process was time consuming, it entailed a 50/50 split of time between leadership and administrative duties and dealing with day-to-day problems. These insights were fundamental in the preparation for the role and the research I was about to commence, and more often than not, experienced in exactly the same way.

### **3.8 Confidentiality**

While the advantages of participant observation in action research include all of the above, there are also some distinct considerations of which the researcher must be aware. Action research is very time consuming (Yin 2009) and can pose difficult ethical dilemmas for the researcher, especially during the interview process and knowing what is confidential or not. It is hoped that this research will assist other similar organisations and provide some best practice elements in this sector. However the specific need for protecting the human subjects in this study, derives from the fact that nearly all case-based studies are about contemporary human affairs (Yin 2009). In turn the decision to not name the Centre and participating subjects of the research (volunteers, tutors and members) was taken to provide anonymity for frank and honest discussion, and to ensure a caring and sensitive approach without fear of backlash (Yin 2009). Permission was granted by the Executive committee and the individuals in writing so that this study could proceed. This care provides for willing participants (having given formal consent to participate) to be protected from any harm including protecting their privacy. Furthermore, as a result of participating they will not be put in any undesirable position such as exposure to other research studies or harassment from similar requests, or hostile reactions/disagreement from other participants.

### **3.9 Considerations of Bias**

It would be impossible to complete a case-based, action research study without consideration of the criticisms of subjectivity and bias related to participant observation. Many theorists have identified that case study researchers are prone to bias (Yin 2009, Daymon and Holloway 2002, Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009, Herr and Anderson 2005), identifying bias as having two sources: the influence of the researcher over participants' behaviours and the impact of the researcher's own beliefs (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009). There may also be many levels of role conflict for the researcher such as the 'colleague versus researcher' role; a bias which may exist or be developed due to the closeness of the researcher to the situation being observed and leading to inner conflict, and the participant observer role as a very demanding one which may not suit many

researchers (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). Furthermore, the role of participant observer relies on the building of relationships with others and a certain amount of flexibility. The role also demands that the personality of the researcher must be suppressed to a certain extent, a practice that the researcher may not feel comfortable with (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009).

Whilst participant observation is a very powerful technique it presents the researcher with unique challenges when dealing with their own personal beliefs, values, ethics and culture (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009). In order to establish both pros and cons of the research it is necessary for the researcher to present the evidence in an unbiased and clear manner and care must be taken to fully display and analyse the evidence objectively through the lens of both participant and observer (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009). This may include in-case and cross-case analysis and pattern matching, comparison with extant literature, triangulation of data sources and theories to satisfy methodological rigour and eliminating alternative interpretations to produce a compelling case (Herr and Anderson 2005). By constant reflection on the facts, the researcher is able to distinguish appropriate facts from personal philosophies; the rigour of the research is reliant on the degree to which the researcher is open to contrary findings and the tolerance to report, analyse and remain objective (Daymon and Holloway 2002),

### **3.10 Data Collection**

#### **3.10.1 Introduction**

This section outlines the step-by-step process of collecting the data. It follows the process of data collection according to Yin (2009) including the collection of data from multiple sources, information on the chronology of actions and events, evidence of their causal relations and in-field procedures. It also takes into consideration Yin's case study protocols (2009), including an overview of the case study project – background on the research subject and associated problem, and field procedures – how the research was carried out and methods used. In this instance the case study questions consisted of interviews with volunteers and tutors to enable an outline for the case study report, results, outcomes and recommendations. In addition it was important to be systematic in recording the types of documentation and reports such as interviews (pre and post re-location), transcript formats, agendas, announcements, newsletters, minutes, reports, letters, memo's, organisation files, field notes, observation notes and personal diaries (Yin 2009).

Initially a meeting was held with the Executive Committee of the Centre to gain their permission to use the Centre as the focus of the research (Minutes 10 June 2009). This was followed with acquiring the written or taped verbal consent from each individual who participated in the one-on-one interviews. A copy of the database of members was accessed through the administrator in the form of printed labels and these were used for the quantitative survey. Data collection via member surveys was conducted in October 2010 (pre-

relocation) and November 2011 (post relocation). Interviews with tutors and volunteers were conducted pre relocation from October 2009 to December 2011, and post re-location from October to December 2012.

Data collection was based on both qualitative and quantitative methods to address specific issues and to obtain proposed solutions to any issues. Data collection consisted of:

(i) primary data - interviews with volunteers and tutors/teachers, membership surveys (pre and post relocation).

(ii) secondary data - documentary, multiple sources such as minutes, agendas and historical data and survey data using written communications between all stakeholders and groups.

(iii) experiential data - notes on the researcher's feelings, observations and experiences during the process.

Other data collected considered the roles played by key participants and how these have changed, along with the organisational structure and communication patterns throughout the relocation process.

### **3.10.2 Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research methods allowed the researcher to target a reliable cross-sectional demographic representation of the members of the organisation who were the target respondents in the survey. The quantitative data was collected simultaneously with the qualitative data, thus enabling better triangulation as well as to complement, develop, initiate and expand the different inquiry components according to Yin (2009). The use of surveys as a quantitative research tool allows for more economical data collection from a more sizeable population. It is used for exploratory, descriptive and analytical research and allows the researcher to analyse collected data using descriptive and inferential statistics for comparison which may then suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables (Bryman 2006).

#### **3.10.2.1 Survey**

The quantitative research was conducted via a survey adapted from a retail service quality scale (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996) to assess the perceived levels of the Centre's service quality. The Retail Service Quality scale was a self-administered survey that consisted of five dimensions – physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction, problem solving and policy. The survey consisted of 32 questions using Likert-style rating scales, with a five point rating scale anchored at opposite ends by Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree respectively (see Appendix II). To contextualize the survey, it was necessary to reword several of the questions but there were no substantive changes made to the instrument. The survey was used as an applied practical focus of indirect service quality research with an aim towards comparing how the members perceived the service quality of the volunteers before and after the relocation. While not the primary focus of the study, data collected from the survey highlighted whether volunteers were demotivated by the change process through the perceptions of service quality by members. The survey was used to triangulate

the findings in regards to the motivation of the volunteers. It was reasonable to assume that the quality of service experience by the members (who attend courses and classes but who have no interest in the day to day running of the Centre) before and after the change would show indications of any decrease in the quality of service from the volunteers.

The survey was sent to 567 members on two occasions – pre and post relocation with a response rate of 26.4% and 32.7% respectively. The initial survey was sent pre relocation in October 2010 and the follow up survey using the same instrument was sent to members following the settling-in period at the new location in December 2011. A letter accompanied both surveys explaining the purpose of the request, the ethics committee approval number and a guarantee of privacy and appropriate storage of responses (see Appendix III). The survey results provided insights to the impact of the change process on respondents including changes in their personal values, personal interaction and satisfaction levels which may determine future retention of these groups (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996). In particular these results enabled before and after comparisons indicating the relative success of various communication strategies used during the change period. Using paired sample t-tests through SPSS v 19, a significant difference between pre and post survey scores was observed.

### **3.10.3 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research methods allowed the researcher to study the subject in its natural environment and through greater access to the subject(s) in question through involvement by way of collaborative democratic partnership between the research subject(s) and the researcher (Creswell 1998). Daymon and Holloway (2002) describe qualitative methods as tending to be associated with an interpretive worldview. This concerns itself with exploring the way that people make sense of their social world through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals. Qualitative researchers are keen to explore people's intentions, motivations and subjective experiences and draw on interactions with people they are surrounded by and their shared history (Cresswell 2008, Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). This interpretive approach allows the focus of the research to be based on the happenings in any given context and includes the consideration of multiple realities, different actors' perspectives and researcher involvement during the study.

NVIVO version 9 software was used to interpret the findings.

#### **3.10.3.1 Interviews**

Interviews are considered to be a central tool within internal and external communication assessments and have been defined as a 'face to face didactic interaction...with both participants being willing contributors' (Millar et al 1992, p3 in Millar and Tracey 2009, 78). Interviews provide a flexible line of inquiry and can be structured or unstructured, formal or informal, conversational or guided conversations (Saunders, Lewis, and

Thornhill 2009). Key features of interviews are that they allow the interviewer to understand the perspectives of the interviewees, and the data collected is situated within the interviewees' own social perceptions (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009). Whilst providing a rich source of data, the transcription of interviews enables an honest reproduction of notes taken and the ability to check for accuracy to ensure trustworthiness and reflection. This allows for greater insight into understanding the issues at hand and revision of perceptions when analysing comments.

### **3.10.3.2 Focus of Interviews**

The types of interviews conducted ranged from structured to guided conversations allowing the free-flow of information necessary to pursue a conversation with a purpose (Daymon and Holloway 2002). Care was taken however not to pre-empt participants' answers and to remain focused on the questions when participants tended to veer away from the subject. Open-ended questions were used to achieve a conversational manner but followed a certain set of questions devised as a discussion guide (Appendices IV & V) and approved by the researcher's supervisor and Curtin University Ethics Committee. The discussion guide focused on thesis relevant topics and issues. All interviews were recorded with permission from the interviewee, transcribed and verified against written notes. In accordance with the guarantee of confidentiality given to all participants, copies of transcripts are included in the appendices to this thesis and have been anonymised (See Appendix XII). Interviews were conducted with volunteers and tutors at the learning centre to obtain a balanced view of their roles as volunteer administrators and volunteer educators respectively.

### **3.10.3.3 Interviews with Volunteers (Administration)**

Semi-structured interviews – both pre and post relocation - were conducted with volunteers, both those who were responsible for general administration work and volunteer tutors. The interviews with general administration volunteers were conducted as more of a friendly discussion or guided conversation (Appendix V) and lasted from 30 minutes to an hour. They were conducted at a venue of the volunteer's choice – at their residence, at the researcher's residence, at the Centre or at a café of their choosing. Participants were sent a letter of request explaining the purpose of the interview, background of the thesis research, the ethics committee approval number and a guarantee of privacy and appropriate storage of their responses as well as a consent form (as per Appendix VI).

At the time of interview, the consent form was explained by the researcher and signed by both the participant and the researcher. The participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time and a transcript of their interview was sent to them for amendment or withdrawal. Once the transcript was approved, a thank you letter along with a complimentary bookmark was sent to each participant (see Appendix VII). Pre-relocation, 13 volunteer administrators and six volunteer tutors were interviewed between October and November 2009.

However, post-relocation interviews were reduced to 10 volunteer administrators and five volunteer tutors between December 2011 and February 2012. Of the 19 pre relocation interviews, only 10 original volunteers were re-interviewed post relocation, others being new volunteers who had joined since the pre-relocation interviews were conducted.

#### **3.10.3.4 Interviews with Volunteer Tutors**

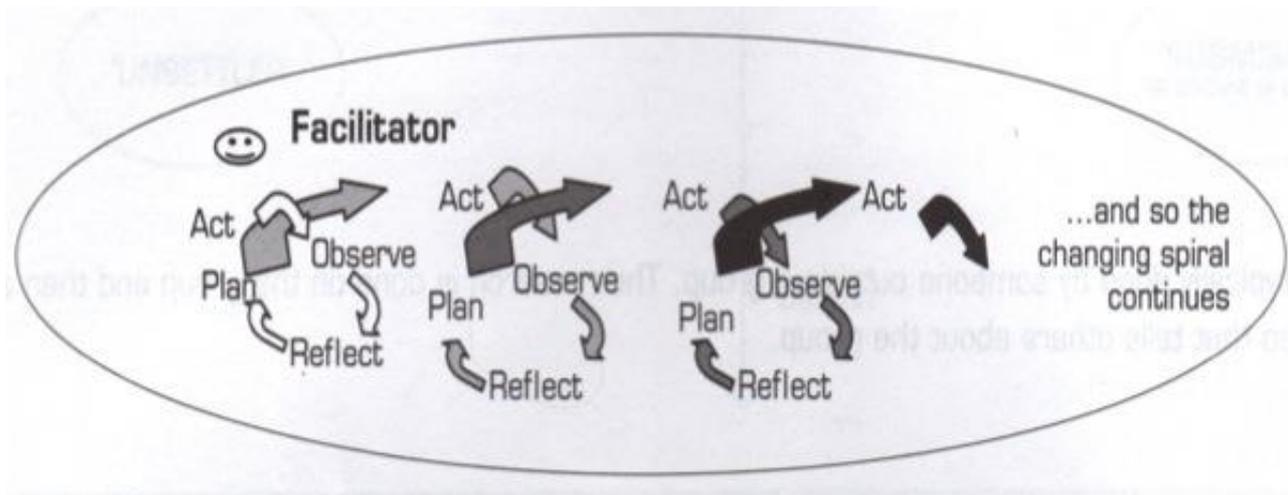
More structured interviews were held with volunteer tutors. This was due to (a) their professional experience which gave a different perspective and (b) the longevity of their tenure at the Centre which gave a more historical time-frame. These interviews were also conducted for periods up to an hour (and sometimes more) in duration and were based on more structured questions focusing on tutors' personal experiences as well as asking for their opinions and perspectives. Tutors were approached in the same manner as volunteers, receiving the same information and being provided with the same assurances of privacy and storage of their responses (as per Appendix VII).

Similar to general administration volunteers, volunteer tutors participants were informed that their interview would be taped and transcribed, with the opportunity to later vet the transcripts, amend or withdraw. Once the transcript was approved a thank you letter with a complimentary bookmark was sent to each participating tutor (as per Appendix VII). As with the volunteers, the tutors were invited to choose the place to meet. A total of six tutors were interviewed pre relocation between October and November 2010 and post relocation between December 2011 and February 2012. A copy of the discussion guide can be found in the appendices (See Appendix IV).

### **3.11 The Use of Action Research Methods in a Case-Based Study**

Action research takes its cue from the perceptions of practitioners within particular, local practice contexts and is distinct from other research in that it shifts its locus of control from the professional or academic researcher to those who are traditionally the subjects of the research (Herr and Anderson 2005). Action research is a continuous reflective process different from isolated spontaneous reflection and is deliberately and systematically undertaken requiring evidence to support the researcher's assertions (Herr and Anderson 2005). This continuous reflectivity is called the action spiral and consists of plan, act, observe, reflect etc (Muirhead 2002). These actions then form a cycle (or spiral) which increases the researchers' knowledge of the original question, puzzle or problem and lead to a solution (Muirhead 2002). Being reflective throughout the research enables the researcher to introduce changes along the way and helps to ensure the quality of the research findings (Herr and Anderson 2005).

**Figure 3.2 – Muirhead’s Action Spiral**



Source: Muirhead 2002, 34

### 3.11.1 Action Research Data

Action research data collection techniques include: *experiencing*, *enquiring* and *examining* (Creswell 2008, 611). This is explained more fully below.

*Experiencing*: The role of participant observer is as a facilitator to help develop a fieldwork relationship, and gain the trust of the volunteers and tutors as well as gaining admission to activities/knowledge that may be otherwise off-limits. Data collection consisted of working with and being actively involved in the preparation and relocation, and be ongoing throughout the length of the research project. This was achieved through the role of participant/observer.

*Enquiring*: Data collection in this phase is from primary data - pre and post relocation interviews with tutors/teachers and volunteers, surveys of members, and diarised notes on what was said/happened during the length of the study.

*Examining*: This phase requires the use of written communications between all stakeholders and information from experiential data - notes on feelings, observations and experiences during the process of relocation. Other data will derive from the roles and actions of key participants, any shift in values and culture during the change, and any impact on the organisational structure and its communication patterns. This data will be collected through documented observations.

Brown and Tandon (1983) observed that action researchers are often adult educators or community organisers who tend to analyse problems in terms of social and community structures, drawing from intellectual traditions of sociology as well as on individual and group theory. Action researchers are also

influenced by the cultural contexts of the organisation and focus on problems in terms of resources and management. This often entails a high level of personal connection and involvement. It is precisely this involvement that exposes the researcher to risks and problems as well as remarkably positive experiences that are often not possible in traditional paradigms (Kidd and Kral 2005).

For the researcher, issues around bias and subjectivity may range from very personal struggles with their own deeply embedded beliefs, allowing in very subtle ways silencing voices and undermining the process of the research. In addition, the potential frustrations, anxiety, and ambiguity of many action research contexts are breeding grounds for researcher insecurity and the temptation to fall back on the comfort of one's power and social position (Kidd and Kral 2005). Reason (1994, in Herr and Anderson 2005, 60) addressed overcoming bias in the role of participant as observer, as 'critical subjectivity'. In other words whilst bias and subjectivity are natural and acceptable in action research they must be critically examined rather than ignored, and validated in order to ensure they have no distorting effect on outcomes (Herr and Anderson 2005). This can be done in several ways through using colleagues as devil's advocates to critically validate/repudiate assumptions, the use of triangulation of methods and data sources, and member checking (Herr and Anderson 2005). Most importantly the triangulation of the data collected from multiple data sources such as different groups, settings or at different times validates and puts observations and bias into perspective. Triangulation however, only takes place when the same phenomenon has been examined from multiple sources, in different ways and from different perspectives (Yin 2009). In the current study, Triangulation was undertaken through comparisons of statements between pre and post relocation interviewees and personal observations during the interviews.

### **3.11.2 Use of Diary, Notes, Minutes and Field Notes**

The importance of using a diary to record events and take meticulous field notes during and after observations allows for recording emerging themes, tracing the process of data collection and assisting in the multi-stage process (Daymon and Holloway 2002). There is also the opportunity for ongoing review, reflection and revision of findings - noting problems, successes, issues and progress of any outcomes that results from developments associated with the process of case based action research. It may generate important knowledge to be shared amongst practitioners (Yin 2009). Meeting minutes and notes - held with both the volunteer and executive committees - were kept and these reflect both secondary (agenda, minutes and personal notes of the meetings) and experiential data (diary notes on observations, attitudes, and experiences – see Appendix VIII).

A common critique of action studies is a failure to include minority groups, traditional cultures or economically and socially disenfranchised groups (Herr and Anderson 2005, Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). To address the

potential for such a criticism, this study has been purposefully inclusive of all members, tutors and volunteers without prejudice or discrimination towards culture, socio-economic status, race, religion or creed. In this way, the conduct of the current study is in keeping with the *modus operandi* of the Centre as a culturally diverse organisation. In addition the promotion of an inclusive participation approach has provided Centre staff with opportunities to contribute to ongoing strategic planning for growth and facilitated ongoing consideration of the needs of present and future members.

### **3.12 Validity of the Research**

#### **3.12.1 Introduction**

Conventionally, researchers have referred to notions of reliability and validity to demonstrate the goodness or quality of their studies, however reliability and validity are complex terms derived from quantitative research and a positivist paradigm (Daymon and Holloway 2002). As validity is a strength of qualitative research (Creswell 2003) it is seen as a more important factor of qualitative research as opposed to questions of reliability and generalisability often found in quantitative research (Creswell 2003, Daymon and Holloway 2002). The term validity in regard to action research may be constructed through *internal validity* - the trustworthiness of inferences drawn from the data, and *external validity* - referring to how well these inferences generalise to a larger population or are transferable to other contexts (Herr and Anderson 2005, 50, Daymon and Holloway 2002)

#### **3.12.2 Ensuring Validity**

Herr and Anderson (2005) and Ozanne and Saatcioglu (2008) suggested that action researchers should employ five types of validity that harmonise with their underlying assumptions and goals. These are known as outcome validity, democratic validity, process validity, catalytic validity and dialogical validity. While it may be difficult to meet all of these evaluative criteria in any given study, action researchers must demonstrate outcome validity and the research must lead to a successful resolution of the problem (Herr and Anderson 2005, Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008).

Outcome validity refers to research that generates practical knowledge for improvement of the research topic and raises the issue of who benefits from the successful resolution of the research. Outcome validity goes hand in hand with Democratic validity and is threatened when democratic validity is not achieved. Democratic validity is the extent to which relevant stakeholders participate deeply and fully in the research of the problem and the extent to which their perspectives and needs inform solutions (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). It seeks to maximise the alternative perspectives included in the research. In the current study, by being inclusive throughout the interview process, discussions and surveys, all stakeholders of the Centre have participated, and their opinions, perspectives and needs have been taken into consideration. This was addressed by

ensuring all stakeholders e.g. members and volunteers, were apprised of the surveys and interviews and the reasons why they were being carried out. A full explanatory letter was sent with the survey to the members and also with the request for interviews to the volunteers. Informal discussions with both groups over tea and coffee answered any questions they raised.

Process validity refers to the extent to which problems are investigated in a way that allows for ongoing learning and improvement. If the process utilised is flawed then the outcomes of the research will reflect this (Herr and Anderson 2005). As such for Process validity to be addressed, both reflective and collaborative processes must be adhered to. A process of reflection should include re-examination of underlying assumptions and deal with the matter of 'what counts as evidence to sustain assertions as well as the quality of the relationships developed with participants' (Herr and Anderson 2005, 55). During the relocation, decisions were made and strategies put in place. Reflection on those decision, strategies, acceptance and success became second nature. It could not be assumed that the good relationship fostered with both volunteers and members of the Centre would mean automatic acceptance and so informal feedback was important to seek acceptance and understanding of any changes, decisions or strategies made during this time. This was done informally and then by the follow up survey and interviews. Collaboration is important for generating quality data, and cycles of reflection and analysis with participants' increases process validity by avoiding premature assumptions and closure (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). In the current research, the researcher's long term involvement with the Centre and its stakeholders facilitated a level of trust and rapport conducive to collaborative outcomes. In addition, a sense of collaboration was promoted by the researcher/TC being readily available for comment and discussion with all stakeholders by having an open-door policy, and being present at the Centre throughout the duration of the transition and beyond the settling in period.

For a study to have catalytic validity – that is the extent to which researchers understand the social reality within and beyond the scope of the study - authentic relationships must be established and maintained between group members and the researcher(s) (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). Herr and Anderson (2005) acknowledged that everyone involved in the research needs to deepen their understandings of the reality under study and be motivated to change it whilst working towards practicable and workable approaches. This ensures a collaborative approach involving all participants' skills and resources as important tensions necessary to build the relationship between group members and the researcher(s). Researcher involvement, primarily as a volunteer in the 12 months prior to the relocation, then as a volunteer Chairperson in the 12 months following the relocation (which coincides with the writing of this thesis) has facilitated greater understanding of the research issues and allowed for real-time involvement at a grass-roots level. This inside/outside knowledge has also allowed for immediate and practicable responses to issues raised in the research process and facilitated an authentic engagement with Centre staff and other key stakeholders.

Finally, dialogical validity - having a critical dialogue with peers about the research findings and actions - requires researchers to engage in conversations to explore alternative explanations, investigate inconsistencies, problematic assumptions, biases and failures (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008). This has been accomplished by the researcher's continued involvement with the Centre and its stakeholders, and has allowed for continued discussions and conversations to address problems arising out of the change process and/or inconsistencies that the research findings may identify. The action research process allows for the researcher to continually reflect on the research outcomes, providing respondents with the opportunity to engage in dialogue to discuss the findings of the interviews and for them to comment on or refine their observations. In addition, the ongoing dialogue with stakeholders is still paramount to the future of the Centre with ongoing strategic planning exercises.

Another approach to validity is proposed by Yin (2009). Yin (2009) simplifies the validity process into four types, more commonly used to establish the quality of any empirical social research especially in case-based studies. These are summarised as construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability.

*Construct validity*: identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied.

*Internal validity*: seeking to establish a causal relationship whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions as distinguished from spurious relationships.

*External validity*: defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised, and

*Reliability*: demonstrating that the operations of a study, such as the data collection procedures, can be repeated with the same results (Yin 2009, 40).

This study approached Yin's process simplistically and systematically. The use of multiple sources of evidence (construct validity), pattern matching evidence through the use of Nvivo version 9 software (internal validity), ensuring analytical generalisability (external validity) and following protocols such as setting procedures and documenting evidence systematically (reliability).

### **3.13 Chapter Summary**

Qualitative research adds the human element to this study as it deals with a real and working organisation comprised of a mixed gender adult cohort whose age group spans late 20s to late 60s. In this respect the research seeks to address human feelings and observations during a period of change, which brings its own traumas and misgivings. It attempts to explore an area of volunteerism where previous research or theoretical development has not yet been sufficiently developed and uses empirical theory as a backdrop to the research.

The quantitative research addresses perceptions of service quality both pre and post relocation. This was carried out in order to define similarities and differences of opinions, and comparative observations on the impact that the relocation has had on service quality as well as providing indirect evidence relating to volunteer motivation. In addition, it will give insightful meaning to expectations and outcomes of the impact that change has on the culture and communications in a volunteer organisation. These results may have significance for other like-minded organisations who may be involved in similar situations whilst helping to plan for comparable future scenarios.

## Chapter 4

### Findings and Data Analysis

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter is a narrative account of the processes engaged in this study, involving myself as the participant observer and is told in the first person narrative to reflect the realities of the highly interactive action research process. This chapter reflects on the phases of this study including pre-relocation (planning phase from June 2010 to Dec 2010), relocation year (settling in phase from Jan 2011 to Dec 2011) and the post-relocation period (strengthening phase from Jan 2012 to June 2012). It provides an analysis of the qualitative data of each phase and the quantitative data used to measure client (member) satisfaction as a proxy for ongoing volunteer motivation.

#### 4.1 Background

This study is focused on an Adult Learning Centre (Centre) in Western Australia, in premises leased from the local Council. When this project began in 2010, the Centre was accommodated in an old residential dwelling consisting of several small rooms which housed a reception area, an office, three rooms used as classrooms, a kitchen and gender specific toilets. A stand-alone garage served as an art-room. The Centre was first established in 1987 in a local Church hall and was set up for young mothers with babies to meet on a weekly basis to interact with each other and share skills. It became increasingly popular and in 1990 the Council offered a more substantial building (the old house) for them to meet in, at a peppercorn rent.

While the majority of the Centre's 900+ members are residents in the local area, the Centre still attracts a number of members from the outer corridors of the area (approx. 20%), and this has been increasing over the last two years. The gender of members is predominantly female (95%) but the male cohort is increasing slowly and steadily with a 50% increase in males over the last two years, based on the Centre's records. The average age of the members was 60+ years of age when this study began but this has slowly been decreasing and the Centre has seen a younger age group (18-50 year olds) appearing over the last two years. This is attributed to a wider range of courses now being offered and longer opening hours of the new Centre.

I joined the Centre as a volunteer in 2009, and as a financial member took on the role of newsletter editor, publicity and liaison officer, and member of the Executive Committee. The Council had indicated that they would like to help the Centre relocate as the old house was in bad repair and the cost of maintenance was rising. As the Council were refurbishing premises at their Civic Centre, they initiated negotiations with the Centre and invited the Executive to have some input into the refurbishment.

At this time the Centre was undertaking strategic planning in order to prepare for the intended relocation and potential resulting growth to the Centre. As a member of the Executive I became a pivotal liaison with the Council's strategic planner as I was the only committee member with experience in this area. It was through this relationship that I became aware of the challenges and implications of the relocation and the possible ramifications it may have on the members. This then became the focus of my study. For the purpose of this study I have already defined the terms 'Volunteers', 'Members' and 'Executives' of the organisation. This was included in Chapter 1 (Appendix I).

## **4.2 The Researcher**

In order to facilitate the relocation, the previously mentioned strategic plan which was prepared by an external consultant identified that a Transition Coordinator (TC) was needed. This TC needed skills in planning, marketing, public relations and communications. The position was to be funded via a government grant, and the appointment required extensive consultation and submission processes to be undertaken. Once the grant had been approved, I was asked by the Executive, and on recommendation from the strategic planning consultant, to apply for the position due to my intimate knowledge of the Centre, its values, culture and people. This knowledge greatly assisted in establishing the credibility and integrity required to underpin my research, as it was important to engage with all of the intended study participants and create a rich environment in which I would be involved as participant-observer.

My background includes extensive experience in public relations in the non-profit, corporate and government sectors. I have worked in communication roles for such organisations as HBF (Western Australia's largest private health insurer), Fremantle Cemetery, the WA Football Commission, and Presbyterian Ladies' College. I volunteer as a Justice of the Peace and have sat on several committees such as Parents & Friends committees (high school level), local voluntary groups and as a Councillor on the local government council. Like all forms of inquiry, action research is 'value laden' (Herr and Anderson 2005, 4) and my knowledge of committees, membership organisations and constitutions, through engagement with other voluntary organisations, can be seen as a significant advantage to this study and to provide opportunities to benefit the Centre as the incumbent in the Transition Coordinator role. This information was well known to the volunteers as I had been involved with the Centre for 2 years prior to taking up the role of Transition Coordinator. In addition, my skills, knowledge and experiences with other organisations and positions were reiterated and highlighted when research proposal on the Centre was put before the Executive Committee and when requesting participation of the volunteers and tutors in the interviews.

Because of my position as a participant/observer action researcher (Herr and Anderson 2005), reliability and validity of the research could be brought into question from a positivist perspective (Macguire 2004 in Herr and

Anderson 2005). In order to ensure the objectivity of this research and to ensure avoidance of bias, case-study researchers such as Yin (2009) suggest that researchers acknowledge and articulate as best they can, any perspectives or biases they may be aware of and use the critical reflexivity built into action research during the research process. This was done by documenting them in my diary and reflecting on issues as they occurred. Many times it was impossible to be thoroughly impartial at the time, but by reflecting on the same issue days or weeks after the event it was possible to become more objective.

Being a participant-observer meant taking part in the activities of those I was observing. In order to do this successfully I needed to ensure I was not driven by preconceived ideas on processes or people, keep an open mind and allow the research to unfold of its own accord (Daymon and Holloway 2002). This proved at times to be challenging as I juggled the roles of the researcher and as the Transition Coordinator where I wanted to escalate decisions and 'get on with it' (diary extract). I was continually drawing on reflexivity to help me be objective. Whilst the information was rich and valuable, at times the issues were all-consuming and overpowering and it was difficult to distinguish between the problems that I had some control over and the individual, but by no means insignificant, personal grievances. There was a need to 'pull back' and continually reflect on what was heard and said, identify the undercurrents and to sift through the emotionalism of the problem to understand the real issue. Herr & Anderson (2005) address this reflection as employing a devil's advocate approach and the use of a third party sounding board was necessary to gain perspective. The third party I chose had extensive experience and dealings with diverse voluntary organisations and was familiar with the Centre as previously mentioned, she became my mentor (I had interviewed this person prior to my taking up the role as TC, due to her previous experience in similar circumstances). In addition the use of a journal to record these issues helped to formulate a strategy, reflect on the issues and refer to when the issue(s) had been resolved.

*Journal entry - 29/4/09 – Enrolment Day for Term 2 - A busy day with many people cramped into rooms – had to go outside for a breather to clear my head where I was accosted by some of the Volunteers who wanted to 'share' their issues and see if I could do anything to help.*

I referred back to the notes I had taken during the interview with my mentor whose advice was to 'focus on the positives, provide incentives and re-articulate *why* this change is taking place' (Interview extract 26 August 2010, Appendix XI). I was also reminded, that the change process was time consuming with a 50/50 split between a leadership role and administration role, as well as being the 'general dogsbody' dealing with day to day problems. This was a timely reminder to reflect on where we had come from, where we were going and how we were managing the processes as well as looking at revisions to strategies such as simple

communication and how well it was working, what needed to be changed and more importantly ensuring feedback from the volunteers.

### **4.3 Background of Volunteers and Organisation**

The volunteers as the critical reference group for this study were made up of both general administration volunteers who played active roles in the day to day administration of the Centre, and unpaid tutors. The opportunity to meet with these volunteers was sporadic and sometimes on their part inflexible, as they worked different shifts throughout the week. However this gave me the opportunity to observe and participate at different times, on different days and when different classes were being held. This also gave me a diverse insight into the roles and interactions between the Volunteers and the members. Each of the general administration volunteers work one half day a week, assisting the paid, part-time Manager in the administration of the organisation. The tutors held their classes on different days throughout the week.

The Manager works a total of 20 hours per week, and her role is to oversee the volunteers, create the term program (list of courses, activities, workshops and tours which occur at the Centre), pay the accounts, allocate rooms for activities, source new speakers and tutors, assess the Centre needs and act accordingly, communicate changes in administration processes and ensure the Centre equipment is maintained. In addition she coordinates dates, agendas and minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee (Executive).

The Executive is made up of 11 members of the Centre, elected at the AGM and who serve as a 'board of directors' in the strategic direction of the Centre. They meet once a month and are responsible for the employment of and overseeing the Manager. Each person on the committee is a financial member of the Centre and has a history of knowledge and longevity at the Centre. Any individual participation in this study is included as a member.

The volunteers' duties include opening the Centre each morning, preparing the rooms for classes, setting up any requirements for tutors and teachers, answering the telephone, liaising with members and providing customer service, general reception duties and then securing the premises at the end of the day. A volunteer shift covers a period of approximately 3 hours, either 9.00am – 12 noon or 12 noon – 3.30pm. The ability to work with and interview the volunteers became problematic due to the constant switching of the roster, and required a great deal of flexibility on my part, particularly as the study continued over a lengthy period of time. The needs and situations of the volunteers were diverse in relation to their experience, knowledge and length of service as well as the time they were available before and/or after their shifts.

Teachers at the Centre are either paid or unpaid. The Centre differentiates between them by labelling the paid teachers as 'teachers' and the volunteer or unpaid teachers as 'tutors'. For the purpose of this study - focusing purely on volunteers in a non-profit organisation - paid or professional teachers were not interviewed as they did not fit the definition of volunteers used in this study. Therefore any mention of tutors relates to those who teach without pay. Many volunteers are retired or semi-retired, and some are still in full-time or part-time employment. I was able to interview a good proportion of the volunteer tutors and developed an easy conversational relationship whereby I was able to interview them and clarify any issues once their interview was transcribed.

In order to identify the key respondents for data collection purposes, codes were used to differentiate respondents' quotes from the pre and post relocation interviews. Tutors are identified by TRA# and TRB# and volunteers by VRA# and VRB#. The A indicates pre-relocation and the B indicates post relocation. The # indicates a randomly assigned number to anonymise the respondent. e.g. VRA1 is volunteer respondent 1 who was interviewed pre relocation; VRB1 is the same volunteer who was interviewed post relocation. The same method was similarly applied to volunteer tutors.

#### **4.4 Qualitative Findings - Establishing the Action Research Cycle**

The process of establishing the Action Research cycle began immediately I took on the role of the TC. The planning stage began by interviewing a person who had also been a TC in a similar organisation, and who had experienced the issues, problems and challenges of the role. Our meeting lasted for three hours and included a tour of the centre which she had relocated. In many stages of my role as TC and during this research, I was able to go back to the transcribed interview to reflect on her experiences and the way she handled similar problems and issues. I was able to learn from and draw on many of her ideas, processes and communication strategies in order to help me plan my strategies. Our discussion focused on planning the management of change - a complex issue which took a variety of skills including leadership (being responsible for the day to day dramas), encouraging the vision and articulating it at every opportunity; providing incentives (re-articulating the why's); focusing on the positives (being able to answer questions and reassuring anxiety) and, planning (resources, income/loss of income, displays, newsletter, media, recruiting volunteers, thanking, rewarding and nurturing relationships). As a Transition Coordinator there would be many day-to-day decisions which would need to be made instantaneously. In addition there were relationships to foster with the Council, which would need to be maintained as well as other community group leaders and sourcing different groups to use the new Centre. I was warned that one of the many challenges in planning change management and communication strategies was in being persistent and following through on processes, to prevent people from falling apart if their expectations of the intended change are not met, through the slowness and upheaval of change (Elving 2005).

## **4.5 Key Themes**

As part of the qualitative research findings, the key themes of this study were identified through semi structured interviews, informal discussions and meetings which indicated that older volunteers are motivated by a variety of factors as well as pure altruistic tendencies. Older volunteers are motivated by the desire to take part in group activities and a need to feel useful. Those with business and life experiences feel the urge to share those experiences with others and pass on useful knowledge. In addition social interaction is a way for older – and sometimes lonely – people to make friends, learn and participate in new and group activities. Some of the key themes identified and which were addressed in this study include:

- the lack of communication processes
- fear of loss of friendships/familiarity
- fear of isolation and loss of their established identity
- fear of bureaucracy
- growth anxiety
- fear of technology
- emotional issues and
- lack of motivation and confidence

In addition the process of change management highlighted issues of confidence and motivation which needed to be addressed. These all related back to the fear of the unknown, a powerful barrier to the acceptance of change, but which was overcome through consistent, interpersonal and participatory communication.

The main strategies employed needed to be focused on creating understanding and communicating the change process and the direction the Centre was taking, continuous support for those who were feeling threatened by the events taking place, restating the values that the volunteers were committed to and building motivation, confidence and pride of the volunteers in the new location.

## **4.6 Communication as a Key Theme**

In order to engage the volunteers it was necessary to gain their trust and acceptance they being the focus of this study and the ones with whom I would be working closely in my role as participant-observer. Their perspective on the culture and communication practices in the Centre was invaluable as it served as a focal point from which to commence this study.

From discussions, interviews and informal conversations with the volunteers, it was obvious that one of the main issues focused on lack of communication. At the old Centre, the volunteers relied on a message book where written messages were left for each other, as well as from and to the manager. Whilst this was

considered custom and practice, it was clearly inadequate from the pre-relocation interviews and suggested a desire for better and more frequent communication. In addition to the message book, other forms of communication were sporadic volunteer meetings which had diminished in frequency over time, and the program of events (mistakenly called a newsletter) which advertised the courses and activities each term. This quarterly program of events was printed and sent by post, but had no real communication basis except as a tool for clients to use in determining in which course or activity to enrol. As one volunteer explained, *'I have little or no contact with other members or volunteers'* (VRA7), and in the word of another, *'If I don't come in, I don't get to know anything. You have to ask and hope someone tells you'* (VRA11). Inadequate communication is a common problem among volunteer workers (Lewis 1999). The suggestion for more frequent and timely communication and the methods by which it could be disseminated to the Volunteers was a recurrent theme, especially in regard to the written word.

*The message book is the only form of communication we have (VRA4).*

*It's not really a tool for communicating through is it? Perhaps we should start a proper informative newsletter and leave the program as a program? (VRA7).*

Other volunteers raised similar issues indicating that the old Centre was not conducive to much social activity during working hours, making communication vague and sporadic unless the message book was used.

*..... we all leave messages for each other as our shifts are all different (VRA4).*

*I have little or no contact with other members or volunteers apart from social gatherings (VRA7).*

*As a group we are not communicated with much – you only see the people who take over from you or handover to you (VRA4).*

*Nobody really talks to each other about the Centre, or the other volunteers (VRA3)*

*..it's (communication) not often enough...we need to send out more information..(VRA5)*

Whilst the comment expressed a candid and relevant insight, they took me by surprise as the overall culture of the organisation was perceived as one of a 'cooperative culture' by one of the tutors (TRA1).

The volunteer comments recognised the problems and how they should be addressed but without being too specific and without suggesting future solutions to rectify problems. The particular volunteer mentioned above (VRA3) might have been referring to their inability to attend the volunteer meetings and the speed with which the handover of shifts took place; space was very limited at the old Centre and there was not much room to hang out or catch up. The comment was also indicative of their shift time at the Centre which was Friday 9.30am to 1pm at which time the old Centre was closed. This meant that there would be little or no handover

as such, as the Friday morning classes were restricted to two Mahjong groups who basically played non-stop, eliminating any interaction of the members with the volunteer on reception duties. However, this was not a stand-alone comment, nor was it indicative of other volunteers who contributed more to the Centre.

Many volunteers got together on mail-out day (the day the program of coming events was collated and made ready for posting); enrolment day, the annual volunteer lunch and the Christmas party. Several volunteers met in groups for coffee – although this was usually done away from the old Centre premises and in their own time.

The general administration volunteers were regarded by the volunteer tutors, as being helpful and informative and I had no experience of any complaints against them. Rather the comments made were very positive.

.....with great respect and friendliness....they couldn't be more helpful and amiable (TRB3)

Great attitude of people who are working there now and I'm talking about the regular volunteers (TRA1)

I have to admit I have found everybody very pleasant (TRA3)

#### **4.6.1 Building Trust for Effective Communication**

As I had already been a member of the Executive as editor of the newsletter and as Publicity and Liaison officer, I knew most of the volunteers, some of the tutors and quite a few of the members. This enabled the relationship between the volunteers and myself, as the participant-observer, as one of acceptance and trust. Conversations were open and revealing, and we had much in common – the future of the organisation. Building trust was a developmental process which demonstrated that the volunteers had confidence in me, and that there was a mutual respect for our respective roles, along with their desire to participate in the research process and the hope that the findings of this research may influence the direction of the Centre. It also required that I respected and acknowledged their roles as volunteers as a valued contribution to the Centre. Lewis (1999) identified that in most volunteer organisations, communication and dissemination of information is often poor and subject to a 'need to know' basis, resulting in a loss of confidence in the organisation and potential loss of volunteers. This was evident at the Centre through informal conversations with the volunteers who made it clear that they wished to be 'in the know' and that communication process needed to be better. *As a group we are not communicated with much (VRA4)*. This was a recurrent theme and is evidenced throughout the interviews with volunteers.

*No one communicates with us Volunteers when they change things, no consultation on what works for us (VRA4)*

*What goes on when I am not there? Who knows? The message book is not really a way to communicate. There must be better ways (VRB1)*

Conversations at the Centre, over morning tea or coffee, and informal chats at the Centre provided the opportunity for the volunteers to sound out their concerns. I became a target for the “what do you think about this?” gambit, and comments on the communication aspects (or lack of) at the Centre became a regular topic of conversation. Listening to their concerns was important in building their trust and ensuring their voices were heard, as well as acting on their suggestions as this proved that I took them seriously and their comments were not neglected or dismissed.

One topic of communication was the lack of leadership within the volunteer group. The part-time paid manager was not available on a regular basis and so the volunteers were left to their own devices. Previously there had been a volunteers’ coordinator who possessed a vast amount of knowledge of the Centre, its history, processes and procedures, was also responsible for training the new volunteers and attended the Executive meetings. Once she retired however no one stepped forward to fill the role. This left a gap in the volunteer group and it was evident from our discussions that with no one to guide them they had lost confidence in themselves, had little motivation and no real leadership. This was evidenced first hand when I suggested someone take over as coordinator and no one offered to do so. The volunteers became reactive not proactive and as the aforementioned coordinator was considered to be the ‘guru’ in all matters of the Centre they were just going through the motions.

*The Executive meet once a month but I think they should circulate the minutes or a summary to the volunteers so we know what is going on. The ‘volunteer coordinator’ was the only one who knew what was going on (VRA3).*

Given that no one was willing to step forward and take on the volunteer coordinator role, it became very obvious that the volunteers needed to be engaged more in decision making processes and the future of the Centre as a collective group.

#### **4.6.2 Strategies for Improved Communication**

The key communication strategy leading up to and after the relocation, was to inspire the volunteers with the message that “**This is YOUR Centre**” and this focused around the volunteers taking ownership and putting their influences into the relocation to the new premises. In addition it was very important that every volunteer had access to me in order to have their questions answered face to face and not by a message in a book. This proved to be the most effective way of communicating with this older generation who had little or no

experience of modern day technology and a reluctance to engage with it. Therefore I operated an open door policy by being at the Centre every day during office hours. I was available to talk through issues, explain what was happening and reassure those who needed reassuring.

As was discovered, some volunteers did not have access to technology, so written communications needed to be done on various levels. I took this issue on board by creating a short informative newsletter available by hard copy or email; exhibited information such as floor plans and boundaries of the new venue and placing pictures and photographs of new equipment to be purchased on a central notice board; created a visual diary which documented refurbishment phases of the new location, and attended the monthly volunteer meetings to discuss events taking place leading up to the relocation and beyond and reinforce the necessity of the changes taking place. These meetings provided the opportunity to update the volunteers on progress, engage them in activities leading up to the relocation and encouraged them to be proactive and creative. The minutes of the volunteers' meetings were sent out by email and a hard copy was made available for those who did not have access to the Internet.

#### **4.6.3 Reflection**

During the course of this study, the volunteers shared a considerable amount of information with me – some positive and some not so positive. This supported the idea that action research can have a 'liberating, enabling effect on participants and provide an opportunity to address issues, express concerns and reveal information' (Abel 1979, 102) which may otherwise not be vocalised. This was evident during the interviews with the volunteers who became more comfortable with identifying and expressing issues they experienced whilst working at the Centre, and their thoughts and concerns with the relocation.

Whilst these communication strategies commenced pre relocation, they were continued post relocation. To add to the communications, training sessions were also held after each volunteer meeting to explain different aspects of the new Centre. Each month a different topic was introduced such as how to work the automatic audio visual equipment; setting up the room for talks or demonstrations, and volunteers were provided with additional hard copy information such as cheat sheets for short cuts, complete with graphics for easier comprehension.

The strategies employed were pitched at a level of understanding appropriate to the age group involved, being simplistic in their nature and execution. The major influence was (my) being available, participating at every opportunity and listening as well as passing out information. Allowing for different types of communication – soft as well as hard copy - ensured that everyone received their own and preferred type of communication, and this allowed for better understanding and ability to participate.

## 4.7 Fear as Key Themes

Fear of the unknown is a powerful barrier to the acceptance of change, and manifested itself in questions such as *'what will happen to...when me move?'* There were also fears of loss of friendships and familiarity; fear of isolation and loss of identity; fear of bureaucracy; fear of growth; fear of technology; and emotional fears. Whilst most of these fears were overcome through consistent, interpersonal and participatory communication, other issues arose as direct spin-offs and had to be addressed through consistent face-to-face support.

### 4.7.1 Fear of Loss of Friendship and Familiarity (Fear of the Unknown)

The pre-relocation interviews with the volunteers indicated that the old Centre embodied the dynamics of a family in that the organisational culture was not just related to altruistic tendencies but to societal aspects, personal values and caring for one another. As many of the volunteers were retired, semi-retired, homemakers or widowed they relied on the friendships made, and the similar interests and backgrounds of the other volunteers. Many volunteers organised groups for coffee or lunch and several of them joined movie clubs, book clubs or games clubs together or attended activities at the Centre together. The Centre became a pivotal focus in their lives, a place where friendships grew and which extended outside their shifts at the Centre. Whilst there was much excitement in the relocation there was also the fear that these dynamics would be lost and the new Centre would lack the bonhomie and camaraderie they experience at the old Centre.

While volunteers displayed reservations during the lead up to the physical relocation, comparisons began to emerge about what the old Centre embodied and what it lacked, and despite their affectionate attachment to it the volunteers were cognisant of both the positive and negative aspects with which the old Centre was attributed.

*There is a really good atmosphere at the Centre..... (VRA3).*

*It's a bit small and gets very crowded, it's hot in summer and cold in winter. It is very quiet on Fridays as we don't have a lot of things going on (VRA3).*

*We're all on top of one another and it's not good at all. I have to say...it's just too cramped and there is not enough space (VRA6).*

However, in contrast to their fear of relocation there was also excitement and enthusiasm about the future opportunities the new Centre held.

*I'm expecting lots of space and light with everything looking clean and new... (VRA7).*

*It's going to be clean and bright...I like the idea of having a coffee machine.. (VRA3).*

*It would be good to have a drop in Centre and meet for coffee....(VRA2).*

#### 4.7.2 Strategies Employed to Reduce Fear of Loss of Friendships and the Fear of the Unknown

It was necessary to minimise the volunteers' fears and threats and maximise the opportunities for the future, but difficult to maintain a balanced objectivity under the continual swing of feelings. However, as the relocation drew nearer and fears were discussed more pragmatically, volunteers began to talk to each other about the relocation and to allay each others' fears. Everyone was encouraged to become involved in these conversations, to voice their fears either individually or as a group or even anonymously. Usually just talking through their fears empowered them to self-resolve or reduce any anxieties.

*I'm concerned about what will happen to all the friends we have made here and who live locally – and if they can't get to the new centre? I know it is going to be bigger and the rooms much larger but will it have the same feeling and will we still be able to chat and mingle like we do now? (VRA14)*

This was addressed by displaying architectural floor plans of the new Centre on notice boards, showing room size comparisons with the room sizes of the old Centre. The volunteers could see that the extra space was not overwhelming or 'barn-like'. The layout was functional and compact and the volunteers could see there was room to sit and talk as well as enough classrooms for activities to increase. This space allowed friendships to be maintained and fostered and in fact help preserve the feeling of intimacy as the extra rooms allowed for groups of all sizes to get together.

*We now have up-to-date, large, clean, bright premises with modern facilities and a large car park with designated parking bays close to the building. It is easier to get to, with room to meet your friends and have a coffee or catch up, and we have been able to increase the sizes of our groups (VRB17)*

The membership could increase gradually to secure the future of the Centre without being overwhelming or destructive to the existing state of affairs. Questions and suggestions were encouraged and by the end of our last weeks in the old Centre, everyone was extolling the virtues of the new classrooms and the positive impact on future lessons and how the new Centre would continue to be a thriving community asset.

*The ability to have better projections, the acoustics.....seating accommodation.....the rooms are so much bigger..this makes it so much easier to teach (TRB2)*

*I've got a bigger area which is better.....the old room wasn't very suitable...the rooms are big enough to have a model and easels and so on (TRB3)*

*The new building will enable the committee and members to have a new purpose and aims for the future...close to transport and better facilities we should be able to encourage new members (VRA10)*

The volunteers began to get excited about the relocation and although the questions were still forthcoming. Both the general administration volunteers and the volunteer tutors were beginning to see that the relocation was a positive move.

### **4.7.3 Reflection**

The continual vacillation of fears and expectations was tantamount to being on a merry-go-round. I was either building their confidence in the relocation and how it would help grow opportunities for them as volunteers, or being a calming influence when their expectations ran high and they voiced their fears of the future. A diary comment made in August 2010 sums up the feeling:

*Into the office at 7am again to deal with all my admin before everyone begins to arrive...getting a headache with all the demands on my time and the constant repeated questions....(Diary note 6/8/10)*

Reflectivity was my constant companion, it allowed me to understand the subjective comments, focus on the objective realities and make meaning of what was happening in my role as participant-observer researcher and transition coordinator both as individual roles and as a collective gatherer of information from which I could learn.

### **4.8 Fear of Isolation**

Volunteers spoke about their feelings that the relocation would cause some disconnect and isolation along with their fears about loss of ambiance and friendliness. They were also anxious that the feeling of 'cosiness' would disappear, and they questioned the impact that the relocation may have on current and future members.

The relocation to the new Centre raised concerns and expectations from the volunteers at the Centre and some voiced doubts that it would actually happen. This however, was more due to the planning process of the Council which had been going on for some time (5 years) in regard to the refurbishment of their Civic Centre and consequently the relocation of the Centre. However, volunteers still had misgivings on what the relocation may mean for them.

*There may be a feeling of isolation, as the new Centre is not close to any shops. There may be a sense of loss of cosiness and the current friendliness we are identified with, may decline and lose that 'family' feel (VRA7)*

It was important to the volunteers that the new Centre remained connected to the old premises and therefore the 'feelings' that bound them all together. This was more out of fear of losing the feelings of friendliness and

family than directed towards the building itself, as there was also a preparedness to leave its cramped and temperature unfriendly, poorly lit rooms. The volunteers were cognisant that they needed to take control in ensuring the ambiance of the old Centre was retained and felt it was their responsibility to do so.

*It is up to us (the Volunteers) to make sure we take some of the old Centre with us so that people feel they still belong (VRA12).*

The fear of disconnect was perceived as the main barrier in retaining connections. This was very understandable as the old location (a small ex-residential house) immediately implied words such as 'home', 'family', 'friendly' and 'belonging'. However the importance of the social aspects of attending the Centre was not only important to the members, many of whom joined the Centre for just this purpose, but also to the volunteers and the tutors.

*Sociability is a priority for a lot of people (who attend the Centre) (VRA2.)*

*There will be a lot of nostalgia for the old Centre and maybe the nice feeling you get when you come here (TRA2).*

Volunteers and tutors expressed concern for the members' ability/inability to attend and should numbers of attendees fall then what would happen to the Centre? Would the Centre be isolated from mainstream transport and it turn its members?

*...the new centre is not close to any shops.....(VRA7)*

*I wonder if our current members will be able to get there – is it on the bus routes? (VRA6)*

*What will happen to all the friends we have made and who (currently) live locally if they can't get to the new Centre? (VRA13).*

*...we need to be careful we stay connected... (TRA5)*

One concern was that the old Centre was on the bus route as the bus stopped right in front of the old Centre. This gave rise to concerns that the new Centre would be inaccessible to many members due to its location (as it turned out the new Centre was also on two major bus routes).

#### **4.8.1 Strategies Used in Reducing the Feeling of Isolation**

To ensure that volunteers' fears and concerns were addressed immediately a continuous dialogue was sustained to address their fears of isolation. Being present at the Centre on a daily basis provided opportunities in my role as the TC to implement a regular and calming strategy of organising small group discussions and being available for individual conversations. To overcome the feeling of isolation, the bus

routes and proximity of bus stops to the Centre were investigated and a map was created showing how easy it was to get to the new Centre. This information was displayed in the old Centre by way of Frequently Asked Question sheets, information on the noticeboards and the use of other relevant media such as the quarterly program/newsletter.

By organising photograph albums of activities held at the old Centre, putting them on display and creating montages of photographs to be displayed on notice boards at the new Centre, the volunteers retained their feeling of connectedness with the old Centre and the memories of the past. This photographic evidence helped with the continuity of the 'family' and 'friendly' feelings of the old Centre. Only by settling into the new Centre would the 'belonging' begin, and as commented by one of the tutors:

*It's the people that make the atmosphere (TRA1).*

This comment seemed prophetic yet comments made by the same tutor after the relocation justified his faith in the overall success of preventing the feeling of disconnect at the new Centre.

*The people bring the culture, and the new people have brought their ambiance and attitude too, so it's made it better (TRB1)*

The new Centre has provided more amenable rooms, spacious areas where volunteers and members can renew and cultivate friendships and catch up with news and future activities.

#### **4.8.2 Reflection**

The Centre had been operating since 1987. It had been located at the current premises since 1990 so it was understandable that familiarity had grown with proximity to amenities in the surrounding area, facilities such as shops and cafés, the post office and bus routes. However, once photos of the site of the new Centre were organised, bus routes investigated and maps on how to get there shown via Google maps explained, members began to feel that the isolation issues were only temporary. One bonus was the extra parking supplied at the new Centre. The old Centre had very limited parking on site (6 cars) and paid street parking nearby. The additional parking, for 50+ cars was a great incentive and allowed for those who had previously caught buses to drive there instead. The constant reminder of the history of the Centre allowed members to remember where we had come from, comparing the move in 1990 from the Centre's original home in a church hall to the old house and the journey to the new Centre. The strategies allowed the volunteers to 'add' to the history of the Centre and this became the topic of many informal discussions and conversations, enabling people to let go of the past but accept the future as an ongoing journey.

#### 4.9 Fear of Loss of Identity and Culture

While the Centre is a non-profit, self-funded and autonomous entity, concerns leading up to the relocation were raised about the possible input from the local Council who are the owners of the properties (both new and old) and leased to us at a peppercorn rent. This was further exacerbated as the new premises were located within the local Council civic centre. There was a strong sense of group identity and community spirit amongst volunteers and tutors at the old Centre. Hence they felt there was a risk of losing something important as a result of the impending move.

Volunteer and tutor respondents frequently spoke of there being a '*sense of belonging*' at the Centre, which offered the opportunity to '*be with people, learning things*'. This feeling of belonging, of being a people oriented Centre and of community spirit is what identified the Centre in its entirety and gave it competitive advantage over other adult learning Centres. It wasn't just a place to learn – it was a place to belong, to make friends and to be equal amongst their peers.

The issue of identity was closely linked to the fear of bureaucracy and re-emerged after the relocation, especially during volunteer and executive meetings when the Centre suddenly became 'invisible'. This occurred when the Council erected incorrect signage that did not bear the full and correct name of the Centre and re-badged the Centre as an *Adult Learning Centre*. The Council were also unable to supply the Centre with a physical street address which made it impossible to direct prospective members, suppliers and visitors to where we had moved to. It became an even more important issue with volunteers and members who focused their concerns on three significant issues which took place after the relocation. Firstly, the incorrect signage; secondly, the Centre having no physical address, and thirdly, constant unannounced visitors from the Council. Quite rightly the Council were very proud of the commitment they had given to the Centre in providing them with new premises and took every opportunity to showcase this to visiting dignitaries. Accordingly the CEO, Mayor and officers of the Council would show up unannounced and conduct a guided tour of the premises irrespective of what was going on at the time. Whilst there was an understanding in their pride of the newly refurbished premises, these unannounced visitations interfered with the core business of the Centre and became a contentious issue with the volunteers.

This was further exacerbated at both the Executive and volunteer committee meetings (2011) and was the subject of much discussion, with intensified emphasis on being identified by our full and proper name. Ashforth and Mael (1989) state that organisational identification is a specific form of social identification embodying special characteristics typical of an organisation where members feel the need to belong. This evidenced itself on the importance placed on everyone's involvement (past and present) with the Centre and, having survived the relocation, wanting to claim it as their own. Stryker and Burke (2000) defined identity in two ways: as

referring essentially to the common culture(s) of a people, and as a common identification within a collectivity or social category. These definitions appropriately describe the importance to the members and volunteers of the Centre in retaining their identity as a collective group.

*If we can't tell people our address we don't look like we exist (VRB13).*

*We have been the (name of organisation) since we incorporated in 1988, who gave them the right to change our name? Is this part of the price we have to pay for our new premises? (noted at an Executive meeting 2011)*

It was important to address these issues in regard to the overall change process and maintain the equilibrium which had been initially instigated immediately following the relocation. As the average age of the members and volunteers (60+) initially signalled that they would be resistant to change, the perceived loss of identity (3 months post relocation) also posed another challenge. This issue became a priority particularly to restore the Centre's identity, and thus control, unity and culture of the Centre.

#### **4.9.1 Strategies Dealing with Identity**

Negotiations with the Council allowed for some equanimity to be restored. This included amending the signage at the Council's expense and requesting the Council to afford the Centre the courtesy of notifying the volunteers on duty of any impending visitors whether inside or outside of normal office hours.

*We don't get as many unannounced visitors from upstairs anymore either – it used to be quite disconcerting having these strange people show up at odd times (VRB8).*

*It's great that we have got the signs up and that we are back to being who we really are (Minutes of the Committee meeting 2012).*

Another issue which needed to be addressed, was of the Centre not having a physical address. The Centre shared common ground with the Council's Civic Centre and therefore shared its physical location as a lot number and not a street address. The strategy employed to overcome this issue, was to lease a post office box for mail and a mud-map was drawn to enable people to find the Centre. This mud-map was included on all external communications as well as the blog, Facebook and the Centre's website.

To remind the volunteers and members of the Centre of its rich historical identity, a community quilt was created, designed and sewed by the Volunteers. Each block represented a scene reminiscent of the Centre's journey from its first days to the present. Members who attended art classes drew their impressions of the old building which were framed and which were to be displayed at the new Centre. Some of the old furniture was

picked out as a reminder that the past was not forgotten but could be a part of the future and these pieces would feature in the new Centre.

#### **4.9.2 Reflection**

The threat of losing its identity at the new premises confirmed that the volunteers and members had accepted their relocation as it implied they had begun to think of the new Centre as 'home', much as they used to associate with the now defunct premises. Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep (2006) suggest that organisational identity is comprised of the aspects of an organisation and its members which allows them to feel that they belong, and answers the questions of 'Who Am I?' and 'Who Are We?'. In addition, Stet and Burke (2000) defined social identity as a group of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category to which they belong. The resolved dispute over signage and unannounced visitors with the Council had been a major turning point in the relocation, whereby the Centre had regained its identity under adverse conditions and the volunteers and members once again took over ownership of the Centre.

#### **4.9.3 Retaining the Culture as Part of Identity**

It has been claimed that the culture of an organisation is so important that it may be 'the one decisive influence in the survival of an organisation' (Hofstede 1998, 488). Through the pre relocation interviews and spending time at the Centre in a variety of roles before I became the TC, it was evident that the group of volunteers had created an inclusive and identifiable culture synonymous with the theoretical definitions of culture. Schein (1999) considered culture to be, at its deepest level, a cognitive phenomenon, while Hofstede (1998, 478) proposed it was a 'collective programming of the mind(s)'. It had already been established that the volunteers worked in tandem with each other, that they were supportive and conscious of each other's needs, and that they were above all else - 'friends'.

*...there is a great sense of community and friendship in being a volunteer, we all have a great rapport and help each other out (VRA8)*

*...friendship is a priority for a lot of people at the Centre(VRA2)*

*it's like being at a friend's house, because it's the people who make it what it is (VRA9)*

*I found my best friend at the learning centre(VRA4)*

It was these behaviours which set the cultural tone of the Centre, and the substance by which their values and beliefs were sustained as part of their identity.

The culture at the Centre was driven by the volunteers – both general administration and tutors, whose personal values and beliefs were shared in a common bond – that of giving back to the community in which they lived, worked and took their recreation. It was a culture readily identified as being inclusive, without boundaries of any description and promoted the Centre as a local community group with a reputation for value for money, friendship and social equality. This was evident through observing the behaviours at the Centre, the openness and willingness of the volunteers and tutors to help each other, the members and the community at large - all reminiscent of a big happy family.

*It's a homely sort of culture – whether that's just the place because it's been formed out of someone's home at some point (TRA1).*

*(The Centre) makes you feel wanted, the old ladies appreciate help and it is very sociable. We're all getting on and I like to meet people in similar circumstances (VRA5).*

*It has a community spirit that I have not experienced anywhere else (TRA6).*

*I feel like a family member, and to me that's very, very special (TRA4).*

*There are good opportunities to socialise as well as for learning (VRA10).*

As the culture of the Centre was one which mirrored a close knit community or family feel, the challenge of maintaining and building on this current culture necessitated revisiting issues I had been familiar with in a more corporate role.

#### **4.9.4. Strategies to Support and Maintain the Culture**

Drawing on my experience in a previous employment where I was involved with the roll-out of the company's Mission, Vision and Values, I saw an opportunity that may assist in maintaining and building upon the current culture of the Centre without generating any conflict. It was possible to remind the Executive and the volunteers of these precepts and reinforce them as basic cultural foundations. This strategy was accomplished by using the relocation as an excuse to review the Centre's mission, vision and values as part of the strategic plan, which was constantly being referred to during the relocation, and to ensure their applicability in regards to the ways in which the Centre was changing – again due to the relocation. It was a simple strategy but effective in reminding the volunteers what they stood for, what their core business was and that if their values remained strong, relocating would not detract from the current culture and that it was the people (volunteers) who set the tone of the Centre, thus retaining the family, friendly, cosy and intimate culture of the Centre.

*The organisation hasn't changed much now we are settled in, ...we are more organised under your leadership (VRB2).*

*It's (the new centre) a credit to all the hard work that went in to setting it up....(VRB16)*

*...thanks to you, you did a great job keeping us all together ....it has given us a new lease on life (VRB4)*

#### **4.9.5 Reflection**

According to Trice and Bayer (1993, in Campbell 2004) an organisation's leadership has some influence over the organisation's culture. The Centre's current leadership posed a challenge to this belief. On one hand there was the Executive made up of volunteers, tutors and members – a mixed bag of influences; and on the other hand a part-time paid manager who had few evident leadership qualities. Theory indicated that there is disagreement on the amount of influence an individual has on an organisation's culture (Campbell 2004). In practice it was evident that collaborative leadership had high returns.

Volunteers were eager to talk about why they volunteered and how they wanted to contribute to the centre, not just as 'workers' but in the overall running of the Centre. These volunteers had been instigative in how the Centre had originated and its current success. They were in daily contact with the members (clients) and were knowledgeable on every activity, course, workshop and event that the Centre had performed in the past and likeliness of repeating in the future. If, as theory suggests, one component that occurs regularly in descriptions of organisational culture is the influence of the values that are held by the participants of an organisation (Campbell 2004), then there is no doubt that these volunteers were capable of being influencers and the Centre. By reiterating and reminding the volunteers of the common values shared by volunteers and members alike, the culture of the volunteers and organisation continued to be a driving force once relocation occurred.

#### **4.10 Fear of Bureaucracy**

There was an inherent fear of bureaucracy closely associated with the fear of the loss of identity of the Centre and stemming more from lack of knowledge and fear of the local government processes and core business. This was exacerbated when I commenced negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the new Lease arrangements. Volunteers raised concerns in regards to the possibility of the Council trying to take over the Centre and if the lease arrangements would bind them into prescriptive processes. As TC, my contract included liaising with the appropriate Council officers and to report back to the Executive on the progress of the MoU and Lease. There were never any grounds for these suspicions or concerns, and verbal confirmation of this was given by the Council's CEO, once requested by me. This was conveyed to the volunteers and committees and helped alleviate the immediate suspicions and fears of being 'taken over' but there was still some apprehension about a takeover by 'big brother' and bureaucratic encroachment which represented a common voice.

*Being somewhat of an anti-bureaucrat, I'm worried when we get a little closer to the centre of the governing body that perhaps we might have a bit more interference (TRA2).*

*I just hope we don't lose our autonomy (VRA9)*

It was important to the Centre that it retained its independence and autonomy and remained self-reliant. The MoU had referred to the Centre maximising the resources (the building) that had been granted to them, by increasing its hours of operation and developing into a valuable community asset. Therefore much consideration was needed to comply with increasing the number of members and courses, possible demands and expectations, and future rising costs. In turn, these issues implied that the growth of the Centre may require a more professional approach to its processes and management and whilst this proposal was met with a degree of understanding there were some suspicions by volunteers as to any changes being imposed on the Centre by the Council. These apprehensions were unfounded and I managed to develop a good relationship with the Council who have since done much to promote and enhance the Centre with no interference in its administration.

#### **4.10.1 Strategies to Overcome Fear of Bureaucracy**

The fear of being taken over, of losing the autonomy of the Centre stemmed from the conditions included in the Lease and MoU. The Executive were wary and suspicious that if we failed to meet specific conditions this would give the Council the right to acquire the Centre and manage it from a local government perspective. Because of my dealings with the Council officers, I knew these thoughts were baseless, and to ensure these did not resurface at any time I included all communication with the Council as part of my reporting to minimise the fear factor by whatever methods I could. It took constant reassurance at every possible occasion to assuage this fear.

My first strategy was to seek legal advice on the lease through someone I knew who prepared lease agreements. I was assured that the clauses were standard practice and the Centre had no grounds for worry. I was assisted in interpreting the legalese into layman's terms so that I could report back to the executive and appease their concerns. My second strategy was to obtain written confirmation from both the CEO and the appropriate officer of the Council that there was no interest or incentive for the Council to procure the Centre by merger or acquisition. This was evidenced through the Council's long term strategic plan which was a public document; and lastly, by producing a timeline of strategies for developmental progress to the Centre. The creation of a marketing plan, business plan and budget to substantiate the Centre's viability, eliminated any unwarranted suspicions about a takeover or desire of the Council to become involved in the Centre. All these documents were made available to the volunteers and were discussed openly either in meetings or on a

one to one basis. In addition each month a report from me as TC was submitted to the Executive and summarised at the volunteer meetings. Everyone was encouraged to read and discuss these reports.

In addition there was the issue of retaining the Centre's charitable status as a non-profit entity. As non-profits are becoming increasingly accountable under the Governmental review of non-profit government arrangements (Commonwealth of Australia 2011), all non-profit organisations are obliged to practice better accountability and transparency and register with the Commonwealth. However at the Centre's Committee level there is still a reluctance to pursue registration based on the fear of losing authority and the distrust of bureaucracy and governmental initiatives. This resistance also stems from a belief that there is no need to change what has always been done. It is a barrier which is hard to break down and convince the volunteers that the effect of the directives will be negligible to the Centre. To alleviate these fears I arranged to have an expert in this area to speak at an Executive meeting and explain the implications for the Centre.

#### **4.10.2 Reflection**

What causes people to fear bureaucracy? Why is there suspicion that higher authorities want to control? These were the questions I had to ask myself in order to understand the volunteers' perspectives. Most of the fears came out of lack of understanding, knowledge or ignorance. Some of them were handed down through the administrator's own fear of losing control over the Centre. This was a constant battle and a recurring theme when changes were introduced. *'If it ain't broke, don't fix it'* or *'We have always done it this way so why change now?'* repeated constantly during conversations in the office. Even the expert in charitable institutions was suspected of trying to find out how much money the Centre earned so that the government could impose taxes or a levy. There were a multitude of conspiracy theories which I had to break down and this was only achievable by addressing the issues at source and proving as much as possible, with evidence at every instance that these fears had no substance. This was achieved with much success but it was a constant struggle to address each one without upsetting one particular person from which these thoughts emanated. Only by being present every day at the Centre were these conspiracy theories defeated, and it took a lot of time and patience on my part.

#### **4.11 Growth Anxieties**

Initial concerns expressed were in regard to the increase in the range of courses to be offered and of the requested longer opening hours. This in turn led to anxieties in regard to the overall size of the new Centre, which added to the already growing fears of lack of intimacy, loss of friendships and the community feel for which the old Centre was identified. Of most concern though was whether the Centre could attract more tutors to increase the range of activities and such, and the ability to attract enough new members to fill the extra, new and spacious rooms. The necessity to grow was constantly questioned.

*I worry that it is going to be a big empty hall... (VRA4).*

*We already service the needs of the community (VRA6).*

The new premises were substantially larger than the old one, and as previously mentioned there were doubts that the number of current courses, activities and number of members could fill the rooms on a daily basis. It was assumed that the Centre would need to promote itself better than it had in the past, as the small size of the previous Centre was limiting so it drove the amount of promotion it could achieve. It was also assumed that if the Centre was promoted more and became busier, then this may present a staffing and administration problem for volunteers, as well as a course/activities shortage and the need to source more of both.

The impending growth of the Centre raised the possibility of having to become more professional, and posed another threat to the status quo. Strategies to introduce this possibility as a tactic for the future had to consider the fears already associated with change. Whilst the volunteers had accepted that growth was on the agenda for the Centre, and although they were wary of what it might mean for them (e.g. longer hours), the main concern was that some volunteers may fear being replaced by a more 'professional' person. Discussions with volunteers intimated that they were accepting of the concept of growth and that more volunteers would be needed to cover the extra shifts. However when asked about the possibility of extra paid personnel being involved, there was little opposition – providing that the current volunteers could keep their current hours, and it was suggested that this paid position might also take on the responsibilities of the volunteer coordinator.

*We need a volunteer coordinator who could be a paid position, I don't think this would put volunteers off-side.(VRA2).*

It was generally accepted that a growth in the Centre's core business would mean the necessity for more staff to fill vacant shifts if the hours of the Centre were to be expanded and the increase in paperwork that additional members and courses would create. This then posed the issue of streamlining the increase in administration processes – or being more professional in practices - to cope with additional work. It was the introduction of this professionalism that needed some consideration if the Centre was to grow its membership base, volunteer cohort and activities. This was not encouraged by the part-time paid manager who was unconvinced that the Centre needed to change its primary focus which was as an adult learning centre with limited hours, courses and activities.

#### **4.11.1 Strategies to Reduce Growth Anxiety**

Previous experience working with volunteers had taught me that a 'gently, gently' approach would work. So it was with this approach that I planned the strategies to introduce the issue of growth and consequently any professionalisation of the Centre to reduce volunteers' anxieties. Any changes had to be incremental, and so looking at the coming year beginning with the physical relocation in January of 2011, it was planned that over the next twelve months, any changes would be introduced gradually and on a quarterly basis, coinciding with the Centre's four terms.

Term 1 (February to April) was to be business as usual, with no radical changes so the volunteers', tutors' and members' routines were not disturbed too much. The newness of the Centre, its technology and location were enough to contend with during this time.

In Term 2 (May to June) we would introduce longer opening hours, such as from 9am to 5pm instead of 9.30am to 3.30pm and try to attract new volunteers and tutors to work during these hours. This would hopefully enable the Centre to cater for prospective different demographics increasing the number of members, tutor and volunteers.

During Term 3 (July to September) Saturday morning classes would be introduced and the Centre would be open from 9am to 1pm. This would help in gauging interest from the public as well as catering for community members who were unable to attend during business working hours. It was envisaged that this would be successful because the local library was in close proximity and the Centre could cross promote with them.

By the end of Term 4 (October to December) the Centre would be running at 90% capacity – that meant the classrooms would have a constant turnover with sufficient time between classes; there would be at least two nights a week where the Centre would be open for courses until 7.30pm; and Saturday mornings would be utilised for courses aimed at those who could not attend during the week. This was specifically aimed at community members in the paid workforce who found it difficult to attend midweek. It was suggested that extra volunteers or possibly paid staff may need to be employed to undertake these introduced extra activities and to ensure the longevity and growth of the Centre.

Professionalisation of the Centre, in terms of service and policies was readily accepted. This was contingent on the change management processes being managed at a pace at which the volunteers could cope. During the transition period, I noticed that new ideas had to be introduced as a concept first, discussed, deliberated, discussed some more and then implemented. The introduction of new and more professional processes and policies has been slowly incremental and this has found favour with the volunteers due to their individual desire, capability and continued encouragement to be involved.

#### **4.11.2 Reflection**

The volunteers were constantly encouraged to participate and their opinions and comments now hold some weight in the Centre's decision making. This has been successful through their ongoing participation at monthly Executive and volunteer meetings. Whilst the Centre has grown in its membership and activities and new volunteers have joined, there is still some reluctance by the manager to position the Centre as more professional and the overriding suspicions that if the Centre becomes more professional there would be a loss of control by the manager and volunteers, the Centre would not conform to its community spirit, and the Centre's values, culture and service. Individual volunteers are not yet confident to challenge this type of thinking - possibly out of a fear of alienation from the rest of the volunteer group or loss of friendship if the challenge became too controversial. There is a complicity between volunteers that they support each other as a group, so as not to alter the status quo. I have evidenced this in meetings when controversial issues were raised and the volunteers abstained from airing their views or being outspoken in case they offended anyone.

#### **4.12 Technological Anxieties**

Many of the processes at the Centre were out-dated, manually produced and laborious. The introduction of more streamlined and technologically improved practices, challenged the current experiences of many of the volunteers.

*There may be a bit of a panic for some Volunteers if they have to use a computer on the front desk but it would make life easier to enter details (VRA2).*

*We need to look at a database program for enrolment, details of participants, courses offered and used, room bookings etc., this could be invaluable for the Centre (VRA11)*

Whilst the majority of the volunteers saw the benefits of the Centre becoming more streamlined in its processes, not all were convinced that the Centre needed to adopt a more technological approach. However, as we were entering a modern "state of the art" building with built-in audio visual equipment in most rooms, panic began to set in when faced with equipment other than whiteboards and flip charts. Many of the volunteers were still not familiar with modern day technology and had shunned the internet and email potential as forms of communication as evidenced in the first comment above.

##### **4.12.1 Strategies Dealing with Technological Anxiety**

Due to the average age of the volunteers I was continuously mindful that the majority of volunteers were technologically challenged and feared all new forms of technology involving computers. I gambled that they may take on board simple forms of social media if this was introduced slowly, explained, demonstrated and offered as another way in which to alleviate their fears and concerns.

This was achieved by setting up a blog, a Facebook page and sending out monthly bulletins by email (also hard-copied and distributed) and using the noticeboards and whiteboards in specific areas to promote this. Cheat sheets were created as well as powerpoint slides and instruction sheets to aid their transition to technology. As the researcher, this exercise offered a greater insight into the complexities of change especially when dealing with mature aged volunteers in particular.

Once relocation had occurred, placing a computer on the reception desk was inevitable and whilst some of the volunteers found this to be too much of a challenge, the majority have accepted and become proficient in its use. In addition, we sourced a tutor and included courses in Social Media on our program and offered free places to any Volunteers who wished to learn more. For those who felt embarrassed in being in a group I offered explanatory sessions on the use of email and social media. In addition we ran courses on iPhones, Smartphones and iPads/tablets.

#### **4.12.2 Reflection**

I had one foot in the past and one foot in the future coping with established practices, out-dated processes, lack of technology and leadership against new age philosophies, state of the art equipment and futuristic ideologies. I was subjected to praise and criticism equally and frequently fought to keep my head above water as I sometimes felt swamped by my roles as the TC and the researcher.

Many of the volunteers are now familiar with the internet and email and are using these tools to enable better communication skills, practices and procedures between them. As an example, with assistance from myself and other volunteers who were more computer literate, they have set up their own group of volunteer names and email addresses and use the computer at the Centre's reception desk to send messages out to each other as well as using the old message book for those less competent. The extra training and courses in technology have proven to be stimulating for the volunteers and engendered interest in all things technological. This was successful mainly because of the pace at which it was introduced, executed and maintained. No one was forced to accept technology or give up their own (old) forms of communication. Much to my delight technology has caught on and is widely used by all the current volunteers at the Centre.

#### **4.13 Emotional Issues**

Whilst many of the volunteers had voiced positive feelings about working at the Centre as part of a community and family culture, the tutors were mindful of possible implications for the general administration volunteers and the members.

*The old Centre allows you to create mini communities....almost like a family.....It's not a learning Centre but a community Centre ..... but like anything getting bigger you tend to sometimes lose some of the cosy feel - that could be lost (TRA6).*

*There'll have to be a readjustment from a small world to a larger world (TRA1).*

*.....moving to a bigger place might be a bit off putting for some...(TRA2).*

These comments suggested that there existed a conscious recognition of the emotive issues associated with change, and acknowledgment that some of the volunteers and members may be experiencing mixed emotions about the relocation and its possible implications. It was gratifying to know that the tutors heard and recognised these concerns and as a result nurtured the positives of the relocation. As the relocation date got closer, it seemed that more and more emotionally driven 'what ifs' were raised in informal conversations and around tea and coffee breaks.

Liu and Perrewé (2005) highlighted the importance of dealing with the emotions of those affected by change and that the management of emotions during any change process is a key challenge. The implications of emotional distress may manifest in several ways. According to Liu and Perrewé (2005) frustration, anger and fear are drivers of emotive issues. It would explain why volunteers may lose confidence in themselves, feel they are being taken advantage of, deliver unsatisfactory customer service to members, or induce argumentative behaviour. It was important then to recognise if and when these behaviours surfaced and what strategies were needed to help reduce these feelings. It was also important to acknowledge that these feelings were 'normal' and part of the change management process. The challenge was how to deal with them in a practical sense.

#### **4.13.1 Strategies Dealing with Emotional Issues**

In order to give volunteers the opportunity to talk through concerns, conversations were initiated to encourage discussion so that any emotional issues could be dealt with and enable a coping process for any situation. It was important to recognise that as the change process progressed the emotional states of individuals became more steady as they were reassured through communication processes and my continual presence at the Centre. This said, emotions can still be influenced by specific actions or unforeseen activities (Liu and Perrewé 2005). Identifying possible emotive issues was a constant challenge, and so more proactive strategies were needed to enable the diffusion of perceived emotional stresses. This was done through talking over possible scenarios with my mentor and noting ways in which emotive issues could be handled. Some of these scenarios also formed the basis of a question and answer sheet to address other issues (Appendix IX).

**Q: How will our members know when and where we have moved?**

*A: Members will be notified well in advance during the last weeks of term 4 (2010). A directional map will be included in Term 1 (2011) program and the change of address will be very visible on all documentation. We will communicate wherever possible with members of the community.*

**Q: How will prospective members know where to find us?**

*A: The Centre will promote the move through our website, blog, posters, emails, enrolment forms, letter and advertisement of Term 1 in the Community Newspaper. We will also send out a series of press releases leading up to and after the relocation. The local Council and library have also offered to advertise in their newsletters and on their website.*

Recognition of any emotional stresses or anxiety in the volunteers became a constant vigil. These sometimes manifested in petty quarrels between, or grumbles about, other volunteers, members, or the administration manager. Many were unfounded and were recognised as an outlet of emotion and were dealt with by listening and offering the opportunity to resolve in a round table conference. Usually just listening to the grumbles produced an adequate solution to the problem and once the complainant had let off steam, the emotional energy was spent and the issue resolved.

It was important too, to deliver information in a timely and relevant manner. This enabled the volunteers to process the information before the change took place and reduced the anxiety related to the likelihood of surprises. Volunteers needed gradual information, a slow pace of change and delivery, the opportunity to discuss and deliberate the actions and outcomes. It was very important that open and honest information was disseminated as quickly as possible. One instance which threatened this concept was when the renovations at the new Centre were nearing completion. Whilst I had not yet been invited to view the state of the renovations, a member of the Executive had managed to enter the site and observed the unfinished interior of the Centre. This person saw some changes that had not yet been conveyed to me and which I was usually apprised of via the Council's project manager.

*Received a scathing email from (name of project manager) who had received an email from (name of person) which was – to say the least – ‘inflammatory’. Spent all day putting out fires and trying to rebuild the relationship (Diary entry 28/8/10)*

In addition the volunteers had been informed of this person's dissatisfaction with what had been observed before I had the opportunity to confirm and gauge the implications with the Council. This initially caused friction and distress for the volunteers which took some time to resolve. Thankfully, once the reasons for the unpredicted

but necessary change were communicated, the volunteers accepted the explanation and I managed to dispel any anxiety at this unplanned and unforeseen activity. The person responsible was apprised of the situation and reprimanded by the Chairperson of the Centre.

To alleviate anxieties, a milestone event was held to celebrate the internal completion of the new Centre (held at the local cinema). Volunteers and members were invited and the relaxed atmosphere of the event helped to lighten the mood in relation to the lead up to the relocation, dispelling some of the concerns of the refurbishment at the new Centre and the interminable wait for the new Centre to be completed. Informal conversations with those present indicated that confidence in the volunteers and the process of the relocation was high and with enthusiasm for relocation day.

#### **4.13.2 Reflection**

It was obvious however that whilst members felt confident, emotions ran quite high at the best of times and the smallest deviation could set them in turmoil. Again my continued presence was invaluable in settling concerns, putting out fires and lightening moods. It was necessary to keep volunteers talking about their worries and walk them through the positives showing them that they were surmountable. Usually my presence was enough to dispel any fears, but it became harder to differentiate between *what if's* and real concerns without detracting from the importance that all fears needed to be considered and dealt with no matter how trivial they may have seemed at the time. As the relocation process progressed without further problems, I observed that the volunteers' emotions were less volatile and conversations and questions became less fraught with anxieties. The volunteers had warmed up to the relocation and were now looking for all the positive elements with eager anticipation.

#### **4.14 Issues of Motivation and Confidence**

Comments overheard, informal conversations and the pre relocation interviews identified there was a lack of motivation and confidence amongst the volunteers in regard to their roles. As a group they all got on very well with each other and many were friends outside the Centre as well as at the Centre. The pre-relocation interviews however, indicated that they had little or no voice in decisions made and were at the Centre just to sit on reception and meet and greet members, with minimal autonomy, creativity or opinion.

*No one communicates with us volunteers when things are changed, no consultation on what works for us (VRA4).*

*I don't really know what happens on a day to day basis, I'm let know when I'm needed and what I am wanted to do (VRA5).*

Despite these feelings, the volunteers continued to work at the Centre but I suspected this had more to do with their altruistic tendencies and their enjoyment of the social aspects, irrespective of the sporadic and sometimes infrequent information needed to fulfil their roles. They were hard working, conscientious and inclined towards fulfilling their own personal values - of giving something back to the community – as well as enjoying the social activities, rather than through a sense of job satisfaction.

However, during frequent informal conversations it was evident that there was a desire to be more involved and participative in the Centre's activities. There was a need to be creative and show off their artistic skills. The more I conversed with them about the Centre and inquired about their perceptions on the relocation, the more animated they became and spoke about what they 'expected' once the relocation took place.

*We should try to get more interesting speakers (VRA4)*

*...have lots of get-togethers, like open days so we get people talking about us. I think a community quilting group would be a good idea. We need to get members to contribute to ownership and attract younger people...(VRA7).*

Whilst there was an underlying fear of change there was also excitement about the potential for the Centre resulting from the relocation and the challenges it might offer – such as more activities, longer opening hours, new members, an increase in volunteers to cover the extra shifts. As the average age of the volunteers and members of the Centre was 60+, this was evidenced when the concept of introducing younger people to the Centre was raised by the volunteers. Responses drew a vast range of what 'younger' meant - from 18 to 50 years of age - '....anyone that's younger than me' (VRA4). With an increasingly ageing cohort of volunteers, the idea of younger people attending the Centre was encouraging and seemed to produce a motivational upsurge as the volunteers showed real enthusiasm in how younger people may help the Centre grow.

*I would like to see more younger people use the Centre.....for evening classes, they would help spread the word and would help us grow our numbers (VRA3)*

*We need to attract younger people as the current perception is it (the Centre) is for 'old' people and may not be attractive to younger people (VRA7)*

*Maybe once we move we could attract a younger market – 20years + (VRA2)*

The volunteers recognised that there were benefits in attracting a younger age group and the idea of attracting younger people became a motivation for them.

Due to the lack of a volunteer coordinator, the volunteers took it upon themselves to organise the roster so that members were not disadvantaged and the running of the Centre was maintained. However, with no one to

guide or encourage them to try out new ideas, the volunteers did not exercise any other forms of creativity or autonomy and some had resigned because they no longer felt useful or appreciated, or were discouraged in attempting to bring new ideas to the Centre. Specific tasks were designated by the manager to the more experienced volunteers leaving other volunteers to their own devices, breeding a sense of complacency with going through the motions of 'business as usual' being the order of the day.

*We are not consulted – there is a teacher mentality – do as I say (VRA4).*

*We need a volunteer coordinator (VRA2)*

However, two of the older volunteers who had resigned, spoke about the past when there had been a proactive period under the guidance and leadership of a previous manager and volunteer coordinator.

*When I was a Volunteer there were no real systems in place so we helped put in place a procedure manual for Volunteers ...not sure what happens now (VRA9).*

*She was there in the beginning.....ran the place like a CEO and lots of time was (sic) involved (VRA10)*

Some of the problems which led to the loss of motivation and confidence seemed to stem from the lack of a volunteer coordinator, problems with the manual being out of date, the ageing population of volunteers and not enough autonomy or creativity being encouraged. The manual used to be regularly updated by the volunteer coordinator and an individual copy was given to each new Volunteer to help them understand the history and running of the Centre. Lately, the manual has been updated sporadically, but a copy was not given to every new volunteer, instead a hard copy was placed at reception and new volunteers were told to read it. Hard copy communication was frugal, deemed unnecessary or a 'waste of paper' and the attitude that volunteers had enough time to read the one copy was symptomatic of the lack of guidance, direction and communication processes.

*We used to have volunteer meetings...it would be good to be able to receive a summary of the meetings....(VRA3).*

The lack of leadership and therefore motivational influences appear to be the reasons why some of the volunteers had resigned or had taken a less active role at the Centre.

*I don't do volunteer desk work anymore, but I do help out at the Christmas lunches, morning teas, fundraisers and enrolment day (VRA12).*

*I don't volunteer any more although I do help out sometimes with the AGM..... I've also helped out on enrolment day and have attended some volunteer committee meetings (VRA10).*

*The Executive should try to disseminate more information on a more basic level to keep us informed and interested in what is going on (VRA12)*

It was evident that these volunteers no longer felt motivated, and saw their commitment as being under-valued, or overworked.

*Unfortunately our levels of commitment change as we get older and Volunteers get 'burned out' (VRA12)*

*...it should be more about productive Volunteers.....otherwise it becomes too moribund (VRA11)*

*I think we should have a paid person running the show and teaching us what to do...it wouldn't bother volunteers if they had a paid coordinator (VRA4).*

As some volunteers no longer took a regular active part in the Centre this created problems in covering rostered shifts during the week, necessitating several volunteers to cover double shifts from 9.30 – 12.30 and 12.30 – 3.30pm. The general feeling was one of retaining the status quo - as everyone was waiting to see what happened with the relocation, and putting decisions on hold because the future was uncertain which fuelled doubts and fears. It was not possible to elect a volunteer coordinator but it was possible to try and reinstate some motivation and confidence in the volunteers and to increase the volunteer base.

#### **4.14.1 Motivation and Confidence Strategies**

Motivating volunteers has both practical and theoretical considerations for organisations (Clary and Snyder 1999). The challenge for me was how to adopt a functional approach to motivate and build confidence in this group of volunteers. Firstly I had to understand what had previously prompted these people to become volunteers, then consider the reasons why they lacked motivation and confidence. Attending the infrequent volunteer meetings before I became TC and revisiting the minutes gave me plenty of evidence as to where the problems lay.

Involvement and recognition, rather than the promise of a monetary reward, has had a positive effect on the volunteers and instilled in them motivation and a new found confidence in their roles. By involving the volunteers in the decision making processes and initiating dialogue at every opportunity in matters of change at the Centre they have been given the opportunity to feel valued and that their input is important to the strategic direction of the Centre. When I became TC, volunteer meetings became more frequent and regular. My attendance proved to be a good opportunity to introduce discussions on what new challenges the

relocation might bring. A simple change in the time that volunteer meetings were held also allowed more volunteers to attend as the Centre was closed at this particular time. This meant they were able to participate more fully and be part of the decision making process.

A regular topic on the volunteer meeting agenda was the need to extend hours and number of activities, as well as attracting younger people and recruiting new volunteers to cover the extra hours. By introducing the volunteers to the marketing plan and asking for their feedback and involvement, the Volunteers input was invaluable. Many new ideas were put forward in regard to the type of activities the Centre should pursue and which would attract a younger cohort. This was later followed up by the volunteer who organised the program.

Discussions on how to recruit new volunteers presented a great opportunity to emphasise to the volunteers that they were not undervalued, nor would they be dispensed with in favour of new recruits. It also provided the opportunity to empower the volunteers to assist in the recruitment process, by encouraging them to vocalise the qualities of what to look for in a volunteer. These qualities were included in the advertisement that was drawn up to be placed in our social media. This exercise helped them to re-evaluate their worth as a volunteer and how much the Centre relied on them. It also reinforced their own values and reasons of why they volunteered and helped to begin the slow process of re-motivation. Petrick (1995) argued that volunteers want to know what is expected of them and to see the value of their contribution as a volunteer. In my role as TC this was easily commenced by saying a simple thank you – which had not been done before. Appreciation for what they had achieved, for simple tasks, for attending meetings and for their suggestions was immeasurable. The volunteers wanted their intelligence appreciated and acknowledged, many of them had held responsible jobs as well as being homemakers, and they needed to validate their life experiences.

In order to boost volunteers' motivation further, I organised a walk-through the building for the Executive and volunteers. The new Centre was spacious, offered extra and larger classrooms which would enable an increase in activities and therefore (hopefully) bring in new members. Volunteers expressed their delight in the layout which invoked a new sense of pride and belonging with better amenities for members' enjoyment.

*..it's (the relocation) going to increase our activities...better facilities.....resources...(VTRA5).*

*...we'll have more room.....and the opportunity to increase membership....(VTRA2).*

*It's a great move..... long overdue....(VTRA1).*

Once relocation had occurred the evidence of successfully motivating the volunteers was obvious, mostly due to continuously encouraging volunteers' input in the choice and placement of the furnishings and equipment

reinforcing the “**This is your centre**” strategy. There was also a feeling of satisfaction in the modernity of the building which has improved morale and enjoyment, adding to the levels of motivation and confidence.

*It (the new Centre) is lovely and a pleasure to work here (VRB3).*

*I am proud to be able to show new people through our modern Centre with its up to date equipment (VRB17).*

*It's a credit to all the work that went in to setting it up (VRB16).*

Volunteers were also reassured when they saw the layout of the rooms as they had previously imagined the rooms to be far away from each other and too large to accommodate small groups. However this was not the case and members' feedback confirmed their approval of how spacious and light the new classrooms were - unlike the previous Centre. In the past, due to the cramped conditions, there was only room for one volunteer at a time behind reception and this proved impractical at the new Centre as it was so much busier. The volunteers decided that two people should be on reception in order to spend time with member queries, resulting in continuous member satisfaction. Volunteers now have the ability to take breaks and chat with members and friends in comfortable surroundings, continually fostering friendships and maintaining the culture of the Centre. Volunteers are not only newly motivated, but feel more involved and more confident and relaxed, recognising their ongoing value in the Centre.

#### **4.14.2 Reflection**

Appointing a volunteer coordinator has not occurred. No-one is willing to put themselves forward. It may be that there is still a lack of confidence at this level, however I presume that the main reason is no-one wants the ultimate responsibility or wishes to be singled out which would set them apart from the other volunteers. It is important at this stage to retain the confidence levels they have achieved and to retain the status quo. Currently the volunteers are self-managed and use the volunteer meetings for decision making processes that were previously undertaken by the volunteer coordinator. The updating of the manual is now a group task and everyone contributes to its content.

It became apparent that the majority of volunteers were highly motivated by feedback – both positive and negative - and in return this added to their confidence. They really wanted to know what they were doing right but also to correct what they might be doing wrong. Feedback also needs to be two-way as volunteers need to realise their value by giving feedback as well as receiving it. Collaboration too is important in order to build trust and emphasise the value of the volunteers. Both feedback and collaboration are born out in the following example.

One instance where I failed to take heed of this approach was when I took over the role of data input (receipts) into the computerised accounting system and found that the current process did not work for me. I revised the forms (without consultation) by which receipts were recorded and gave brief instructions to the two volunteers whose duty this was. For a week or two the volunteers accommodated this change with good grace but it clearly was not functional for them as it meant a double entry process. I became aware of their dissatisfaction when another volunteer commented (naively) on the laborious process I had created for these two volunteers. I immediately recognised that I had delivered a *fait accompli* rather than entering into a consultation/ collaborative process and seeking input and feedback. This was remedied by meeting with the two volunteers and recognising the problem as a time-consuming process. Between us we resolved and streamlined the process which is still in use today. I was embarrassed by this event because clearly the volunteers were happy to take on board new ideas but felt they were unable to query or comment on the process I had foisted on them, and my lack of requesting their feedback. As I reflected on the outcome and possible damage I might have caused, I resolved to ensure that in future volunteers understood that decisions were not a one-person process; their input was valuable; to speak up when they could see a process or procedure was not working; that no one was infallible (especially me), and emphasised that the Centre belonged to **them**. In addition the fact that I had listened to them and that their system was more practical gave them a sense of worth through knowledge and experience. This outcome contributed to their self-esteem, confidence and more importantly the motivation to pursue their ideas and use their own experience(s).

Their positive reaction to the relocation was evident from comments made in the pre relocation interviews and in the lead up to the physical move. Volunteers participated in adding to the 'shopping lists' and commented on suggested furniture and equipment needed. The tutors instilled a sense of excitement in their last few classes of Term 4 in 2010, and helped alleviate concerns by discussing the benefits of the relocation with members. This spontaneous collaboration was reminiscent of Luscher and Lewis' (2008) theory of sensemaking, in that the tutors took on an unintended intervention role not to resolve or eliminate the issues associated with the relocation but helped construct a more workable certainty that enabled acceptance.

It seemed that confidence levels were slowly increasing and there was one instance where a member was dissatisfied with a course being cancelled, the volunteer handling the issue managed to turn it round and recruit the member as a volunteer in the process. This episode shows how that volunteer had the confidence and ability to problem solve and take responsibility in an autonomous role. Praise of course is always a boost for confidence and positive feedback from the members on social events handled by the volunteers has encouraged them to increase their autonomy and decision making. This was evidenced by the volunteers forming an Events Committee (of 3 volunteers) who now coordinate all social events.

As the Centre continues to develop, overcoming the challenges adds to the volunteers' commitment, motivation and confidence. This can be attributed not only to the ongoing altruistic tendencies of volunteers but also to their newly found job satisfaction and involvement as decision makers as suggested by Dailey(1986). Phillips & Phillips (2010) noted that Volunteers prize intangible rewards more highly than any other kind. These intangibles included the feeling of satisfaction in what they do, using their skills to help others, making the community a better place and developing relationships with people they serve. The inclusion of volunteers in the decision making process reinforced these intangibles and thus their worth to the organisation - which is reward in itself.

#### **4.15 Quantitative Findings**

The purpose of the quantitative component of the study was to provide triangulation for the qualitatively-grounded findings (Yin 2009). One of the major objectives of this action research project was to evaluate the success of the change communication strategies in maintaining volunteer motivation during and after the relocation of the Centre. Qualitative 'before and after' semi-structured interviews with the volunteers provided the principal and most direct form of relevant evidence. However, given that one of the most important tasks of the volunteers is to provide customer service to the members who pay to attend classes, member perceptions of service quality may be considered a useful proxy indicator of volunteer motivation. It is reasonable to assume that any decline in motivation would be accompanied by a noticeable reduction in customer service. In the literature review, employee motivation and satisfaction are considered key elements of internal communication which leads, in turn, to successful external marketing (Ueno 2010). Employee motivation is one of the aspects of internal communication playing a role in the development of a service culture through facilitating and enhancing quality service delivery (Ueno 2010).

##### **4.15.1. Background**

The majority of the clients (members) of the Centre attend one or more of the courses held there. It was important to liaise with this group when I was in attendance so they got to know who I was, why I had been appointed Transition Coordinator and that I was basing my research on the Centre. The majority of clients were accepting of my presence and saw my intended research as a positive progression for the Centre. They were enthusiastic in sharing their experiences, anecdotes from the past, and thoughts on the relocation. This was accomplished over many cups of tea enabling an informal, open and honest dialogue between me and a small number of the clients who happened to be in the Centre at the same time as I. They were very interested and excited at relocating and were forthcoming in their views and expectations of what it would be like.

As this group was large in number (total membership was at the time 997) it was impossible to speak to each one individually and so they were used as the sample for the quantitative research aspect of this study. Their opinions were collected through a self-administered two-part survey sent by post (Appendix II).

The actual relocation took place in January 2011. The last term of 2010 concluded on 7 December and immediately we began to 'pack up' what we could use and dispose of what we did not or could not use. The previous three months had seen me purchasing equipment and furniture which was now stockpiled in my garage. Continuing with the strategy of "**This is YOUR Centre**", photographs had been displayed of proposed furnishings so that members could also comment on styles, colours and functionality. This was invaluable as one style of chair was deemed to be a possible hazard due to its splayed legs and might have caused an accident with the older members (and other users of the Centre) who relied on walking aids. The members became involved in their own right and were encouraging and excited about the new Centre which promised better accessibility, better parking and better facilities.

#### **4.15.2 Service Quality**

Given the nature of the service interaction in learning Centres, the survey instrument used was adapted from a scale designed to measure service quality in a retail environment (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996). This was considered more appropriate than alternative scales intended for service environments such as securities brokerage and banking (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996). When originally developed, the 28-item retail service quality measure was found to capture five major dimensions: Physical aspects (i.e. facilities), Reliability, Personal interaction, Problem solving and Policy, as well as a number of sub-dimensions (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996). In this study, all items were measured using 5-point Likert-type scales, anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). Factor analysis of the pre-relocation survey responses, identified four factors as follows (Cronbach's alpha coefficients in brackets): Physical aspects (.814); Reliability/inspiring confidence (.936); Personal interaction/problem solving (.905); and, Policy (.629). As can be seen, with the exception of policy all factors exhibited a high degree of reliability (Nunnally 1978). The policy factor related to such issues as handling cancellations and refunds, as well as the availability of credit card facilities and opening hours. Whilst this was a component of the survey it was not deemed to add significant benefit to the service quality this research was seeking.

#### **4.15.3 Inspiring Confidence and Personal Interaction**

The important factors in terms of volunteer motivation are reliability/inspiring confidence and, especially, personal interaction/problem solving. In the original scale, inspiring confidence was a sub-dimension of personal interaction (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996). In the factor analysis, however, the items relating to inspiring confidence loaded with those intended to tap reliability. This is not altogether surprising as the two

concepts share similarities, i.e. reliable performance of promised services inspires confidence in the service provider. The items relating to the courteousness/helpfulness sub-dimension of personal interaction in the original scale (Dabholkar, Thorp, and Rentz 1996), loaded in the analysis with problem solving. Again this is unsurprising as service personnel who solve customer problems are highly likely to be regarded as helpful.

#### **4.15.4 Comparative Survey Results**

The results for Physical Aspects indicate that there was a significant improvement from pre-relocation (M = 2.05, SD=0.74) to post-relocation (M = 4.24, SD = 0.60;  $t = 28.03$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). A significant change was also observed for Reliability/Inspiring Confidence pre-relocation (M = 4.07, SD = 0.77) and post-relocation (M = 4.30, SD = 0.59;  $t = -3.03$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), and for Personal Interaction/Problem Solving pre-relocation (M = 4.27, SD = 0.66) and post-relocation (M = 4.46, SD = 0.59;  $t = -2.82$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ). These results suggest that the relocation and modernity of the venue did have an effect on respondents' perception of service quality indicating a rise in volunteers' motivation and confidence.

The paired sample t-tests (Appendix X) show there was a dramatic rise in the members' evaluation of the Centre's physical facilities following the relocation. The old building was, as discussed above, somewhat dilapidated. Unsurprisingly therefore, this aspect was rated at only 2.05 out of 5 prior to the move but 4.24 out of 5 afterwards. Of greater relevance to this study, however, were the results regarding perceived reliability/inspiring confidence and personal interaction/problem solving. In both cases there were modest but statistically significant improvements from an already high base (more than 4 out of 5). Hence there is evidence to suggest that the already high levels of volunteer motivation (as reflected in perceived service quality) actually improved following the move, despite the volunteers' frequently expressed fears prior to the relocation. It is possible that the improved physical surroundings enhanced the volunteers' mood but, at a minimum, the change communication strategy can be seen as a success in maintaining their enthusiasm and building their confidence.

#### **4.16 Other Functional Issues**

As the new location's building had been extensively refurbished, there were many 'new building' glitches which upset the members and which were verbalised after the relocation. These consisted of the air conditioning being either too cold or not cold enough; audio visual equipment blowing fuses; sensor lights flicking on and off at the most inappropriate times and not being able to be controlled manually; timed access preventing people from accessing parts of the building such as the toilets; and the inability to open a window in any of the classrooms. My continual presence at the Centre helped alleviate some of these complaints, unfortunately most problems could not be instantly resolved and were reliant on contractors to return to the site to do so. As the Centre was a tenant of the local Council (paying a peppercorn rent) the onus was on the Council as the

landlord, to rectify these problems. Calling in independent contractors was not acceptable as the building was still under warranty. This proved difficult to explain to those members who voiced their dissatisfaction on a regular basis and it became a constant issue for discussion.

The new Centre was well above the standard of the old Centre and consequently member expectation was high. Unfortunately there was much dismay when things went wrong and although we did not experience any irreparable damage to what the community thought of the Centre, members felt a slight degree of dissatisfaction. The post relocation survey however showed that the service quality had not suffered.

#### **4.17 Discussion**

Despite all the fears expressed by the volunteers prior to the transition, they have accepted the advantages of the new Centre quite rapidly after the move.

*The relocation has not changed my role as a Volunteer but the new Centre has given me pride in its appearance...(VRB1).*

*...a wonderful environment...and also interaction between members (VRB14).*

*Now we've moved everyone is friendlier and people are looking ahead (VRB16).*

The post-relocation interviews document the positive contribution of the communication initiatives undertaken, as shown in the following statements from volunteers.

*We now have our volunteer meetings every month and I am kept informed via the Internet of things that are happening in the Centre. Now we have a regular meeting and going to the Centre every week, the communication is often and enough for me (VRB14).*

*I am part of the communication. I attend meetings, I listen, I am aware of planning and of all the daily arrangements for upcoming terms. It is done often and is enough (VRB1).*

*Since moving to the new premises monthly meetings have been scheduled and have proven to be of exceptional assistance to the Volunteers – it is a forum where each vollie [sic] has a voice and feels that the part they play is significant (VRB8).*

The volunteers are now starting to assume leadership roles within their group; new events, fundraising and ideas committees have been set up, although no-one is as yet willing to take on the single role of volunteer Coordinator.

*..we have trebled in growth in regards to courses made available....monthly meetings have been scheduled and have proven to be of exceptional assistance to the volunteers – it is a forum where each vollie (sic) has a voice and feel that the part they play at/for the Centre is significant (VRB8).*

*We need a strong person to run the Centre, someone who is a leader and not just a delegator (VRB4)*

*We need a volunteer coordinator who could be a paid position, I don't think this would put volunteers off-side.(VRA2).*

#### **4.18 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided the key findings of the research into volunteer motivation in the non-profit sector during organisational change, based on a case study of an adult learning centre. The key themes have been explored and addressed and it was found that fear of the unknown had a direct influence on each of the other themes identified herein with an underlying focus on the process of communicating information. Therefore, these two concepts are reliant on the timeliness, dissemination, clarity, processes and forms of communication targeted appropriately to the audience, especially when the group is of a mature age and inexperienced in modern technology.

Whilst the overall culture of an organisation may remain intact during organisational change, there are many factors which may threaten the status quo. Volunteers have strong personal values but it has been shown that they are susceptible to the emotional effects that organisational change brings and this may have serious implications on their behaviours in the short term but in this case did not have long term effects on their values and the Centre's culture. Whilst of a generation whose values personify a stoic countenance, they have been seen to thrive on acknowledgment of their skills and experiences, and their altruistic tendencies over-ride any grievances they may encounter. Whilst craving autonomy and creativity they are unwilling to take leadership roles, preferring to work collaboratively in or as a group, possibly due to their need to 'belong' rather than 'lead'.

Volunteers are a precious resource in non-profit organisations and should be treated as valuable members of staff. Their value has been shown to be significant in this case study and the Centre would not be able to survive without them. Whilst age proved to be a barrier in the acceptance of technology, it provided a wealth of maturity in other aspects and was not the specific detriment in the change management process. In fact the maturity of the volunteers generated the pace of the change process and probably provided a more thorough understanding and therefore acceptance of the changes being implemented. Again due to their age group, they seem to be more susceptible to the absence of feedback which directly affects their confidence and motivation.

Change and growth in particular present anxieties as well as excitement about future possibilities and it was shown that whilst mature aged volunteers vacillate between fears and threats and the excitement of opportunities, conversations in small groups or on a one to one basis alleviates their concerns. Involvement in the decision making processes, encouragement in voicing their opinions and inviting participation in future planning allows the individuals to grow into and accept the changes being made. They are only suspicious of unjustified concepts, when information is vague and when they do not understand what it being advocated.

This study has identified that change in a volunteer driven, non-profit organisation needs to have a 'human touch', communication needs to be consistent, simple to understand and frequent. Above all there is no substitute for the physical presence of the key communicator who must be available for consultation, and be willing and able to deal with emotional upheaval; especially in the case of older volunteers.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Implications

#### 5.0 Chapter Overview

The background to this research was presented in Chapter 1. It outlined the primary purpose of this study, given the identified gaps in the current literature, to define a clearer understanding of the way in which organisations communicate with volunteers in a time of organisational change. It also looked at possible barriers to the implementation of communication strategies and the influence of communication directives. The research is described as an action research, case-based study within the context of an adult learning centre in a suburb of Western Australia, focusing on the impact on culture and motivation of mature-aged volunteers, when change takes place in a non-profit organisation, and if its future necessitates increased professionalisation of the organisation.

Chapter 2 reviewed the extant literature on organisational change and communication. This led to further reviews of other relevant literature specifically aimed at the volunteer segment in the non-profit sector. While much of that literature was aimed at the what, why and who of volunteerism (Bussell and Forbes 2002, Clary and Snyder 1999, Goodale 1992, Hafner 1980, Johnson-Coffey 1997, Karl 1998, Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth 1996), supplementary literature was explored which reviewed the potential to better manage communication in a volunteer driven organisation (Harshman and Harshman 1999). The literature review also focused on defining and clarifying the meaning of change management (Burnes 2000, Burnes 2004, Carnall 2007, Heaven 1998, Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001); reviewing the theoretical and research literature on culture in a volunteer organisation and any effects that change management may have had on the existing culture in the organisation; reviewing the literature relevant to the concept of the professionalisation of a volunteer organisation (Broadbridge and Parsons 2003, Geoghegan and Powell 2006, Guirguis-Younger, Kelley, and McKee 2005) and what effects (if any) professionalisation may have on the organisation as a whole, following on from the implementation of change management.

Chapter 3 provided a detailed account of the philosophy, methodology and justification of the research approaches used in this thesis. It focused on the type of research methods used (Bryman, Becker, and Sempik 2008, Herr and Anderson 2005, Yin 2009) and discussed the analyses, along with details of the research design and ethical considerations. The chapter provided a clear outline of how the methodology suited the objectives and context of the research as a case-based study through mixed method and action research. It took into consideration the role of the researcher in action as *participant observer* (Herr and Anderson 2005, Muirhead 2002, Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009) and examined the challenges of that role as well as the advantages. As with all case study research, this chapter showed how case-study research includes procedures central to all types of research methods including threats to validity, maintaining the chain

of evidence and testing explanations. The action research component provided constant reflection on those processes to ensure the reliability of the outcomes.

Chapter 4 presented the action research process findings described in Chapter 3. The main focus of this process required continuous and reiterative processes to identify what culture shifts may have occurred in the non-profit organisation before, during and after the organisational change (Hofstede 1998, Meek 1988, Randle and Dolnicar 2009a, Schein 1985, 1999). A consideration of the behaviour and interaction of the organisation's key stakeholders – including fee paying clients, general administration volunteers and volunteer tutors was also undertaken as a part of the research process during this change. In particular the major issues associated with volunteers – the possible loss of individual/ group identity and autonomy; anxiety about new technology and potential increase of bureaucracy; and continuity at the Centre as a vehicle for social inclusion were primary research foci. A narrative account was used in this chapter to demonstrate the processes engaged in this study and involving the researcher as a participant observer. This account was told in the first person narrative to capture the impact of the researcher on the study as well as to reflect the realities of the highly interactive action research process. This chapter reflected on the phases of the study - pre-relocation (six months planning phase), relocation year (12 months settling in phase) and the post-relocation period (6 months – strengthening phase), and provided an analyses of the qualitative data collected during each phase and the quantitative data that provided a measurement of customer (member) satisfaction as a proxy for ongoing volunteer motivation.

This final chapter focuses on the findings and implications for both managerial and theoretical aspects to enable managers of volunteers to better understand the consequences of a change management process. There are a number of important implications for the development of communication in a non-profit organisation which is run by volunteer staff and these will be discussed in more detail. This chapter will also review the limitations a study of this nature presents, along with its intended contribution and recommendations for future research.

## **5.1 Introduction**

Organisational change is fraught with possibilities and problems. At best it can be an opportunity for growth for both the individual and the organisation; and at worst it unsettles, demotivates and breeds resistance and fear (Callow 2004, DiFonzo and Bordia 1998, Edmonds 2011, Eriksson 2004, Kello 2011). This thesis has attempted to understand the complexities of change and address strategic communication approaches (Barrett 2002, Daymon 2000) for a positive result in both methodology and relationships with the volunteers involved. It has found that upholding open and honest communication, encouraging participation and practicing a collaborative approach on the part of the change facilitator have all been instrumental in achieving outcomes

which could be considered desirable by other organisations that are also using volunteer workforces and are undergoing similar change management challenges. The current study has also found that volunteers' expectations, fears and uncertainties need to be addressed immediately in order to alleviate the negative impacts that concerns, gossip and rumour may have on any organisation approaching change (Caruth, Middlebrook, and Rachel 1985, Kotter and Schlesinger 1979, Luscher and Lewis 2008, Stroh and Jaatinen 2001).

## **5.2 Managerial Implications**

Many managers or facilitators of change struggle with implementing change, not in the least because of the implications on work related roles and responsibilities but also because of the emotional uncertainties and fears that go hand in hand with change (Liu and Perrewe 2005, Carnall 2007). Of interest to this study was how the manager (in this case the researcher and facilitator of the change), coped in introducing and implementing the change and what strategies were employed to facilitate successful change (Huy 1999, Mossholder et al. 2000, Parker 2008, Luscher and Lewis 2008). If the objective of the current study was to facilitate change that resulted in positive outcomes, then this study has shown that the implications are diverse and many. These implications will be discussed later in this section.

For the purpose of this section the term Manager refers to me as the facilitator/researcher and temporary manager, but also includes managers who manage volunteers and/or facilitate organisational change. The importance of building relationships to gain the trust and respect of the volunteers and members involved will also be reviewed, as will the strategies employed to manage change communication channels. In reviewing the relationships with volunteers, it is evident how change management strategies are necessary to alleviate the fears held by volunteers. Action research methods enable managers to constantly review and reflect on the strategies used in organisational change to empower people within the organisation and allow them to learn new and effective ways of utilising their skills and retaining their autonomy. The challenge of preserving the identity and values of volunteer workers in order to retain the motivation and culture of the volunteers if further professionalisation takes place is also considered.

The honesty and openness of everyone involved gave much credence to this study and is the basis for its success. It is with these advantages in mind that this thesis can put forward conclusions and implications that will positively benefit facilitators of change. It is particularly through the concepts of change, culture and possible professionalisation and the impact these concepts may have on volunteers and their motivation in a non-profit organisation through which such benefits can be realised.

### 5.2.1 Building Relationships

The very nature of this thesis – as an action research and case-based study – established the necessity to form relationships with the actors involved. As the researcher my participant-observer status had a powerful effect on being admitted to the circle of volunteers with whom I worked side by side, temporarily managed and sought information from. In addition, I was also the facilitator of the organisational change which made this dual role extra challenging. Building relationships with the people involved had a powerful influence on their trust (of me) and mutual respect, and allowed open and honest comments and opinions from which they had no fear of retribution. In practical terms relationship building has positive implications for managers of volunteers and is a step which has been previously ignored (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008) particularly if those managers are in a paid capacity or have limited knowledge of the volunteer culture (Ozanne and Saatcioglu 2008, Lewis, Hamel, and Richardson 2001).

The main challenge in building relationships is one of timing. In this study, many volunteers worked on a roster basis, and were at the Centre for a limited period of time. This meant that at times they were unable or unwilling (due to lack of confidence) to communicate effectively with the manager, and she/he with them. In these circumstances relationships can be tentative, superficial and tenuous, resulting in a lack of cohesion for the organisation and a lack of social interaction for the individual volunteer(s) with the manager. This can also have an impact on building the trust, commitment, confidence and motivation of volunteers, and in turn influence the reaction and resistance to organisational change (Whitely and Whitely 2007, Quinn 1980). Relationships take time - time to explore, time to build and time to establish, and managers need to be aware of the importance of breaking down barriers to social interaction between themselves and volunteers.

In addition, managers need to be cognisant of the complexity of the social psychological influences on volunteer behaviour during organisational change (Yoshioka, Brown, and Ashcraft 2007) which lends itself to confusion and sometimes resistance between the old and the new. Managers of volunteer workforces predominantly comprised of seniors who understand the need of social interaction sought by members of this age group will be better equipped to enable relationship building to gain trust and respect that will subsequently facilitate any organisational change. This was evidenced through my informal conversations and interviews with volunteers who repeatedly stressed the importance of the social contact and friendships made, and who emphasized the significance of my daily availability, five days a week to listen to their comments and fears. These relationships allowed me to fully immerse myself as participant/observer as previously discussed, gaining access to information as part of the inner circle. The volunteers trusted me and felt confidentiality would be honoured, no matter what the subject of discussion entailed.

### 5.2.2 Opening the Channels of Communication

Good communication strategies help create, sustain and manage change (Nixon 1994, Parker 2008) however, it must be noted that the methods of communication need to vary within the organisational, group and individual context. Effective communications during organisational change must be interactive and an integral part of the process. The need to examine the process of change communication, must take into consideration what is said, how it is said, when it is said and the impact(s) these processes may bring in order to effect success (Argenti 1998). The importance of targeting communication strategies to the correct audience is paramount to the successful implementation of change. In this instance, the audience consisted of mature aged volunteers who had been involved with the organisation for a long time and held traditional values and expectations. It is important to understand what kind of communications are desired, what experiences are evident/lacking - ranging from traditional to modern day techniques - and what opportunities exist to engage in the correct context (Barrett 2002). Australian and UK research indicates positive images of older workers associated with values such as reliability, loyalty and dependability (Brooke 2003). However, communicating with older volunteers can be time-consuming. This may be attributed to the lack of confidence in mature-aged workers in using information technology (Eisner et al. 2004) as a method for communication. This seems to originate mainly from the fear of technology, its perceived instability, or equally from an inability to understand or use it.

*There may be a bit of a panic for some volunteers if they have to use a computer on the front desk .....(VRA2).*

*Thankfully we don't do any computer work.....(VRA6)*

It has also been found that older, more traditional volunteers struggled with transitions from old to new (Warburton and McDonald 2009) and organisations need to become more proactive in facilitating change by specifically targeting knowledge bases and tailoring communication to the individual. This may pose a problem for managers, as age should pose no barriers to communication strategies or connectivity. It is important then to engage volunteers and together decide which communication channels are appropriate and acceptable, remembering that communication needs to be consistent, clear, simple to understand and follow, and frequent. Through informal conversations with the volunteers, it was not hard to determine how best to communicate with them and who was familiar with technology and who was not. To assist the volunteers I organised social media training, information and training sessions on how the new equipment worked and cheat sheets taped to walls to help them follow instructions.

### 5.2.3 Methods of Communication

In addition to informal conversations, managers need to gauge the types of communication that volunteers are most comfortable with and their acceptance (and in turn absorption) of communication methods (Barrett 2002,

Daymon 2000, DiFonzo and Bordia 1998, Elving 2005, Sopow 2006). A combination of verbal and non-verbal communications need to be simple to understand and consistent – there is no advantage in muddying the waters where communication plays such a vital role in change management. Managers therefore need to be aware of volunteers' preferences and their ability to receive and comprehend communications. It was found that while some people could communicate verbally and easily, others could not and preferred non-verbal communications, confirming that managers of change need to take into consideration volunteers' experience with and/or reluctance to speak out and their inclination (or not) towards technology.

*The message book is a good way to keep in touch with other members and volunteers ..... I'm not interested in attending committee meetings.....(VRA2)*

*Face to face is best but not always possible .....the committee should try to disseminate more information on a more basic level to keep us informed and interested in what is going on (VRA12)*

A simple approach to achieve this is to involve volunteers in the development of communication channels. If volunteers are asked to articulate their experiences, and any suggestions they may have for a preferred method of communication then the level of acceptance or willingness to learn new technology becomes evident.

Communicating change is a multistep process (Ford and Ford 1995) which as previously mentioned needs to examine more closely not only what is communicated, but how it is communicated, when it is communicated and the impact(s) that these methods may have on the progressive development of organisational change. However, whatever method of communication is agreed on there is no substitute for face to face communication to alleviate concerns, address fears and simply for reassurance. While this may initially be perceived as time consuming, it enables two-way communication, the ability to ask and answer questions, provides support and encouragement, and the manager can gauge the level of understanding and interest through the volunteer's body language and demeanour (Argenti 1998). Being visible and approachable reinforces the necessity of change and reduces the trauma and anxiety that change brings. However whilst this intensely personal approach is essential to the success of communication it can have consequences of dependency and the manager needs to be aware of this.

Emergent theory in the art of storytelling to assist in the communication of organisational change is receiving much attention (Reissner 2011), and may help with sensemaking, and allow a richer understanding of organisational change. Sensemaking is a narrative interpretive process by which an organisations' actors attribute meaning to unknown or unexpected events. It helps to explain the contradictions between expectations and experiences in the early stages of change, and is a theory that managers of change may

wish to pursue, especially with older volunteers where it may be used to reduce feelings of uncertainty and anxiety during change (Bean and Eisenberg 2006). In times of organisational change, organisational actors may lose treasured aspects of their daily routines and work environment (Reissner 2011) however stories which reflect past realities and values, such as stories of the good old days or how things have changed for the better, are prominent means for making sense of everyday experiences in a changing organisation (Gabriel 1993). As one volunteer pointed out:

*In the old days..... we used to not be able to talk about many things - taboo subjects like sex, religion and Politics - now the only taboos are Politics, and suicide (VRA10) .*

This volunteer spoke of many of the traditions which today could be seen as an integral part of the organisation's culture and identity, and which could have been used to better advantage had the theory of storytelling been a factor in this research. Managers need to be aware that these stories of the good old days help unite the past with the present and can be used as examples of how change can be beneficial to the organisation and its volunteers. Unfortunately storytelling was a strategy which could not be used to great effect in this research, due to the fact that many original members of the Centre were no longer around or able to share their stories.

Organisational change by its very nature is a challenge to the status quo, and is perceived by many workers, in general, as a threat to their feelings of security in their job (Parker 2008). This was discussed in Chapter 4 under Fears. Introducing mechanisms to listen to and act upon the Centres volunteers' concerns and dealing with these concerns at the source with some immediacy reinforced the interests of the individual(s) as well as the organisation. However, I found that the preferences of volunteers were varied and complex. Whilst some preferred one-on-one, face-to-face meetings, others wanted security in numbers – whether it was two or more people present at the time. It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that these preferences are accommodated to enable honest and forthright dialogue to take place, to validate the trust and integrity of both parties and the volunteer(s) having a more balanced and informed view of the change. As the TC I found that once preferred channels of communication were established, information became not only accepted but anticipated, as the volunteers (and members) were interested in what was happening and what the status was. By making communication more visual such as by using graphics and photographs, volunteers became more interested and had more comments and interaction.

Communication needs to be frequent, simple to understand, up-to-date and consistent. Managers need to ensure that volunteers are unafraid to ask questions by encouraging them to participate, by asking for volunteers' opinions and feedback and by respecting their concerns and issues – no matter how trivial they

may seem at the time. If volunteers feel that they are listened to and supported by the manager/organisation, their self-worth and ultimately their reasons for volunteering are reinforced. Managers must reduce the risk of resistance, negativity and poor communication methods to support the transformational change taking place, to ensure the changes are internalised in the hearts of the volunteers and that the desired effects can be achieved (Stroh and Jaatinen 2001).

Using an open door policy enabled volunteers to approach me whenever they felt the need. Also in giving them my private contact details, they felt that any confidences they shared were private and respected. When they needed to have support from other volunteers they knew that this was acceptable and would offer to meet outside the Centre if the issue necessitated this. Likewise, I made myself available on or off the premises, by phone or email as well as face to face. The volunteers knew any action that needed to be taken would be immediate. This promoted good service on my part and served as a good example which volunteers emulated at later stages.

#### **5.2.4 Engagement**

Organisations face many challenges during periods of change especially in terms of both its processes and content. There is still much to learn about the levels of anxiety and stress during change brought about by fear and the uncertainty that change brings (Edmonds 2011). Barnett and Carroll (1995) saw that the potential for successful change is to consider how change occurs (the process) and what actually changes/will change in the organisation (the content). Engaging volunteer workers prior to change is of itself a challenge. This is evident in the number of strategies employed to ensure the volunteers are included in the change processes, acknowledging that mature-aged volunteers are a special breed of people who volunteer for altruistic and social reasons (Clary and Snyder 1999). Older volunteers are less egotistic and less materialistic than younger volunteers (Callow 2004), they have a profound sense of commitment, their personal values are high and are shared within the organisation's culture. Mature-aged volunteers need to be needed, they want to belong and to be involved; to feel useful and fulfilled as well as enjoy some social interaction with like-minded people who share similar circumstances (Callow 2004). It is for all these reasons that engagement is paramount. Engaged volunteers are more productive through realising ownership and embracing commitment (Chen, Chen, and Chen 2010).

*I like to help people.... I also have the time to do it....there's a lot to be done...so I want to give something back (VRA5)*

*I'm a person who likes to be kept in the know and likes to be a part of the organisation fully even though I only work half day shifts (VRA13)*

Volunteers are more concerned with doing the right thing than they are with internal politics, power struggles and one-upmanship. Managers of change need to create genuine two-way, face-to-face dialogue, build trust and be available to answer questions as and when they are raised. It was for this reason that I made myself available every day both on and off premises to ensure that questions did not go unanswered.

My office hours began at 7am so that I could address any administration issues before the volunteers arrived at 9.30am and the members and tutors began classes at 10am. This meant I was available for consultation, informal discussions, problem solving and generally to answer any questions or assuage any fears and concerns. Being present meant that any problems were dealt with immediately and did not fester or increase in momentum. The volunteers respected my willingness and availability and did not abuse it. They approached me to discuss ideas and innovations, and allowed me to play the devil's advocate to analyse and reinforce their suggestions. From one of these discussions came the ideas to form a social events committee, set up a stationery account with a well-known supplier instead of buying stationery piecemeal, and to establish an account at the local supermarket for tea, coffee, sugar, biscuits etc. The idea for a roster for other duties as well as administration work also emerged from these informal discussions with volunteers.

Managers also need to fully justify the changes being made by way of explanation of outcomes and results – *we are doing this to enable that* – and not by being purely directive. With mature-aged volunteers, it is also imperative to 'ask' or 'inform' rather than 'tell'. (The practicality of this was evidenced when this researcher implemented accounting processes without consulting with the appropriate volunteers, as mentioned in Chapter 4). Collaboration and information produces a relationship of respect and trust to ensure participation and lessens the fear of change by having prior knowledge of the processes and outcomes, and establishes commitment. Involving volunteers in the decision making process by asking opinions, activates their creativity and draws on their life skills, developing a sense of achievement and future responsibilities to the organisation. This again was evidenced in preserving the history of the old site when the volunteers were asked how best to preserve the pictorial history of the past. Their answer was to create photograph albums recording past events, courses and activities for the archival history of the organisation.

Background conversations – such as informal communications over a morning or afternoon break – as well as casual conversations or simple exchanges of ideas enables change and the link to these levels of communication need to be more thoroughly explored. Many good ideas were formed over a cup of tea, such as having honour boards for Life Members; naming one of the rooms as a tribute to a past volunteer, who had had a huge influence on the organisation and was highly respected, but who had died some years ago; discussing new activities for members, and introducing friends who may consider becoming volunteers. Using

informal networks such as this is a useful mechanism to hear about change concerns and issues from participants, and are best performed in an informal setting to help alleviate fears and resistance.

### **5.2.5 Preserving Culture, Identity and Motivation**

Many people volunteer due to their own altruistic tendencies as dictated by their personal values, their desire to put something back into the community, from family tradition, to share their expertise and experiences, for social need and/or friendship, while expecting no reward or remuneration. Whatever their reason(s), volunteers form an identity within themselves and with the organisation.

*Identity is viewed as central for issues of meaning and motivation, commitment, loyalty, logics of action, and decision-making, stability and change, leadership, group and intergroup relations, and organisational collaborations (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003, 1164).*

Preserving the identity and values of volunteer workers in order to retain the motivation and culture of the volunteers is paramount to a successful change management process. One can define organisational identification as the degree to which individuals define themselves using the same attributes that they use to define or understand the organisation (Ashforth and Mael 1989). Therefore motivation and commitment is enhanced by preserving and maintaining this individual and organisational identity. The communication strategies to achieve this need to be consistent with the message of ownership by the volunteer workers. This will ensure that change processes do not detract from the core business of the organisation and the responsibilities of the volunteers, so that volunteers still have a choice and a degree of involvement, and so that the culture, values and ethos of the Centre will not be redefined by the change processes taking place.

In practical terms, whilst volunteers seek no pecuniary reward, nor do they see monetary value as a primary concern (Phillips and Phillips 2010) they much prefer intangible rewards which boost encouragement and appreciation. This can be achieved through the interaction of personal dynamics and situational opportunities such as saying a simple thank you, awarding certificates during Volunteer's Week (a national campaign aimed at recognising the valuable contribution of volunteers), long service recognition and acknowledgement of achievements in the organisation.

While change challenges the emotional, mental, physical, spiritual and psychological ideals of those involved, and managers of change often struggle with the process of managing subordinates' emotions, anxieties and defensiveness, it is essential to acknowledge how successful the change process has been. Liu & Perrewe (2005) highlight the importance of dealing with the emotions of those affected by change and that the management of emotions during any change process is a key challenge. A major communication strategy to

manage this aspect is to encourage conversations and give volunteers the opportunity to talk through concerns so that speculation, rumour and any ambiguities are put to rest. An open door policy, being accessible and approachable every day, and being easy to contact by phone or email are all reliable engagement tactics. Managers must not cut themselves off from the workers, but rather be reachable, approachable and readily available to take on broad concerns in order to retain trust with and motivation of volunteers.

There are theoretical and practical considerations in motivating and retaining volunteers (Clary and Snyder 1999). Managers of change need to recognise the primary reasons why people volunteer, that participation is an ongoing and continuous activity which must be sustained. Functionalist theorising suggests that volunteers whose motivational concerns are served by their participation, derive greater satisfaction than those whose concerns are not met (Clary and Snyder 1999). Volunteers are motivated by self-satisfaction in performing a function from which they feel fulfilled (Phillips and Phillips 2010). This is achieved by being cognisant of the volunteers' experiences and channelling their energy through participation and is as simple as asking volunteers for help, opinions and comments.

#### **5.2.6 Approaching Professionalisation and Retaining Identity and Autonomy**

It is imperative to keep focused on the positives of organisational change especially when further change is mandated by legislation and the organisation is a well-established identity within the community. If the organisation is independent, autonomous and self-funding there will be much resistance to any directives from government bodies. This is especially the case when the organisation is reputable within the community and has proven its sustainability over a long period of time. The fear of bureaucracy has much to do with such a response and often produces opposition, hostility and conflict if mismanaged, confirming volunteers prefer to work in a partnership rather than in a bureaucracy (Dacombe 2011). Therefore the reasons for the implementation of any bureaucratic directives in this respect must be treated with simplicity and candour. It is essential that explanations are sought from an experienced and trusted source and that the core business of the organisation is not affected. As the TC, I was in constant communication with the Local Council's representatives dealing with our lease and MoU. Summaries of these meetings were vocalised to both volunteers and the Executive committee members. Copies of any communications were made available and the CEO, the Manager of Community Services, the Head Librarian, the Financial Director and the Mayor of the Council were frequently invited to the Centre at special events, committee meetings, AGMs or specially to address the Executive and volunteers and committees. This helped to assuage any fears of a takeover by the Council and helped to build relationships instead of hostilities.

Volunteers have deep seated values, the most important of which is their altruism in volunteering for an organisation that is not a corporate entity, but rather caters for the community. Therefore any move towards professionalisation – and to most volunteers this would mean being seen as a profit-making organisation or worse - answering to a higher authority – would be anathema to their core values. Not that they have an aversion to profit making enterprises, but more often due to them not wanting to be taken over by ‘big brother’. To be professionalised indicates that they are no longer in control, a higher authority is calling the shots, and their identity of being a local, community-based non-profit organisation may be lost.

The strategies to address this are four-fold.

Firstly, the reasons for any professional changes must be articulated to the volunteers with evidence of the expected outcome(s);

Secondly, source an authority who can relay the information in simple terms and who will speak to the volunteers in an informal gathering and,

Thirdly, provide a real life example of where this has taken place and which has been successful in the organisation retaining its identity and autonomy.

Lastly, if possible obtain written confirmation of the extent to which any professional or legislative change has on the organisation e.g. a letter from the governing body, and make it available to anyone who wishes to study it.

### **5.3 Theoretical Implications**

As has been stated previously, the key research questions focused on how organisational change affects volunteers. More specifically, how can we communicate change to successfully implement it? What implications are there for the personal values, culture and motivation of volunteers in the non-profit sector? Will one of the consequences of organisational change dictate higher levels of professionalisation resulting in more bureaucracy and less autonomy? Will this in turn damage the culture, values and motivation of volunteers?

#### **5.3.1 Implications for Change**

Change can be demanding, difficult to administer, hard to predict and track and not always as successful as it could be (Kotter 1995). The introduction and implementation of these constant changes due to productivity, technology, brand, image and reputation demands responsibility to ensure that change effort is effective and makes sense. How can this be done? A better focus is needed on the psychological state of volunteers in times of major change in order to better understand the impact of change and the alleviating role effective communication can play (Yoshioka, Brown, and Ashcraft 2007). Covin and Kilmann (1990) found that the general importance of communication during change has been empirically demonstrated and generally agreed amongst practitioners as a key factor, along with a range of other factors including (facilitator) visibility,

consistent support, widespread employee participation, clear communications regarding process and goals and tying the process to the organisation's needs. It has been shown in this study that the presence of these factors had a high positive result as channels for the dissemination of communication to enable successful organisational change. Not least is the relationship between the facilitator of change and the volunteers which was of utmost importance in understanding the mixed perceptions, anxieties and expectations of volunteers and allowing easy identification of problems with communications and comprehension. It is important to note that the choice(s) of receiving communications was targeted to the individual's choice (*"I find that the messages left in the message book are sufficient for me"*) and diverse methods of communications were utilised to meet different needs/wants, experience and competency with technology.

### **5.3.2 Implications for Communications**

Two-way communication is the ultimate goal, allowing feedback, mutual understanding, participation and enabling change in attitude and/or behaviour (Grunig and Hunt 1984), and can be achieved on many levels in order to prevent psychological and physical isolation of volunteers. Effective communication strategies must begin with concentrated interaction on a day-to-day basis and not be thought of as an additional burden but as a natural method of communication collaboration. A nationwide survey of over 5,000 employees in the USA showed that the single biggest criticism in regard to communications in an organisation is the discouragement of upward as well as downward communications (Argenti 1998). What is the best way to communicate change to volunteers? It must certainly begin with informal discussions, interviews, face to face discussions or meetings (one on one or with several people at a time) to discuss preferred methods of communication. Volunteers must feel secure enough in their positions to ask questions and offer insights without fear of retribution. This can be done through encouragement and invitation to participate and interact in determining the best methods of communication to facilitate the process of organisational change. It can also be accomplished by giving volunteers the respect they deserve, listening and connecting with them frequently to set the basis for effective communication strategies (Argenti 1998). Furthermore face to face communication allows more active engagement and provides opportunities to gauge reactions and shifts in demeanour, and establishes eye contact which increases the positivity to and acceptance of change communication (Normore and Blaylock 2011).

While meetings are an important way to communicate face to face with volunteers, print media as a preferred method is also valuable to reinforce, support or supplement face to face interactions. As well as instructive and informative communications, visualisations or graphical communications have their place. These also support or invite interest as well as encouraging discussion and comment. Facilitators of change need to be 'conscious of their own taken-for-granted perspectives' (Daymon 2000, 249) and consider the individuals within the organisation when designing and implementing communication strategies. Not least is the preference for

individual vs collective engagement for communication as well as the relevance of the information and tolerance for ambiguity. Communication strategies need to be meaningful, show purpose and be realistic in order to be understood.

### **5.3.3 Implications for Performance**

Evidence shows that effective communication strategies are linked to performance (Harkness 2000) and deliver behaviours that are aligned with organisational goals. In an ever changing environment the need for improved communications has never been greater with strategic communications playing a critical role in ensuring successful organisational change. Volunteers have in the past been largely ignored in the frequency of communications and have been subject to top down communications (Lewis 1999), however when the work of the volunteers is integral to the operation of the organisation and to the success of the planned change effort, there is a need to ensure that volunteers are given every opportunity to access information and be prime recipients of two way communication.

Substantial evidence also exists to support the importance of evaluating employee participation in the change process communication strategies. Although the success may be evaluated by the smooth transition of organisational change, evaluation is necessary to ensure minimal degree of discontinuity and disruption in the organisation, work methods, relationships and roles (Lewis 1999). Furthermore, there is the need to preserve and maintain the values and culture of the organisation as change involves much more than the presence of new procedures, ideas, people and equipment. The failure of many organisational change processes can be linked to the misunderstanding of the role that culture plays in an organisation (Sopow 2006) and how culture is deeply rooted in its traditions, values, beliefs and sense of self. Therefore when organisational change threatens the very core of tradition (what has been) and tries to supplant with the unknown (what is to come) there is ultimately the risk of fragmenting the foundations of the organisation, giving rise to discord and disharmony and creating psychological anxiety and negative energies (Schein 2010). Creating psychological safety for organisational members who are undergoing change within the organisation can help the existing culture to remain intact through rationalising the change(s) and reducing the levels of uncertainty (Schein 2010).

### **5.3.4 Implications for Motivation**

Increased motivation can be achieved by engaging volunteers in the change process and facilitating buy-in and ownership over aspects of the change management process. This is an observation which finds credibility in change management literature although it has previously been unobserved regarding not-for-profit organisations with volunteer workforces. Whilst there are many challenges in regard to implementing change in terms of both its processes and content, not least is the challenge of maintaining motivation and the

alleviation of anxiety and stress which is often seen as disruptive, negative, unnecessary and complex. Resistance to change is brought about by fear, frustration and anger resulting in decreased morale and needs to be addressed in a clear, simple and immediate manner to avert a demotivated workforce and/or loss of personnel (Edmonds 2011, Liu and Perrewe 2005). Change provokes emotions, anxieties and defensiveness (Luscher and Lewis 2008) therefore identification of these issues and how best to alleviate them is paramount to successful change strategies. Change can be costly in terms of human resources, so considerable attention must be paid to the sequence of communication in order to involve volunteers and other possible stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition. To keep volunteers motivated and confident in their roles, communications must be simple, clear to understand, consistent and uncomplicated in order to address the issues that arise, and they must be done quickly in order to settle grievances, anxieties and problems. Volunteers need to have someone who is available, approachable and attentive to their concerns so as not to delay the acceptance of change or have a profound negative impact on the values and culture of the organisations or the self-esteem and confidence and motivation of the volunteers. This was evidenced by the continued presence of the person leading the change, the ability for them to be approachable, and through the many informal individual and group conversations.

### **5.3.5 Implications for Professionalisation**

Haski-Leventhal (2009, 6) noted that *"in the last two decades a new profession is emerging: management of volunteers"*. However, she notes that there are practical implications which need to be addressed, such as the involvement of third parties e.g. governments and academic institutions. There is a move to enhance the professionalism of volunteer organisations by adopting national standards for volunteering, enhancing accreditation of volunteer managers and organisations, collaborating with governmental organisations to train volunteer managers, scholarship funding to enhance training, funding of research into volunteering to enable standardised policies and procedures and an establishment of an institute for volunteer management (Haski-Leventhal 2009, 6). While this may allow many volunteer/non-profit organisations to be classed as a 'professional body' the implications for the volunteer organisation means loss of independence, an increase in bureaucracy and informal socialisation. Brint's (1994, in Haski-Leventhal 2009, 2) definition redefines what a volunteer non-profit organisation purports to be:

*'... having full time paid workers; develops a union for purposes of professional socialisation, education and learning; formal training for its members; guidelines determined by the state/government on who can work in the profession (sometimes through licensing) and the development of an ethical code to protect service recipients as well as the professional status of the organisation'.*

While this bureaucratisation may challenge many non-profit organisations and seem threatening as a 'take-over' by bureaucracy, it could very well be a practical solution to recruiting, training and retaining volunteers. However the role of volunteers is more than just a human resource, it is a central aspect of the nature of voluntary action, less defined by following set procedures and protocols, and outside of contractual arrangements (Dacombe 2011). The number of voluntary organisations providing public services has grown, and many of them rely on government funding. Yet, the implications for those non-profits (who do not rely on state or government funding) is the feeling that they are being subjected to the same increasing demands for performance management, accountability and contractual obligations as funded organisations and will in turn lose their independence, identity and purpose. In this study we have seen concerns raised about the impact of the proliferation and the consequential implications of increased regulation for the organisation.

*I'm always worried when we get a little closer to the centre of the governing body that perhaps that we might have a bit more interference..... autonomy is important I think for this place (TRA2)*

The way forward for similar organisations wrestling with a change process is to consider open and clear communication strategies in regard to their volunteers, confirmation of their autonomy as a volunteer workforce to alleviate their fears.

### **5.3.6 Implications for Action Research**

Using an action research method is not without its challenges. It has often been thought of as a process that produces local knowledge rather than global knowledge or generalizable knowledge. It has the ability to retrieve information that quantitative research cannot reach and takes into consideration feelings as well as statistics. The researcher wears many hats – researcher, participant, observer, facilitator - and sometimes this blurs the boundaries of the researchers own emotions, the emotions of the respondees and the research method. Therefore it is necessary for the researcher to frequently reflect on and separate the information obtained from emotional context in order to document the facts as well as the highly emotive reasoning behind them. The implications for action research are to accurately record the findings with minimal harm and maximum benefits (Herr and Anderson 2005).

All researchers are ethically bound to protect participants from any risks whether physical, financial, emotional or reputational which may affect them in revealing information (LeCompte and Schensul 1999). Because of the nature of action research which often includes the use of interviews, discussions etc., the usual risks are further exacerbated by possible embarrassment, invasion of privacy or a breach of confidentiality (Tanke and Tanke 1982, in Herr and Anderson 2005). There is also the issue of being subtly encouraging or unduly influencing participants in terms of them freely and voluntarily offering information. This is even more of a

challenge when the researcher is a participant-observer and facilitator of change as they may be in a position of power in relation to the participants and subconsciously and unintentionally prompt answers or opinions.

Action researchers need to recognise conflicts of interest which may arise within their subjects of research and their own interests in order to not contaminate and/or raise concerns about the integrity of the research findings (Brown and Tandon 1983). The high level of personal connection and involvement between researcher and subjects exposes the researcher to risks and problems as well as remarkable positive experiences that are not often possible in traditional research (Kidd and Kral 2005). However the implications of this are the immediate comparisons between the understandings and beliefs of the respondents and the researcher and the existing academic theory. This poses both the greatest challenge and a prospective source of new knowledge to the existing research literature (Kidd and Kral 2005).

A common problem in case-based research is the lack of selectivity and presentation of ideas which the researcher finds appealing due to their considerable immersion in the subject matter. The researcher must ensure that the conceptual argument - which will shape future thinking of the issues discussed in the research - allows the theory to be seen in a different light (Siggelkow 2007) whilst accepting a significant insight into the subject matter. Therefore the role of the researcher as participant observer fulfils this role in two respects in this particular case study: it allows submersion into the subject matter as researcher (observer), and as a participant also enhances a greater understanding of the organisation from an inside perspective, working collaboratively with the members of the organisation being researched.

Therefore in summary, this study has identified the following implications for action research;

1. The necessity for frequent reflection by the researcher as participant/observer;
2. The implications of ethical responsiveness to managing an equal power relationship;
3. The importance of being aware of and recognising the danger of any conflict of interest, and
4. The need to ensure that theory is used to guide the selection of presentation of ideas.

### **5.3.7 Summary of Implications**

This study has revealed several implications regarding organisational change.

Firstly, the importance of engaging volunteer workers in communicating and participating in internal change is significant.

Secondly, by involving volunteer workers in the decision-making process to make them feel less alienated and therefore more willing to accept the changes introduced to the organisation (Alexander, Lindsay-Smith, and Joerin 2009).

Thirdly, the method(s) of communication must take into account the amount (or lack) of expertise and experience of each participant (bearing in mind that technology-bound communication may be too formal, too

hard to access or just unavailable to certain individuals) and therefore the communication strategies and methods by which it is delivered must be considered for individuals and each set or sub-set of recipients.

Fourthly, the challenge of preserving the identity and values of volunteer workers must be appropriately addressed in order to retain the motivation and perceived culture of the volunteers particularly when professionalisation takes place.

Lastly, action research is a time consuming process which is often seen as ambiguous, needing high tolerance levels and is sometimes messy (Herr and Anderson 2005) but can offer insights that quantitative research fails to address.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

The most obvious limitation of this study is that it involves a single case study in a specific Australian location. The focus on only one non-profit organisation may raise questions about the generalisability of the findings. However, many of the issues encountered by the focal organisation during the course of its change program may be similar to those encountered in other parts of the world by similar organisations. In particular, the findings of the study have relevance for many non-profit voluntary organisations reliant on older volunteers located in other developed, Western countries.

A further limitation arises from the nature of the action research methodology employed with the principal researcher in the role of participant observer. It is time consuming, even more so than with other forms of interpretive research, and it was at times frustrating (as the researcher) to distance myself from the topic of the research and the emotions that surfaced. Inevitably, an element of subjectivity can arise. In order to safeguard against this possibility, as the researcher it was necessary to regularly reflect on the progress of the project mainly through keeping a detailed diary and through discussions with a mentor. Reflection is a vital element of the action research cycle (Altrichter et al. 2002) and must be ongoing through all stages of data collection, analysis, interpretation and writing of the thesis. The inclusion and reflection of personal actions, feelings and conflicts due to the involvement as participant-observer was also part of the phenomenon to be studied for the results to become reliable and valid, trustworthy and authentic (Daymon and Holloway 2002). The quantitative data also contributes in this regard by providing a potentially more objective source of data triangulation offering a more complete picture (Denzin, 1989 in Daymon and Holloway 2002, 98).

The use of volunteers from a single geographic location might also have produced some socio-cultural issues, however as the volunteers were from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and all volunteered without pay, this was not considered a source of bias. With an older demographic, the age group of the volunteers may unduly influence the researcher in terms of pre-conceived ideas as to volunteers' knowledge, experience, abilities and involvement in the future of the organisation. This could perhaps skew the interpretation of

comments made in the interviews. For example when asking about bringing 'new and younger' people into the organisation the definition of 'young' varied from 18 years of age to 50 years of age. In addition the gender of the volunteers and members was predominantly female, so the limitations here included a lack of gender equality which may have resulted in skewed gender-balanced opinions. However statistics show that more females volunteer than males – about 38% more – and the age group was relevant to the research topic.

Future economic pressure from governments may see an increase in the demand for volunteers to undertake jobs which have previously been government's responsibility, and non-profit volunteer-driven organisations may be confronted with a shortage of volunteers despite the increasing number of retirees and baby boomers with time on their hands.

## **5.5 Recommendations for Future Research**

This research started in 2010 and began as a single case study in a local self-funded non-profit organisation, run by volunteers, on the cusp of organisational change. The challenge was to determine what processes were available which would assist in the proposed organisational change to ensure its success when many theories document reasons for failure. However while this single case study allowed for in-depth analysis through action research there is the opportunity to compare its findings with similar organisations in other non-profit areas and locations.

It may be possible to apply the strategies employed in this study in other similar volunteer-run organisations, not just reserved for older established organisations but also for new organisations setting up for the first time. The strategies are not restricted to West Australian locations, as being based on a volunteer-run organisation these are applicable to any non-profit entity that is run by volunteers. Larger organisations may also benefit if they have a volunteer cohort – either large or small – as the communication and engagement concepts are transferable across most disciplines. Within the non-profit industry it may be possible to replicate the study to gauge motivation and commitment and communication problems across a variety of volunteer run organisations. Another reason to extend the study is the number of baby-boomers now looking to expend their skills and expertise within the community as they approach retirement.

Researchers have to look beyond the cause of change problems and more to evaluating the outcomes in order to progress. For this reason researchers need to look at what was successful, what improvements can be made and how the change process can be better communicated to the participants. Consideration must be given to who the participants are, their personal values, experiences and degree of understanding of the change taking place. Research will have to focus more on explanations instead of the dynamics of change to enlighten participants and to garner their support. Evaluation of change management and change

communication needs to be well categorised and documented so that its applicability can be disseminated to the appropriate organisations and industries. Thus far it is too generic and needs more specificity to be of any real value.

The uniqueness of the organisation must be taken into consideration in the context of this study. The number of local, volunteer run, self-funded non-profit organisations without affiliation to any government body is uncommon. The age and demographics of the volunteers may lead to a chronic shortage of volunteers in the near future and so factors addressing recruitment of younger-aged volunteers needs to be addressed. This then raises two questions which may need to be addressed. What incentives could be employed to attract and recruit interested volunteers? What skills and experience are needed to engage altruistic prospective volunteers to reinforce and enrich an organisation such as this?

While some of the findings were specific to this particular organisation, there is potential for many of the key findings to be relevant not only to non-profit organisations but to corporate entities who also employ volunteers. Further research into the treatment of volunteers in these instances needs to be conducted and could well focus on the relationships, communications and motivation issues between managers, co-workers (paid) and other volunteers within the organisation – especially during organisational change. As has been mentioned the idea of a non-profit having to become bureaucratically more professionalised seeks to undermine the very reason why people volunteer for a self-funding community based organisation, and demands that more research is carried out to explore the precise impact that professionalisation would incur.

## **5.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has summarised an account of how non-profit organisations can best manage change. As volunteers become more in demand, non-profit organisations need to think more strategically about their most valuable resource – their volunteers – and how communication strategies play a vital role in the acceptance of change especially when mature aged volunteers are the recipients. Action research techniques were employed from which emerged honest and open dialogue, and served to highlight the complexities of change demonstrating that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ method of delivering change communication - taking into consideration the characteristics of the organisation and the diverse demographics of its volunteers.

Managerial implications have been discussed which included developing relationships with volunteers, communicating frequently, simply and consistently to ensure a clear and collaborative functionality exists. Theoretical implications include the consequences of leaving the implementation of change strategies to managers who struggle with the process of managing subordinates’ emotions, anxieties and defensiveness. This also includes the need for 2-way communication, regular information, inclusivity in the decision making

process and acknowledgement of ideas, suggestions and commitment. Recommendations for further research were outlined concluding with several research propositions resulting from the experience of working with volunteers through the dilemma of change processes. From the theory to reality evolved a documented journey of events, activities, exchanges, insights, tears, fears and laughter that will forever be of special interest to this researcher, hopefully more so for the people involved and for future researchers in the field.

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## Appendix I

### Definitions

The Executive Committee (the Executive)	Made up of members and volunteers who have been elected to this committee.
Member	Anyone who is a financial member of the Centre and who attends classes, workshops, activities or outings.
Term	The period of time when the Centre is open for business such as February to March; April to June; July to September; and October to December.
The Centre	The adult learning centre where the research was undertaken.
Volunteer (Administration or Tutor)	A financial member of the Centre who also volunteers their time in the Centre in administration and customer service duties or as a tutor for no pay or reward.
The Volunteer Committee	The group of volunteers who run the administration side of the Centre.
Manager	A part-time paid person who acts as the Centre manager in order to coordinate the running of the Centre with the Volunteers' assistance. This person is a contract provider employed by the decision of the Executive.
Transition Coordinator (TC)	The person leading the change of relocation from old premises to new premises

## Appendix II

### Member Survey

Dear Centre Member,

This survey is part of a Masters degree research project at Curtin University and will also assist the Centre to continue providing excellent service to you, our members. Your completion of this survey and its return in the reply paid envelope provided will be greatly appreciated.

In relation to each of the following statement, please tick the number you find most appropriate to your feelings about the Centre, where 1 means ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 means ‘strongly agree’.

Thank you for your participation.

Veronica Lawrance

Q1. This centre has modern looking equipment  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q2. The physical facilities at this centre are visually appealing.

Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q3. Course materials associated with this centre are visually appealing  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q4. This centre has clean, attractive and convenient classrooms.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q5. The centre layout makes it easy for members to find what they need.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q6. The centre layout makes it easy for members to move around.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q7. When the centre promises to do something by a certain time, it does so promptly.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q8. This centre provides its services at the time it promises to do so.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q9. This centre performs the service right first time.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q10. This centre has courses available when the members want them  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q11. This centre insists on ease of enrolment and services.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q12. Volunteers in this centre have the knowledge to answer members’ questions.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q13. The behaviour of volunteers in this centre instils confidence in its members.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q14. Members feel safe in their dealings with the centre  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q15. Volunteers in this centre give prompt service to its members  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q16. Volunteers in this centre tell members exactly when services will be performed.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q17. Volunteers in this centre are never too busy to respond to members’ requests.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q18. This centre gives members individual attention.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q19. Volunteers in this centre are consistently courteous with members  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q20. Volunteers in this centre treat members courteously on the telephone.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q21. This centre willingly handles cancellations and refunds.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q22. When a member has a problem, this centre shows a sincere interest in solving it.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q23. Volunteers in this centre are able to handle member complaints directly and immediately  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q24. This centre offers appropriate materials and books for the courses offered.  
Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly  
Disagree      Agree

Q25. This centre provides plenty of convenient parking for members.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

Q26. This centre has operating hours convenient to all members.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

Q27. This centre accepts most major credit and debit cards.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

**Demographics**

Q28. What is your gender?

1. Male  2. Female

Q29. What is your postcode? \_\_\_\_\_

Q30. What best describes your employment status?

- 1. Employed full-time
- 2. Employed part-time
- 3. Self-employed
- 4. Not employed
- 5. Semi-retired
- 6. Retired
- 7. Homemaker
- 8. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q31. What is your age group?

- 20-25  26-35
- 36-45  46-55
- 56-65  66+

Q32. If we produced a monthly newsletter as well as the Term Programme would you prefer to receive it/them by email?

a) monthly newsletter

YES please  NO thanks

Don't have email

b) Term Programme

YES please  NO thanks

Don't have email

If yes, please include your email address here:  
(please print)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Optional: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your assistance in completing this survey is much appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Veronica Lawrance  
Transition Coordinator  
0409 035 343

*Instructions:*  
*Please return this form by mail in the reply paid envelope provided by 6 December.*  
*Thank You*

**Appendix III**  
**Letter to members**

17 November 2010

Dear Member,

I am working towards a Masters Degree at Curtin University. My research is based on the (name) and its impending move to the new premises early next year, focusing primarily on perceived customer service in a volunteer organization.

We may or may not have met each other previously. I have been formatting the Centre's newsletter since Term 2 2009, was appointed Transition Coordinator to assist in the relocation to new premises, and elected Chairman at the recent AGM.

As you are, or have been, a member of the Centre I respectfully request your assistance with the enclosed survey which will contribute to my Masters thesis.

Please be assured that this study is entirely voluntary and **your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence. The data will be secured** and stored in the Curtin University School of Marketing office for **5 years with restricted access. No individual response will be made available to any person not connected with this thesis.** The research project has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval number SOM 2010 039).

The survey should only take about 10 minutes to complete. Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed reply paid envelope by 6 December 2010. I understand the time constraints on us all and hope you may be able to spare the time to assist me in this.

If you have any queries, please telephone me on 9474 3835 or email [transition@xxxx.org.au](mailto:transition@xxxx.org.au). Alternatively you may wish to contact my supervisor Associate Professor Nigel de Bussy at the Curtin School of Marketing on (08) 9266 2855 or [n.debussy@curtin.edu.au](mailto:n.debussy@curtin.edu.au).

Yours sincerely

Veronica Lawrance  
Chairman  
Masters Student, School of Marketing, Curtin University

**Appendix IV**  
**Discussion guide : tutors**

**What do I want to find out?**

**Attitudes/perceptions to any changes in the Culture, Professionalism and Motivation at the Centre before the imminent relocation.**

---

**The Centre**

1. What do you consider are the benefits for the Centre's members?
2. What do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?
3. How do you feel about the centre relocating?

**The Culture**

4. What do you consider is the culture of the Centre?
5. How does this fit in with what you teach?
6. The imminent relocation to new premises will create a lot of change – how do you see this is going to impact on the centre and its members' culture?
7. What may be lost?
8. What may be gained?

**The Professionalism**

9. Is the Centre professional enough for what you do?
  - a) If so why?
  - b) If not what can it do to improve?
10. How will the relocation change either a) or b)?
11. What is your understanding of the term 'Brand'?
12. Do you think Centre has a brand? What is it?
13. If not – does it need one?

**The Motivation**

14. Why do you volunteer?
15. How long have you been a volunteer?
16. What do you understand about the term volunteer?
17. What other organizations are you a volunteer for?
18. How many hours per week do you do volunteer work?
19. What's In It For You?
20. What motivates/de-motivates you?
21. How are you treated by volunteers/members?
22. What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?
23. Will you continue to volunteer?
24. What else can Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer?

**Appendix V**  
**Discussion guide : volunteers (administration)**

Date:

Time:

Interviewee:

Venue:

---

**Centre**

→ Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?

**Current communication strategies:**

- How are you communicated with?
- How often?
- Is it enough?
- Elaborate

**Organizational knowledge:**

- What do you know about the Centre?
- History-wise
- Personnel
- How it runs
- What its mission/vision/values are?
- Other thoughts

**What are the strengths of the Centre and its current location?**

- What do you perceive these are?
- Elaborate

**What are the worst things about the current Centre?**

- How can they be improved?

**What do you feel about the new location?**

- Opportunities/strengths

**What do you think of the current newsletter?**

- As a tool for communication?
- As purely a programme?

**As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction?**

- Training?
- Manual?
- Time with experienced person?
- Rate of job satisfaction?
- Type of communications? Processes? Avenues for discussion/interaction?

**Other comments interviewee discloses.**

**Appendix VI**  
**Letter to volunteers and consent form**

<date>

Dear

I am working towards a Masters Degree at Curtin University, based on the (name) Centre and its exciting move to the new premises early next year.

We may or may not have met each other. I have been formatting the newsletter since Term 2 and have just been appointed Publicity and Liaison officer at the recent AGM.

As you are a much appreciated volunteer, I would very much like to interview you as part of my qualitative research and ask you questions relating to being a volunteer. This will form part of my thesis which I will complete over the next 12 months.

The interview should take approximately half an hour and I would be delighted to meet you at your convenience either at my house, your house or a local (to you) coffee shop and treat you to a well deserved cup of coffee!

I understand the time constraints on us all and hope you may be able to spare the time to meet with me.

I will give you a call in a couple of days to see if you are amenable to this or you can call me on the number above.

Kind regards

Veronica Lawrance

## Consent Form

**Title of research project:**

Communication, Change and Culture in a Voluntary Organisation

**Name and position of researcher:**

Veronica Lawrance, Post-graduate student Curtin University.

**Supervisor:**

Associate Professor Nigel de Bussy, PhD, FPRIA  
Public Relations Course Coordinator  
School of Marketing  
Curtin University  
GPO Box U1987  
Perth 6845  
Western Australia  
Tel: (08) 9266 2855  
Fax: (08) 9266 3937  
Mobile: 0401 103 172  
Email: [N.DeBussy@curtin.edu.au](mailto:N.DeBussy@curtin.edu.au)

*I confirm that I have:*

1. Read the letter inviting me to take part in the above project.
2. Consider myself informed about the aims and methodology of the project.
3. Understood that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
4. Been guaranteed by the researcher that she will ensure confidentiality and anonymity.
5. Consented to participate in an interview and that this may be documented, recorded or transcribed.
6. Agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publication of a thesis.

.....  
(Signature)

Date:            /            /20

.....  
(Name)

**Appendix VII  
Thank You Letter**

<date>

Dear <name>

Please find enclosed, a small token of my appreciation for allowing me to interview you for my thesis and a copy of the transcript of our interview.

I hope you are satisfied with my interpretation of your comments and would like to assure you that anonymity will be exercised at all times.

Please feel free to amend anything you think is incorrect or let me have any further comments you wish to make.

Kind regards

Veronica Lawrance

## **Appendix VII**

### **Diary of Field Notes**

*19/3/09 – Meeting at Centre to take on role of NL editor*

Met with (name A) Administration Manager and (name B) Chairperson, to discuss my volunteering to become NL editor.

*3/4/09 – End of Term 1*

*15/4/09 – NL Mail out Day*

Attended the Centre and met the volunteers who do most of the administration work. Introduced myself as the new Editor of the newsletter and helped with the mail out. A good bunch of ladies some of whom are familiar and some I know. Very welcoming and talkative, sharing snippets about the Centre and its downfalls.

*29/4/09 – Enrolment Day for Term 2*

A busy day with many people cramped into the little rooms – had to go outside for a breather where I was accosted by some of the volunteers who wanted to ‘share’ their issues and see if I could do anything to help.

*4/5/09 – Day 1, Term 2*

*13/5/09 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Invited to attend committee meeting and get to know them all. Some discussion on strategic plan and the need to get feedback from members, offered to do a survey of needs for next Term. Discussion about Strategic planning with (name). Requested opportunity to base my thesis on the Centre using volunteers in some capacity. Not sure of thesis topic yet.

*10/6/2009 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Committee meeting at the Centre. Heard about position of a transition leader which sounds interesting. Need to find out more from (name) and (name) who have done some strategic planning.

Transition Leader will set up and guide the Centre through the move to a new centre. Exciting! Sound like a job I could do and enjoy.

Look up:

Learning Centre Link

City's Lease/MoU

(name 1)

(name 2)

(name 3)

Demographics of the City

*26/6/09 – End of Term 2*

*2/7/09 – Meeting with (name 1), (name 2) and (name 3)*

Just had a meeting with (name 1), (name 2), and (name 3) at a Cafe. Very exciting listening to opportunities that Centre has in store. Lots of ideas to promote further and increase courses/members – youth, young mums – different subjects. Need marketing and PR plan to facilitate transition. Very enthusiastic and feel I could work with them.

*6/7/09 – Admin meeting (name 1), (name 4) (name 5) and (name A)*

Admin meeting to look at finances and plan for future.

Seems a given that I will be Transition Leader (TL). YAY! Looking at ways to better understand P&L and Finances to plan for future. Ann very supportive – good! (name 1) and I to meet with Learning Centre Link people.

*8/7/09 – NL mail out day*

*20/7/09 – Meeting at Learning Centre Link*

(name 1) and I met with (name 6). Looked at other Learning Centres in area and how they got through similar transitions. Need to visit centres and interview leaders to see what can be done to survive the transition and come out stronger than weaker. One Centre has a paid centre manager but also had unpaid T/L – MUST met her.

(name 1) asked me to do some work for him (as a para something) sounds good.

*22/7/09 – Enrolment Day Term 3*

*24/7/09 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Reported on meeting with Link. Spend a lot of time discussing 'Elders' – key stakeholders rather tedious – and repetitive. (name B) absent so no confirmation as TL no one seems to want to progress and time is slipping away. Very frustrating but much needs to be done to build case. (name 4) now wants to go to Link – not much point as we exhausted their knowledge - however may help with Grant knowledge need to ID stakeholders and get underway. Bit of a push/pull slow/go relationship here.

*27/7/09 – Day 1, Term 3*

*7/8/09 – Meeting with (name 1)*

Meeting with (name 1) – progress! Talked about TL role and process to follow. Organise morning tea with (name 4) and (name 8) to find out more. Lots of little things to do but (name 1) encouraging. Should start talking to volunteers especially (name A) for better background. Still excited and enthusiastic. Organise list for forums

*11/8/09 – Meeting with (name A)*

Met with (name A) and found out a lot of background information on Centre. (name A) is enthusiastic about me as TL and promised to put on next agenda. Feel good and ready to go.

*13/8/09 – Centre Member Survey*

Created survey to find out members' needs. To be sent out with next newsletter mail out.

*19/8/09 – Meeting with (name 4) and (name 8)*

Met with (name 8) who started the Centre and (name 4). Learned lots of history and origins of the centre. (name 8) is very gracious and still enthusiastic about my role. Handed over lots of PR stuff and information to help.

*25/8/09 – Meeting with (name) who is a Former Transition Coordinator (FTC)*

Met with this person who was a former Transition Leader for (named) Centre. Had a great morning finding out about how she managed the pitfalls of the transition and the emotional impact on everyone. Took me to the Centre to meet the centre manager and look around the centre. Could work together on a marketing plan and bounce ideas around. Fantastic – all coming together – must get (name 2) to formalise position as TL.

*26/8/09 – Centre Committee meeting*

Centre committee talked about Grant for TL position: still not formalised but still seems I am preferred choice. Bugged down with AGM feel a bit miffed that position not yet formalised – ah well, that's a volunteer society for you.

*1/9/09 – Meeting with (name 1), Bohdi Tree Café*

Met with (name 1) to talk about forum groups. (name 1) to facilitate, me to assist. Talked about Dept of Education, ACE, VET and TAFE – not competing with them. A bit befuddled – but conscious of concept. Showed (name 1) survey concept and discussed when – to send out next Newsletter. Budgets need to be done.

*4/9/09 – Group Forums 16 Glyde Street, South Perth*

Forums were great! Lots of ideas – met quite a few volunteers and discussed how to move the Centre to new home, strategies to grow and increase centre. Everyone seems to be OK with the vague idea of me as TL even though not yet formalised.

*9/9/09 – Centre's AGM*

Attended AGM, good turnout. Was elected publicity and liaison officer – one step closer. Met with the Mayor and CEO of local Council and the Community officers. Good feelings about the Centre.

*18/9/09 – End of Term 3*

*21/9/09 – Meeting with (name 1) at Bohdi Tree Café*

Meeting with (name 1) re revision of Business Plan and Strategic Plan. Discussed idea of crèche and actions in 3 phases. Apprehensive about TL position not yet ratified. Much work to be done and getting ready to start interviews. (name 1) helpful.

*30/9/09 – NL Mail out day*

Member survey was not sent out with NL – very disappointing have to rely on members picking one up at the Centre, completing and returning. Not confident of success or number that will be returned.

*5/10/09 – Volunteer Interview VRA7 – The Glove Café Angelo Street South Perth*

*12/10/09 – Interview VRA10 – 16 Glyde Street South Perth*

*9/10/09 – Centre Committee Meeting*

(name B) was an apology so I had to chair the meeting, very difficult as many interruptions. Talked about TL and need to set up as a priority as a grant has to be applied for. Also need MOU for Lotteries and duty statement for TL role. Position still not formalised!! Frustrated – Ann not happy. Discussed TL now Transition Person spent half an hour on terminology alone – really pissed off! (name 4) now want to advertise for position after I have done so much work. TL Committee formed –of three volunteers, (name A) and (name 1) and myself.

9/10/09 – Interview VRA3 16 Glyde Street, South Perth

12/10/09 – Interview VRA2 16 Glyde Street South Perth

*14/10/09 – Enrolment Day Term 4*

14/10/09 – Interview VRA12 16 Glyde Street South Perth

15/10/09 – Interview VRA9 16 Glyde Street South Perth

*16/10/09 – Meeting at the local Council offices with (name 1) and (name 2)*

Met with (name 1) and (name 2) re MOU. (name 2) backtracked a little re peppercorn rent: must maximise use of new Centre. Grant may not be available unless partnership entered into. A bit down as (name 2) no longer in charge and leaving. The Director of Finance needs to be met with re financial implications.(name 2) to do Needs Analysis. The Centre needs to get on with Lotteries Grant for TL.

*19/10/09 – Day 1 Term 4*

21/10/09 – Interview with VRA4 at Dux Café

*6/11/09 – TL Committee Meeting*

Big discussion on budget amendments in Business Plan which I had prepared. Not necessary in end as it was correct. Discussed dynamics of the TL working group and (name 8) to be spokesperson to Committee as a whole. Frustration grows, (name 1) sympathetic – be patient.

9/11/09 – Interview VRA5 at The Globe Café

12/11/09 – Meeting with (name 1)

Met with (name 1) most discussion on Business Plan and control mechanisms. Feel idea of me as TL is going cold. Suggested put out to tender as could be a battle to justify. Very miffed.

16/11/09 – Interview with VRA11 at Windsor Hotel (lunch)

27/11/09 – *Centre Committee meeting*

Reported on returned member surveys (20). Disappointing number of returns due to not being included in NL.

11/12/09 – *End of Term 4 and Centre's Annual Christmas party*

13/12/09 – *Meeting with (name 1) at Bohdi Tree Café*

Looked at logistics for expansion of centre to justify Lotteries Grant application. Also looked at fundraising ideas and grants for specific activities. Finalised business plan budgets for inclusion with grant request. All business and no discussion of TL role. Felt let down somehow though not (name 1)'s fault really.

22/12/09 – *Meeting with (name B) and (name A)*

Mostly business on how to keep the centre running smoothly and what transitions need to take place. Looked at plans for new centre and a few suggestions were noted for further discussion with the City's Financial Director A bit aggrieved as I am doing all the work for TL position but still not ratified.

## **2010**

20/2/10 – *NL Mail out for Term 1*

Included survey for member needs analysis

22/1/10 – *Centre Committee Meeting*

Apology

29/1/10 – *Meeting with previous Thesis supervisor at Murdoch*

We talked about me transferring to Murdoch and about my thesis. Not happy and pretty upset about not being appointed as TL. Decisions left in a fog.

*2/2/10 – Enrolment Day for Term 1 2010*

*8/2/10 – Day 1 Term 1 2010*

*26/2/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Apology. Committee decided to advertise position for TL – what the! I'm really angry and disappointed that the other members didn't speak up against (name 4). Seems I am no longer the flavour of the month.

*26/3/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Mundane business as usual. Business plan and timeline report to be finalised next week by (name 1) and I. Lease or new building discussed. Lottery West decision expected mid May. (name 8), (name A) and I to meet and prepare advert and timeline for TL position. I'm doing all the work – meeting with local Council officers and looking at fittings but not as TL – Grrr!!!!

*28/3/10 – Financial Director of City*

Followed up in regard to MOU and interference from Centre committee – (laugh) this will put some backs out!

*1/4/10 – End of Term 1*

Meeting with (name 8) and (name A). Drew up timeline for TL. Discussed an external person as referee. Funding to start mid May, advertise in June and appointee to commence 1 July. Centre link to be approached re English for Migrants as well as Mission Australia though what this has to do with employing a TL I don't know! Decided to approach three external professionals for suggestions/offer position.

*7/4/10 – NL Mail out for Term 2 2010*

*23/4/10 – Meeting with (name A)*

Time is marching on and still getting nowhere with TL. (name 8) away so (name A) and I met to sort out duties of TL, marketing plan, periodical payment of salary to TL and other duties TL to take over from

me when they commence. Feel like a spare part and not happy. The gods are conspiring against me – after all the work I have done, I feel like I should be given the job.

23/4/10 – FESA

Follow up with FESA re needs for Centre

*23/4/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

In absence of the Chairperson I chaired the meeting. Same old, same old – interruptions and discussions outside of agenda. Nothing new just the same old topics done to death. Prospective member invited to meeting (not really done) and was too vocal for a non committee member. (name 4) insisting we advertise for TL and was told this was being done as Expression of interest through (name 1)'s network and Learning Centres Link. Reported on member survey 53 returned approx. 25%.

*27/4/10 – Enrolment Day Term 2 2010*

*29/4/10 – TL Selection Criteria Meeting with (name 8), (name A) and volunteer.*

Looked at the Strategic Plan which (name 1) prepared and the priority of tasks. (name 8) a bit pompous but we got through by dividing into quarters – June to Sept, Oct to Dec and Jan to April. A realistic timeframe for someone who might come cold into the Centre.

*30/4/10 – TL Committee Meeting*

Looked at Essential and Desirable criteria such as EXPERIENCE!!!! Grant knowledge, ability to research funding and application of self. No 9-5 person wanted here, although the position is only 3 days a week. Ha! Like someone is going to do all this in that time. Good luck. Applications to be sent through to (name A) at the Centre.

*3/5/10 – Day 1 Term 2 2010*

*11/5/10 – Meeting with Financial Director of the City*

Discussed peppercorn rent and what it means; variable outgoings; security swipe cards and other charges the Centre may incur. Also looked at lease/MOU; floor plans and size of rooms; floor treatments and after hours security. Director is very adamant that he will not deal with everyone at the Centre just the TL person when appointed.

*21/5/10 – Seminar*

Attended Developing Community, Capacity and Spirit seminar run by (name 1). Would be a great intro for our new TL.

*25/6/10 – End of Term 2*

*28/5/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Chaired the meeting as Chairperson not up to it although he was present. Hoping he will say something about appointing me as TL. The Grant has been approved waiting on Minister's appro so EOI for TL is now being ramped up and getting desperate for someone to start working effectively. (name 1) and Name 9) to be contacted again re possible employee. Time is running out to get everything done for January move. Very frustrating and angry at rest of Committee who are being very subdued in all this. Set up a resource committee to investigate new equipment/existing equipment for new Centre as no TL yet.

*2/6/10 – Meeting with (name A) and (name 8)*

Both worried about no replies to position of TL and wondered if I was interested in submitting an application! Hah! Felt like telling them to get stuffed!

*6/6/10 – Meeting with (name A) re TL position*

Followed up with (name 9) and (name 1) re update on Centre and TL. Discussions about time line and urgency to get going now Grant has been approved. No likely applicants.

*11/6/10 – Attended Community Engagement and Involvement Seminar run by (name 1)*

Very helpful with the Centre and its processes – be great if we could send TL to one of these

*21/6/10 – Meeting with Chairperson at Atomic Café Mends Street South Perth*

Discussed AGM and if I would run for position. Also wanted to talk about Life Memberships and criteria and his anxiety about visitors to Committee meetings talking or offering opinion under Constitution as they were not financial members. Chairperson was distressed re administration processes, talked about reviewing once we move.

*22/6/11 – Meeting with TRA7 at Atomic Café Mends Street South Perth*

Discussed marketing plan and ideas for future Centre. TRA7 very supportive and would like to join Committee if she doesn't get a full time job.

*25/6/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Discussed TL position and failure to find suitable person. (name A) to follow up with external professionals again. Resigned now to TL position passing me by and need to decide if thesis will stand up if I have not got that observer/participant involvement. Talk to Thesis supervisor about it.

*1/7/10 – Meeting with Chairperson at the Centre*

Chairperson concerned about marketing and PR for new centre. Told him it was up to TL to do as part of criteria but would help to alleviate his anxiety.

*2/7/10 – Attended workshop on Facilitating meetings form 3 – 300 people.*

(name 1) is an outstanding presenter and a brilliant community worker. Every chairman should attend this, it is realistic and down to earth and the Centre could benefit from it.

*6/7/10 – Meeting with (name A) and (name 8) at the Centre*

(name A) discussed lack of interest in TL role. Had followed up with external professionals but no luck (what do you want ME to do?) (name 4) is away so (name A) feeling a bit abandoned. Should they advertise on SEEK? Told her to look at costs and advise Committee by email, get consensus for expense and go for it. Feeling a bit peeved and insulted that they want my help but not expertise in job. (name A) still anxious about Grant and TL position. Discussed applying for position again. Told her to follow up again with external profesisonals. Still feeling aggrieved.

*7/7/10 – NL Mail out Term 3*

*14/7/10 – Follow up calls*

Follow up with First Click, SP Fiesta, Learning Centre Link, Community News and Adult Learner's week – al TL jobs but I seem to have copped it! Spoke to Community Manager at the local Council to introduce each other.

*15/7/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

*16/7/10 – 10.30am Meeting with Community Officer at Atomic Café Mends Street South Perth.*

Met with the Manager Community Culture and Recreation at the local Council Discussed the Centre and the TL role and how the Centre and the City can work together. Type of rates we can expect to charge in new centre if we decide to sub-lease rooms to gain extra income. Also discussed participation of the Centre in the City's forthcoming community activities.

*16/7/10 – Meeting with (name B) and (name A) 12 noon at the Centre*

No interest shown in TL role despite advertising through appropriate channels. Getting desperate now me thinks. Asked me about contract/tasks/grant equit. Would I need to resign from the Committee: Wanted to know how I would expect to deliver outcomes – easy half done now. Will I accept? Make them stew? Practically begged me to submit an application.

*16/7/10 – 1pm Volunteers Meeting*

Good feelings and welcomed by all. We have a happy bunch of volunteers at the Centre. It would be a pleasure to work with them. Decided to put in an application and not stand on ego-centric morale. Went home and typed up application and sent to the sub-committee. Feel excited but hollow victory as I feel like I am last choice – but BEST choice really. I must believe that otherwise I could get negative and then not do the job properly. No I wouldn't do that – I'd always do my best. Look out!

*19/7/10 – Meeting with External professional at Department of Training*

Discussed grants for trainees to work as reception at new Centre as well as other grants the Centre may be eligible for.

*19/7/10 – Meeting with (name B) and (name A) at the Centre*

Met to confirm my appointment of TL at the Centre. Contract to be typed up and back-dated to 1 July because of all the work I have done so far. Very excited and going full steam ahead!

*20/7/10 – Enrolment Day Term 3 2010*

Phone call from a member of the local Golf Club Charity Golf Day Committee. He heads up the Charity Golf Day Committee and was given my name by the Mayor of the City. Golf Club is looking for a worthy cause to donate money to a local community initiative. Was invited to submit a brief about centre and what we could spend the money on. Prepared a brief and suggested they may like to sponsor the reception area so we could dedicate the room to the Golf Club.

*21/7/10 – Meeting with (name A) and (name B) at the Centre*

Formally signed the contract which I noted was dated 12 July - hmm! Made sure I put today's date on it. Given keys to Centre and told them about the call from the Golf Club. Very excited. Met with other volunteers and started them on an inventory of current equipment etc at the old Centre so I can determine what we need for the new one – how exciting! Had a call from a Councillor at the City and the MD of an IT company. He offered us a server for the Centre – the goodies keep rolling in, also knew of someone who had a photocopier we might be able to use. Feeling on top of the world, it is all just slotting into place.

*22/7/10 – Meeting with two members of the Golf Club*

Gave them a copy of an estimate to equip the reception area as a suggestion – they liked the concept and that they would get continual kudos from it. Spoke at length about the Centre and the PR that would come out of their sponsorship/donation. They agreed in concept and asked me to redefine costs - see I knew I would be good for this role. Can't wait to tell the committee! Started on pricing straight away after asking (name A) for some details on our insurance, registration as a not-for-profit organisation and a membership list.

*23/7/10 – Follow ups*

Emailed the Financial Director of the City re my appointment and organised a time to meet to discuss what needed to be done. Wrote up my first report for the Committee meeting later this afternoon! Aha – a few noses put out of joint.

*23/7/10 – Centre committee Meeting*

Gave my first report on all the work I had done as TL (informally and formally). Everyone was thrilled with my appointment except you-know-who – no surprises there. Doesn't matter I can handle that obstacle. Organised site plan, and visual diary to put up at the Centre to keep volunteers and members informed as to what is happening. Looked at events to celebrate milestones along the way. Such a lot of work to do but happy to do it and very enthusiastic that I will report directly to the Committee and not to one person in particular. Way to go!

*26/7/10 – Day 1 Term 3 2010*

*27/7/10 – Meeting with external professional at Lotteries West*

Met to discuss the grant for new equipment for the Centre. Was informed of the process – phew! – and the timeline. Need to get a move on if we want the money to purchase before December normally takes

3-4 months from start to end. Was promised to push through if I can get a submission to her by end of October – a lot of work to be done before then. Am I up to it?

*27/7/10 – Meeting with sales person at Office Fit-Out company*

Met with (name 10) who was a referral from the Golf Club. The company MD is also a golf club member and may give us a good discount on furniture. Showed the plans and the layout of the reception area along with the much-revised edition of the budget that the Golf Club have authorised (\$15,000) to equip the area. Sales person to come back to me once she has costed out our requirements. Going full steam ahead now as there is such a lot to be done and a bit aggrieved that this should all have been done before now. The TL position should have been decided in March so we are already 3 months behind and I am working like a canon about to explode.

*3/8/10 – Shopping Day*

Visited Harvey Norman, Officeworks, Ikea, Freedom furniture and several other furniture shops up and down Scarborough Beach Road in Osborne Park/Innaloo looking for furniture, office equipment etc. Loaded with plans, floor plans, measurements and photos from magazines collected over the last month. The list gets longer and the prices get higher. Collating all prices exclusive of GST for Lotteries submission. Do I ask for more or keep it low? Real dilemma because I am not sure how much they will look at it and think we are being greedy. I guess I can only be honest and ask for what we really need and not pad it out as some have suggested.

*4/8/10 – The Centre*

Quote completed for Golf Club to finalise and formalise. So glad that it is out of the way – relief!

*5/8/10 – Golf Club*

Golf Club came back with queries so revised again and sent back – worried!

*6/8/10 – Meeting with (name 8) and PR person at the Centre*

Into the office at 7am again to deal with all my admin before everyone begins to arrive.

Met to discuss other sponsorships we could pursue. Also looked at future fees and charges and how appropriate it might be to increase when we move. Spent the rest of the day creating a sponsorship proposal on different levels to see if we can get annual sponsors for rooms etc. Hard work and mind-blowing – getting a headache with all the demands on my time plus committee members wanting individual updates. Need to put my foot down and tell them I will report at the Committee meeting.

*10/8/10 – Shopping Trip*

Re-visit furniture stores add JK Hopkins, Mike Hopkins, McLennans and Office Supplies. More pricing, update XLS spreadsheet and set up a comparison of prices. Mind-boggling how much variance there is.

*11/8/10 – Sponsorship Proposal*

Feedback from Committee re sponsorship proposal, need to update and resend. Really think they are being picky about this and unrealistic as to what we can ask from sponsors. They really have no idea on costs and can't come to an agreement on 'words' never mind "\$". Ugh! Very frustrating.

*16/8/10 – Meeting with (name) at Learning Centres Link*

Met to discuss ideas re Mission Australia, Volunteering WA and other institutions that may help with funding. Gave a few contacts to try and looking at university students to do project work on things like Access and Website building. Telstra also fund modules and other possible areas to research. Good meeting and feeling very enthusiastic

*17/8/10 – Meeting with CEO of City at the Centre*

Met to discuss the relocation and possible concept of the new Centre. CEO is very proactive and positive for us and pleased that there is one point of contact (me) rather than other(s). Feel good and very positive that he will help all he can. Strike one for me!

*18/8/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Met to throw around some ideas for a competition to design new logo involving schools in the local area. Also looked at community grants from Chevron, BHP, Woodside, Alcoa, ING and Pro Bono.

*20/8/10 – Meeting with external professional at Traineeships Australia*

Met with this person who outlined the process and gave some other leads to follow. Not feeling good at results a bit despondent on the whole process very difficult to follow and not sure we would qualify as we are not a government or registered body with clout! Here we re trying to train someone to give them skills for life and we are being held back. It's not fair!

*23/8/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Discussed Life Memberships, quilt class, upholstering chairs as opposed to buying new ones, upgrading policies for volunteers and the business plan. Tried to get an appointment to meet the manager at West

Coast Community Centre so we can set up a network, no joy. Also discussed the type of program we want to offer in the future and came to blows (verbally) on times of opening and closing the centre. Will not accept that it is in our best interest to open longer hours and work with the library rather than against it – Grr! I wish I could get through to her that we need and MUST do this.

*25/8/10 – Meeting with Centre Manager at Loftus Learning Centre*

Met with Manager who is vibrant and a real get-up-and-go person. She is extremely talented in design and graphics and very helpful in giving out information on how they make their learning centre work. Although slightly different to us, they have more children activities and need more adult activities whilst we are the entire opposite except our members and volunteers do not want a crèche no matter how much (name 4) and (name 8) push it. Manager willing to help us and showed me around the centre, the equipment (great fold up tables on wheels, no need for strength!) and we also discussed salaries and financials (they get \$50,000 a year from the local Council –wow!) Agreed to keep in touch and have LC meetings every quarter.

*26/8/10 – Meeting with Learning Centre Gosnells*

Met with the admin person at Gosnells LC after getting lost and buying morning tea for the committee. They are looking for a centre manager and feeling very negative due to their venue and the City of Gosnells attitude towards them (no help, no interest in the LC). Offered to share what I could with them and find them someone to help them get new premises if I could.

*26/8/10 – Meeting with Principal from local Real Estate Company at the Secret Garden Café in Angelo Street South Perth.*

Met to discuss possible sponsorship of \$500 for a competition inviting local schools to redesign our logo (the windmill). Very enthusiastic and offered to talk to his partner and get back to me. Looking good and will involve the whole community!

*26/8/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Discussed the agenda for tomorrows meeting and the length of my report to determine tasks completed and those in pipeline. As we are beyond on-track, very excited about the feedback we will get at my successes over the last 6 weeks. 5 months work done in 6 weeks – they just have to be thrilled with that!

*27/8/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

The draft resource list was circulated for comment and as usual we had a few gripes from one person in particular who is touting her friend to be interior design consultant. However she had not yet come back with whether this person is doing it free or charging a percentage of costs as is usual with consultants, so was told to forget it as we cannot wait any longer. Hurrah one for the pot! One member had snuck into the new centre (under construction and had a sneak peak, she encouraged others to do the same but I encouraged them NOT TO! For safety's sake and liability problems should they hurt themselves. Tabled my report and gave a brief account of where I am up to which was well received and applauded for the amount of work that has been accomplished. Feeling pretty good and less frustrated as we move forward and not backwards. Pride comes before a fall so need to watch out what is on the horizon....a bit pessimistic I know but I have this feeling.....

#### *28/8/10 – Trouble!*

Had a scathing email from Director of Finance at the City who had had an email from (name 8) which was - to say the least - 'inflammatory'. Spent all day putting out fires and trying to rebuild the relationship with Financial Director. I knew something was going to happen! Spent rest of the day on MYOB data input for the accounts.

#### *30/8/10 – Follow ups*

Still putting out fires which (name 8) has decided to light. Decided to take the bull by the horns and contact this interior design consultant so I can't be accused of being obstructive. Send an email as she lives in Singapore (another reason why it isn't going to work) – but keep an open mind and see what come of it.

Also met with (name 8) and one of her colleagues to discuss a new format for the newsletter. Not enthusiastic about going from 12 pages to 2....members and volunteers won't like it but told them to go ahead and pursue and send a brief to the Committee for discussion. Not convinced it will happen.

#### *31/8/10 – Meeting with PR officer and Community Manager of the City*

Met to discuss how the City can work with Centre for better outcomes and mutual benefit. Some resistance from one or two of our Committee may hinder the process so need to be wary of how we handle any meetings. Will pursue further but feel I may get 'shot-down' in flames when I broach the subject at the committee meeting.

#### *31/8/10 – Contact with Dept of Racing and Gaming and Liquor*

Discussion on process of running a competition and legalities. Very helpful and gave us some good information. Sent through to Committee along with update on Life Member certificates, furniture and equipment amended list, 2011 budget for the Centre, calendar of events and proposed increase of fee structure. Don't hold your breath.....I know there will be some resistance to one or all of these issues.

*2/9/10 – 9am Meeting with (name 8) at the Globe Café Angelo Street South Perth*

Met to discuss the revised plans for the New Centre. Not a happy chappy – either of us. Very insistent on the crèche even though members and volunteers have decided against it. Asked a lot of questions which I did not know the answer to but will follow up with the Finance Director of the City. Some most unreasonable like the smell which will permeate the building from the new carpets and equipment and the danger to people – what the! And if there is an exhaust fan above the photocopier! I'm not sure I'm from the same planet sometimes..... Is she serious? How can I go to the City after all they have given us and ask stupid questions like these. Sometimes I wonder why I wanted this job so much and if it is too late to back out.

*2/9/10 – 3.00pm Meeting with (name A) and (name B) at the Centre*

Met to report and update on activities. Both very happy at progress and asked me if I would run for Chairperson. Flabbergasted! Not sure if there is a conflict of interest so need to check this out. Thrilled but wary of what my protagonist will make of it.

*3/6/10 – Troubleshooting*

The fire still burns and now (name B) has jumped on board and demanded an apology from (name 8) to the Finance Director. (name 8) was hoping to run for Chairperson but I think she has just lost the confidence of all involved. Still placating the City's officer and soothing troubled waters. It will take some time for this to blow over. Damn!

*6/9/10 – The Centre*

Worked on preparation for committee meeting and report as TL. Collate all comments in regard to equipment list sent out. Some consensus but some negativity. Why am I worried? I've done everything I can to get good rates and good quality. Beginning to doubt I can pull this off. MYOB still out of synch so input of all receipts essential before new term starts.

*7/9/10 – Meeting with Director Finance and Information Technology CoSP and Manager Community Culture and Recreation at the City*

Met to discuss the MOU and/or lease. Asked for a copy of our strategic plan and equipment list. Offered a 5+5 year lease at peppercorn rent and promised first draft of lease by 18 October. Completion of Centre by 1 January so looking good. Felt a bit wary of promises and the need for them to know what our furniture looks like. Uneasy would be a good word to describe how I feel.

*8/9/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Inventory and discussion on number and layout of chairs per room for new Centre. Also looked at naming rooms and how we can describe them and utilise them. Need to look at audio visual equipment and costs to include in grant application – so much work still to be done and more suggestions coming through everyday – most of which are nonsensical but which have to be investigated and reported on. Under the pump now to complete the submission by end of month.

*9/9/10- Meeting with (name B) re quilting experts for community quilt at 66a Surrey Road Rivervale*

Turned up at 3pm to find house empty and no (name B). Tried to get her on mobile but no answer. Felt very cross as there is so much to do without wasting precious time on wild goose chases.....didn't show up after half an hour so went home to find a message with the correct address. Too late now so phoned back and said so. Pretty pissed off!

*10/9/10 – Meeting with students from Murdoch University*

Met with 5 students in regard to their project to do a Communications program in a real life organisation. Gave them the launch of the new centre to do and arranged to meet on a regular basis. One job less for me to do? - BUT will need to supervise and meet with them – aargh! Looks like more work for me to do – bring it on!

*10/9/10 – Volunteers Meeting*

Great meeting with the volunteers – very enthusiastic bunch and got good feedback from the resource list and photos of equipment. Wish the committee was as good! Requested lockable cupboards and bookcases to set up their own library and if chairs could be lightweight but stackable – no problem. I'd give these ladies anything they asked for! Left with a good feeling and very optimistic.

*13/9/10 – Meeting with (name C) at the Centre*

Concerned about naming the rooms in the new Centre. Wanted to discuss what each room would be used for and very anxious that we get it right. As the Centre is not quite finished it is hard for him to envisage the space so tried to put his mind at rest that we can sort it all out once we move which will be

some time before Term 1 starts. Felt very sad that there was a feeling of being so vulnerable and anxious, he's getting old and worries too much.

*13/9/10 – Meeting at Loftus Centre with other Learning Centre groups*

Met many other similar Learning Centres from Stirling, Bayswater and Mt Lawley. One person facilitated the meeting and there was a great sharing of ideas. Pity that Claremont and Tresillian did not attend. Thought it was a good idea to do more frequently and get to know each other so we can help each other when necessary. We are very lucky to be able to relocate to a new building some of these groups are in real run down facilities.

*14/9/10 – Meeting with Professional Quilters*

Met with these ladies who are helping us with our community quilt. Both of them are experienced quilters and can't wait to get some ideas of what they think. Need to put on program for next Term and get some ideas going again. Whoo-Hoo another issue solved!

*15/9/10 – Contact with Kumon Teaching*

Wow! This group would like to rent out space from us when we move. This will help us with our plans to increase income for the centre. Need to get actual room sizes and max/min number of people per room we are allowed to work out if suitable. Very excited at this new stream of income which could pay for another admin person (not me – no way) I'd like to have the Centre staffed 6 days a week and from 9am to 7pm each day.

*16/9/10 – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Discussions about how the furniture is going on and if it will be suitable. Had to allay her fears and convince her I was doing everything right and it will be done in time. A lot of anxiety about getting in on time and if we are on schedule – most of it not up to me all I can do is ask for Updates from the City and they are not always forthcoming – a lot of frustration at all levels and trying to separate the anxious from the needy.

*17/9/10 – End of Term 3, 2010*

*20/9/10 – 8am Contact Silex, Pusey Road Jandakot*

Spoke with sales representative re tables and chairs for new centre. Ease of use and movement a priority as our volunteers and members are getting on in years and last thing I need is an accident. Sales rep to call me when in stock so I can go over and take a look.

*20/9/10 – 9am meeting with quilters at Campbell Street Welshpool*

Met with (name 8) and 4 others - at least we got the address right this time! Not sure if I am here as quilting member or TL. Ladies very nice and hospitable, (name 8) wants to take over so happy for her to do so even though she can't sew (by her own admission). Let's see where this takes us I have a feeling I will end up with the responsibility as though I have not got enough to do.

*20/9/10 – Meeting with Karmini from Curtin University*

Another student with a project. Got her to organise a movie afternoon for members and volunteers to raise communication and awareness of our milestones. Seems interested but have preferred to work on the launch – tough – another group got in first so get over it! Talked her through the format and event plan. Left her to design poster and tickets.

*22/9/10 – Centre AGM*

Voted in as Chairperson unanimously! What have I done? Now I am really wearing two caps – researcher and member. Going to be hard to remember which hat I have got on. Finance Director of the City gave a presentation in the new centre and shocked us all by donating ALL the kitchen equipment – cooktop, oven, stainless steel fridge/freezer, overhead fan AND a TV and camera so we can record our demonstrations! Everyone went wild – and he said it was due to our good relationship, so got a fair bit of kudos out of that especially after the events at the beginning of the month. One Councillor also donated a server if we need it and a photocopier (coloured) if we can use it.

*24/9/10 – Meeting with Murdoch students re launch campaign*

All on time and eager to get going. Gave me an outline and we discussed issues. Answered their questions and came up with new ones....giving me a run for my money but they know their stuff! Great meeting and energised by their enthusiasm – if only I could get them to join as Committee members.....

*29/9/10 – NL Mail out Day Term 4 2010*

Met with the proprietors of an organisation in regard to their renting rooms from us in the evening at the new Centre! All my dreams come true as we have to look at different streams of income AND opening

later in the week so this fits the bill nicely! Discussed options and took plans to show them – looking good and worth pursuing.

*30/9/10 – Meeting with (name A) and the City's Library girls at the Atomic Café Mends Street South Perth*

Met to discuss how we can work together to enhance both of our enterprises. There was a lot of events and courses we could share and do together in conjunction with our own targets and we organised to keep in touch on a regular basis. Looking good and great to see (name A) is on board with this and not seeing them as competitors. This attitude has had me worried for some time as we need to network with other groups and not be so exclusive.

Afterwards (name A) and I met alone to discuss the outcomes and set up a list of things to do to help us go forward – I'm not feeling too optimistic about this as there is still some resistance to keep 'secret' from the library what we are doing.....

*4/10/10 – Drawing up quotes*

It goes on and on.....very frustrating, tedious and boring. Now the GST has to come off and revise all quotes. Can clam it back afterwards.

*5/10/10 – 9am Meeting with Student at Curtin University*

Totally pissed off as she was half a hour late and didn't even apologise! Not very professional, however got to grips with the milestone celebration and a list of things she needs to do. Not confident she will get to grips with it but we'll see.

*5/10/10 – 1pm meeting with Steve Hammond at Lotteries West*

Was very nervous as Steve is the man who makes the decisions, however got to grips with what I need to do and showed him my first draft of cost comparisons which he was pleased with. Also reiterated that if can get the finished spreadsheet back to him before end of month will push through so we have approval to start buying furniture. Quotes need to be altered to show ex-GST though so back to drawing board – bugger! Another long night with Mr Excel.

*7/10/10 – 8am meeting at Sylex, Pusey Road, Jandakot*

Met with sales rep re furniture etc for new centre. Looked at tables and chairs with ease of use for older members and volunteers. Gave him a list of requirements for him to quote on.

*7/10/10 – 1pm meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Another hand-holding session requiring me to convince (name A) that all is going to plan. Find these sessions very tiring and soul destroying as her doubts make me question my abilities to bring this to fruition and I get despondent.

*8/10/10 – 10.30am meeting with Murdoch students re launch campaign 16 Glyde Street South Perth*

Met with Murdoch students re update on their communications plan. Going well and they seem to have a good idea of what is expected. Their ideas of a budget are a bit way out but that can't be helped as they have done everything by professional practice and our inability to meet those costs can't be helped either. Wonder why I always choose organisations without money?

*8/10/10 – 1pm Volunteers meeting at the Centre*

Introduced Curtin Student who is organising the Milestone movie afternoon. Everyone excited and enthusiastic. Need to book cinema and student is to create posters and tickets. Getting enthusiastic and seems to be a bit more interested than last meeting. Trying to stay positive but not easy.

*11/10/10 – Final inventory of equipment needed*

Spent the morning looking at the plans of new Centre and investigating rooms sizes and how much equipment is needed for each one so that I can finalise the Lotteries submission. Not an easy task because I have to think of storage as well when extra tables and chairs not needed. Seems like impossible but ploughed on and finally decided on max numbers. Had to prepare to give presentation on the Centre to a Rotary Club in the evening to create awareness of our impending move and encourage people to join. Tired out and wish I could skip it.

*12/10/10 – 9.30am Term 4 enrolment day at the Centre.*

Heaps of people turned up - some excited, some sad as it will be our last enrolment day at this centre. Spent the morning consoling and encouraging others – is this in my job description?

*12/10/10 – 1pm Theatre visit*

Went to Cygnet Theatre with Curtin student to determine dates etc for movie afternoon. Provisionally booked date but need to send deposit in to confirm.

*12/10/10 – 4pm Contact with ABC Blinds*

Spoke to ABC blinds re time to measure up for blinds at new centre. Organised a time to meet on site contingent on access via builder.

*13/10/10 – 8am Meeting with Grace removals at the Centre*

Met with Grace Removalists for quote on removal for relocation of new centre - another early start I don't need. Then met with Teresa at 9am to go over accounting system as she will be away for a month and someone needs to input credits and debits –not really my role either but I have somehow inherited shadow treasurer role now!

*14/10/10 – 8am meeting with Pickford Removals at the Centre*

Another early meeting for quote to relocate. This was a quick one and very efficient but left me feeling tired and overworked. Can't slow down though as still much to do and 3 quotes for everything.

14/10/10 – 12 noon interview with VRA8 at Secret Garden Café Angelo Street South Perth

*14/10/10 – 2pm meeting with PR person at The Globe café Angelo Street South Perth*

Met in regard to PR and publicity for our relocation. Also discussed sponsors and other milestones to celebrate. PR person to research and get back to me with ideas. Left feeling a weight had been taken off my shoulders as PR person is so full of energy and ideas.

*14/10/10 – midnight*

Completed submission for Lotteries. Email to (name A) for discussion before printing and taking to LW.

*15/10/10 – 7am Presentation to Executive Women's Forum, Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club*

Gave presentation on the Centre to encourage membership and increase awareness. Getting too old for these early mornings – especially after a late night!

*15/10/10 – 10.30am meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Finalised submission, printed and took to LW in Osborne Park with 15 days to spare! Yippee that's out of the way now I can concentrate on the buying. Spent the afternoon reviewing the lease from the City so not let off lightly. Still much relieved that the submission is finished.

*18/10/10 – Day 1 Term 4 2010*

Met with Community Manager of the City to look at lease review and correct a few anomalies. Very boring and tiring to the eyes but has to be done.

*20/10/10 – Shopping Day*

Still looking at prices and quality of furniture – no harm in getting a bargain and expending resources wisely. Tired though and frustrating at times.

*22/10/10 – 10.30am meeting with Murdoch students*

Catch up meeting to review campaign to date. Going well and need to do a bit more work on designs and budget.

*22/10/10 – 1pm Committee Meeting at the Centre*

Quick and lively meeting due to apologies from the protagonist. Got a lot done and decisions made which were easy compared to some meetings. Feeling confident and competent and positive – which makes a change!

*26/10/10 – 9.30am meeting with prospective tutor*

Met with (name 10) who offered to take some cooking classes at exorbitant prices - tried to let her down gently but she was pushy and so had to tell her how 'down-market' we were and not in her league of gourmet cooking. Didn't go well she was very uppity and I was losing my cool. Found out later she had approached Daphne behind my back which made me see red and I was furious!

*27/10/10 – 8am meeting with Auditor at The Dome café Mends Street South Perth*

Another incompetent who fails to see we are not a big profit oriented business ....can't believe he has been doing our books all this time. No-one has questioned his process or the fact that his report has no notes to justify how he does our books. This is a nightmare and needs to be sorted out. Asked for notes to the audit to explain any anomalies.

*27/10/10 – 12 noon Meeting at the Centre*

Met with two volunteers who expressed their concerns about the running of the Centre. Didn't know I signed on for HR manager too. Agreed to follow up on their concerns and get back to them. Not a good frame of mind today – nothing but problems.

*28/10/10 – 2.30 meeting with Murdoch students*

Met with group to finalise plan, need to consider and amend if necessary before they turn it in to their tutor. Email from (name A) asking me to look into revision of signatures, employee contract, payment of honorariums, list of payments, wages and income per person per hour, accounts lists and expenses for volunteer tutors as in fuel and mileage. Another working weekend.

*1/11/10 – Meeting with Financial professionals at the Glove Café, Angelo Street South Perth*

Both from Westpac re Finance course for the Centre members such as Stock market trading for the over 50s or Stocks and Shares 101. Also looked at managing budgets for retirees and superannuation problems. They are to get back to me with possible dates for Term 1 in our new Centre.

*1/11/10 – 3.30pm meeting with (name B) at the Book Caffe Mill Point Road South Perth*

Needed to discuss issues with contracts and honorariums. Over cautious as ever but mindful of the need to be transparent and legal. I seem to be the arbitrator now and the role of Chairman is interfering with my role as TL and researcher. Getting difficult to separate the roles and remain objective in each one.

*2/11/10 – Contact Professional at Learning Centre Link*

Rang to talk of Strategic and Marketing plan template and grants and application processes I have developed and if they could be used for other Centres. Happy to share but would have to delete all references to financial figures and names before handing over. Interesting concept that they haven't done this already?

*3/11/10 – Contact re McPharlane House*

Rang again to see if I would assist McPharlane House (Gosnell Learning Centre) as they were in a bit of strife and need to get a Coordinator. Asked if I was interested I said emphatically NO – I have enough to do and not enough time to do it in.....flattered though I may be, I need to sleep sometime!

*5/11/10 – 7am Presentation at Golf Club*

Spoke to members of Mill Point Rotary Club on the Centre to encourage membership and promote awareness. Another early morning (Yawn!) Was challenged by an ex Mayor on dates who later apologised that he had got it wrong – but too late as he had embarrassed me in front of the members. Not happy.

*5/11/10 – 10.30am meeting with Murdoch Students*

Met for final presentation of campaign before presenting at Uni. Went over budget and printing costs before agreeing overall concept. They have done well and I hope I can raise the money somehow to use their campaign when we move.

*5/11/10 – 11.30 meeting with Shelly McHale at old Centre*

Met with Shelley and showed her around our Centre. Went for a coffee and discussed operational costs such as wages, GST and tax. A mine of information we also looked at room booking programs and coffee machines. Tutor costs were discussed and how much prep time was paid for or included.

*6/11/10 – Saturday morning 10am to 2pm*

Went into Centre to do some research for my thesis – yes on a Saturday – what is wrong with me? It's the only time I can go in and have some peace and quiet as all the members and volunteers want to talk to me so I go in and get nothing done. Feeling a bit dejected - must be the quietness, didn't really get much done, seem to have lost my way and feeling overawed by it all. Managed to do some MYOB input but not enough. Must be an easier way to record payments.

*8/11/10 – Calls re hire of rooms at new Centre*

Had two calls from a Zumba group and a kiddies music group in regard to hiring rooms at the new Centre. Need to talk to Manager of Community at the City in regard to what we can charge and type of agreement we can enter into with these type of groups. More work!

*9/11/10 – 4.45pm site inspection of New Centre*

EXCITING! To see our new Centre in the raw just brilliant. It all seems so real now and the rooms are fantastically big compared to what we have now. Took some photos to show the committee and put up on the website. We have been promised that the City will outfit the kitchen for us if they can so very optimistic about this. Really excited.

*10/11/10 – 11.20am Group presentation at Murdoch University*

Went with VRA8 (a volunteer from the Centre) to listen to the students present their campaign at Murdoch. Wow! They did extremely well and only made one error which only I knew about so decided to let it pass. They were given a huge acclamation as they knew their subject very well and I was well pleased with all the work they had done. They presented me with a bunch of flowers and a box of chocolates afterwards in thanks for allowing them to intern at the Centre. A great group of young people

who will be a credit to Marketing and PR. I wish them well and feel sad that it is over – I think I will miss them no matter how much work it involved. VRA8 was blown away!

*11/11/10 – 1pm Photo Shoot at the Centre*

A photo opportunity to promote the Community Quilt class via the local community newspaper. Well organised and will write up media release.

*12/11/10 – 10am Photo opportunity at Golf Club*

Photo shoot to recognise the donation by GC of \$15,000 to equip the Centre's reception area in the new Centre. Local Community newspaper took photos and promised a good write up. One only hopes!

*12/11/10 – 2pm Milestone Celebration at the Cygnet Theatre.*

Good turnout. Curtin student came through and attended showing people their seats and collecting tickets. A great afternoon followed by coffee and cake. A good film which everyone enjoyed even though the story line was a bit corny. However one milestone completed and others to follow....

*19/11/10 – 11.45am Meeting at McPharlane House Gosnells Learning Centre*

Met with the committee to discuss what they need to do to increase membership, courses and activities. Introduced them to current deputy Mayor of the City and has experience in Community matters. She will help them find a way forward and possible grant to pay for a coordinator. I feel terrible as I am too busy to do it and would love to have been able to assist – I would have enjoyed the challenge too! It might have come in handy for my thesis.

*19/11/10 – 1pm Volunteers meeting the Centre*

Another enjoyable meeting with dedicated volunteers – what would the centre do without them? They are all excited about our move and looking forward to it even though some of them are saddened at leaving what has been 'home' for the last 15 years. A good bunch of people with the right attitudes.

*20/11/10 – 10am Interview with TRA3, South Terrace South Perth*

*22/11/10 – 1pm meeting with (name A) and prospective tutor of Computing at the Centre*

Discussion took place about what this person could offer the Centre. Happy to work pro bono and wanted to know what type of equipment we had. A bit presumptuous but apparently we need him so kept quiet and left it up to (name A) Not sure if I need to be involved in this type of meeting.

23/11/10 – Interview with TRA1 at La Galette café Mends Street, South Perth

*24/11/10 – 11.30am at the Centre*

Reconciliation of accounts in MYOB and compile a report. This is tedious and I need to find a way to simplify this accounting method.

25/11/10 – Interview with TRA2 at the Centre. TRA2 is fascinating and has much experience in tutoring and all walks of life.

*25/11/10 – 3.30pm Meeting with Senior Citizens Manager and CEO of South Care*

Met with these organisational heads to investigate how we can work together as community groups once we move and to set up some kind of networking advantage between us. Some good collaboration could be determined and cross promotion of or services would mean an increase for all of us in participants. Resolved to meet quarterly to keep abreast of each other ideas. Some good ideas came out of it and happy to be making allegiances in the local community with likeminded people.

*25/11/10 – 5.30pm meeting with Deputy Mayor of the City and the President of the South Perth Historical Society*

Met to discuss collaboration between our Centre, the City and the Historical Society. Looked at cross promotion and possible member benefits such as discount on fees etc for members, sharing of mailing lists for promotion and similar problem solving techniques. A bit one-sided as to what they would get out of us, but reserve doubts until we get together again.

*26/11/10 – Centre Committee Meeting*

A lot of operational stuff to deal with. Had been a mix up over room allocation due to miscommunication from administration – need to tidy up processes to nip this in the bud. Lots of queries about the new Centre and the photos from the onsite inspection were received with much delight. Other news included Rotoract wanting to hire our rooms and possible Lions group. Everyone happy with the time frame though some doubting the relocation will happen on time – oh ye of little faith – it's all about trust and they just don't get it.

*30/11/10 – The Centre*

3pm on site inspection of windows for blinds

*3/12/10 – 8am meeting with Allied Pickfords at the Centre*

Meeting re relocation quote for removalists.

*4/12/10 – 10am Meeting with Kumon proprietors*

Met to discuss possible hire of new Centre for their evening maths and English tutor sessions. As we are not competing with the City's venue charges, they feel a bit aggrieved that the cost is prohibitive and whilst I need to increase our income streams I am obliged to at least break even with costs. A bit of a Mexican stand-off so don't think they will be coming to the party. A bit of a let down really as I have put a lot of work into this relationship and the work gone into conditions to hire, fees and charges. Disappointed.

*6/12/10 – 9am interview with TRA6a and TRA6b*

*6/12/10 – Shopping trip Kitchen Warehouse Osborne Park*

Shopped till I dropped for kitchen ware for our new demonstration kitchen at the new Centre. Spent under budget and stored it all at home in my dining room. Used my Visa card to pay for it as the grant money has not been sent but has been approved.

*6/12/10 – Shopping trip J Hopkins Osborne Park*

Got quotes on credenzas for classrooms and storage cupboards. Inquired about payment on receipt of goods as money not yet come through. Not happy about putting amounts on personal credit card as I am going away overseas during December and January but mindful that the shopping needs to be done before I go away so delivery is on time. Expected removal date is 18 January so only just over a month to get things organised. Time is of the essence now and I am under the pump to deliver.

*6/12/10 – Shopping trip to Ikea*

Bought leather sofas for entre, had them delivered to my house so now my garage will be full of furniture too. Delivery Monday but too good a bargain to miss out on.

*6/12/10 – The City*

Trying to organise a site visit for the Committee to bolster their negative feelings. There is much suspicion that my reports are not quite true and the Centre will not be finished in time. Urging Finance Director to arrange for my credibility as well as his. Very anxious about this now.

*7/12/10 – New Centre site visit*

Committee attended site visit and were well pleased. What a relief! Received many congratulations on a good outcomes with the City.

*8/12/10 – Away now until 8 January.*

As much in place as possible so Merry Christmas everyone. Phone call from Westnet at Sydney airport re relocation of telephone and ADSL lines. Explained situation whilst waiting for plane to Hawaii and asked them to ring (name A) at the Centre. Rang and left message to contact Westnet re problem. What a start to the holiday! Nearly end of term so should be quiet.

*10/12/10 – End of Term 4 2010 and the Centre's Annual Christmas Party*

*7/1/11 – Home at last*

Eager to get back into the swing of things. Kept up to date with emails and spoke to JK Hopkins several times re furniture and delivery, also Silex and other suppliers. Rang the City to find out when keys would be available as getting much pressure from Committee.

*10/1/11 – 9am Meeting at the Centre*

Met to confirm moving date and ability to use new Centre for enrolment. Some members still unsure and sceptical on move but I'll show them. (name B) and VRA1 showed up and we discussed several issues in regard to the relocation such as Westnet, Launch, enrolment day, 1<sup>st</sup> day of Term 1, necessity of a P O Box number as we have to street address, purchase of MYOB, Lotteries grant and when we could expect to receive it, delivery of new copters, and new opening times. Still some resistance to opening after 3pm and on Saturdays mostly from (name A).

*11/1/11 – 9am contact from J K Hopkins*

Hopkins rang to ensure delivery at new Centre. Getting excited now and feeling pleasantly relieved it is nearly all over. Looked at the MYOB inputting process and decided to try something new. Created the forms and will talk to volunteers about it before start of term 1.

*14/1/11 – 1pm Volunteer's meeting*

Grand update on new Centre – everyone thrilled and pleased it is going to plan. Discussed how we will organise enrolment day and what process we will use to ensure good service. Will need signs to inform

people where we are as a bit difficult to find first time. Volunteers offered to assist in packing up after the meeting and have had boxes delivered from removalist to do so. Everyone excited about the move and we planned for removal day which is only a week away.

#### *17/1/11 – Packing up day 1*

Everyone on deck (Volunteers) to pack up and dispose of unwanted equipment. A great atmosphere with lots of talk about days gone by and old stories of past members. Some of this is worth preserving and important to see where the culture of the volunteers has come from. A great day tinged with a little sadness but much excitement.

#### *18/1/11 – Packing up day 2*

Another packing day and more throwing out of 'stuff'. Volunteers still cheerful and enjoying each other's company.

#### *19/1/11 – Newsletter mail out day.*

Volunteers mustered in to mail out the newsletter at the old centre before we move tomorrow. All hands on deck and done without fuss. Our last mail out from this old centre – roll on tomorrow! D-day tomorrow and most of the centre is in boxes ready to move. Shopping trips to City West, Domayne, Harvey Norman, Officeworks and Jacksons to buy furniture and equipment. All on my credit card to be reimbursed asap. Lotteries sent a letter to say we had to pay and they will reimburse on proof of invoices so that they exclude GST. Good job I have a good line of credit with Visa otherwise they would have come unstuck! What would have happened if the TL did not have credit facilities? Hmm.

#### *20/1/11 – Relocation Day*

All hands on deck. Three of us at the new Centre, three of us at the old centre to make sure all boxes are delivered. Relocation done in record time and all boxes delivered by lunch time giving us the afternoon to put it all away. Deliveries of new stuff to start tomorrow.

#### *21/1/11 – Delivery Day*

Unloaded my dining room and garage and took to new centre. Everything looks fabulous. Went to Ikea in afternoon to look at stools for the kitchen but found some cheaper ones in A-Mart, just as good. Centre looks great and blinds are to be fitted next week.

#### *24/1/11 – Delivery Day 2*

Blinds installed and Jacksons delivery of easels.

Member from Rotaract sign contract for hire of rooms on Sunday nights on fortnightly basis. The income streams are happening another outcome achieved. Everything going according to plan, writing up new policies and manual with help from Volunteers who are proof reading and checking duties.

#### *27/1/11 – Delivery Day*

Deliveries from Silex – tables and chairs, desks and whiteboards for classrooms. Innerspace delivery of reception desk but disaster – it was wrong! Had to take it away and have it remade to fit. No problem use of extra new tables will suffice. Still putting things together to ensure classrooms are ready to go.

#### *28/1/11 – Centre Committee meeting*

Full house with much excitement in our new home! No regrets and plenty of accolades that we beat the doubting Thomases. Enrolment day next week so still much to do on Monday. Some disappointment that the reception desk is not ready and a verbal tut-tutting from our protagonist – to be expected.

Planned for a launch or open day to create awareness. Revision of marketing plan and update some key outcomes. Volunteer base to be added to so advertising will commence in media and by word of mouth.

#### *31/1/11 – 9am Delivery*

Innerspace delivered some more furniture and measured up again for desk component. Still disappointing after all the work done on getting it right for opening of Term 1.

#### *1/2/11 – Enrolment Day*

Exciting, and full on! Volunteers did a marvellous job and handled over 300 people coming to sticky beak or enrol. Calls from prospective tutors to teach DIY cooking, and career enhancement sessions. To follow up. Just really thrilled that it all went well and ON TIME! Much to some people's chagrin.

#### *2/2/11 – The Centre*

Three new people volunteering to help. Need new signs so requested quotes for banners. Went to fridge and washer city to buy bar fridge for tea area and then officeworks to buy more stationery. Volunteers still thrilled with the move and holding heads higher than before!

#### *3/2/11 – Meeting with Community Manager of the City*

Met to finalise lease. Quite a few alterations needed but agreed on changes. Chased up rubbish removal and cleaning contract.

#### *4/2/11 – Deliveries*

Credenzas delivered and set up. Prospective tutor interview for Term 2. Contact from Learning Centre Link to wish us success and talk about employee contracts. Met with (name A) to determine what remains to be bought and for which rooms. Nothing major but need to chase up contractors re air conditioning, lights and kitchen video camera.

#### *5/2/11 – Shopping trip*

Visit Office Comforts, Harvey Normans, Officeworks and McLennan's to price bookcases for reception.

#### *7/2/11 – Meet with Community Officer at the City*

Returned all the keys to old centre and sign lease. Organise cleaning of old premises and follow up on Room 3 air con. Few teething problems but members making big fuss of sensor lights going off when no movement and one room is too hot (air con needs fixing) Being very vocal about it which is terrible when you think of where we have come from – old dusty and smelly place. Day one and a few grizzles – hope it isn't catching. Organise delivery of donated photocopier with much angst. Shopping to Mike Hopkins to buy bookcases for lending library area.

#### *7/2/11 – Day 1, Term 1 in new Centre*

We did it! They all doubted we would but we did it! Great start to the year and everyone overawed by our new Centre. Good vibes from all and everything working well. Feels great!

#### *8/2/11 – Day 2*

Attend Centre to troubleshoot problems and there are some little glitches which members are really upset about. Can't understand their intolerance and demand for perfection! Volunteers not happy with new input process for MYOB. Very frustrating. Asked them to persevere.

#### *10/2/11 – Day 3*

Pick up new TV for reception area, pickup towel rails from Howard's storage and then trouble shoot air con problems and lighting. Hot water tap needs adjustment and fixed but complaints from art group that room too noisy – really! They used to be in a garage before, members being too precious for my liking.

*11/2/11 – Volunteers meeting*

Great feedback from volunteers although some had been upset by member comments about things not working. Volunteers very apologetic to be giving me news but I had already dealt with most of the complaints. Worried that member complaints may affect volunteers but still can't understand reasoning behind such verbal abuse from members. Produced list of still needed resources and resolved to fix up over next week. Drew up letter to tutors in regard to responsibilities of rooms etc. Some communication problems happening as no-one is taking responsibility to clean up so produced an 'open up and shut down' sheet/check list for volunteers on desk. Requested feedback on sheet. Volunteers decided they wanted a soft approach to a launch so agreed on an 'Open Day' format rather than a big launch until we really get things together. Teething problems causing volunteers much distress but think it is more to do with members being objectionable than deep seated problems.

*12/2/11 – Contact with Finance Director at the City*

Emailed re problems with Centre and requested a face to face meeting to discuss. Reply was venomous to say the least and rather distressing. Typed up a reply but chose not to send it so as not to inflame the situation.

*14/2/11 – Follow ups and trouble shooting*

Typed up list of things left to do to follow up over next week. Investigated soft launch as proposed by volunteers and made business case to present to Committee. TV Installation in Reception area. Meet with PR person re media releases.

*15/2/11 – Administration*

Attend Centre to troubleshoot problems e.g. air con and lighting problems. Field venomous remarks from members and calm volunteers. Not sure if this is my job or Centre Manager's....

*16/2/11 – Meeting with Community Manager from the City*

Met to discuss signage, loos and sharing of facilities. Meet with library re fire procedures and process. Silex re delivery of goods outstanding. Members driving me crazy with petty grievances. Follow up with Officeworks delivery of goods and Harvey Norman and Hopkins . Meet with Rotaract at 6pm to sign hire agreement.

*17/2/11 – The Centre*

Troubleshoot concerns by members. Meet new volunteers. Mike Hopkins re delivery of furniture. Meet with quilters. Volunteers not happy with the new process for MYOB input of receipts. Decided to scrap it and revise with volunteers input to the process. Will meet again next week to discuss further.

*18/2/11 – The Centre*

Instruct volunteers re audio visual instructions. Interview at Curtin Radio with Jenny Seaton – great success and much kudos –I like it!

*21/2/11 – Meeting with Director Finance and Information Technology*

Spoke about issues still unresolved – loos and rubbish, pipe in kitchen, lighting and air con, and time frame for fixing. Director still cool from troubles of last September so slowly, slowly with our 'demands'. Spoke to site manager re problem and he is going to sort it out.

Had to work out GST for previous year. Spoke to Director re issues and revise budget. Ian Ball from Rotaract re invoice and payment. Revise marketing plan and print for committee meeting later in the week. Contact site manager re problems and request early fix up. Discuss lease arrangements with Community Manager

*22/2/11 – Meeting with Manager Community Culture and Recreation and Manager Community Liaison at the City*

Both came to have a look round the Centre and talk about the problems of the rubbish bins and loos. Very helpful and loved our set up. Eager to help with funding opportunities.

*24/2/11 – 8am Centre attendance*

Volunteer without a key so had to go and open up and set up because volunteer didn't show. Problems with air con and one room too cold and one room too hot! Can't win! Library staff brought down Fire procedures for walls and we looked at fire procedures for the Centre. Prepared report for Committee whilst watching the desk. Person from Community Service inquired about hiring our computer room for a focus group so another form of income coming in.

*25/2/11 – 10am Photo shoot at the Centre*

Photographer from the City and local community newspaper for media release on the Centre.

*25/2/11 – 1pm Centre Committee Meeting*

Nothing too exciting as some people were away. A bit flat as the excitement has abated and the teething problems mean I have to come in every morning at 8am so feeling very tired and negative about the members who constantly complain.

#### *26/2/11- Meeting with new Murdoch Students (Saturday!)*

Met with 2 students from Murdoch Uni who offered to update our website as part of their IT Project. Great presentation and set them on task. To report fortnightly to me, meanwhile sent a letter out to Committee members to advise of such. Negative feedback from our current volunteer web master who has now washed his hands of the project.

#### *2/3/11 – Training Session with Volunteers*

Ran through the entry and exit process with electronic swipes, audio visual equipment turn on/turn off procedures and lights, blinds, whiteboards, photocopiers and new computers. Made them all go and do it by themselves and yell when they got into trouble – plenty of yells! Also showed them how to set up and set down the new tables with minimum physical stress and some people just don't get it. Thanks goodness I was on hand to help them. Discussed MYOB procedures and some good ideas came out of the discussion which we will trial. Should have done this in the first place.....

#### *2/3/11 – 10am Meeting with City Librarian*

Met and showed her around the Centre, discussed how we might work together by complementing each others' courses and activities instead of direct competition. Not sure she is interested in being collaborative, didn't get any warm and fuzzies.

#### *2/3/11 – 5pm Meeting with Kumon Education*

Met again and showed through the Centre. Lots of negative remarks about sizes of rooms and lack of one big open space. This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> meeting now and I am losing patience with their procrastination. They want to renegotiate fees and this is an issue for them.

#### *3/3/11 – Centre problems*

Following up suppliers i.e. our reception desk which is now 3 months late and back order of chairs and tables (4 tables and 28 chairs). New IT tutor is very demanding and wants a large screen TV, cupboards and all kinds of stuff in the computer room. Very annoying. Tried to explain that we are a non-profit organisation with NO funding of any kind and so these things take time. Not appeased. Tough! Still having problems with air con too hot, too cold, tap leaking...the list goes on.

*8/3/11 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteers Training session*

Ran session on entry/exit to centre, setting up and closing down of classrooms as well as audio visual equipment etc. Went home to do some work where it is quiet.

*11am – Call out*

Got called out as the Audio Visual wasn't working in Classroom 3. Fixed it, after changing laptops – the presenter took down our laptop and used her own which in fact is a mini notebook and incompatible with our system – Aaargh! How many times have I told them not to bring machines in just their presentation on a thumb drive. Back home to finish off my budgeting.

*9/3/11 – Contact ESL*

Had a call from possible tutor who trains ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers. Discussed how we may get a trainee in to runs some classes for our new Australians.

*10/3/11 – 8am call out*

Volunteer couldn't get audio visual working so tried to fix it to no avail. Had to call out experts who noted that there was no filter on the 'in-ceiling' plug of the projector so the lamp had blown. Another bag of worms – who's responsible for filters, how would we know there was no filter on it if it is in the ceiling and we can't see through ceiling tiles, etc etc. They fixed it up this time and organised filters to be put in at their expense. YAY! A win for us!

*11/3/11 – Meeting with Innerspace*

Finally got hold of Innerspace to follow up with our reception desk hopefully it will be delivered early next week. Arrow rang to come and fix one computer which has had a melt down (like me). Went shopping to buy a coffee machine and a vacuum cleaner. The IT tutor is still bugging me and is complaining about one of the 3 printers in the computer room which is not working but which will be fixed later today.

*11/3/11 – 1pm Volunteers Meeting*

Great meeting as usual, the volunteers are really a class of their own and to think they do it for nothing! Ran though what other resources/equipment they needed and wrote up a list to get over the next week or so. Decided to have an Open day to showcase our fabulous Centre and the volunteers will bake and serve coffee/tea etc.

*Sunday 13/3/11 – Catch up and Creativity*

Designed posters, invites, VIP list, labels and posters for our Open Day next week. Assembled vacuum cleaner and coffee machine at the centre and went to Bunnings for shelf supports. Printed everything out ready for tomorrow and updates the Blog, Facebook page and e-newsletter. No rest for the wicked. Left everything for Volunteers to organise on Monday.

*14/3/11 – 8am at the Centre*

Got there early in anticipation of reception desk arriving – it did at 11am. At least we have it now! Took the afternoon off to recuperate.

*15/3/11 – 7.30am at the Centre*

Met our handy-man at the Centre to install whiteboards and picture hooks. Ended up on the desk as one of the Volunteers was away (husband sick). Went home at 12.

*17/3/11 – My birthday.*

Took the morning off. Had quilting class at 1pm then meeting with a database programmer who specialises in non-profit community based databases. Too rich for us at \$4 per month per member – with 600members that's a small fortune for us. Ordered tear drop banners, new sings, posters and put call in to air con people.

*19/3/11 – Open Day*

At least 400 people passed through our doors. Everyone on a high! The day was brilliant and I had lots of people inquire about hiring out our rooms at night – Lions club, Commonwealth Health, Korean Language teacher, Australian Music Board, Continence Advisory Service of WA, and a self managed Finance group. We should do this once a year to encourage the local community to come and see what we are about.

*20/3/11 – Fiesta Fun Day*

Had a stall at the Fiesta Fund Day but really a waste of time. We were not in a good post and people stood in front of us and talked then watched the dancing exhibitions. Not on our list to do next year.

*21/3/11 – Early Start*

Had to open up at 8am as one of volunteers was late. Set up desks etc and turned on machinery. Sent out Thanks you letter in regard to Open day and followed up on those who showed interest in hiring rooms by sending copies of floor plans and other information.

*23/3/11 – Meeting with Murdoch IT Students*

Met re update on new website. Looked at content and gave them copies of photos and pdf's which need to go on the site. Coming along very well.

*25/3/11 – At the Centre*

8am open up. Met with a gentleman at 9am who wants to hire the venue on a monthly basis.. Interviewed new volunteer at 9am; 11.30am met with possible tutor who wants to hire the venue on a Saturday morning to teach Korean.

*25/3/11 – 1pm Centre Committee Meeting*

What a buzz! Great meeting - for me anyway – as I had lots of good outcomes. During the meeting we had a lady walk in who wants to teach Spanish! Another win for the Centre. Had a post-mortem on the Open Day and declared it a resounding success. Launched the possibility of having a Chef's Challenge to draw attention to our new demo kitchen and inviting local chefs to come and do a demo. We'd take their photo, give them some free publicity and use their recipe and photo in a cook book later on in the year. Could also tie this in with a launch of the Kitchen later in the year with a celebrity chef to do the honours. Well received so on to the logistics now. Showed them a T shirt I had printed up for our participant in the Gopher Muster on Sunday – a member will be driving her Gopher under the banner of the Centre at the Senior Citizens Grand Gopher Muster!

*28/3/11 – 8am Start*

Got in early to follow up on emails and courses. Write up blog and Facebook and send out e-newsletter.

*29/3/11 – The Centre*

Met with Blue Pod coffee makers re a coffee machine for the Centre. Went to Officeworks for stationery and Clockwork for banners.

*30/3/11 – 8am Start*

Had to open up due to volunteer mix up. Met with a volunteer re signage from old Centre which needs to be taken down and brought here. Organised new P O Box number and reconciled the expenditure of the grants.

*1/4/11 – 8am The Centre*

Met with project site manager and Director of Finance to go through some of the problems we are still experiencing. Getting very repetitious now as we are not getting anywhere with the same problems. Met with our PR lady in regard to newsletter and term dates for publications. Followed up with Coffee pods, lock up procedures, P O Box keys, process for enrolment day and processing of forms for Volunteer meeting agenda. Follow up with speakers for discussion groups.

*4/4/11 – 8am Start*

Met handyman at the Centre to put up picture rail and hand towel rails. Reconciled grants account and report for Lotteries West. Met with Murdoch Students re new website and nearly ready to launch. Met with, and interviewed a new volunteer who wants to help with the accounting processes. Decided to give her a trial run. Sent letter to all tutors asking them to be respectful of the Centre and to clean up afterwards.

*5/4/11 – Clockwork*

Went to see about banners and corflute signs for enrolment day.

*6/4/11 – 8am Start*

Met with handyman to install rest of whiteboards. Investigated Telstra and Adult Learners Week grants for Centre. Attended the launch of the new library upstairs at 6pm – very well done! Created new labels for new P O Box number for Volunteers to stick on envelopes.

*7/4/11 – At the Centre*

Learning Centre Link re Certificate registration, ABM certificate, Statements and tax file number for non-profits. Researched TV's for computer room now we have some spare money Harvey Norman, JB HiFi and Myer. Met with Korean tutor re finalise contract.

*8/4/11 – 1pm Volunteers meeting*

Tabled a to do list and advised volunteers about their responsibilities. Reminded them about the mail out of the newsletter on 13<sup>th</sup> and process for enrolment day which was a collaborative effort and worked well last term. Good meeting and everyone still enthused.

*11/4/11 – 8am meeting with David Ford*

Met with David to give him a swipe card and take deposit for hire of room. Very excited as our first 'tenant' bringing a steady income each month.

Met with TRA7 one of our French tutors to talk about a new course she wishes to run.

*13/4/11 – 9.30am NL Mail out day the Centre*

Newsletter mail out day – all hands on deck and a great feeling with lots of room compared to our last mail out! Everyone happy and motivation high. Follow ups with several issues – mainly building problems. Redo Volunteer list and look at roster program.

*14/4/11 – At the Centre*

Run of the mill administration issues, still chasing up problems with site manager.

*18/4/11 – At the Centre*

8am early start due to late volunteer. Bought TV from JB HiFi for computer room now chasing up installer.

*20/4/11 – Meeting with Grants Officer from the City*

Met with the officer who had heaps of info in the types of grants Centre might be eligible for. She even offered to 'eyeball' our applications so ensure they met all criteria – what a find!

*27/4/11 – Term 2 Enrolment Day*

Term 2 enrolment day went quite smoothly and record enrolments so far. Everyone exhausted at the end of it but great feedback from members and volunteers. Processes do work if they are followed – a good example of working together for the best outcomes!

*28/4/11 – Meeting with Murdoch students re website*

Good meeting and website CMS nearly finished. Quite easy to manipulate so will teach (name A) how to do it for future. Ran through the whole process and tweaked a few pages. A good result I'm pleased with the outcome, now we need to go live!

*29/4/11 – Centre Committee Meeting*

As I was unable to attend as I was on an NVivo course at Uni the meeting was rescheduled for the following week.

*2/5/11 – Term 2 Day 1*

Started early 8am, before the masses appeared and managed to get a heap of work done. Members love to talk to me but it is in a way unproductive as I can't get near my desk to work! Managed to follow up on computers, lights, air-con, mail which keeps going missing, electronics, and the bins. Met with the CEO re signage, other officers re photocopiers and computers and audio visual installer in regard to the kitchen audio visuals.

*3/5/11 – At the Centre*

Finish budget for year and look at accounts to be paid or reimbursed. Found installer for TV and teed up for next week.

*4/5/11 – At the Centre*

Early start to trouble shoot problems in classrooms. Finance Director re issues and followed up with email. Met with Murdoch students re finalise front end of website.

*5/5/11 – Centre Volunteers*

Met with volunteers who wanted to voice some concerns about new volunteers and training. Talked with them at length to allay their concerns and look at a new way to organise the roster so a mix of experienced and non-experienced volunteers work together. Did some preparation for the Committee Meeting and finalised the budget.

*6/5/11 – 8am Start at the Centre*

Open up as volunteer incapable of doing so. Met with prospective tutor who want to run a Yoga program but rooms too small.

*6/5/11 - 1pm Centre Committee meeting*

Spent too much time going over previous minutes so will need to revitalise the agenda and get out sooner than later. (name A) off sick so had to chair and take minutes. Still getting good feedback from committee in regard to Centre and lots of new ideas for the future. Still pushing longer opening hours

and Saturday mornings which everyone agrees to but no-one wants to help with. Frustrating to say the least. Getting good publicity and will be interviewed by Jenny Seaton on Curtin radio on 19 May. Transition role coming to an end and need to look at the next phase of the Centre. Agreement on a launch for Kitchen and Chef Challenge. May be able to get Neil Perry to officiate. What a coup!

*9/5/11 – At the Centre*

Photo-shoot with Neil Mansfield local chef and PR person in new kitchen for PR purposes and to launch Chef Challenge. Met with PR person later to discuss logistics for Chef Challenge and process. Made list of all restaurants in the local area and created timeline for process.

*10/5/11 – At the Centre*

8am start is getting to be a habit as I can do so much before everyone else arrives.

*13/5/11 – Centre Volunteers Committee Meeting*

Spoke about Chef Challenge and other events throughout the year. Volunteers liked the social aspects of the events and took on board. Everyone wanted to help and so distributed tasks to each person. Lots of good ideas and enthusiasm – these people never say die! Quite euphoric really.

*16/5/11 – The Centre's Biggest Morning Tea*

Early set up and lots of kitchen activity to raise money for Australia's Biggest Morning Tea – all proceeds to Cancer research. Well attended and a total of \$40 raised selling cupcakes and coffee – well done ladies!

*16/5/11 – First French games and conversation evening class*

7 students attended and had a great time. Very pleased with initiative.

*17/5/11 – At the Centre*

8am set up as volunteer unaware of entry procedure. Need to organise another training session. Met with PR person who wants to organise cheese making classes – referred her to (name A)

*18/5/11 – At the Centre*

Early to rise and get some work done, stayed until 2.30pm and talked to volunteers and members in regard to the Centre and any problems. Good feedback, few problems and lots of good feelings.

*19/5/11 – At the Centre*

Catch up with website protocols and westnet; City officer re details for water authority; Link updates and follow up on rubbish bins.

*19/5/11 – 12.00 Interview with Jenny Seaton at Curtin radio*

Great interview and got a copy to put on website! Very comfortable and relaxed atmosphere talking about the Centre and what we offer. Good PR for the Centre and hopefully bring in a few more members and volunteers.

On a high!

*19/5/11 - 1.00pm Meetings*

Caught up with Deputy Mayor and Venue booking officer from the City events and parking officer re problems with overload parking in front of our centre.

*20/5/11 – 8am Call out*

Flooding in the Centre from heavy rainfall. Had to soak up and organise safe way for members to get to toilets. Rang the City to assist but no luck. Used whatever we could find to soak up excess water and sweep out towards drains – not good enough! Really angry that we were left to our own devices. Health Centre next door had same problem – just not good enough!

*23/5/11 – At the Centre*

Early start to follow up on flooding and other issues. Completed student performance survey from Murdoch on the students and new website. Contact with Link re their problems and Wednesday's networking meeting here.

*26/5/11 – 8am At the Centre*

Open up for volunteer who forgot key. Helped set up and get ready for classes. Left at 11.30 when I knew she could manage. Need to talk to (naemA) about volunteer motivation and my impending departure from administrative tasks.

*25/5/11 – 1pm Networking meeting*

Good attendance, everyone brought a plate so lots to eat. The Centre was a great hit and everyone loved it. Did the obligatory tour and showed them our piece-de-resistance – the demo kitchen – very

envious looks from all. Spoke about my role and how the transition happened and gave a presentation of where we had come from. Did a brainstorming session to identify problems within the Learning Centre groups and looked at how we can help each other. Good meeting and one we should do more often. Felt very energised by the group and thankful for what we have.

*27/5/11 – Centre Meetings*

Met with Peter Moore re collaborative session at the Bowling Club. Met with volunteer re kitchen roster. Met with prospective tutor re kitchen demo; Shopped for cables for audio visual room on behalf of our belligerent IT tutor (they turned out to be wrong specs he had given me so we wasted \$100).

*30/5/11 – Centre Meetings*

Met with PR person re Chef challenge and media releases. Met with (name A) re website material and amendments needed for program.

*31/5/11 – At the Centre*

Administrative work on labels, timelines, letters and invites for Chef Challenge. Talked to Peter Moore re logistics of bowling event and Murdoch Students re website protocols.

*1/6/11 – At the Centre*

Volunteer called to say the desk had finally been fitted – hurrah! Not going in today as too much to do elsewhere and need to start pulling back so volunteers become self sufficient again. Going to be hard to do.

*9/6/11 – At the Centre*

Called in to see how things were going. Took some files home to work on them e.g. GST and budgets. Spoke to President of the South Perth Historical society re a talk at the Centre.

*13/6/11 – At the Centre*

Called in to update website, Facebook and blog. Helped out on reception whilst volunteer did banking. Caught up with (name A) re some admin issues and reminded her my contract about to expire. Felt sad at that, so used to coming in every day, I will miss the involvement.

*14/6/11 – 12.30 meeting At the Centre*

Met with a member who was upset at an altercation with one of the volunteers, Will investigate at earliest opportunity after checking with (name A)

*15/6/11 – 8am At the Centre*

Had to open up as volunteer absent. Left as soon as possible after talking to some of the members and sitting in on a class. Everyone pleased to see me!

*16/6/11 – 8am At the Centre*

Early start as had a meeting re Chef Challenge. Left early and continued to work from home sorting out files and backing up the records.

*17/6/11 – 1.30pm At the Centre*

Meeting with Korean teacher in regard to her sessions. No problems just needed to clarify a few issues.

*20/6/11 – 8am call out At the Centre*

Problems with audio visuals and lighting so had to go in and sort out. Answered half a dozen emails whilst I was there and looked at roster. Now I am not around much things tend to slip away. Must talk to (name A) about that.

*21/6/11 – 12 noon At the Centre*

Met with PR person to follow up with Chef Challenge and get quotes for printing.

*22/6/11 – 9am Budget meeting At the Centre*

Sat with (name A) and talked through the budget process, looked at previous year's audit and used figures plus a percentage. Left (name A) to add up expenditure.

*23/6/11 – Admin*

Worked from home most of the morning to finalise and check budget figures from previous audit.

*23/6/11 – 1pm Meeting with (name A)*

Walked through budget and MYOB essentials. Tried to set up new chart of accounts to help ease the process. Prepared reports for committee meeting tomorrow.

*24/6/11 – 1pm Centre Committee Meeting*

Good turnout with only 4 apologies. Website well received and new agenda process helped a lot. Some heated discussion over naming of rooms with one contingent very vocal about logical numbers and the other wanting fancy names! Program is good but gaps in afternoons which I fear are not being filled on purpose. Hmm how do I get round this one? Informed committee that this was my penultimate month and that the contract had neared its completion so would be making a final report to Lotteries and sharing that with them at the next meeting. Some signs of relief but mostly sighs of regret and anxiety of what will happen once I am no longer on the scene. Asked them to find a new editor for newsletter as it was too much for me to do as well as being Chairperson. Plans for launch going well and Neil Perry has confirmed. Much applause and kudos!

*27/6/11 – 8am Centre meetings*

Met with Mayor of CoSP re launch. Met with PR person re media; met with (name A) re flooding and newsletter. Worked from home from 11am.

*28/6/11 – 5pm Security call out to Centre*

Alarm was set off and got called out to reset. Will find out what happened through security firm who monitor last person in. Need to find someone else to be on call – not really my responsibility and not sure how they got my number! This wouldn't have happened if we opened later.

*29/6/11 – At the Centre*

Went in to see if I could find out about the alarm last night but no one there who could help. Very aggravated.

*30/6/11 – At the Centre*

Met with PR person re chef Challenge and future media releases for Term 3. Spoke at length of opportunities and ways in which we can draw the attention to the Centre via the media. Sue has some great ideas but declined the offer of help from a uni PR student.

*6/7/11 – NL Mail out Day for Term 3*

All hands on deck for mail out – went like a breeze. Vollies happy and still enthusiastic.

Met with (name A) and PR person re Chef Challenge – going nowhere so need to rethink logistics. Sent out at least 100 invites to participate and only 5 or 6 responses. Kensington police offered to do a series of cooking demo's – great! Book won't be done for Christmas, maybe try for Easter 2012! Disappointing for us as we have put so much work into this project.

*8/7/11 – 9.30am Centre Newsletter Mail out*

All volunteers on board to assist with mail out. Got finished in record time and then had volunteers meeting over lunch.

*8/7/11 – 1pm Volunteers Meeting*

Main topic of conversation was the after hours call out last week and how it happened. Seems like someone locked up and before the lock armed itself they opened the door testing to see if it was closed. Informed them to wait for the 'click' before testing – hopefully this will not happen again. Spoke about Chef challenge and elicited help from volunteers who know local Chefs. Goo meeting and everyone still enthused although a bit sad to hear it was my last meeting as TC.

*11/7/11 – 5pm Meeting*

Met with Ian and Laurie from Kensington police who had a tour of the kitchen to determine demo sessions.

*14/7/11 – 12.30pm lunch at Volunteers house*

Volunteer gave a lunch for the volunteers and invited me along to say thank you for all my hard work. Very thoughtful of her and pretty much had me in tears! Her husband did all the cooking and we had a really great time talking about the future of the Centre and their dreams and passion for it. Felt very humble after all the nice things they said about me and privileged to have worked with such a great bunch of people.

*19/7/11 – Centre Enrolment Day Tem 3*

A good crowd as usual and we are really learning from previous enrolment days. Very smooth transactions and enough volunteers to cater for everyone who came to enrol. Everyone exhausted at the end of the morning so I shouted them a cake for afternoon tea and a glass of wine with lunch.

*22/7/11 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Talk of the day was the launch with Neil Perry on 9 August. The volunteers were very excited and looking forward to the event. It was decided to ask local caterer to cater for the event as the volunteers had enough to do with the Centre being open all day. Room naming came up again but I managed to quash debate until we had done some research. Adult Learners week is looming and we secured a grant of \$5000 to run social media workshops. Much enthusiasm but due to launch not anything to do

with the Centre. I tabled my final report with some sever recommendation which could have caused a riot had they had time to read them there and then, but told everyone to digest the comments for discussion at the next meeting.

*25/7/11 – Day 1 Term 3 At the Centre*

Investigated wine for the launch at discount prices through vineyards and outlets. Not much luck.

10.30am Meeting with PR person at the Dux café in Coode Street South Perth

Met to go over the Chef Challenge options. Not having much luck with local chefs and struggling to get them to commit to a time and date. Decided to resend invitation to participate and offer two places to the Neil Perry Launch of the demo kitchen if they booked their time slot. What else can we do? It is such a fantastic idea – free publicity for them all year round – and no one can give up an hour of their time to participate – tough world out there! Very disappointing.

*26/7/11 – 10am Meetings*

Met with local caterer who is doing the catering for the launch to discuss menu. Toby offered to food at cost and will organise table cloths etc., at cost too.

*29/7/11 – 10.00am Visit to McPharlane House new venue 27 Wheatley Street Gosnells*

Visited the Gosnells Learning Centre at their new venue. Quite a dramatic change – they have gone from a modern building to a little house (the reverse of what our Centre did) but they already feel at home and have all their belonging round them so great to see! Very enthusiastic and thrilled that they have so much more room to use. Great work!

*29/7/11 – 12 noon Meeting with Mayor of City*

Met to finalise details of launch and timing of speech.

*1/8/11 – 10am Meeting with Curtin student re Social Media Workshops*

Interviewed student who is full of beans and interested in doing the social media workshops. Lovely young lady except she is a smoker and it puts me off a bit. More interviews scheduled.

*1/8/11 – Visit to Sign makers 35 Elmsfield Road, Midvale*

Went to see quality of work for plaques for launch. Excellent quality so organised there and then. Will be ready in a week once deposit has been paid.

*3/8/11 – 1pm Meeting with Curtin student 2 at Curtin University*

Interviewed student 2 at Angazi café at Curtin for social media tutoring. Very nice but not quite up to speed with social media.

*9/8/11 – 10am Launch Day*

Went up to Midvale to collect plaques for launch then back to Centre to prepare speech.

*9/8/11 – 5pm Launch Day*

Met Neil Perry and entourage and gave tour of Centre. VIPs arrived and approx. 120 guests. Very exciting and a great coup for us. Fantastic evening and the formalities were short, sharp and sweet. Neil is a lovely man and took the time to speak to everyone. Flew home – so thrilled.

*11/8/11 – 10am Meeting at the Boatshed Café South Perth*

Met with Peter Moore to finalise the collaboration between the Centre and Como Bowling Club. Went through the marketing plan I did for them and looked at possible dates for Term 4.

*12/8/11 – 1pm Volunteers Meeting*

Everyone still euphoric after the launch, took time to settle down to business but eventually got a lot done in the time we had. Training session organised for new volunteers and an events committee of 3 volunteers formed to organise logistics for future events – very pleased that they had recognised the need to form this. Also discussed the new communications in the volunteer manual but of course there is a lack of communication in finding out where this resides! A message was supposed to be sent to every volunteer asking them to take a copy of the manual but this did not happen. (name A) did not follow through. I have now set up an email contact group and a separate email address for volunteers to keep in touch with one another and not rely on the message book. Also laminated instructions for all equipment for each classroom and requested that they date messages and cross out or initial once they have received and understood and actioned them.

*16/8/11 – At the Centre*

Sent out letters of thanks to all VIPs for attending launch. Reconciled the accounts and budget for launch..

*17/8/11 – Meeting with possible volunteer bookkeeper At the Centre*

Met prospective volunteer who volunteered to be our book-keeper.

*19/8/11 – Centre Event*

Volunteers put on a Strawberry and Champagne afternoon tea. Well organised and a good crowd of about 40 members.

*23/8/11 – At the Centre*

Finalised printing of brochures for PR and promotion.

*24/8/11 – 7.15am Rotary Club presentation*

Gave presentation on the Centre at the South Perth Rotary Club who meet at the Atrium restaurant in the Burswood complex. Well received and probably get a few members out of it.

*24/8/11 – 2pm Kitchen Demo*

Kensington Police chefs gave demonstration to a bunch of ladies in our demo kitchen – Crème Caramel and Crème Brulee – very well done.

*26/8/11 – Centre Committee Meeting*

Some disgruntled committee members in regard to signage and sensor lights. (name A) to follow up. Some petty grizzles from individuals which are hard to believe. Cheered them up by telling them about the BP vouchers. Received \$1000 worth of BP Petrol vouchers from submission sent in earlier this year. Typed up letter to volunteers and included vouchers to be given out to worthy volunteers. The only good piece of news in this meeting – very negative feelings. It was decided to hold a planning meeting after the AGM date. I reminded them that now my contract had finished I would no longer be at the Centre in the same capacity and that troubleshooting is now the Centre Manager's responsibility.

*6/9/11 - At the Centre*

Updated blog, Facebook and twitter.

*16/9/11 – End of Term 3*

What a term that was! A few glitches but nothing too drastic. Glad its over can get down to admin work now.

*21/9/11 – Centre AGM*

Attended AGM in capacity as Chairperson. Was elected for second term and presented with a book of photos a memento of my year as TC. Overwhelmed by this gesture and near to tears. A standing ovation ensued and the immediate past chairperson spoke of my passion and commitment to the Centre. Very emotional and very much appreciated.

*28/9/11 – 9.30m Newsletter mail out for Term 4.*

Well attended as usual. Popped in to say hello and take them a cake for morning tea.

*11/10/11 – 9.30am Enrolment Day Term 4*

Great turnout and lots of new faces. Well organised and plenty of scope for people to sit and chat after enrolment. Great to see so many new and well-known faces returning to the Centre, everyone loves it! Very happy with our achievements.

*12/10/11 – Survey to Members for Masters Thesis*

Printed, folded and packed 500+ letters and surveys to the membership of Centre. Poor fingers had so many paper cuts. Quite exhausting really but all gone!

*14/10/11 – 1pm Volunteers meeting*

Events committee working well. Enrolment day declared a success. New editor for Newsletter for next year and pre-enrolments were up on last years figures. Looks like the Centre has finally bedded in and can now enter its growth stage. Next event is Melbourne Cup Day a great social get together bonding relationships and setting new ones. I feel that my work is done and I can happily leave them to it.

*17/10/11 – Term 4 begins*

Didn't attend but was given an update on the first day of Term. No hassles, no problems, looking good. I felt a bit sad at not being there but they have to stand on their own now.

*22/10/11 – Trouble at 'Mill*

Had a phone call from a very upset member who had been upset by a volunteer in the middle of her class. Arranged to meet to hear the full story and see what can be done.

*26/10/11 – 8.00am Meeting with member at Secret Garden Café, Angelo Street south Perth*

Met with member who was still upset at the rudeness of the volunteer during the member's class activity. Calmed her down and laid out the options to take. Member upset because she reported it to the Centre

Manager on the day who did nothing to alleviate the tension. As Chairperson I was next to call. Need to think about a strategy to counteract this volunteers method of delivery.

26/10/11 – 10am Post relocation Interview with TRB1 at the Secret Garden Café Angelo Street South Perth.

*27/10/11 – Committee Meeting*

Quick meeting – new agenda working well.

Alleviated some of the problems re signs and parking. Good response for a change. Still get bogged down with minutiae, and diversion of topic. Still arguing about room names and proposed we do a survey of members to see what they prefer. Was asked about my Master's survey and if I would share results – absolutely yes!

Chef Challenge to be deferred to 2012 as we are running out of time. Some concern about new not-for-profit legislation so need to read up on this. A comparison of learning centres was needed and I offered to do this as I thought it would be a good guideline when setting fees next year.

Planning day needs to be organised to address recommendations in the final TC report.

*31/10/11 – 10.30am meeting with (name A) at Book Caffe Mill Point Road South Perth*

Met to go over a few issues at the Centre in addition to the one about the distraught member. Decided to have a discussion between the three of us and see what we can do to soothe the member as the volunteer is a good one but can be a bit brash sometimes without meaning to upset anyone.

*1/11/11 – Melbourne Cup day*

Great event run by volunteers and even had a win after a flutter in the sweep. Well organised and no input from me – well apart from the badges. Raised some funds for the Centre which will go into a slush fund for extras. Great day and good to see so many positive friendly people.

*11/11/11 – 12.30pm Meeting with member and (name A) at the Centre*

Met with member and talked through the incident. Gave assurances that (name A) would speak to the volunteer and ensure no repeat. Decided to withdraw volunteer from time slot that member attends and offered sincere apologies – accepted. A good outcome I think but draining.

*25/11/11 – Committee meeting*

No controversial issues - only good news this month. Outdoor garden done, comparative matrix done on other learning centres done, Telstra Grant for 2012 applied for, City library meetings to be organised. All going smoothly and getting ready for planning session in January.

28/11/11 – 10am Post relocation interview with TRB2 at Secret Garden Café Angelo Street South Perth

*28/11/11 – 11.30am Meeting with Auditor*

Discussed opening balances for new version of MYOB and how to finalise account charter.

*29/11/11 – 12.30pm – Meeting with (name A) at the Centre*

Met to review some issues and resolve some problems in administrative and volunteer duties. Seems to need a guiding hand in getting information across and communication channels are breaking down. Need to determine best way to get info through.

1/12/11 – 12 noon Post relocation interview with TRB4 at Secret Garden Angelo Street South Perth

*2/12/11 – 1pm Volunteers meeting*

Planning for the Centre's Annual Christmas party. Events Committee have got a good handle on what needs to be brought in and shared responsibility around rest of volunteers. I will create an invite and send out to local VIPS (politicians and the like) and organise name badges for the day. Approx. 70 invites and should be fun. I miss the interaction on a daily basis with these people as they are full of life and fun.

*3/12/11 – Thank a Volunteer Breakfast*

Attended this breakfast as I nominated one of our volunteers for the award. Didn't get top award but did get a certificate of commendation and was thrilled. Good to reward those who do so much and who do it without thought of reward.

*9/12/11 – End of Term 4 and Annual Christmas Party*

Great attendance – even got some dignitaries. Really well done by the volunteers who really put their all into these events. Happy to be part of it all.

*16/12/11 – Lunch with volunteers*

Invited to lunch with a couple of volunteers who have really taken to me and don't want to lose touch.  
Very touched by it all. Had a great time and got to know them a bit better than I used to.

## **Appendix IX**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: *When are we likely to move?***

*A: Indications are that the new premises will be completed by the end of December so we can expect to relocate to the new centre mid January.*

**Q: *Will the move necessitate an increase in fees?***

*A: Relocation costs will not affect fees and courses. Our rent will be the same and it will take some time to work out if the new premises are going to use more utilities e.g. electricity and water. If we find this to be the case then fees will be adjusted accordingly.*

**Q: *Is the new centre going to be too big for us?***

*A: It will certainly be more spacious but it will also give us room to hold more courses and will be more comfortable with air conditioning in the summer and heating in the winter.*

**Q: *What is going to happen to all the old furniture?***

*A: An inventory will be taken of all our possessions and we will utilise what we can. A grant has been sourced and funding has been offered to buy new and more functional furniture for the Centre. Any old furniture/equipment that we cannot use will be given to charities or offered to members.*

**Q: *How will our members know when and where we have moved?***

*A: Members will be notified well in advance during the last weeks of term 4 (2010). A directional map will be included in Term 1 (2011) program and the change of address will be very visible on all documentation. We will communicate wherever possible with members of the community.*

**Q: *How will prospective members know where to find us?***

*A: The Centre will promote the move through our website, blog, posters, emails, enrolment forms, letter and advertisement of Term 1 in the Community Newspaper. We will also send out a series of press releases leading up to and after the relocation. The local Council and library have also offered to advertise in their newsletters and on their website.*

**Q: *Will I still be able to use public transport to get to the centre?***

*A: Bus timetables and routes will be sourced and made available to members. The new centre is on a*

main road so there should be ample public transport to and from the centre. In addition we now have free car parking for 50+ cars at any one time at the new centre.

**Q: Will the same courses be available?**

A: We are confident that not only will be able to offer all of the current courses, workshops and activities but a whole new range as well.

**Q: Are our current tutors going to move with us?**

A: All of our current tutors are as excited as we are in relation to the move and are eager to move with us. Hopefully we will also attract some new tutors with different skills and experience to increase our program.

**Q: Who is going to run the new centre?**

A: The Centre will be run as previously in the old centre. Nothing is going to change and it will be business as usual for Term 1, 2011.

**Q: is the City council going to run the Centre?**

A: No. The City are our landlords, we are tenants who pay a very nominal rent, just as we have done at 12 Labouchere Road in the past. The City has no interest in the administration of the centre.

**Q: Will we have to abide by certain rules of the City?**

A: The Centre will have a lease agreement and will have to abide by certain rules and regulations, however these will be common sense rules and regulations and will in no way stifle our methods of business within the community. They wish for us to maximize the resources they have given us (the building) and we wish to work collaboratively with the Library and City so we help each other cross promote our services.

**Q: How can we maximize the resources?**

A: At the moment we are open from 10am to 3pm Monday to Thursday and from 10am to 1pm on Fridays. In order to maximize our resources and increase our activities we will attempt to open for longer hours each day and possibly a few night a week and on Saturday mornings.

**Q: When will this happen?**

*A: Term 1 will be business as normal, no changes to our timetable, classes, courses and workshops. In Term 2 we will try to increase our daily hours and offer one or two evening classes. In Term 3 we will endeavor to run Saturday classes, by the end of Term 4 we should be running at 90% capacity.*

## Appendix X

### Paired Sample t-test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Physical aspects before minus after	-2.19	.91	.08	-2.34	-2.04	-28.03	137	.000
Pair 2	Reliability/inspiring confidence before minus after	-.23	.89	.08	-.39	-.08	-3.03	130	.003
Pair 3	Personal interaction/problem solving before minus after	-.20	.80	.07	-.34	-.06	-2.82	128	.006

## Appendix XI

### Interview with Mentor a former Transition Coordinator (FTC)

FTC was the transition leader at (named) Centre through the relocation and redevelopment phase in 2007.

She shared her experiences with me and we revisited the trials and errors, highs and lows of the transition.

Some of the questions asked were as follows:

- **Is there a place for a transition manager as Centres go through a dramatic change?**
- **How has the Centre dealt with this?**
- **What have been some of the major tasks involved in the transition?**
- **Were there any 'surprises' that we should be aware of?**
- **How does the staffing at the Centre work?**
- **Who pays?**
- **What is the role of staff?**
- **To what extent is the TC role a 'leadership' role and to what extent an administrative role?**
- **Does she have any views or advice on how to attract new 'markets'?**
- **What are some of the real 'magnet' courses for younger markets?**
- **Exploration of 'after hours' use of the Centre particularly evenings and holidays?**

FTC began by talking me through a Visual Diary, which she had organised to track the changes and involve the Centre staff. This was basically a communications book and everyone was encouraged to record (make notes) on their perceptions regarding the development of change.

FTC used weekly updates and recorded summaries of events such as the closure of the car park and information on alternative parking.

FTC noted that there was a resistance to using the visual diary with the use of a pen but when she changed this to a pencil, more people were inclined to document their thoughts, suggestions and comments.

FTC thought that a transition manager was the only way to go. Managing a complex change took a variety of skills including leadership (being responsible for the day to day dramas), encouraging the

vision and articulating it at every opportunity; providing incentives (re-articulating the WHY's); focusing on the positives (being able to answer questions and reassuring anxiety); planning (resources, income/loss of income, displays, newsletter, media, recruiting volunteers, thanking, rewarding and nurturing relationships). As transition leader there were many day-to-day decisions, which needed to be made instantaneously, and which could not wait. In addition there were relationships with the local Council, which had to be maintained as well as group leaders and sourcing new groups to use the new centre.

Because of the 'move' FTC was responsible for the packing up and transport of the centre resources, which caused much emotional upheaval, especially for the volunteers. As an advocate of the centre she was involved with the local Council, the history of the centre, the volunteers and staff on a daily basis through the change process and maintaining relationships on a non-threatening basis.

One of the many challenges was in being persistent and following through on processes as people fell apart as the vision recedes through the slowness and upheaval of change.

A chain of command based on trust, had to be initiated to preserve continuity and to ensure mixed messages were not confusing for the staff and volunteers. In addition daily contact and presence at the centre was needed to ensure validity of plans. As Transition Leader, she was on hand to solve problems quickly and satisfactorily to all concerned.

**Be aware of:**

**Problem:**

Fixed glass window put up at reception forming barrier to visitors etc.

Marie had to negotiate the removal and refitting of a sliding partition.

**Problem:**

The Physical Move – although boxes were labelled some still did not get to correct destination.

Volunteers helped to physically move equipment etc.

**Problem:**

Capacity (number) of telephone/fax/internet lines/electrical points and TV antennae.

**Problem:**

Emergency door was hidden from view, locked and access was through another room. Also had two steps down once opened – a double hazard.

**Problem:**

Choice of door handles/knobs, security alarms and fire drills proved to be personal psychological investment for volunteers/staff. They needed to know they were safe.

**Problem:**

Access for disabled – is it functional?

**Role of Transition Manager**

FTC was emphatic that there is a place for a transition leader and as such drew up an action plan which was very detailed and which had time-lines allowing for contingencies along the way.

FTC spoke of the need for 'breathing' and used morning teas, lunches and parties to mark milestones, celebrate victories, elevate morale and thank the volunteers/staff. e.g. When the windows went in they held a "Windows' morning tea;

FTC set KPIs and whilst working towards them, stressed the need for the ability to improvise and be flexible to ensure progress. She also emphasised that new spaces (premises) do not engender new ways of thinking. This has to be worked at constantly and by one person to provide continuity and eliminate mixed messages. If the committee are not in agreement then this contributes to the confusion with the volunteers. Negativity was NOT allowed.

It was emphasised that problems travel such as rooms for storage/emergency exits/ etc., any current problems need to be discussed and possible solutions tabled and fixed.

FTC had a very good relationship with the current Chairperson and committee. Everything was documented from the beginning – photos, images, newsletter, flyers etc and recorded in the visual diary.

She also walked me through a PowerPoint presentation which she had organised for the volunteers and staff and which she also printed out and incorporated in the visual diary.

The change process was time consuming and FTC spent 50/50 between a leadership role and administrative role – as well as ‘general dogsbody’ as she was the person who dealt with day-to-day problems.

There was a loss of some of the groups probably about 10-12 but also a gain once the centre was operational.

### **Employed Staff**

Once the Centre was ready it took time to employ the right person to run it and the Centre now has a Centre Manager paid by the centre.

Revenue made up from 60% room hire and has taken a new direction in the last two years concentrating on Marketing and Leadership by the Centre Manager whose expertise is invaluable.

Currently the centre employs a Manager for 30 hours per week;

a Finance/Administrator for 27.5 hours per week, and

2 x Customer Service Officers – one 15 hours per week the other 13 hours per week.

The Secretary of the Volunteer Committee works ½ day per week to support students and special project volunteers.

### **Opening Hours**

The centre is open Monday and Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm

Saturdays 9.00am to 12.00 noon (Centre Manager does this shift)

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are short in supply and currently consist of 2 weekly volunteers, 1 facilitator (3 hours) but do draw on students from Central TAFE and Servite College who would put through at least 30 students each per year engaging in Community Service work or aged service.

Central TAFE Arts and Media students are always looking for field placement, work experience and special projects.

Volunteers should meet regularly and be motivated by the leader – no negativity is allowed.

### **Budget**

The Centre receives a \$50,000 grant from the local Council with an all-inclusive budget of \$250,000.

### **Attracting New Markets**

The outward appearance and colours used in the centre will attract younger markets - brand yourself with 'live' colours.

Their new Centre Manager is redefining the 'Community' and willing to share her ideas with us.

The website must be vivid and enticing to younger markets – interactive if possible.

Use on-line visuals of rooms, bookings and openings - possible visual tour of centre.

The centre is always used after hours and by a diverse range of groups

The Centre is cleaned on a contract basis – important that the Centre is clean. The Centre pays for cleaning of the Centre 6 days per week and this is taken into account in the room hire charges.

Will you offer catering and by whom?

Currently, course participants are drawn from the Community by way of families, seniors, youth volunteering, small businesses and home businesses.

The centre is investigating credit card and eftpos facilities, encouraging small businesses, laminating services, reception services and networking.

Existing market does not bring 'new' markets; these have to be actively sought.

There needs to be an 'Interest' offered to attract other existing groups who may be looking for a new home.

Target 'Connect' groups (WISH) and support agencies, lotteries houses.

Look at your courses – who runs them? What are they providing for the community? Do they cover the markets you wish to attract? Do you know what your markets want?

Look at your groups – what differences/changes can you make? Are you serving the community or a few chosen individuals?

### **Security**

FTC said it was important for volunteers and staff to feel 'safe' and protected as well as helping them maintain a sense of 'belonging' to the Centre. Security was an issue and they managed to overcome this by:

- Having a key pad installed in each room
- Providing after-hours users with a security code so if any problems it was logged who used what room and when.
- Key management by deposit which is returned when key returned.
- Room deposit returned after event if no damage is done.
- Providing permanent keys for permanent users
- Room hire by the hour is too limiting
- Deadline of 11.30pm
- NO to 21sts, Bucks and Hens night parties.
- Used successfully for 50<sup>th</sup> – 80<sup>th</sup> birthdays, laughter club, harmony girls, Claisebrook catchment group (eco), etc.

The meeting ended with a visit to the Centre, a tour of the rooms and meeting the Centre Manager. FTC loaned me the visual diary to look at and to use any of the content for the Centre's advantage.

## Appendix XII

### Transcripts of Interviews with Volunteers and Tutors (pre and Post relocation)

#### Interview with VRA2 pre

*How did you become involved in the Centre and when?*

I was introduced to the Centre about 2 years ago looking for something to do after retiring. I saw an advert in local paper and followed it up by doing the Italian class and now I volunteer for Friday morning sessions once a fortnight from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

I open the Centre, clear the fire escape exit, turn on the lighting/heating/cooling open up the Art shed and gate, make sure the hot water urn is filled and switched on and there is enough tea, coffee etc for members. I am also responsible for banking the monies on a regular basis as well as setting up for and attending on enrolment day. I usually come to the Centre three times a week – Monday for Italian; Wednesday for Drawing and Friday as a volunteer

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

It does ok, we have volunteer meetings which are a good idea but perhaps we only need them once every two months instead of every month. The message book is a good way to keep in touch with other members and volunteers but I didn't know much about the committee and everyone who is on it except for (names 3 people). I'm not interested in attending committee meetings as we get enough information as volunteers.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I know a bit of the history of the Centre but didn't know that (name) had started it all off in 1985. I did know that it used to have a crèche in the beginning but I don't think it a good idea now.

*What do you like about the Centre and its current location?*

Oh the Centre is homely and intimate. It's not a bad location really because its on the bus route and close to shops and café's.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Well there's not enough parking for a start and the rooms are small and badly laid out. There is no way to increase the size of the Centre so we are unable to grow or increase our classes. The building is falling down and needs a lot of repair if we had to stay here.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

The plans look good and the rooms look larger. There seems to be plenty of parking for all of us and the building is new - not falling down. From what I've seen there is a good reception area which will make enrolment easier and less crowded and it will be good to have a drop in Centre and meet for coffee. Maybe once we move we could attract a younger market (20+ years of age) and organise some evening classes because this will attract new members. There may be a bit of a panic for some volunteers if they have to use a computer on the front desk but it would make life easier to enter the details. We need a

volunteer coordinator who might be a position I don't think this would put volunteers offside, as long as you keep the atmosphere good because the friendships are a priority for a lot of people at the Centre.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Some people complain that it's too busy, not enough pictures in it and we should photocopy it in colour and on our own premises. Personally I don't like columns, it's like a newspaper. I think we should include the enrolment form and there should be a better way to process it.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I had about 3 to 4 weeks of training with (name) when I first started and was given a manual to keep. I think that the time spent with an experienced person was very helpful and I'm very happy to be a volunteer. It's much better now that meetings are happening again because we get more communication about processes and we are kept up to date with the committee and what they are doing so we get enough information for what we need to do.

*Thank you*

### **Interview with VRA3 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I learned about the Centre through the Library in April 2008 and became a volunteer. There was no official training as such, I was shown the ropes and left on my own but was told to call on VRA1 for help or VRA8. I work on my own on Friday mornings from 9:00am to 1:00pm until the centre closes.

*And what do you do at the Centre? What are your main responsibilities?*

I answer the telephone mostly but it is very quiet. When I come in in the morning I turn on the heater or air conditioner and the urn for tea time and set up for the groups if no one has already done so the night before. Before I leave I turn it all off again and lock up.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

We used to have Volunteer meetings on Wednesdays but I can never attend as I have other commitments at the Senior Citizens centre. It would be good to be able to see a summary of the Volunteers meetings maybe in a newsletter or email as I would like to know what happens.

*Are the meetings regular enough?*

I suppose so but I can't come on a Wednesday.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I know a little bit, some of the history but not all of it like when we started and who was here. I don't know what you mean by mission...

*You know like a statement of how we run things and how we operate?*

No I don't know.

*How well are you treated as a volunteer?*

Oh very well. They take us out to lunch once a year and we are given vouchers to attend courses, I attended an Energy Course and it was quite good. WE also have bus trips and outings but we have to pay for them.

*What do you think are the best things about the Centre and its current location?*

Oh, the people, they are lovely and I like new meeting people and helping them. There is a really good atmosphere at the Centre and the older people are friendlier

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Nothing really, it is a bit small and gets very crowded and hot in summer and cold in winter. It's very quiet on Fridays as we don't have a lot of things going on.

*What do you feel about re-locating to the new Centre?*

Oh it is going to be really modern and clean and bright. I think we will have more parking which will be good and I like the idea of a coffee machine.

*Have you seen the visual diary and the suggestions for the new equipment?*

No, I haven't seen anything about the plans or the visual diary.

*What would you like to see happen at the new Centre?*

I would like to see more younger people use the Centre, not children but maybe as young as 14-15 year olds for evening classes, they would help spread the word and would help us grow our numbers. I can't see any disadvantages of the move as people come to learn and that's what we're all about. Maybe we should look at English classes for second language

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

It's ok but not sent out enough. Perhaps we should have a more frequent one sent out .

*As a volunteer, what communication do you have with the committee?*

Not a lot really. I know they meet once a month but I think they should circulate the minutes or a summary to the volunteers.

*Would you be willing to join the Committee?*

No, I am not interested in attending meetings, I don't have the time.

*Do you know anyone on the committee?*

I know that (names of 4 people) are on Committee but not sure of anyone else.

*Do you see any major problems in the Centre as it is today?*

Well no-one seems to tell anyone anything that is happening. We don't seem to be as busy as we could be. I think we could be more visible – more publicity is needed like advertising North and South of the River, in the Alexander Library and other Libraries, Radio 6PR and Curtin radio. Nobody really talks to each other about the Centre, or the other volunteers. Esther was the only one who knew what was going on.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA4 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I became involved 5 years ago through a brochure from the Centre. I looked at the courses and enrolled for Italian, then did some bus tours and foreign affairs. I ended up volunteering about 2 years ago and I work on Tuesday mornings. However I am having a Term off at the moment but I sometimes help out as relief if someone is sick and at the newsletter mail out and on enrolment day. I found my best friend at the learning Centre (name) who has since died, she was a lovely lady and I miss her still. I did a talk on "Egypt" and "Things go wrong but you can get over them" recounting my experiences on holidays as I like to travel a lot.

I like the sociability and friends as well as the variety of classes but we should do weekend and evening classes.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

The message book is the only form of communication we have and we all leave messages for each other as our shifts are all different. They changed some of the forms but we were not consulted – there is a teacher mentality – do as I say.

Someone created a manual to help volunteers but it is quite simplistic. As a group we are not communicated with much– you only see the people who take over from you or handover to you and I can't always get to the volunteer meetings. No one communicates with us volunteers when they change things, no consultation on what works for us.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

Hmm, not a lot, I know we have been around for a while.

*What's good/bad about the Centre at its current location?*

We are a bit cramped although I like the centre as it is – I hope it doesn't lose its "Feelings" when we move. The front office is not effective, much too small for us to handle groups of people when they come in. Although it's small, we have enough rooms for 'break-out' for groups if we don't have too many classes on at one.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I've seen the plans but don't understand them. I'd like to see some visual things or artists impression of what it might look like from the outside. There are some high expectations of what it might be like from some of the ladies and so it is exciting, but it will feel like "leaving home" after all these years and I worry that it is going to be a big empty hall. When we move our classes should be booked out and we should try to get more interesting speakers. We could look at travel, German language/Asian language courses – what's popular with other people/centers? We should also do more surveys, they are a good idea, and how about Yoga, keep fit and line dancing?

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

It's just a program. We need to advertise more in the local community paper because it is good and local and we should write more about our courses. Each class should promote other classes to

encourage people to attend and we should put more posters in shops, and have book marks like they used to for promotion of the Centre. We could leave them at Doctor's surgeries and other places, give talks to retirement villages and educate the public about who we are and what we do more.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No not really. I think we should have a paid person running the show and teaching us what to do. The Volunteer Coordinator duties burn people out and they get fed up and tired. I went to my first recent volunteer meeting but have not been since, it went on for too long. It would not bother volunteers if they had a paid coordinator, maybe she could do banking and shopping and all the things we can't do because we can't get around much.

*What about younger people, what do you think younger means and how can we attract them?*

Well young for me is up to 50, that's young. I'm not sure about a crèche though, I am out of that now and it might put off some people who are semi-retired or retired. They want peace and quiet and to mix with like-minded people, if it goes ahead it should be user pays.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA5 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I actually got involved through Mah Jong as a participant 3-4 years ago and participated for a number of terms – I'm still enjoying it. I also do voluntary bus driving for the last 2 years. I was an Ambulance driver 25 years ago. The

bus belongs to the City who lease it out to the Centre.

So I have to pick up the keys for bus, then the bus from a different place. The city fills it up with Diesel and charge a small fee to the Centre.

I've done other types of volunteering in the past. I've worked at the airports, in the country as an airport controller, been an ambulance driver, a sea scout leader, a fire-fighter and a driver for aged care.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

I know a little about the nuts and bolts of the centre and I presume the minutes of meetings are available from (name). I don't really know what happens on a day to day thing, they let me know when they need me and what they want me to do. I think if I wanted to know more they'd tell me.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I know a bit about the history and where it has come from. Not sure about the exact wording of any of the rest but I guess we would have them somewhere written down.

*What do you like about the Centre that attracts you to volunteer there?*

Well, (laughs) I'm a closet socialist and I like to help people. But I'm not religious and think if you can do it – you should. I also have the time to do it and think other people should make the time to help in the community – there's a lot that can be done. I've been a Navy radio operator and air traffic controller and had an easy life compared to others so I want to give something back I suppose. I've travelled quite a bit – lived in Spain as well as Sydney then came to Perth. Volunteering makes you feel wanted, the old ladies appreciate help and it is very sociable. We're all getting on and I like to meet people in similar circumstances

*So what do you like most about the Centre?*

Hmmm, well there's a pretty diverse range of people and you don't need any academic recognition, so it's pretty non-threatening for most people.

I'd like to do Italian and drawing future just something different to what I am doing now.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Well, it's a bit run down and always needs some maintenance, the ceilings are falling down and the rooms are tired looking. It's also mostly women so we need to attract more males and more male oriented programs. There's also a lack of younger people, and we don't open at times when other people can come, we see to cater for the semi-retired and retired but we need to attract other age groups, especially when we move.

*So how do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

Hey, it's a great location and lots of parking. I know it is a big leap for some but the design looks good and there was some input from us, the committee and community.

I think we need to offer courses people want and get known more in areas close by.

We could advertise more and do more PR work like on the local radio stations – Capital and Curtin and maybe do a letter drop.

*Can you see any disadvantages of the move?*

No not really, the old place is claustrophobic, small, dingy and dusty so anything is an improvement. This old place is not really 'ours' and I think the new one will be much better and we have the opportunity to put our mark on it, but I wonder if we might lose some of our autonomy in the move.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Well it's not often enough. I've been around on enrolment day and think that we should look at being able to register via the website. I think we need to send more info out to members and let them know like when we have one day talks on and such.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I know who's who but not what they do as far as the committee goes or some of the volunteers come to that. The Executive committee is a bit different to the volunteer committee I suppose. I've not had any formal training as I only drive the bus. I'm not aware of what the volunteers do or talk about (those who go into centre), there are so few men about so not aware of a lot of things I guess.

*What does "Younger" mean to you if we were to target a younger audience?*

Younger? I guess over 15 and under 30 years of age, wouldn't really work for anyone younger I don't think.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA6 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I've been a member for 5 years, after doing a course in computers for beginners. I'm originally from Quairading and Lake King, but I'm now retired and live in Como. I've been a volunteer for about 4 years helping on Mondays from 12:00 noon until 3:00pm. Some of the things I do are to take over from the previous volunteer, read messages in the message book and do anything that needs doing. I also contact people if necessary and prepare and register new members. Occasionally I set up for classes but I don't not like having to lift heavy tables. It's too much. If there is a new teacher I will introduce them to the class. We also have to know the fire drills and procedures and how to turn the urns on and off as well as the heaters and coolers. Once a week we take the bins out and takes and enters money in the ledgers. Thankfully we don't do any computer work, our responsibilities already snowball and interferes with other plans so you don't get away on time.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

The message book is only form of communication it's to leave notes and messages for the next person. Some people use it properly but some don't. It's not always kept up to date.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I'd like to get to know more about what goes on in the Centre and what the committee does. I am not aware of the vision, values or mission statement of the Centre.

*What do you like about the Centre and its current location?*

Oh the lovely people and I enjoy being with other volunteers and members. It is lovely to work here and we have a good volunteer group so there is no pressure, no guilt if you can't do a shift. Everyone helps each other but we do need more volunteers to cover for holiday periods or stand-bys. We also need a volunteer coordinator to organise the duties and the roster.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

It has to be the parking, it's atrocious and the small rooms. It's always too hot or too cold and it's pretty grotty inside. Members are generally friendly and willing to learn, but need to get more involved and interested in fundraising because it is always left to volunteers and committee, unlike the Country where everyone gets involved.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I think the Centre services the needs of the community and we will be able to do more when we move to new building. There will be more opportunities to do things and improve courses. I wonder if it will be easy for our current members to get there – is it on the bus routes?

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

The newsletter should have more dates of events like morning teas and celebrations and could include some history of the Centre as well as committee details and dates of meetings.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No job description was given to me although a manual has been produced since. Perhaps the Centre could organise volunteers booklet and make them personal so volunteers can make their own notes. I'd like more volunteer meetings say every second month and have some input into the agenda.

*What else would you like to see the new Centre do?*

For a start there should be more social events like morning teas and Christmas lunches. I'd be happy to attend committee meetings but would like more information first such as what I would be expected to do. I'd like some informal lunches with the Committee, maybe 2 to 3 a year to be kept up to date with what is going on and what the committee are up to and how it affects the volunteers. I think we could do more new and interesting courses and talks. I like the idea of a 'drop in centre' so volunteers can meet, have a coffee and chat.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA7 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I've been associated with the Centre since the middle of Term 1 2009 after moving to Perth from Wongan Hills for personal reasons. I was in the local Library asking about volunteer work when I was overheard by the Centre's administration coordinator who recruited me on site. I volunteer for half a day (Tuesday mornings) at the Centre performing reception duties and helping out once a term with the newsletter mail-out. Other duties include opening the Centre and locking up; preparing the art shed and rooms for courses and the tutors; checking milk, tea and coffee, switching on the urn; heating and cooling of rooms and the handover at end of shift. My shift starts at 9am and finishes at approx 12.15pm when handover takes place.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

I wasn't given any training hand-outs and I've only been to two formal volunteers' meeting although I was invited to the volunteers' lunch and the informal meeting held after the last mail out day. After the last meeting all volunteers were given a copy of a "Reception/ Admin" booklet which outlined their role as a front desk volunteer and it also included Tasks and Responsibilities of a volunteer. I haven't met all the committee yet so am not really sure of who does what.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I wasn't given any formal paperwork or introduction to the Centre's Vision, Mission, Core Values or the history of the Centre. I am trying to get to know the members who attend the classes/courses on my day at the Centre but otherwise have little or no other contact with other members or volunteers apart from social gatherings at the Old Mill Theatre every few months to see a play as part of the Theatre Group.

*What do you think are the best things about Centre and its current location?*

Well, the friendliness of the volunteers I've met so far has been great and it is very informal which is good. I like meeting and talking to new people who are enrolling for courses or attending courses and there is a sense of belonging to a group – like a family. The Centre is close to shops and post office and Mends Street shopping Centre is good for café's and things.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

The building is old and tired-looking and the rooms are dusty and not very clean. There's not enough space so there is a feeling of being cramped because the rooms are small and restrictive. Oh and not a lot of parking, you have to park streets away. Some of the ways we can improve is to have lots of get-togethers like open days so we get people talking about us. I think a community quilting group would be a good idea. We need to get members to contribute to 'ownership' and attract younger people as the current perception is it is for 'old' people and may not be attractive to younger people. Not sure about crèche facilities some people may be over young children.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I haven't seen any of the plans yet so don't really know much about it, not a lot has been said about it, the size of the rooms or the layout. Not sure if there are any plans yet. A coffee machine would be nice.

better than the instant stuff we put up with. I'm expecting lots of space and light with everything looking clean and new. Hopefully there will be better security and safety and possibly classes after hours which will help with bringing income into Centre from meetings and celebrations. Better parking will be a bonus. Some disadvantages may be a feeling of isolation as the new Centre is not close to any shops. There may be a sense of loss of coziness and the current friendliness *we are identified with* may decline and lose that 'family' feel. It will all depend on how we furnish it and if we can make it look like home.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

It's ok it only comes out once a quarter so its not really a tool for communicating through. Perhaps we should start a proper newsletter and leave the program as a program?

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No formal induction took place but before I was allowed on the desk by myself I had 4 half days with other more experienced volunteers who taught me the tasks I was expected to do. Training was hands-on but a bit ad-hoc.

*Anything else you would like to add?*

Yeah, I feel that the Centre is a great meeting place both socially and as a learning Centre and there is great potential for the new building to improve and expand our courses whilst keeping it interesting and up to date.

I'd be interested in quilting and think that a quilt telling the story of the Centre's history would be a great way to preserve the old Centre and tie it in with the new, so we don't feel so lost.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA8 pre**

*How did you become involved in the Centre and when?*

4 or 5 years ago I was asked by (name) to volunteer. I knew (name) through working at Uni and it appealed to me working with adults rather than teenagers, and working in the community, doing something good and there's a social aspect to it too. I'd just left work and was made redundant so wanted something to do though of volunteering at PMH.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

Mainly through discussion with other volunteers, we used to have a couple of meetings a year but only about 7 volunteers showed up, so it's hard to get everyone together. Because we all work different times sometimes there's an overlap but sometimes there isn't so you don't keep in touch with everyone all the time, just at enrolment day and mail out day. You have to be pretty consistent so you don't let other people down and there is a great sense of community and friendship in being a volunteer, we all have a great rapport and help each other out, we leave messages for each other so we know what needs to be done and what to do.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

Didn't know much about it at the start but you learn as you go along and you talk to people. It's an easy team to work with because we all know what we have to do in the time we are here. We all seem to value the same kind of things like respect for each other and we all get along.

*What do you like about the Centre and its current location?*

Meeting and seeing people doing something with themselves, lots of our members have just given up work or are semi retired so its good to see them get out and about and stay active mentally. The people that you meet here is really its biggest asset, members, teachers, volunteers, everyone makes it what it is.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Well, it's an old building but has character, but like all old places it is hard to keep clean and tidy. We need more room especially on enrolment day it gets pretty packed in here. It would be nice if we could go outside more but we need tables and chairs and shade cloth for the older members and we could do with some pot plants to liven the place up.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

Can't wait! (laughs) we'll have more space, everything will be new, we'll have a great kitchen to do demonstrations in and I think we will be able to offer more to our members. I don't have any worries for the members or the volunteers or for the Centre itself I think we will grow beyond belief and it will just get better.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Well the two things are entirely different and should be separated. The programme comes out four times a year to tell people about our courses but to communicate with people you need to produce a newsletter in the real sense of the word and tell people what is going on in the *Centre* and how well we are doing. I'm optimistic that we can do this when we move.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

It takes a certain type of person to volunteer, I learned on the job as probably most other volunteers do. (Name) was a big help and always ready to answer questions, but having an administrative background I think I picked it up pretty well. The volunteers are always ready to help each other and the members, they are very nice people who enjoy the work and the social aspect.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add?*

Yes, when we move I think we will really come into our own and put the *Centre* on the map.

*Thank You*

## Interview with VRA9 pre

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre,, why, where, when, how?*

I attended a lecture in 1989 on colours (Colour me beautiful) and then did Italian language for beginners. I was on the committee when the move to Karawarra was imminent and got 'conned' into volunteering (laughs) I also helped on bus trips.

I used to organize and help out at enrolment days – membership would have peaked at 1,000 had we not culled down to 400 or 50 each year. The Centre has grown to a kind of half way house between TAFE and Senior Citizens club and now I'm a Life Member due to the hours, years and contribution to the Centre's growth, but I don't attend as a volunteer anymore. I edited the Newsletter with my daughter for some time when it was straight-forward but now it is very time consuming. Phillip Pental used to print it for us, then Kim Wilkie, and now Steve Irons. I still keep in touch through the theatre group and invitations to special events.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

Well I'm not a volunteer anymore but when I was there were no real systems in place so I put in place a procedure for volunteers as I used to be a teacher. I read in the Constitution somewhere that meetings were compulsory so I initiated those too. Not sure what happens now but I think they have a volunteer manual – at least I hope so!

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I'm pretty knowledgeable on its history, you know it nearly folded at one time. There was a 'Move' on the cards for some time and so rent was reduced which enabled the Centre to continue. I think a lot of people worked hard to keep it going and to increase the membership, whatever we did is why we are here today. I know there is a full committee but not exactly who is on it, I'd probably read the newsletter to find out.

*What do you like about Centre and its current location?*

It's compactedness makes it easier to make friendships. The building is ours – no sharing so can put up photos and put our mark on it. We are unique in what we do in this area and having a kitchen helped. As we do not share with anyone, there is a feeling of belonging, a kind of club house feeling even though we are sometimes bursting at the seams. However there is a cosiness and conviviality, it's like being at a friend's house, because it's the people who make it what it is.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Well it has to be the small rooms, we are all crammed into one space. Then there's the lack of parking which means we can't grow. We do not have good audio visual facilities and there is a distinct lack of space to move around, store our tuff and conduct new courses. We are bursting at the seams probably due to the lack of an efficient coordinator.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I've seen the plans and they look good, but not sure of the sizes of the rooms. Parking is going to be better so I'm told and we have a private entrance which is not shared with anyone else. We look like we

will have more storage for our equipment and much better facilities all round – like loos and things. I hope we don't lose our autonomy. The drop in Centre sounds good and the coffee machine. I just hope there is some sound proofing from the upstairs noise factors from other sources. Not fussed about the crèche though, the old one died out as there was no use for it, but all in all I think it is a good move for us.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Well, the program is just that really, a program of courses and events. It has always been used as a tool for communication but it only comes out once a quarter so there is room for some other kind of communication as well as phone calls. I guess they still have meetings and you can always ask if you want to know something.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No we did it ourselves and taught each other in the beginning. It was such a learning curve for us all when we started.

*What changes do you think the new Centre will enable us to put in place?*

Well attract a younger audience for one.

*So what does young mean to you?*

Young means 26 – 40 years of age I guess.

*And what changes would you like to see put in place?*

Well more advertising to start with, the local paper is good, the editor has always been sympathetic to our needs. Word of mouth is always the best way to get information out and cooking and food is a good incentive. Perhaps we can have Open days with food or Enrolment days with food or cooking demonstrations like cooking for 1 or 2 people now our children have gone. I'd like to see more physical exercise like dancing or Tai chi.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA10 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I first joined the Centre in 1991 to attend a writers course for my autobiography. I was interested at the time in Chess and Business Administration so ran a Chess course. I had 10 people attend the first course so was pleased. I did not want to be on the committee due to time constraints and had previously joined Jaycee's (similar to Apex) in 1954 for debating, meeting procedure skills and the like. After that I attended a handiwork course and then started a discussion group in 1993. I had 18 attendees for the 1<sup>st</sup> discussion group, and ran this group until 2008. I've also lectured on several cryptogram courses.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

I don't volunteer any more although I do help out sometimes with the AGM, as an assistant book club leader for discussion group, chess, and cryptograms. I've also helped out on enrolment day and attended some committee meetings.

*What do you know about the Centre?e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I know that (name) who is now deceased was Coordinator for about 2 years and was there in the beginning. She ran the place like a CEO and lots of time was involved. It should be a paid position as the CEO fosters the friendliness and willingness of the volunteers. At the moment we have little prestige in the community and wonder if we are an irritant to the Council at times.

*What do you think are the good things about the Centre and its current location?*

There are good opportunity to socialize and for learning. In many ways it has become a social group. In the old days, during the discussion group we used to not be able to talk about many things (taboo subjects like sex, religion and Politics) now the only taboos are Politics, and suicide . This last subject was avoided because some participants could have been personally involved.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Parking has always been a problem. The entrance is not very welcoming and the size of the rooms is inhibitive. The toilets and facilities are not the best and I think it is vermin infested. The rooms are dull and boring and old. We could teach English as a second language to immigrants. I think the groups need to be advertised more to increase attendance. I used to do Spanish so maybe other languages could be investigated

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I think it will be good. The new building will enable the committee and members to have a new purpose and aims for the future. With plenty of parking and we are still within the local area, close to transport and better facilities we should be able to encourage new members. However we might be competing with the university of the new age, so we need to encourage younger members (30+years) and if a crèche is established then we must adopt user pays system as it would not be fair to penalize members who do not use the crèche system.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

The newsletter is good and on time each Term, the registration forms is set out in a nice way. I could attend meetings if I wanted to, but not really interested in seeing all the minutes and stuff. Don't want to get involved as a committee member, but I think I know who is on the committee and what they do. Better communication has helped with the set up for enrolment day of classes, but sometimes the room is not available and you have to make to with whatever is available.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No not really, I think I just learned as I went on.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA11 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I was a lecturer at UWA in Mechanical Engineering Design but am now retired. I took 6 months long service leave as I was looking for something to do a bit more up-market than meals on wheels. Something action based not disabling and I knew a bit about computers. So I went from Mac to Windows to teach "Computing for beginners" as another Centre lecturer resigned and here I am, 8 years on doing the website as well as teaching beginners, and Image Editing for PC and Mac. I've also worked for Carers WA as well as other learning Centres.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

Well, there's not many high level volunteers here, too many chiefs and not enough Indians – not really – it should be more about productive volunteers, otherwise it becomes quite moribund. We need more volunteers because we are full of middle aged females learning Mah Jong who use it as a social club. There aren't enough males or male oriented subjects like community gardening, a Mens Shed (like there is in Subiaco). I work one session a week teaching basic computing skills from 10.30 – 12.30 on a Wednesday so if I don't come in I don't get to know anything. You have to ask and hope someone tells you.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

It's a learning centre and it's been around a while.

*What's good/bad about the Centre in its current location?*

It's dependent on its demographics and too set in ways to accept younger people. It needs to offer more to attract younger people and the enrolment process – needs to be computerized to capture data (such as the program I introduced some time ago). Computers are old and rooms are tight. People will pay for use of a good product/service and we need to expand and attract younger members. Our rooms are under-utilised and we need to think about what we are offering and when.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Well, parking is abysmal and we need to look at a database program for enrolment, details of participants, courses offered and used, room bookings etc., this could be invaluable for Centre.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

We need to do more market research and find out what the community wants. A creche could be useful but it should be user pays. Perhaps we could share amenity with the Library or the health Centre. The future of the Centre has to look at getting to a wider section of the community and we will have the space to do that.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

We need to do more advertising, like other clubs/associations and get some lateral thinking going to produce a newsletter as well as the program.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

No, didn't need it really, not for what I teach.

*Thank You.*

## **Interview with VRA12 pre**

*What is/was your Involvement with the Centre, why, where, when, how?*

I attended the Centre after retiring looking for something to do, saw the advert in the doctor's surgery – it was a bookmark, good advertising for someone like me who reads a lot of books. So I joined about 9 years ago I think and have been involved in the movie club, the book club, bus trips, Art, Talks, lots of things.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

I don't do volunteer desk work anymore, but I do help out at the Christmas lunches, morning teas, fundraisers and enrolment day. I guess we get news through the newsletter.

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

I joined committee 2 years ago so I'm up to date with all the planning and stuff that has been going on.

*What do you like about the Centre and its current location?*

The spirit of the Centre, the people, we are all socially like-minded and have lots in common probably due to our ages, but generally there are good differences – makes for better discussions. Unfortunately our levels of commitment change as we get older, and volunteers get 'burned-out'.

*What are the worst things about the current Centre and how can they be improved?*

Small rooms and either too hot in summer or too cold in winter. Parking is a nuisance but all that will change when we move.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it? How can we make sure our members are happy?*

The size and parking are the main attractions. When we move we need to attract other markets and people, we need to talk it up – at Christmas lunch, morning teas, volunteer meetings. We really need to talk to people and get them interested in our classes/courses. It would be good to go outside of our immediate area and use photos of the new Centre to entice people to come. Use it as a drop in Centre, advertise more and do more promotional stuff. It is up to us (the volunteers) to make sure the new Centre take some of the old Centre with us so that people feel like they belong.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

The newsletter is good and there is always the ability to ring up people for help. Face to face is best but not always possible depending on the time of day. The committee should try to disseminate more information on a more basic level to keep us informed and interested in what is going on.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I think we had enough to get us by, not huge amounts but enough.

*And what do you think we could do to improve what we do now?*

We need more people to get involved and we need to target young people (Late 20s to early 40s). We should try to do courses like scrap-booking and sewing and quilting like we did before. If we offered child-minding facilities then it must be user pays or reduced rate depending on finances, but we need to grow to be successful. We used to advertise in Doctors' surgeries; chemists; supermarkets; book-shops, now we don't bother. The survey was a good idea and we should do it a couple of times a year to find out what people want. Perhaps we could start cooking groups and demonstrations again to help build our finances – maybe even teach English to migrants!

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRA13 pre**

*How did you become involved in the Centre and when?*

Through the Senior Citizens Club in South Perth. I help out there and wanted more volunteer work as I am here in Perth with my husband who has just got transferred from over East.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough?*

A bit sporadic and could be better. I'm a person who needs to be kept in the know and likes to be a part of the organisation fully even though I only work half day shifts

*What do you know about the Centre? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are?*

Not much really. There is some information floating round but no one has actually asked me to read it.

*What do you like about the Centre and its current location?*

Everyone is friendly and always willing to chat – it is a great place to make friends especially with the food and wine club and the theatre club and book club.

*What are the worst things about the current centre and how can they be improved?*

It's a bit run down and needs some TLC. Parking is horrendous and the rooms are pokey and uninviting.

*What do you feel about re-locating? What is good/bad about it?*

I'm concerned about what will happen to all the friends we have made here and who live locally - and if they can't get to the new Centre? I know it is going to be bigger and the rooms much larger but will it still have the same feeling and will we still be able to chat and mingle like we do now?

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

It's a bit of a programme really, we need a much better way of communicating with each other especially as we don't see each other too often. We should all meet on a regular basis and talk things over.

*As a volunteer, did you have any form of Induction, training, manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

Yes the other volunteers helped me through and sat with me until I knew what I was doing but there is no-one to really go to when you want things done immediately as the manager isn't always around.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add?*

The move is exciting but it is going to be hard to keep the relationships going especially if the activities are moved to different days and times. We should try to keep things as much the same as possible so that we are not too traumatised by the move.

*Thank you*

## **Interview with VRB1 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

The relocation of our Centre has not changed my role as a volunteer but the new and spacious premises have given me a greater pride in the appearance of the Centre and for the comfort of our volunteers and our members.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

Well, I'm part of the communication. I attend meetings, I listen, I am now more aware of planning and of all the daily arrangements for upcoming terms. It is done often and is enough.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

The Centre's membership has grown since the relocation, only 1 year ago. History wise we were incorporated in 1988 at 12 Labouchere Road but originally the Centre started in 1986 in Manning. At present we have 19 volunteers each working at the Centre half a day a week, time permitting. Our intentions are to provide a focal point in the local area and beyond for social and educational interaction for adult members.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Oh the spaciousness and newly renovated premises are a tremendous improvement as far as cleanliness, comfort, parking, facilities and accessibility are concerned.

*What do you not like about the new Centre and how can they be improved?*

Electricity could be saved if the lighting went on and off more efficiently.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

Apart from a feeling of nostalgia for the Labouchere Road premises, the relocation was an excellent decision.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

A bit of both really.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

Time spent with new volunteers depends on how quickly the new volunteers grasp all the materials to be learnt. Volunteers must have patience and respect when teaching new people how the Centre operates. There is a lot to learn. New volunteers should be given up to date lists of duties and verbal information passed on to them. Current volunteers must also be kept up to date. Sometimes volunteers say "I didn't know that" myself included.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

Only that I applaud the dedication of our volunteer without whom there would be no Centre. Facilities are excellent. The increase of courses and of members is to be commended and the facilities inspire us with confidence to go about our daily tasks.

*Thank You*

## ***Interview with VRB2 post***

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

As it has got busier so have I, but I have also taken a lot of holidays too.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

It has got better and the meetings are more frequent now, not that I can get to all of them but I get to most and I am on the committee as well so one way or another I get to know what is going on.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

We definitely need more volunteers and members. We could open longer and schedule more courses with more variety. We need to tap into a wider section of the local Community to promote ourselves better.

The organisation hasn't changed much now we are settled in, during our moving it was ramped up a bit and we were more organized under your leadership.

We need to grow to stay sustainable.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Well some aspects are a lot easier but it does get noisy at times. As I am in charge of the banking it is a little easier now we use credit cards especially on enrolment day. People come early for classes so I think this shows they like the place.

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

We need to use the rooms more and longer and the kitchen needs to be used more.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

It has been a good move for us and everyone is much happier. We had a few glitches at first but they got sorted out and now we are in and settled it is as friendly as the old place

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Well it really is a program and we need to supplement it with other things. I know you've set up a blog and facebook, our website is looking better but we need to do more to let people know who we are and where we are. The signage did not do us much good and confused people because it wasn't right.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

It's easy to ask if you need help, you are always around or used to be, but the cheat sheets help and we can always get hold of you if we need to.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

I think it is fantastic and enjoy coming here rather than the old place. Some of the new systems we tried didn't work but we managed to get round them. Perhaps some new activities and courses – a bit more fun things to do and possibly something for the males. The talks are always good and we need to keep doing these.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB3 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

Not a lot, there is some new things happening that we have to learn since we moved like where everything is and how the technology works. Beginning of Term is always very busy but once the first few weeks are over it settles down.

I have been away a lot this year so haven't really had much to do

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

We have a message book and we leave messages for each other in it. I only volunteer once a fortnight on Friday mornings so I read the messages to see if there is anything I need to do. There is a volunteers meeting once a month and I try to attend if I can.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

Well not a lot has changed really, we have a few new volunteers but we are getting busier with new classes and courses and of course we have more room now.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Parking is very good and the place is much brighter

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

Nothing really. It is a bit busier than it used to be and there are a lot more people. I don't seem to know as many people as I did before.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

The building is much nicer and we seem to have been here a long time now, it is getting to feel like home. Not a lot has changed.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Hasn't changed much. It tells you everything you need to know.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I feel ok. We can ask (name) if we need to know everything. You aren't here as much as you used to be but there is always someone to help if we get stuck. I like that at the beginning of term there are two of us on at the same time so we can get on top of things and sort people out, but sometimes we need help and we can't reach anyone.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

It's lovely and a pleasure to work here

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB4 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

It has got busier especially in the first two weeks of term. Not much time to chat with the members these days. It usually settles down after week 3 and we get some time to socialise.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

I can't get to all the meetings so I rely on the message book a lot and people telling me things.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

I know it has been documented in the reception manual but I can't say I know too much about it. Someone said we had been going for a while and gave a bit of a talk on it at the last AGM

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

It is very modern and bright and sometimes things don't work! The lights keep going out because they are on sensors and it is a nuisance that we can't turn them on and off.

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

The new technology is confusing and I know we are attempting to streamline things. Not sure if this is a good idea some times as it can be a bit much for people like me. We need to introduce more activities and talks and perhaps a few more tours and trips.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

It seemed to go very well and by the time we started Term 1 everything was in place – thanks to you, you did a good job keeping us all together and it was lovely to walk into such a nice centre. I think we will be very successful here and it has given us a new lease on life.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

It is just a programme, we need to advertise more and (name) does a good job getting our name in the paper. I still think we need to give more stuff out like posters and leaflets and put them in doctors surgeries and centres to promote us more. It's a great centre but we don't seem to be doing enough to grow.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

We need a strong person to run the centre someone who is a leader and not just a delegator. We all look to people who inspire us to do better and show us what to do not just tell us what to do. If we have to pay them so be it, but they need to be good and take us to the next level.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

We need to introduce younger people, open later and at the weekend and cater for the working mums and dads. I still don't think we need a creche but we do need to think of the next generation who will take up the volunteer roles when we can't do it any longer.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB8 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

My role as a volunteer has not changed since the relocation. We have had a surprising increase of volunteers attending the Centre which has made it much easier to fill in when others go on holidays, travel or are ill etc, especially for reception duty.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

Since moving to the new premises monthly meetings have been scheduled and have proven to be of exceptional assistance to the volunteers – it is a forum where each vollee has a voice and feel that the part they play at/for the Centre is significant

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

The Centre has 'trebled' in growth with regards to courses made available to members thanks to the creation of additional classrooms and other modern facilities. The very fact that the Centre's Demonstration Kitchen was officially opened by an internationally renowned Chef has created its' own little piece of history already!

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Everything! The modern facilities, large classrooms, an actual art room, new computers, eftpos – but most importantly, we can have more than two items at a time on in the wet area or demonstration kitchen and we do not experience a power blackout!

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

If I had to think of anything I guess it would be the difference in temperature in classrooms No 1 and No 3, the lights in the reception area which are on and off all the time – a problem which the original builders continue to ignore 'fixing' after many approaches to do so. Having the alfresco area brought up to par would be great – i.e. putting the plans for sails, plants for the garden plot etc to bed. I have planted four frangipani trees at my home to be made available to be put into pots for the alfresco area whenever the time is right but I am at a loss to know exactly 'who' is now organizing the garden area at time of writing this. Communication in regards to this project has become somewhat confusing.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

Initially I was hesitant regarding re-locating – only because I realized that what we had at No 12 Labouchere Road (environment/atmosphere) was a little special and would probably change. That 'it' was a close-knit environment shared with both fellow volunteers and die-hard

members. I certainly feel that 'close-knit' environment I refer to hasn't diminished due to the increase of number of both volunteers and members.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Definitely as a tool for communication – it is an added bonus as a programme.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

So far it has been o.k. but there is always room for improvement in all of the above and am always eager to learn something new or if I can better myself in any way in my roll as a Volunteer for the Centre.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

We don't get as many unannounced visitors from upstairs anymore either – it used to be quite disconcerting having these strange people show up at odd times, so it is good that they have decreased.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB13 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

Not at all. Being a new volunteer nothing has changed

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

What goes on when I am not there – who knows? The pink message book is not really a way to communicate. There must be better ways.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

My knowledge has grown since I started. I don't think that people from the old place mix all that well with new people at the centre. I'm not sure of the history of the Centre or how it runs.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

The Centre is nice and up to date, there is the opportunity to expand with the space we have and the hours we operate and we have the space to hold functions which is important.

*What do you not like about the new Centre and how can they be improved?*

Some people could be friendlier, we need to attract people who can look ahead, problem solvers, pro-active about what the needs of the Centre are and who you can go to, to talk things out with.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

Can't really comment, not for me to say, some say its not the same as the old place in more ways than one, and we don't really have an address so if we can't tell people our address we don't look like we exist.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

I think it is very good to spread information around – especially to places like the Council Library and Senior Citz. It's very versatile and the older people can understand it without having to be bothered with computers.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I think it is important to make new volunteers feel at ease, we should have some social time to meet. Some people are not gifted to help train new people.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

Where are all the friends of the all the people who use the Centre? People who have lived in the area for years and KNOW people in the area? There are also some clicky groups, some people have commented they would not join because of them.

Some volunteers are elderly and can't think of things to do like the everyday things that need to be done – or what to do if things do not go well.

We are now having more subjects and activities to do for the time booked – things to move, things to set up for talks and set up the classrooms, we need to be more organized.

I have worked before and after these types of activities and you need to check things out and do your job.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB14 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

Not really changed much as I am still doing Monday mornings but of course the ambience is very different and a lot more people coming through the new Centre.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

We have our volunteers meetings every month and apart from that I am kept informed via the Internet of things that are happening at the Centre. Now we have a regular meeting and going into the Centre very week, the communication is often and enough for me

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

I know how much the Centre has grown since December 1986, introduced by mothers at Manning School. Also we were given a grant from the City (\$1500) and the temporary remises and in 1990 to our beautiful old home in Labouchere Road.

Now due to a further grant and donations we have our beautiful new premises at South Terrace since January 2011. We want to create a wonderful environment in the area for adult learning and also interaction between members. The running of the Centre is due to an executive committee and Centre Manager and also the volunteers comprising of office workers, reception areas and the presenters.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

The new Centre of course is absolutely beautiful and of course many more courses can be given e.g. big difference in the art room as opposed to the old tin shed. The kitchen is fantastic so we can now offer cooking courses. The entire Centre is much more functional but I do miss the camaraderie between the older volunteers and presenters in the old house.

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

The only thing I could suggest is a few more computers or laptops and more courses as all our computer courses are always booked out very early.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

I think I have covered this before..always moving from old to new...you miss more the closer friendships but certainly not our beautiful new air conditioning and nothing fuses it!

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Both. I think this is very well done and very informative

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

My training was thorough as is the training today and we have our wonderful manual..so when in doubt you always have back-up in the manual, but there is always someone in the Centre to assist,

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

I think I have covered everything except I forgot to mention the wonderful parking for our members – a fantastic improvement here.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB16 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

Yes. I am more involved.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

Very well. Mainly by email and also with the message book right where we work. Also the monthly meetings and minutes sent by email. By phone if anything unexpected happens. Also (Name) can be found in her office quite often if needed or we can ring her at home.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

Definitely more volunteers and members. More courses and more variety. The mission/ vision/ values are for the Centre to be open longer hours, more days and bring a variety of courses that provide interest, pleasure and knowledge first to a wide section of the local Community and then for other interested people in the wider Community.

Organization knowledge is practical with an overall Executive committee that passes on to a wider audience at the Volunteers meetings. As needed these decisions are given to the members.

History wise. I think the original members would be thrilled to see the result of their endeavors.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Number one has to be the parking followed by the spacious rooms. The ability to use Credit and Debit cards. The more Courses and the variety. More room to relax and have a cup of coffee or somewhere to wait if you are early.

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

The notice board in the corridor leading to Rooms 2 & 3 rarely gets anyone looking at it and is a waste of space.

The kitchen needs more use. It needs to be advertised more. More effort into renting it out.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

It was the right move. More space, better parking, more room to socialize. Now we've moved everyone is friendlier and people are looking ahead

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

I think we should perhaps push our Web site more. Darker print etc in our ad. We get quite a few coming in with the ad to find out what is on. A lot of those would be computer savvy.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I have always found that there is always someone to ask for something you don't know or have forgotten from one term to another. New volunteers need at least a term with an experienced volunteer.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

It's a credit to all the work that went in to setting it up and will be a godsend to a lot of older people who are being told to find interest and exercise their minds. Also to a section of the community who shift here with no family or friends who can meet people who they can interact with and perhaps make friends.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB17 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

Relocation of the Centre means more classes are available hence my workload has increased.

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

Current communication to volunteers is through monthly meetings, regular emails with Agenda/Minutes of meetings and also through the message book on the reception desk. I find this is fine

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

Well, I know that the Centre started in 1986 with a small group of volunteers. Over the years it has grown immensely, still run with volunteers. The aim of the Centre is to provide social and educational interaction for adult members of the community. It is a purely non-for-profit organization with revenue being raised from membership and course fees and fund raising activities.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

We now have an up to date, large, clean, bright premises with modern facilities and a large car park with designated parking bays next to the building. It is easier to get to, with room to meet your friends and have a coffee or catch-up and we have been able to increase the sizes of our groups.

*Veronica:*

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

The noise in the reception area, especially when taking phone calls at the reception desk and also the noise in the small tea/coffee making facility area when classes take coffee breaks at the same time.

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

Relocating was necessary to be able to accommodate more vehicle parking, and a larger premises to be able to hold educational and informative courses and workshops. It was an excellent move.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

The Newsletter is informative as a tool for communication.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

Training is adequate. I find training on new equipment is always available if and when required.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

I am proud to be able to show new people through our new modern Centre with its up to date equipment and to explain to them about our large variety of courses, workshops and outings.

*Thank You*

## **Interview with VRB18 post**

*Since the Centre has relocated how has your role as a volunteer changed if at all?*

I wasn't a volunteer before the relocation

*How well does the Centre communicate with you as a volunteer. How is it done, how often and is it enough? Current communication strategies; How are you communicated with? How often? Is it enough?*

Generally I find the information provided at the monthly meetings is sufficient.

*What is your current knowledge of the Centre and has it grown since the relocation? e.g. History-wise, people who work here, how it runs, what its mission/vision/values are? Organizational knowledge: What do you know about the Centre? History-wise, Personnel, How it runs, What its mission/vision/values are?*

I have read the historical/background information in the volunteers information file. The organizational structure has become clearer over time – perhaps this should be explained when a new volunteer starts, but experience always makes things clearer.

*What do you like about the Centre now it has relocated?*

Excellent facilities, easier parking, much more room.

*What do you not like about the new centre and how can they be improved?*

I can't think of anything major. I do find the air conditioning very cold at times (but many buildings have this problem). It would be good if we could organize the outdoor area so that we can make better use of it (i.e. more shade in summer, a few plants).

*How did you feel about re-locating? What was good/bad about it?*

I was happy about it, but I hadn't been attending the centre for long, so I didn't have the same sentimental attachment to it that others did.

*What do you think of the current newsletter? As a tool for communication or purely as a programme?*

Basically I think it's fine. I would prefer the courses under each major heading to be arranged alphabetically rather than by day of the week, but that is only my personal opinion. I think the amount of information given about each course is about right. The general information provided is good.

*As a volunteer, is your training adequate/improved e.g. manual, time with experienced person, type of communications, processes, avenues for discussion/interaction?*

I think training has improved since I first started at the beginning of last year. We have better processes and documentation in place.

*And is there anything else you'd like to add about the new centre?*

It's great that we have got the signs up and that we are back to being the *Centre*. It's such a pity that we don't have a proper address though and I think people assume we are part of the City because of that. We don't get as many unannounced visitors from upstairs anymore either – it used to be quite disconcerting having these strange people show up at odd times.

*Thank You*

## Interview TRA1 pre

*V: Okay, for the tape it's Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and I'm speaking to TRA1.*

*So what I'm trying to do is trying to do is find out four things about the centre, what your feelings are about the centre, what you feel about the culture, what you feel about the professionalisation or the professionalism of the centre as it stands now and motivation and that means you and anybody else that you come into contact with. And I have your permission to tape this?*

TRA1: Sure.

*V: Thank you. Okay, so what do you consider are the benefits for the members of the Centre?*

TRA1: To expand the knowledge, to meet new people, to expand their own networks, to assist them in remaining as young as possible I guess if they're of a certain age. Yeah, it's a good place for people to be able to learn new skills and to expand themselves.

*Okay, what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?*

TRA1: Well, the same I guess to some extent and also to give something of my knowledge to the areas that I have interest in and to give the opportunity for people to, if they wish to, if they have thought of giving some sort of motivation, but yeah it's a way of giving something back to the community as well

*V: Okay, thank you. And how do you feel about the centre relocating?*

I think it's a great move. I think it's obviously long overdue but it'd be interesting to see when it happens and how it happens and the attitude of people who are working there now and I'm talking not only about the regular volunteers but the people that work on a regular basis to see how they handle the move and how the more room will give them, obviously will give them more scope, but how they use that scope.

*V: Okay, thank you. Alright I want to talk about the culture now. What do you consider is the culture of the Centre? Do you think it has a culture?*

TRA1: I think it does. I mean it sort of has a homely sort of culture – whether that's just the place because it's old formed out of someone's home at some point. But a friendly culture, I think cooperative culture.

*V: Okay, and how does this fit in with what you teach?*

TRA1: Well, vital, absolutely vital. Without those things, without that sort of cooperation and assistance and its genuine assistance and I never felt anything else but comfortable in the place. I have worked at a few places where comfortable was not the first word I thought of, so yeah, you need to feel as though you belong.

*V: Okay, the imminent relocation to new premises will create a lot of change – how do you see this is going to impact on the centre and its members' culture?*

TRA1: I think that they'll have to be a readjustment from a small world to a larger world and again I think it depends on how people – volunteers and others – adjust to it. Some will and some won't, some will say, "oh it's better in the old place", inevitably that will happen. I think the first term, the first full term will be the catalyst, from there on once you get over that first term I think people will settle in, but some won't be happy, people won't be happy, others will be.

*V: Well we're hoping that not a lot will change in the first term. The big thing is relocation then the other things will come in term two and term three and then by term four, next year, hopefully we'll be running at max and if not as near as damn it so you know we will massage them gently in term one.*

TRA1: Yes. But the thing is I think, is say by term two, it's to do with the logistics of the place. Once people find where things are and where things fit you know – I'm talking about when people come in all the time end up feeling more comfortable but until that happens...

*V: Okay, what do you think might be lost in that relocation, in that move?*

TRA1: I don't think there should be anything negative to be honest. I can't see there should be anything negative. The only thing is that people will have to - because there will be changes in certain areas, for instance we have a lending library there now we don't know if there is a library anyway so that will have to change I think and I've already told people that. Perhaps we could charge a gold coin for borrowing?

*Oh, great idea. Put some money in the coffers.*

TRA1: But I think that's important because it shows that the centre is inclined to raise it's own funds for something – it won't be a lot, but it gives people the incentive that when they are going for grants and things they say, "well are you collecting it yourself?" "No." "Well that doesn't look good."

*V: I couldn't agree more with you. And what do you think is going to be the biggest gains?*

TRA1: Well I think it brings another demographic in as well and you are expanding from this centre. Well I would bet that if you looked – if you went around this area here and said, "do you know about the Centre?" and so I think that, that would bring a new, people that go to the library now – its our third library – will find the place. You might lose people in the move because of that reason you might find it more difficult to get there but they would probably drop off anyway but you would get a whole new lot of people and I think that's the challenge – that would be a challenge for the centre.

*V: Well we are working very hard at the moment building relationships with the girls at the library – senior citizens, aged care, you name it, historical society – and that's what I'm doing is seeing everybody and telling them we're moving, telling them we want to work collaboratively with them so they can send people to us and hopefully like when we get classes that aren't full we can ring these people and say, "look we've got three spare seats" they can either pay a gold coin donation or they can pay the full price; or if they don't want to pay anything just come and sit on seats because there's nothing worse, as you know, than teaching an empty class, you know one-on-one. It works in some instances but not in everything.*

TRA1: No, it doesn't.

*V: But that is, what I feel, is the most important part of the Centre is building other community relationships so we all work together. We're not in competition with anybody – we're there to help and if we can help people like the girls at the (name) Foundation or the Senior Citizens or the (named) Centre – you know we've got to spread our nets wide because we've got a lot of space to fill and I don't want it to be daunting for either tutors, teachers, or people who come to learn if their rattling around in big rooms, and when I say big rooms they are not that big but they are bigger than what we've got. Okay, going onto professionalism now – is the centre professional enough for what you do?*

TRA1: You mean for people who work there, or is it...?

*V: The whole thing, not just people but what we do, how we set up, what we offer you as a tutor to come in like photocopying, or networking systems or computer whatever.*

TRA1: That's a you know – I can't afford that quite frankly, but I have found there has always been cooperation but I'm not too demanding I keep it as minimal as I can whilst giving my students as much information as I can physically – but yeah I just find that it is an easy place to work in and people are professional in that sort of attitude. They understand what I want and they are happy to go along with it.

Which is different from some places where I've been you know you feel as though you are binging on their space – that you are a bit of an impediment even though you are providing the service.

*V: Absolutely. I do, I'm a JP and I go around over to Manning library and depending on who's there as soon as I walk in I'll either get a cup of tea and a biscuit or I don't get even a glass of water – I don't get offered anything. And you sit there for two hours and you think "oh help" so it depends on who's there.*

TRA1: On a general sense I always found it really well organised.

*V: That's good. Is there anything that you think the centre can do to improve its professionalism towards you as a tutor?*

TRA1: Towards me?

*V: Yep. I mean can we be as any help?*

TRA1: I'm not sure. I think the thing that can probably tell us is the technology that is available there, in the new centre, the technological things there now but with the space its not always convenient but that will tell how people worked out what to do with the stock that's there or the new equipment, that will be a test, but again that's part of the learning process. You know we all learn from experiences so that will be a test, I think.

*V: Okay, well the new technology hopefully all you need to do is bring your thumbdrive in and stick it in the hole in the wall..*

TRA1: Yes, that is the theory

*V: ...but I mean, if not it will be a lot simpler for set ups and things like that and photocopying will be able to offer colour photocopying as well and there will be space on the walls to put the maps up and put other teaching tools if you like. There'll also be space so you don't have to keep carrying your stuff backwards and forwards and you will have a lockable cupboard where you can keep your stuff and hopefully it will be a lot more professional because we'll be able to offer a lot more services and cooperation I think at the moment as you know with debt, horribly limited for space.*

TRA1: Yes. Well today was a perfect example. I think that because of the people, as I mentioned earlier about the demographics. People who are seniors, well not seniors necessarily but most people are I guess – the next generation will demand and expect far more.

*V: Absolutely.*

TRA1: So I think the centre management in time will have to be aware of that and keep \* by surveys, you know surveys once a year or something like that. We could incorporate that with the newsletter or something but yeah you need to because people will be expecting, because if you don't provide it they'll say thanks very much and walk away and find somewhere else to go.

*V: Well they'll look for it somewhere else, won't they?*

TRA1: Yes.

*V: Okay, and how do you think...do you think the relocation will change that professionalization?*

TRA1: No, I think that it'll have the opposite effect to be honest because it may be, it will be confusing initially I supposed – but that's to be expected. But I think that once people get the feel of the place I think that you feel that you can do more and therefore...

*V: You do less...*

TRA1: Well no...well whether they'll do less? No, the thing is they'll will probably feel more enjoyable coming to the place...coming to the new place.

V: *They'll enjoy coming to the place?*

TRA1: Yes. Not that I'm suggesting that they don't now.

V: *No, no, I understand what you mean, and I guess with the confusion until they – as you said before – until they find where everything is there'll be that sort of with the new technology, "do I touch this, will I break it or risk it."*

TRA1: Yes, that's right. That's always on the cards but that's part of the training I think. That they don't feel intimidated by what's there.

V: *Well hopefully they wont. Okay, now, can I ask you what your understanding of the term 'brand' or 'branding' is?*

TRA1: Branding? Of the centre, well I think it's the name of the place, you mean can it be changed?

V: *No I mean, if somebody says to you, 'this is the brand' what do you understand of the terminology brand or branding?*

TRA1: That is what the place does, I mean, what it provides, probably what the Centre is, that's what it is. It's a place where people can learn. And I got told (name of other tutor) who said that with the number of language courses you should call it the (name) Language Centre. Which, in fact, you wouldn't believe it, was in the newspaper in the (name of the local community newspaper), did you see that?

V: *They did a booboo didn't they? Yes. I know I saw that.*

TRA1: That was afterwards, but yeah. I think that you've got to keep that core, rather than providing services outside that. That's a temptation that I think should be avoided.

V: *Yes. I mean there is room to expand but you don't just sweep out the old and bring in the new because you attract a different demographics and you want to keep the core members because that's what the centre thrives on.*

TRA1: Yes, it's a centre for people to learn things.

V: *Absolutely.*

TRA1: It's not going to be drop in for the lost and lonely.

V: *No. Exactly. Oh well we will try to make it comfy.*

TRA1: Yeah, sure. You know what I mean. It's not that...

V: *It's not that kind of a community centre.*

TRA1: No, no.

V: *So do you think that the Centre has a brand?*

TRA1: I think it does.

V: *What is it?*

TRA1: Well one which would be the work because it's a learning centre, but also that it provides and pays for people to meet and expand their own networks. So yeah I think it clearly meets the criteria of its own name and hasn't sort of come to be something that's it's not. And I think that's important.

V: *So if I said to you the Centre's brand is the terminology of the Centre would you agree with that?*

TRA1: Yes, absolutely.

V: *You wouldn't say it's the windmill?*

TRA1: No

V: *Thank you for that. And do you think that it needs a catchy logo? For years we've been playing with where great things happen, that kind of thing.*

TRA1: It cost more, you could, but these things you know have a life span it's a bit like you know WA became known as the wildflower state then it became a state of excitement – whoopee – you know.

V: *Then it became the state of (name of local celebrity)*

TRA1: Yes, or something, you know what I mean, yeah. I think you have to be – those sort of things you're never going to please everyone so you are going to have to be careful, not careful – aware – that these things have a time limit.

V: *Okay, now we're going to volunteers and motivations. Why do you volunteer?*

TRA1: Why do I volunteer? Community spirit, a good sense of community spirit I guess. I enjoy it – I enjoy the interaction with people. At my own time at my own calling .

V: *That's important too!*

TRA1: But it keeps me active and keeps me young – youngish.

V: *We're all young.*

TRA1: Young at heart. But it expands my network as well, my network of people. It's the sort of community that I enjoy, that sort of atmosphere.

V: *Okay, can I ask you how long you've been a volunteer?*

TRA1: I started volunteering probably late 80's - 84, 85 maybe.

V: *Do you volunteer anywhere else?*

TRA1: Yes, I do. At the (name of other centre)

V: *Oh right, I must go and see them, must go and talk to them – introduce myself to them.*

TRA1: and (name of other centre)

V: *Anywhere else?*

TRA1: No, that's all.

V: *Okay. I missed one out there sorry. What do you understand about the term volunteer?*

TRA1: Providing a service free of charge yeah, yeah free of charge.

*V: How many hours a week would you say you do volunteer work?*

TRA1: At the centre?

*V: Everywhere. Oh right, start at the centre. How many hours would you spend at the Centre?*

TRA1: Ummm about 4 hours.

*V: .....and in total?*

TRA1: I don't know, 2 hours a day - about 6 altogether.

*V: Altogether, okay. Big question. Big \$30 000 question. What's in it for you?*

TRA1: Simple enjoyment I think and trying to give back to the community what I've learnt and what I've gained and yeah giving back to the community I guess.

*V: And what motivates you and demotivates you?*

TRA1: The people that, in my case, the people that I teach motivate me and I'm fortunate that I've got, have had, over the past two years that I've been here at the Centre, a good group of people. It's the people that come along and the people that run the place again, that comes back to feeling comfortable as though you want to be there as against not.

*V: Okay, and what demotivates you? As a volunteer.*

TRA1: As a volunteer, feelings as though you're not welcome or uncomfortable and pinging on their time or wasting their time or being used for you know, being used up – had that happen.

*V: Yes, it happens in every volunteer. Put your hand up, put your hand up, put your hand up until you burn out. How do you think you were treated by the volunteers and members?*

TRA1: Excellently, really. I've never felt anything else than feeling welcome. Feeling comfortable and always...yeah.

*V: Okay, what does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there? It can't be the building...Or it could be! (laughs)*

TRA1: No, definitely not (laughs)

*V: Gives you an understanding of what traditional means as opposed to contemporary?*

TRA1: Yeah, well it's the people that work there. It's the volunteers and in my case, the people that I teach. It's a combination of both really.

*V: Nearly finished. Will you continue to volunteer?*

TRA1: Yes.

*V: Even when we move?*

TRA1: Yes.

*V: You will, yep? You don't see that you will pull the pin at any time in the future?*

TRA1: Well I might, I might find that I need to back off a bit and do less than what I'm doing and that's nothing to do with the centre. It has something to do with me. It's all what I want to do

V: *You have other interests.*

TRA1: Well not only that, I've been doing this for two years and I haven't even thought about that I want to do next term subjects because I've done nearly 100 different topics.

V: *I know, I read yours with great interest – what's he going to come up with next?*

TRA1: Precisely you see, it's just like a \* you know you get writers...what do you call it?

V: *Block.*

TRA1: Writers block. Yes so, but my hope is that I'll continue.

V: *So what can we do then to motivate you as a volunteer and keep you? This is the \$30 000 question!*

TRA1: Well I think it's down to me. The centre's done everything that I would've expected it to do and I don't mean that in a demanding sort of sense but I think that it's a question of me coming up with the goods. If I don't feel as though I'm coming up with the goods then I'd be wasting people times and I would feel disappointed with that because of the good times and fun times I've had here so far over the past few years. And if I didn't feel as though I was giving my best then I would have to think about what I was doing

V: *So you've got from 10<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> February.*

TRA1: I know, I know. The clock is ticking. And I've got a blank page.

V: *You've got a blank page? It's always best to have a blank page. Is there anything else you would like to offer freely of how you see the centre or where it's going, where it's been what its opportunities are. I have no more questions so anything you say from here on in is yours.*

TRA1: You mean what I'm doing? You mean providing anything else? Well the only experiences I have are from another organisation but I would give that advice freely without any commitment because if I commit to something then I give my life, I don't sort of slack off so I sort of only commit to where I feel as though I can provide something substantial but also there would be a benefit to the centre rather than just saying what I'm doing and just thinking well I can't really do it. I do think that the centre needs to have a good look at where it needs to be going in the transition and not expect everything to fall into place simply because of the move. I think that's a trap people willingly fall into.

V: *Thank you (name) thanks very much.*

## Interview TRA2 pre

*V: For the tape it's the 25<sup>th</sup> of November. I'm Veronica Lawrance and I'm speaking to TRA2. So as I was saying, because it's a qualitative survey it's really based on people's perceptions and feelings and literally all about the Centre. So, first of all what I'm going to do is ask questions in four different categories, one about the centre, one about the culture of the centre, one about the professionalism of the centre and one about motivation. Because you are a tutor it will help me put into perspective the whole of the centre from the members to the volunteers to the people that come to one-off activities to the people who are doing everything else, or attending more frequently.*

TRA2: Ok, fine.

*V: So what do you consider are the benefits for the members of the centre?*

TRA2: Probably ease of location, very friendly group, a pretty wide range of offerings and I think the quality by large is quite high.

*V: Good, thank you. And what do you consider are the benefits for you as the tutor?*

TRA2: I'm not sure, I've only sort of become a tutor very recently as far as where Italian is concerned. I've given a couple of one-offs on various art, one was about the last supper which was dropped on me at a moment's notice.

*V: ...Oh you did the da Vinci? Oh fantastic. I tried to get to that but I couldn't because I was working.*

TRA2: .....and years ago when we bought an Italian artist out from Italy we got the Centre's members to come in and meet him at TAFE.

*V: Wonderful. ok and what are your personal feelings about the centre relocating?*

TRA2: I haven't really thought about it much. Being somewhat of anti-bureaucratic I'm always worried when we get a little closer to the centre of the governing body that perhaps that we might have a bit more interference, but I'm sure that the new Chairperson will be strong enough to resist that.

*V: Absolutely. So they are the main things?*

TRA2: Yeah, I think on the other hand...

*V: ...you want to retain autonomy?*

TRA2: Yeah autonomy is important I think for this place. On the other hand with the biggest centre I think we need more people to justify it and one of the things, on the contrary to what I just said, might be interesting to do some sort of affiliation with the university of the third age.

*V: Very interesting concept, yes. Ok I'm going to talk about the culture now. What do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

TRA2: I think its mutual aid is very important in what we do. I think this spills over the talk I gave here on the Guggenheim and that was also then responded by east Fremantle's learning centre so I think this idea of helping not only within our own learning centre but I think we could also probably do more cooperation with other learning centres to swap ideas.

*V: I like to hear that because I've been going around talking to all the other learning centres and saying, "how can we work together so that we can either cross reference courses or cross reference tutors", because a lot of tutors are semi retired and so they are looking to do more of that work than sort of, lets say full time paid work.*

TRA2: Plus I think also that sometimes we don't get enough people to justify doing a course but for two or three centres are willing to do it together then you can have a lot of fun

*V: Excellent. Okay, how does the culture of the Centre fit in with what you teach?*

TRA2: I teach all sorts of things so I think because the centre is very flexible so whatever you are doing, can work around it. The one which didn't happen what I said I would do was a series of lectures about the introduction into Japan – that was a little bit heavy for the centre, where as several years ago when I was lecturing and tutoring at Murdoch one of the other learning centres, I forget which one it was, one of the guys who'd actually done the course there then asked me to help him deliver a similar course to his learning centre and they probably had about 30 or 40 people turn up and they all bought the – it wasn't a text book – but the reading...it was sort of an accumulation of bits and pieces from different publications that had been put into a reader for the group. This guy bought 20 or 30 of these and they sold them to the people and I mean I think this is the beauty of the flexibility and I think again it would be another advantage of combination.

*V: Collaboratively working together. The imminent relocation to the new premises will create a lot of change – how do you see this is going to impact on the centre and the members' culture?*

TRA2: They will get used to it. There will be a certain nostalgia for the old building and the nice feeling you get when you come here, its very relaxing and moving into a more modern place might be a little off putting for some, but that wont last for long. I think the other big thing is the library next door could be a recruiting centre just made for us and that should really benefit the membership of this place as I think the more we've got, the merrier and the better it will be.

*V: The library has been very helpful because (name) who is the director of finance and planning in the city, has actually given the library a certain budget so that we can work with them and if we're doing something, say you were talking on a specific topic, if we let them know in advance then they will get books on that topic so that we are really working collaboratively together to help each other.*

TRA2: That very...that's even sensible, isn't it?

*V: Absolutely and we're hoping that we will be able to say to our members, look there's a library next door why don't you go and see if you can go find something there, as well as them saying, look there's a learning centre next door they might do a course on this, this or this.*

TRA2: Got access to videos and things like that is just going to be so much better.

*V: Yes, that's right. And we can borrow their films to show in our place and to groups. So hopefully it's going to be a great partnership. Do you think that anything may be lost?*

TRA2: No, there will be a temporary feeling of disassociation with an old built place where we got used to being here it but its sort of a older one, its not for yourself but we merge in here.

*V: I'm like a Chameleon, I just blend in wherever. What in your opinion is there to be gained?*

TRA2: I think the facilities are going to be fundamentally more comfortable, we'll have more room, and I think again the opportunity to increase membership which will just give us the opportunity to do more things. As long as it doesn't overload the people who are willing to put the effort in. I think that parking will be easier and the location is just as easy to get to as this place is...

*V: Well it's on the bus route.*

TRA2: I'll have to take the bus or the car now instead of walking.

V: ...They've got bike racks.

TRA2: There we go.

V: I'm going to start talking about the professionalism and the professionalisation of the centre. Do you think that the centre is professional enough for what you do? If so, why? If not, what can it do to improve?

TRA2: Well as far as Italian is concerned both (names of two tutors) are ex-teachers at a fairly high level. (name of another tutor) who I'm not sure was actually a teacher but she is a native Italian so we are getting the benefit of native speakers which is quite fantastic. It's a long time since I did the introductory course here but yeah I think that from that point of view it's certainly a hell of a lot better than the Italian club in Fitzgerald street.

V: Oh, that's good to hear....

TRA2: Well 2 or 3 of us have left there to come here.

V: Oh, right. So I don't want to dwell on what they don't do right but I'm more concerned about what we do right or wrong.

TRA2: Well what it was, was they started off as virtually a conversation group and 20 or 30 people probably came along and chatted away usually the leader was a native speaker but then they started to have classes...beginners classes. They had year 1, year 2, year 3. The years 1 and 2 which I never went to, but they didn't get very far so many people came in thinking they were in level three and weren't anywhere near the conversation group so it all just got mixed. Here I think that the levels in the conversation group are quite varied but I think they are all very tolerant of each other and I think again having (name of a tutor) there to push us a little harder if we can be pushed but also to help those coming along, so I think that we do that pretty well. I've done computing with (name) and I did one sometime ago and that's always difficult. No matter what course you try to take you go to its always 90% what you know and the other 10% is what you are there for or try to get and there's always a bit missing but I think that she is very good, I can't remember what other ones I've been to, but of course they are excellent.

V: Oh absolutely. So as a tutor, do we help you enough to help you prepare, do we have facilities that will assist you in preparing your material?

TRA2: The material I have no problem with because the stuff I've done I've usually done somewhere else anyhow and now I've got my own screen so I can I rely on the projector. I think I've learnt that, not only here but in most places the technology is always something slightly different from what you are used to and doesn't quite work.

V: So the equipment leaves a bit to be desired. Hopefully that will be rectified because what I'm planning to do in the new centre is to have ceiling mounted projectors and either you just connect your laptop to a point or you can just put your thumb drive in and it will...

TRA2: ...I think we have got that fixed now here...

V: ...We do have a laptop. So were you here yesterday when it all blew up?

TRA2: No, no

V: Apparently it took them half an hour to get the equipment working yesterday.

TRA2: I know the feeling. I don't think that's limited to here. I mean if you go to any other university lecture none of the lecturers know how to use the projectors

*V: I know - when I did a presentation last year at the Curtin university of technology and the damn thing wouldn't work and I'm going, "will somebody help me please" anyway they got a technician down from the IT department and he fiddled about with it, so yes it happens everywhere doesn't it.*

TRA2: Yeah I was lucky when I did a presentation at (another Centre) and everything went pear shaped and very, very fortunately their computer guy happened to be in the next room so 10 minutes later everything was working.

*V: Oh that's good. So I guess the next question is how will the relocation change either a) or b) and I think that we have already answered that by saying that more modern technology will be helpful*

TRA2: Helpful...or confusing

*V: No trauma. I don't think we bought the easiest of data projectors – they might have been on special or something because I've got a little one like this that looks like a box of tea bags. You just plug it in, turn it on first then you plug it up to your computer and while it's going whizz whiz whizzy you turn your computer on and bang it's on.*

TRA2: Bang it goes. yes, I've seen those. They're good.

*V: it's very good. Okay, what is your understanding of the word or term 'Brand' as in 'Branding'.*

TRA2: Oh dear.

*V: Now this is generic.*

TRA2: Yeah, I know. Something a little to identify a particular product, place, person, even an idea.

*V: .....and do you think the Centre has a brand?*

TRA2: No

*V: ....and the next question was if so, what is it, but you've answered two questions in one. Do you think it needs one?*

TRA2: The idea of something in which you can attract people from around Perth to want to come here, somebody's got to give out, somehow we've got to get the image of a nice friendly place where you can keep the mind from going bonkers. I'll get off that. I went yesterday to the presentation on Alzheimer's and the work that's been done in various places...

*V: it's amazing isn't it?*

TRA2: Yes and lets face it its sort of again a funny thing that even that there's something that the Centre could probably help.

*V: Well I think (name of person) started it off by doing the 'unexpected talents of the brain'. I think he started to introduce that, but unfortunately his wife died last week so we had to cancel the two sessions for this week, but hopefully next term we'll get him back. Apparently the one he did last term was well attended.*

TRA2: I'm a guide at the art gallery as well and we do Alzheimer's tours and apparently they are much more advanced, the people that were here were from MOMA and what they're finding is that they don't just do one tour they get them to come in for 4 or 5 weeks in a row and then the people come to expect

the amount of participation they get and they come in with a carer and the carer participates, not just looking after the person but suddenly there is an exchange of ideas and people on the way like there is too much stress put on the memory failure and not the fact that they are still a human being who can cooperate and respond and then they start to close in.

*V: That would make a really good talk for the Rotary clubs. My husband is in (name of Rotary Club) and they had the guy that's doing all the research on Alzheimer's and he was about blew me away. But I think these kinds of things that are happening, the art gallery tours, to specifically look at those participation methods of people who are at risk would be a fantastic thing to get out into the community.*

TRA2: Oh yeah, what MOMA did was they spent a long time and they work with all the Alzheimer's associations and the researchers until they came up with a format that they thought would work and in fact a lot of things that they thought wouldn't work have done.

*V: And who's that, MOMA?*

TRA2: Yeah, Museum of Modern Art in New York.

*V: Yeah. I'm going to New York for Christmas.*

TRA2: Yeah well call in.

*V: So who's here who's organising these tours?*

TRA2: In here at the art gallery, it's (name of person)

*V: Right, it might be good for her to come in and give a talk here at the new centre about it.*

TRA2: I think she'd be willing.

*V: ...See there's always somebody, there's always another little one. That would be great if we could get her to come in and talk to us about that because then she comes here and talks to people here and they go there...*

TRA2: Yeah its Alzheimer's and vision impaired.

*V: Excellent. I'm sure that will go down here very, very well*

TRA2: Yeah and the first vision impaired one I did was of this sky thing which is shaped like a cloud and I tried to set the scene and he's been blind since birth and so he's never seen a cloud.

*V: Oh, how would you describe it?*

TRA2: Well fortunately there was a carer there, "it's like cotton wool" she said.

*V: Oh yeah give him some cotton wool*

TRA2: Oh dear, oh dear.

*V: How amazing*

TRA2: Yeah she helped him out four times on that

*V: That was excellent*

TRA2: first response.....

*V: I mean, how do you describe blue to somebody who's never seen blue.*

TRA2: Oh, blue, yeah.

*V: You can't say it's like the sea because they've never seen the sea. They just wouldn't have a clue would they? Alright, so getting back to the brand*

TRA2: sorry

*V: No, that's alright it's my fault I'm always diverting back. Do you think that the Centre needs a brand? Does it need an identification?*

TRA2: Yeah I think it does...yes.

*V: So when you see the Old Mill do you consider that as the branding of the Centre?*

TRA2: No, but its branding South Perth isn't it?

*V: Yes, it is....*

TRA2: Yeah I think there is an identifying symbol of it, I don't think that the brand is really important for what we do though.

*V: I wonder if it might change, when we move from here to there, because the Mill's not there, so you kind of lose that proximity, however...*

TRA2: It's still South Perth

*V: I guess.....*

TRA2: In particular when they mess it up with all the modern things, like technology for one.

*V: Okay, I'm going to talk about motivation now. Can I ask you why you volunteered?*

TRA2: Because my mother told me to.

*V: That's the most original one I've ever heard, how sweet.*

TRA2: I've been doing it all my life.

*V: So you've always done some kind of volunteering. How long have you been a volunteer?*

TRA2: I've been a volunteer guide at the zoo and at the Art gallery now for 11 years probably I was neighbourhood watch probably around 20 years. I tutored and then lectured at Murdoch for about 4 or 5 years but that finished about 5 years ago so...

*V: So for quite some time, over 20 years. What do you understand about the term volunteer?*

TRA2: Do you want my rude version? (laughs)

*V: If you like (laughs).*

TRA2: You are usually evaluated by the professionals at the same amount you are paid.

*V: I thought volunteers didn't get paid?*

TRA2: No I think it's just important to cooperate and give back something that you've got out of your good fortunes.

V: .....and you just told me what other organisations you've worked for. So you work for the gallery, neighbourhood watch, here, the zoo,

TRA2: I'm sure there's something else... Oh yeah the university of the third age!

V: So how many hours a week would you do volunteer work?

TRA2: Oh goodness...

V: On average.

TRA2: At the moment probably about 12, 12 or more...

V: 15 plus?

TRA2: But usually the zoo is one day, 2 days a month, but I'm training to be a snake handler so that'll become four.

V: Oh, right. I'm glad you didn't say spider handler.

TRA2: I'm not allowed to bring them to the learning centre...

V: I think I'd be alright with the snake, it's spiders I don't like.

TRA2: At the gallery we've got to go 2 mornings a month and do 2 tours a month but I probably do about, I've done about 30 in the last three months so I'm doing about 10 a months.

V: Wow, so you really are in that high end bracket.

TRA2: No, well probably it's very high at the moment. Neighbourhood watch at the moment is just about gone since the council shot it.

V: Yeah, although I'm still going to meetings at the council once every two months I think it is, talking to the organising committee there and we're just setting up a website for them, (name) who is a councillor for Como ward he's just set up a dedicated website for neighbourhood watch and I think he got the council to pay for it too, which he should.

TRA2: I was suburb manager for a while but I had come down to the next level, whatever that is looking after a number of people, or a .....

V: .....Champion?

TRA2: Something like that and when the council said distributing newsletters is a waste of time and money half of the volunteers dropped out.

V: I didn't agree with that. I vehemently argued against that. I said, "if a piece of paper stops somebody from breaking into one old persons home what's the cost" and I'm still arguing with them about it so...

TRA2: Well you're on that level, away from the Centre, one of the things they did hear in South Perth police was have this thing on your email where they would notify you if there was something happening in your area and you can report back to them. This was run by the police and then of course the inevitable happened, the guy was transferred somewhere else and this very successful thing stopped and they did partly because they didn't have anybody to do it and I think that its an area where volunteers could do it.

V: I agree. I'll chase that up actually, when I go to the next neighbourhood watch meeting which I there is one more before Christmas

TRA2: There's one on Monday but it's a dinner a sort of lunch.

V: *There might be a morning tea or something*

TRA2: There's one on Saturday morning somewhere.....

V: *(name of City Councillor) and I are really interested in neighbourhood watch and we sort of drive it from the council end so I shall keep driving. Anyway back to the Centre– only a couple more questions to go. The big question, the \$30 000 question, what's in it for you as a volunteer?*

TRA2: I never think about it.

V: *That's a wonderful answer because it says you just do it*

TRA2: Yeah, you just do it.....

V: *You just do it. Like - Nike! OK, next question, what motivates you and what de-motivates you? So what really gives you a buzz and keeps you going?*

TRA2: I think I just told you what de-motivates me...interference by the bureaucracy I think is the one that de-motivates me most because having fought against the bureaucracy all my working life I can't see why I have to fight against them even when I am retired. That's the other thing that has quite sprung out, and I don't know if this answers any of the questions, but in the gallery because I knew nothing about art they said concentrate on one thing until you are confident of it and they suggest I do indigenous art because nobody else knows much about it when people come in you're safe\* and so I've been doing it now for 10 years and can't make root\* of it and one of the things is we don't get back neighbourhood watch to some extent, how many aboriginal people do we have in neighbourhood watch and my favourite story is when I go to the gallery and I talk very lovingly about all the indigenous artists – no aboriginal artists is now the right word...

V: *..Oh we've gone back to Aboriginal art?*

TRA2: Mainly because 90% of the aboriginals people prefer that

V: *Oh ok. And I guess indigenous could be Inuit – you can't call them Eskimos anymore. It could be all different kinds of...*

TRA2: It's the...I don't know what percentage they are, but the percentage of aboriginal blood in them is usually very low and they are the ones that object to the names people call them, but the others – all my aboriginal friends say aboriginal - but I just wonder why again this is an area where perhaps the learning centre can reach out a bit. I've never thought of it before...

V: *Well what we've thought of doing, because I'm actually going to (name of place) next week and talking to (name of person) about how we can work together and also to (name of other community group) and I've also been talking to the (name of another community group) in South Terrace and I've said to them when we open our new premises we've got lots of wall space and we would love to exhibit some of your art, now if the girls, boys wants to put a price sticker on it and if somebody wants to come along and sell it we'll happily sell it for them. We don't want a profit, we don't want a margin or a cut, we are very happy to promote because we are a community centre and that might be one way, I mean it could even turn into a talk if we get enough pictures around the room for somebody to do a, kind of a gallery tour and tell them about the pictures and paintings, where they've come from and everything else and again that could be something that maybe somebody like (name of other tutor) could do so she could talk about techniques and strokes and why aboriginal art is different from traditional art. All these things just open up more doors for us to experience and investigate.*

TRA2: Well I mean, this guy (name) was the first aboriginal member of the lower house lives in South Perth and he's the guy that could've been quite useful in bridging the gap because say I go in and talk about all these wonderful artists then I go in the pub and some drunken person falls all over me, then I go to a neighbourhood watch meeting and I hear that 70% of the crimes in South Perth...all in one day

*V: I know, it's from one extreme to another isn't it? Very, very different.*

TRA2: But I've got no idea how you bridge the gap, I work on north\* rd\* and when I came over here and started to work on indigenous art I thought, "oh do I know any aborigines? No I don't" but then I realised that 25% of the people I work with are aborigines – but they weren't aborigines they were my mates. You know, you never thought of them, and they were full bloods. I mean it wasn't as though as you couldn't see the difference.

*V: No, no, but again it's perception isn't it?*

TRA2: Perception...nobody thought about it, we did in the end when we ran out of mining – the mineral mining in one of the last areas, we still had the lease but all the conditions had lapsed so we had to go through the courts and everything again and (name of friend) organised protest meetings against it and I can still remember in one meeting this old aboriginal woman, fat, badly dressed, smoking a pipe saying, " (name of friend) you wouldn't know a bloody sacred site even if you fell over one"

*V: Tell it like it is*

TRA2: they didn't want it closed. When it finished the mine we wanted to bring the best people back here, quite a lot of aboriginal people. And they didn't want to come because they didn't want to get mixed up with that mob on the main land, they just weren't interested. so I don't know how the hell we made contact but we keep trying.

*V: We keep trying. Ok, so how do you feel as a tutor how do you feel you are treated by the other volunteers and the members here?*

TRA2: Very well, I have great fun with them. The Italian group are a bit rowdy, ruckus and rude, no they're great! And cooperation, I only sort of stepped in when (name of tutor) was away to do the Italian food and both (names of 3 other tutors)couldn't have been more helpful.

*V: That's great. Are you going to carry on doing it? You going to carry on teaching Italian?*

TRA2: I think (name of other volunteer tutor) can do it better than me so I'm quite happy.

*V: It takes all sorts you know?*

TRA2: Yeah but, as I said with Jo, anytime the shorter of the class becomes too big, which would be great...

*V: I know that (name of other tutor) wants to cut down, he only wants to do 2 classes a week so you know perhaps when we move we might need 3 beginners classes, or 3 intermediate or 3 conversation classes because we'll have the room. I'm not saying that we'll turn anybody down at the moment but we tend to air run the side of restraint more than we don't actively go out and sell it where as we will be able to now, we only rely on the newsletter that goes out so I think it's going to grow.*

TRA2: (names) can blackmail me!

*V: what 2 or 3 things did the Centre have that attracted you to it?*

TRA2: we were here some time ago doing a number of things and then sort of drifted away until I bumped into (name of volunteer) one time and mentioned that I had given up on this idea of going to

the Italian club for conversation classes. She said, "oh we've got one at the learning centre" so I sort of came back here and I don't know how long ago that was now 5 or 6 years and I've been doing it since.

*V: Right, fantastic. Excellent. Will you continue to come as a volunteer capacity?*

TRA2: Oh yes

*V: Anything particular that you'd live to do?*

TRA2: No I sort of do whatever. If there's anything I can do, actually the next thing I was looking at was I was training course for the guides at the art gallery on indigenous art and that would probably fit in as a fairly easy one because it can be broken down into segments so people can either come for all four or just come for one.

*V: That would be great. If you're willing to do it we should put it in the newsletter for term one and see because we've got heaps of room and see what interests we get, especially sort of over the long break.*

TRA2: Yeah term one would be fine

*V: I think that would go down really well. Now the last question. What else can Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer?*

TRA2: I don't think they can do anything

*V: Nothing?*

TRA2: Yeah double my salary (laughs).

*V: Two times nothing is still nothing, isn't it? But what do you think we can do as a group to make it better for volunteers?*

TRA2: Oh dear, I don't know. The first thing that sort of came to mind was the gallery we have regular meetings as volunteers but that's mainly because we do a lot of work with stalls and they've got to give fortnights notice and so we've got to have a fortnightly meeting so we can take up the slacks. But I thought of our initial meetings to talk about volunteering. I don't know...

*V: Would it be helpful if all the tutors*

TRA2: Maybe a get together every 6 months or something more or less so we can talk about any problems that are arising and anything that can come up.

*V: To address problems or even just to inform everybody*

TRA2: Swap ideas. How we can do things better

*V: Yeah, there's always room for improvement*

TRA2: That's about it.

*V: Well that's it. Thank you very much for helping with that.*

## Interview with TRA3 pre

V: So (name) what I want to find out about you is what your thoughts and feelings are about the Centre so I'll ask you a couple of questions and you just take your time in answering them. So I guess, for the center what do you consider are the benefits for the members, people who come to the center?

TRA3: What do you mean, in learning art? Well there are huge benefits.

V: would you like to elaborate on that?

TRA3: Well it's learning another skill for a start, and it's something that's creative and worthwhile.

V: Okay, and what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?

TRA3: I just enjoy being with people and handing the knowledge I have over to other people.

V: Okay, and how do you feel about the centers relocation?

TRA3: Very happy about it, very happy.

V: And what do you think will be the benefits there?

TRA3: I think we will have bigger room to, you know, to do more things, to set up things and I mean as it stands I'm only actually, I'm parked actually in the garage there so we can only really get just a very few people plus you know when the weathers really hot its just too hot you know so its not the best arrangement I have to say.

V: Well at least in the new Centre we will be cool in summer and warm in winter.

TRA3: Yeah.

V: Not the opposite.

TRA3: Yeah, so you know we are going to have a bigger space to work and you'll be able to set up things you know set up a still life and people have more room to move and so on. We wont be so squashed in that tiny area, you know?

V: Absolutely.

TRA3: You couldn't really get more than about 5 people in that small area.

V: No. It's not very conducive really is it? Not really creative when you're all cramped up.

TRA3: No, we are all on top of one another and it's not good at all I have to say.

V: Okay, what do you consider is the culture of the Centre?

TRA3: The culture?

V: Yes, do you think it has a culture?

TRA3: Well I just think it's an important aspect of the area. I think it's very much needed in all aspects really, and like I said before the more people are creating they are not destroying. I think it does cover a great deal of activities there too, doesn't it?

V: Yes, it does.

TRA3: You know, there's Mah-Jong and languages and it's nice that, I mean, I think a lot of elderly people go there – this is another thing – I mean it's better, you know, to be involved with stuff. I mean my class is quite fun and we laugh about things you know and it's an afternoon out for them as well doing something that's creative. You are with other people mainly, you're not just home by yourself and you know?

*V: So there is a social aspect to it?*

TRA3: Oh, there is a tremendous social aspect to it yeah. You are meeting new people which is another aspect of it.

*V: how does this fit in with what you teach?*

TRA3: well I teach oils and I'm happy to teach water colour as well both.

*V: And what's your background with art?*

TRA3: With art, I could give you my biography. Originally well I've been painting for nearly 40 years. Well I started with a lovely old chap in Perth called (name) and I did 3 years with him at the (name) arcade and then from there I did a diploma at Perth tech. In 1980 I founded the water colour society of WA as well.

*V: Oh, wow. And have you always taught art?*

TRA3: After doing the diploma I have on and off you know just privately, you know. In my other house I had a nice big studio and I used to have a few students there but I haven't – well I've got a studio but not like a –

*V: You don't teach from home?*

TRA3: No, no, no, no.

*V: So do you teach anywhere else except the Centre?*

TRA3: Nope

*V: No?*

TRA3: No, I mean I could but you know...

*V: Time?*

TRA3: No its not even time, its just, I don't know really, I suppose I could if I had the energy to.

*V: Do you still paint for yourself?*

TRA3: Ooh every day I paint, yes.

*V: I was very fortunate to go and meet, (name), he lives in Mt. Lawley, he does lots of, I call them 'quirky paintings'...*

TRA3: Oh.

*V: Do you know who I am talking about?*

TRA3: Yes.

*V: He's an Englishman.*

TRA3: Yes, what's his name?

V: *(name)*

TRA3: Yes, I've got one of his paintings here I think, you know, this sort of stuff he does, is different.

V: *Yes, he is different*

TRA3: Oh gosh the style!

V: *I love Leon Pericles too*

TRA3: I thought you meant someone else.

V: *Anyway, (name of painter) has a huge, he's got like a big barn at the back of his house full of paintings and I said to him, "what do you, you know, how do you do it?" and he said, "I paint every day, every waking minute I'm thinking of painting." A lot of his paintings are very similar, they've got little quirky houses that are off center kind of thing and lots of farm yards.*

TRA3: Not traditional art?

V: *No, no.*

TRA3: Its sort of abstract work isn't it?

V: *It's not so much abstract as you can make out the outlines of everything its very child-like painting – but anyway the thing is that he said he painted every single day and you can tell because he's just got this huge place that is swamped in paintings – its fascinating to look at and see them all.*

*So, the new relocation to the new premises will create a lot of change, do you think that might impact on the Centre and its members?*

TRA3: Impact? Well I...

V: *The relocation.*

TRA3: Oh I think it will be a great success and I think we will have a lot more people interested.

V: *.....and?*

TRA3: I mean one of the things that puts a lot of people off there is the parking, it's such a hassle and normally you sort of go loaded when you've got a class you are sort of loaded with things as well and you've got to park in some distant street and I think there'll be a huge interest, especially if it's well advertised.

V: *Yes it will be, we are going to have a big launch and make sure everybody in South Perth knows about it.*

TRA3: Can't wait.

V: *Well ...I've got plans to have a big bang when we open just before we open. We are hoping to move in that first week in January, but obviously in January well be physically moving all the furniture, and you know.*

TRA3: Get prepared yeah.

V: *....and all that so it'll be good.*

TRA3: We're all looking forward to it.

*V: Good! I'm very glad to hear that, very glad to hear that.*

*Do you think anything may be lost as far as people's...as far as the culture of the Centre is concerned?*

TRA3: No, no. Everything to gain.

*V: Right.....*

TRA3: .....everything to gain.

*V: .....lovely. I like to hear that.*

TRA3: Well I mean we're going to have a much nicer area, a bigger area, more parking, I can't see any downsides.

*V: And the gains, what are the obvious gains going to be...*

TRA3: .....the gains?

*V: How do you feel about the gains?*

TRA3: Oh the gains, well again the bigger area, you know, and it will be air-conditioned, I guess? We haven't got any of that down at the other Centre.

*V: It's very light, you know like we are now it's quite dark and even though there are internal rooms they've put glass windows on the internal walls to allow the light to filter through from the classrooms behind so it is quite bright.*

TRA3: Yeah .

*V: But when I went in at 5:00pm at night and it was, the dusk was just falling, and it still looked bright and new.*

TRA3: We have to prove to the council too that it's all worthwhile don't we as well?

*V: Well the council are behind us, the city of (name) I mean they've offered it to us at a peppercorn rent and...*

TRA3: ....because basically it's not much else around here you know?

*V: No, no. And all they've said to us is, "look if we give you these premises you must maximise the resources".*

TRA3: Well we will.

*V: Which means we can't open from 9:30-3:00 we've got to open from 9:30-5:00 maybe do a couple of evenings, maybe do a Saturday morning and that's fine I've already got people interested in hiring the rooms at night when we're not there so...*

TRA3: I was going to say yes so the area is quite big for meetings as well I hope.

*V: We can hire rooms out for meetings.*

TRA3: Wow, you know there's the water colour society they may be even interested too.

*V: Well one of my jobs is trying to find people to rent the rooms to when we're not using them.*

TRA3: I mean yeah at the moment the water colour society meets at the rotary hall you know in Sandgate Street and that's another thing that is very busy as well.

V: Yes.

TRA3: That is booked out to capacity you know I think because when we have our Christmas party sort of coming up next month and I think that it was booked pretty well every day so we've got to have an evening meeting which most people don't like actually but.

V: *Oh I'd like to give you some brochures to take to the water colour society.*

TRA3: Yeah sure I'll hand them in.

V: *Would you do that?*

TRA3: Yep

V: *I'll leave them at the desk for you at the Centre and you can hand them around because I know that'll be good.*

TRA3: Yeah. I know that's quite good that hall, that rotary hall, because it's a nice size but its got...

V: *it'll make a great studio*

TRA3: But its got a little kitchen and toilets, I mean it's big enough to you know yeah so you know it's quite good for meetings really that is but like I'm saying it's well used, it's used everyday I think for different societies and different things.

V: *Well the (name of society) you know the people that teach the (subject, and English to children they are at the rotary hall 3 times a week.*

TRA3: Are they?

V: *They want to come over to the new center.*

TRA3: Oh are they?

V: *I hope so...*

TRA3: I don't know who uses it all I know is that they are busy there, you know, there is different things that go on there yeah.

V: *Well I think one of the city's thoughts is to move everybody – not out of there – but to give people choice and to have more updated surroundings and places to go and that's why they built the whole community Centre there's going to be a very big hall upstairs where the new library's going, which I think might replace the rotary hall so people can you know have a more open, maybe a nicer outlook, a more modern surroundings, more technology, all that kind of thing, but I don't know I'm just saying its there for people to use so they've got choice.*

TRA3: Yeah sometimes we have workshops you know, we invite people over from the eastern states so it would be marvelous for that.

V: *The big hall upstairs would be fantastic and its all petitioned off, it's got the best technology in it, you just take your USB if you want to do a powerpoint presentation you put it in a little slot in the wall and it goes straight to the overhead projector and its on the screen in front of you. You don't have to take your laptop and your data projector and your table and everything else its really state of the art and the room is so big you can section it off into 4 different rooms. You can have a very long one, you can have a*

*square one, you can have an oblong one you can have the whole hall, you can have a small room just for a meeting it is fantastic and all these things are all electronic.*

TRA3: But you know sometimes we have people come over from the Eastern States to demonstrate and we've always got to look at where we can hold it...the last one we held was at Heathcoat – you know they've got a nice room actually up there – and what about cost, is it going to be reasonable?

*V: Very reasonable.*

TRA3: Because I don't know, although I was at the workshop I wasn't organizing it so I don't know the cost I'll have to ask them to cost.

*V: Very reasonable. I do a lot of events and I've got a group that I organize 2 meetings a month for and the cheapest place I can find is the Golf Club and it normally costs about \$600*

TRA3: For what?

*V: That's including the room, the white board, the electronic white board, tea and coffee and that was just for a 3 hour meeting.*

TRA3: Wow.

*V: But that's cheap.*

TRA3: That's a lot of money.

*V: You go to somewhere like Kings Park they want \$600 before you even walk through the door, and that's just for the venue.*

TRA3: Yeah, some years ago we used Curtin University.

*V: Bentley Park is very good. The technology park*

TRA3: Is it?

*V: Absolutely. They've got huge, beautiful rooms there with facilities to cater and everything and they're not expensive, and technology park is very, very nice.*

TRA3: Oh is it? The technology park...

*V: I've got some information at home, I'll drop it off in your pigeon hole at the Centre.*

TRA3: But anyway we should be using our local amenities...

*V: Well that's right too, but choice is good because you can compare choice and you can get the best deal for the people that you're working with so there's always choice.*

TRA3: Well that's really good isn't it I mean for so long, I mean, I've lived in you know like this area for 40 years and there's really nothing we've got the river of course but and one of the good things too is I suppose McDougall house that got left to the people and in fact in the early days I used to teach there and the water colour society used to meet there and as a matter of fact on the 27<sup>th</sup> of march we've got a huge workshop going on there I mean they are all marquees and everything and that's amazingly popular I mean we are going to have over a hundred people.

*V: Wow.*

TRA3: Yeah.

V: *That'd be great.*

TRA3: Anyway the mayor was there last time and Lady (name). Yeah she's a patron, she was there too you know it's a quite big event really.

V: *Absolutely.*

TRA3: Some of the members will demonstrate, you know, water colours.

V: *Yep?*

TRA3: That's on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March

V: *Well the big hall would be fantastic because there's also an outside area ad a little balcony where you can sort of break out during the recess – break times.*

TRA3: What sort of costs do you think it will be to hire it approximately?

V: *I'm not sure but I know that the rooms I know that the meeting rooms are something like for none profit organizations its something like \$15 dollars an hour.*

TRA3: Oh, gee.

V: *Which is very cheap. The big hall I'm not sure but I have got, I can pull down the prices from you and find out.*

TRA3: Just out of curiosity. I don't know it might have gone up in the early days I know cause I'm not on the committee anymore but I know the rotary hall used to be \$20 a morning I think, but I think its gone up.

V: *Right.*

TRA3: I'll be seeing the secretary or the treasurer rather on Wednesday I'll have to ask her.

V: *Yes, I've got the prices because I've pulled them off the website to have a look at them and they're today's prices so I don't know when they should last for a year because we've just had the budget at council so they should be you know but yeah it'll be worth looking at.*

TRA3: Yeah. I mean we are a non-profitable organization.

V: *Well you get a special rate if it's a non-profit organization.*

*Okay going back to the Centre, is the Centre, as it is, is it professional enough for what you do?*

TRA3: Well not really is it, it's just too cramped and there's not enough space, there's lack of parking.

V: *okay I agree with you, this is only between you and I this will get transcribed but there is only you and I and my tutor that will see it so you can speak quite...*

TRA3: I think what I'm saying as you know already pretty well I'm just confirming perhaps what you already know.

V: *What do you think it can do to improve?*

TRA3: What, here? At the Centre?

V: *Yes, at the Centre, and I'm talking about professionalism as to, how they promote you and your courses and how they treat your students...all that kind of thing.*

TRA3: I think we're all treated pretty well, you know, they are all lovely people, and I think there could be more promotions probably.

*V: Right, yep.*

TRA3: Well the problem is I think is that they haven't got a bundle of money obviously I mean it runs a tight budget I think and of course it's mainly volunteers who don't get paid and really we don't, our students don't, it's very cheap for the students as well I mean I think my students only pay \$8 a lesson.

*V: Right.*

TRA3: Or anywhere else you would be paying a whole heap more so whether that's another thing which will change or whether we have to increase prices well it depends what we have to pay there doesn't it, isn't it really?

*V: No different to what we are paying now.*

TRA3: Oh right. That's good. I think it gives people the chance to do something at not a high cost I mean I think too paying a reasonable price you can for example like teaching art you can continue to come. If you paid a lot of money like some of them charge down at other places, then who knows...

*V: Right.....*

TRA3: .....you know their fees, actually I did have a price list I've just thrown it away - they charge so much more you know so if you are a pensioner or something you know you can only really afford to go like one term but if you're only paying like \$8 a lesson you can continue to go the whole year or perhaps a couple of years which it should be, you can't learn art or anything in one term.

*V: No, of course not.*

TRA3: It is just impossible so well so that's another thing for the price of things if the prices are kept reasonable.

*V: Yes and I think they will do because what we're hoping to do is provide more classes and look at, I mean at the moment the rooms are very small so you're limited to you know 5 or 6 people.*

TRA3: What here down at the center? Oh, it's hopeless.

*V: ..... so if we can increase...*

TRA3: I've only got 4 students.

*V: You've only got 4?*

TRA3: .....and I mean that's just about it really, for me.

*V: What's your maximum number of students that you take?*

TRA3: .... in that garage, 5 - I think.

*V: 5? But what would you be most comfortable with?*

TRA3: I'll take 8 or 10, I think, possibly.

*V: 8 or 10, well you see you'll be able to do that in the new place.*

TRA3: Well yes, if I had a bigger area.

V: *You'll be able to do that at the newer place so easily. Okay, so the relocation you think is going to...?*

TRA3: *....be a great improvement.*

V: *....be a great improvement for that professionalism to be able to promote better, to have more people walk in through?*

TRA3: *Yeah we will all look more professional too – rather than just being in a garage.*

V: *Okay, on a different sort of level now, what is your understanding of the word – the term – brand, or branding? You know when people talk about brands? Like Target's brand is the red and white bulls-eye type thing, do you know what I'm talking about?*

TRA3: *What like a logo sort of thing?*

V: *Yes.*

TRA3: *What you're sort of thinking is - we should have a logo?*

V: *No, no, no – you're jumping the gun here. What I was going to say, was what I wanted to find out is, you know what a brand is, do you think the Centre has a brand?*

TRA3: *No, I don't think it has, no. I don't think so.*

V: *So you don't associate it with the windmill?*

TRA3: *Did I have one of their logo's - did I? Oh, well, you're saying you've got the windmill here, you mean a logo like that?*

V: *Well if you look at that logo do you automatically think of the Centre?*

TRA3: *No, I don't, I have to be honest and say no. I mean what I mainly read is the Centre but that's got to change, hasn't it? That title has got to change.*

V: *Why?*

TRA3: *Oh no it doesn't have to really I guess, I just associate the Centre with you know ...*

V: *Yeah, yeah. No that's good. This is exactly what I want.*

TRA3: *Oh yeah well I, because I you know I'm there that's how I associate with it.*

V: *So if you close your eyes and somebody said to you, "The (name) Centre" what visual image do you see, or what pops into your mind?*

TRA3: *Where I teach...*

V: *.....the shed?*

TRA3: *Yes, that little place, yeah, so what are you thinking maybe we should have something different?*

V: *What I'm trying to find out from people is if they think Centre has a brand and if so what they think it is, and if not does it need one?*

TRA3: *Yeah, that needs some thinking about, doesn't it?*

V: *....yeah, absolutely.*

TRA3: I would like to see it changed really to something a little bit more up market

V: .....up-market?

TRA3: .....yeah that needs some thought doesn't it?

V: *Well we did try to run a competition recently with the local schools and we said, "we're moving in the new year and we're looking at changing our brand and we're looking for artists to design a logo" and of the 14 schools – all of which have junior schools, or senior schools, or primary schools – there was only one school that put any submissions in and that was Penrhos Junior School, and they drew beautiful pictures, I think you'd be quite interested in this. They drew some beautiful pictures all with things about the Centre, one had a flower in each petal one had a book, one had an easel, one had a paint brush one had an Italian something or rather so you know the petals and you know they were quite innovative, but what we were trying to do was look to see if there was something in there that was quite relevant to every body.*

TRA3: Well that's the point, it's not, I mean it is art, it is languages, it is card games, you know, and it is computers.

V: *That's right we were trying to find out what was common, what was the common denominator in each one that we might be able to use as a logo but...*

TRA3: I still don't mind the actual...

V: ..... the mill?

TRA3: .....the windmill. I think maybe that's still nice to keep, you know, I mean the windmill still is part of South Perth.

V: *South Perth, that's right, yeah.*

TRA3: That's about the only major thing we have, isn't it?

V: Yes.

TRA3: I still quite like our windmill, I would keep that.

V: *You would? Okay.*

TRA3: Personally I quite like it. I just think, you know, perhaps more the Activities Centre, I mean I've just taken that off my head because there is a lot of activities that go on there

V: *So you've cut out the word community, do you think that's because...wait, no, it's a learning Centre, isn't it? Somebody said we should put community in there and somebody else said no sounds like we're a health Centre if you put the word community in there.*

TRA3: That's right, and I think that activity means busy, you know if you say the Activity Centre...

V: *It's a bit more proactive?*

TRA3: It sounds like more things are going on – I've just taken that off the top of my head but...

V: *Okay, thank you for that.*

TRA3: It's just an idea but...

V: *Yes, it's a good idea, very good idea.*

TRA3: Just Learning Centre to me almost sounds like children or people who can't read or write in there, do you know what I mean?

V: Yes.

TRA3: So, I mean, if you sort of what to say activity, I mean activity covers all sorts of things doesn't it, you know?

V: *I guess what you're saying is learning is passive whereas activity is a bit more proactive?*

TRA3: ...its busy I mean if you're painting you're busy and if you're playing a game you're busy.

V: *Well that's right.*

*Okay, can you tell me why you – what I want to talk about now is motivation. Why do you volunteer to teach painting at the Centre?*

TRA3: Well I think there's a need, first off, a need for teachers first and foremost and somebody that really is established, you know.

V: Yes.

TRA3: For me, personally, I enjoy being with students and I enjoy passing on the knowledge I have.

V: *Go on.....*

TRA3: I mean I try to always make it a fun afternoon. We have lots of laughs in the meantime you know?

V: *How long have you been a volunteer tutor?*

TRA3: Quite some time. I actually took over one of the members of the water colour society, he got a bit old and just rang me up one day and said do you want to take over my class, I can't remember when that was a few years ago I can't remember now...

V: *Okay.*

TRA3: It was a few years ago...I can't remember exactly.

V: *Okay, what do you understand about the term volunteer?*

TRA3: Well that you're giving your services free.

V: *Thank you, okay and do you volunteer for any other organizations? Do you do any voluntary work for other organizations?*

TRA3: Well no, I founded the water colour, well wait a minute yes sort of yes I have to say yes I should be demonstrating at the water colour societies workshop, no pay at all I have to tell you.

V: *Right.*

TRA3: I used to raise money for our water colour society.

V: *Yes, okay.*

TRA3: .....and I have to say when I first founded the water colour society I was president for 7 years and secretary for 22 years.

V: *Woah!*

TRA3: So I mean there's no pay, I did it when I was younger you know, I was 42 when I first, you know...

V: *How many hours a week do you do volunteer work?*

TRA3: Oh well only a couple of hours a week.

V: *Okay, so what more than 4 or less than 4?*

TRA3: Less than 4 I think.

V: *Okay, the big question, what's in it for you?*

TRA3: Well like I'm saying I enjoy being with students and hopefully they enjoy being with me. You know, I mean, really and truly often I mean I'm happy next year to teach water colour and oil if I'm needed you know from the water colours society point of view we always have people ring us up, well the secretary, not me anymore – but you know give me a list of people that teach, people want to learn water colour. There's another Centre you know down in Kent Street isn't there?

V: *I don't know.*

TRA3: Yes there is.

V: *I'll check that one out.*

TRA3: Kent Street, you know where the gym is? I go to the gym every morning, just around the corner there, I must go have a look at that what they've got a bad reputation for being inefficient there. There's quite a few people that teach art there.

V: *right, no I didn't know about that.*

TRA3: Yeah.

V: *That really is news to me.*

TRA3: Yeah and they put a display of paintings on sometimes people have exhibitions there as well and that again is another house, a bit like the learning Centre.

V: *(name) that's the artists name, you know him?*

TRA3: Oh (name) Yes I've known (name) for years, is he still about?

V: *He's still about, he's in Mt Lawley, sorry to diverse.*

TRA3: Well he does still paint?

V: *That's right yeah and we went up to see him, we went up to his studio and he's amazing, absolutely amazing.*

TRA3: I know.

V: *He really is.*

TRA3: I know, look, I tell you this story about him; years ago when I was doing a diploma at Perth (institution) he and his wife – he's got an Asian wife doesn't he?

V: Yes.

TRA3: He was sitting there as our model you know he got paid, and so I had to be chatting him up and he said, "Yes I've got a commission to do some houses in (suburb)" I said, "oh..." because I'm such a traditional painter obviously, well I said, "Oh you know you've got to be careful on your perspective" and so on and so on and he didn't say anything. Well when I saw his paintings of houses I was amazed.

V: Very distinctive style hasn't he? There isn't anybody like him.

TRA3: No, of course I'll tell you another thing about him of course he was into framing that's what he does – he does framing.

V: Yes, yes he does.

TRA3: .....and he was one of the first people to really do really expensive looking framing you know he used to sell a lot of paintings in the early days.

V: *There's still a lot around, still a lot around. But he'll never ever sell everything that he's done because – I've been twice now, first time about 5 years ago to see his workshop and then we went about 3 months ago and there's just more and more.*

TRA3: Similar thing.

V: *Very similar yeah.*

TRA3: He's done it for years.

V: *He has.*

TRA3: I mean see that's, that's the whole question about art, there's just a big question here. When you begin art are you painting for money or are you painting for the love of art? And that is you know a big dividing line because you know his work is decorative you know and it fits nicely in a modern home and so on but I mean you would never give it up into the main gallery. The main gallery would never accept his work he's like ProHart - same style.

V: *Yeah but you would only ever have one of his, you would never have 5 or 6 – they're all the same.*

TRA3: Because you see another one, another one, I mean I saw loads of those – what do you call them, I don't know what you call them, fly things, I don't know what you call them – just you know not butterflies but those things that fly?

V: *Dragonflies.*

TRA3: Dragonflies, that's it. I mean I saw dozens of those I mean like \$3000 each and people will buy them because they think they're buying an investment.

V: *Nope?*

TRA3: But you know how, for me I can't understand how an artist will keep the boredom of just doing the same thing.

V: *The same thing?*

TRA3: I mean I like to think a new painting is a new subject. I mean, if you've done it before you can even close your eyes and do it.

V: *It's like paint by colours really isn't it?*

TRA3: So in conclusion I don't earn much money but you know what I mean, well if I say yep in my view art is one skill, marketing is another skill, marketing is a skill I don't have so you know that's another skill in which I don't have and that's the problem.

*V: You obviously do it for love.*

TRA3: Well I do because I've just done it as part of my, you know, I've just done it...

*V: It's here, it all comes from here (taps chest).*

TRA3: Yeah I just, yeah and when I – its interesting because I do genealogy as well and then when I started doing research I discovered in my mothers line they were painters you know in fact one of them has work in the Victoria Albert Museum so you know you find out who you are.

*V: Yes.*

TRA3: Why you are what you are.

*V: That's right.*

TRA3: So, my father painted.

*V: Did he?*

TRA3: Yeah my father was really good at water colours, unfortunately he died early.

*V: Here in Australia?*

TRA3: No back in the UK

*V: Back in the UK?*

TRA3: Yes, but unfortunately he died early and you know he caught up with the first world war and he got a chance at nothing.

*V: No!*

TRA3: .....and I felt really sad that when I started painting I so wished he was alive and I could have helped me so.

*V: You could have talked about it and shared ideas.....*

TRA3: .....it didn't happen.

*V: But obviously there's something there in the genes isn't there?*

TRA3: Yes, it's interesting doing genealogy you find out who you are.

*V: I guess that's right.*

TRA3: So I was really excited when I...

*V: Do you ever watch that program on television "who are you?"*

TRA3: Yes I have.

*V: It's fascinating isn't it when you see these people and they go back to their roots and they just don't know.*

TRA3: Well look you go off in different areas– I've got like, I wouldn't like to tell you what I've got because I've got loads and loads and loads it all keeps dividing it's really interesting where we all come from you know you don't come from one person you come from lots.

V: *Several, yeah, I was reading in the paper the other day the prince of Wales just got engaged and they've gone back to her past– they did her geneology they have to, just to make sure there's no mass murderers on her side or whatever and they found out that they were 66<sup>th</sup> cousins you know several times removed and I thought you don't really want to know that would you, that you're cousins, anyway.*

TRA3: Yeah but they check her out anyway.

V: *They certainly do, they certainly do.*

TRA3: As long as she can breed as well (laughs)

V: *Yes as long as she is fertile that's all that matters I think. What motivates you?*

TRA3: I just like being busy really, I think life is for being busy.

V: *But what motivates you painting? Do you have an idea or do you see something and think you want to recreate it or?*

TRA3: When I started painting, there's two things I do, mainly I'm a still life painter and so you can put that into any form of course. You can paint and the water colours I do are from around the river, you know I do around the river scenes in water colours. They're the two things I do I don't know I just yeah I think something you see can motivate you just anything can set you off. Well I'll give you an example this one I've just done here I had this friend come in that I've not seen for nearly sixty years you know from the UK. Anyway he was going to be here for 2 weeks but unfortunately he's only here for 1 but anyway that's another story but anyway I thought I can't set anything up that's going to go bad like fruit or what so I set up all my shoes. I can get it started put my brushes away while he's here and get back to it when he's gone so I came to paint my shoes.

V: *.....and who's the doggy?*

TRA3: Oh nobody in particular I just put him in, well otherwise it's kind of uninteresting he just kind of lightens the scene up.

V: *Looks like he's just deciding, which shoe am I going to chew next.*

TRA3: Yeah, or you know, I'd like to go for a walk. I've got to think about a title.

V: *It's very cute that one. So what demotivates you?*

TRA3: Demotivates me...what do you mean, what I don't like? I don't really like abstract work.

V: *Okay, so you're not a Picasso fan?*

TRA3: Well Picasso in the early days of course could do some really good traditional work of course, but then you know every time he had a new woman he had a new style you know?

V: *That must've changed fairly frequently?*

TRA3: But he changed because it was 7 women or whatever it was, you know all those women with eyes?

V: *Yeah it's a bit sort of Frankenstein-ish really.*

TRA3: Well you know its kind of he changed art and its worth a fortune now people are always, I have to say people are always looking for something different you know you cant go on through all the different generations doing the same thing, do you know what I mean. People always look for something different. Different isn't always necessarily good but you know I mean its like all the beautiful paintings he did and he was the first to capture our gum trees and then quite a few other people have done it but now they move completely away people are tired and move on you know.

V: *Yes I do.*

TRA3: I mean, if you go in that gallery now all of the stuff they have been buying is aboriginal art - you know some of its very interesting I have to say some of it is very good.

V: *I went to the gallery a couple of weeks ago...*

TRA3: Did you see the Peggy Guggenheim?

V: *No I haven't seen that yet. No, not worth going? Well I'm going to America for Christmas so I'll go to the Guggenheim there and have a look.*

TRA3: That'd probably be more worthwhile. I mean there's a couple of pieces that are interesting but to me it's nothing special.

V: *Well its just one persons collective taste of what has been collected over the years isn't it?*

TRA3: You see the thing is, she got – well you know the story don't you – she got left a lot of money, her father died when the Titanic went down and she got left you know and so she got into the arts society.

V: *Is that right?*

TRA3: She met with a lot of people and promoted them, and to me a lot of them are just...I mean in theory if you are good at marketing you can promote anything you know? So to me that's an exhibition I couldn't say I was inspired by in any way and another thing, really another thing that tells the story was if there was a big long queue waiting to get in you say go this is really going to be good – well when I went in there was hardly any body there you know this tells a story when we had Golden Summers up there we had thousands of people.

V: *I went to Paris a couple of years ago and went to the Louvre, it's quite amazing what they've got there. Then we went to the Musee Dorse and saw the Degas collection which was just ballerinas but they were so pretty. I mean, I don't know anything about art, I'm not going to try convince you otherwise, but I guess for me – because they evoke – when I was a little girl my mum made me do ballet and I kept thinking to myself, "I've seen these picture in a book and here I am looking at the real thing" and it's quite amazing because you go back and you think this guy sat there and painted these things and probably...you know they were just so beautiful. That's, I don't know if that's good technique or art work or anything else but they were just so beautiful.*

TRA3: Oh the impressionist work is just lovely.

V: *....and the colours just jump out at you.*

TRA3: Oh they do! They are just good colourists. Dega is one of my favourite painters too I love his stuff. The feeling he gets in his people, you know the dancers and you know he just captures something. It says to me, "that's what art is about." The pleasure of looking at it and from my view its like Turner you know to me there's nobody like Turner. You stand there sometimes looking at his stuff and you think how did he do that? You know as if you look at Jackson Pollocks stuff you think well I could do that.

V: *That's right.*

TRA3: I can dribble some paint you know there's a big difference here isn't there?

V: *Absolutely, its like Pro Hart, you know I can throw a cake on the floor and trample through it, but it doesn't quite look the same as his.*

TRA3: To me that's the big difference, that's where the skill is you know.

V: *Perfecting a technique that's quite unique really.*

TRA3: I mean its like you look at his stuff and you know he has skill and everything and you think 'how does he do that?' The light he captures in his work you know and to me that's really what skill is...but dripping stuff...

V: *No art in that is there.*

TRA3: No, no.

V: *Okay, how are you treated by the volunteers at the...?*

TRA3: Oh very well.

V: *You think the volunteers do a good job?*

TRA3: I have to admit I have found everybody very pleasant. I mean they're mainly elderly people too aren't they?

V: *Yes, they are.*

TRA3: You know wanting to get out of the house and be useful.

V: *That's right. And they come from such a diverse range you know there are ladies who have been homemakers all their life, there are ladies there that have had really powerful jobs, there are people who have worked part-time and they're all incredible, they really are all incredible people.*

TRA3: And those sorts of people don't just want to switch off and sit at home all day.

V: *That's right.*

TRA3: They want to be usefully, don't they? And I think there are some people that have lost their husbands as well.

V: *That's correct, yes.*

TRA3: And it's another way of meeting people, and being useful.

V: *.....making friends.....*

TRA3: yes.

V: *That's right. That's good. They are lovely people.*

TRA3: I mean too, I think what's quite good is the bus trips they do too from that, you know?

V: *They are always packed. They are the first activity that fills up.*

TRA3: The last one I went on, was the one before they went to Gingin.

*V: Did you go to the observatory one?*

TRA3: Yes, in fact there were more people wanted to go but they couldn't get on the bus.

*V: No, we could do with 2 buses though couldn't we?*

TRA3: So it just shows how popular they are too I'm saying so that's another thing run from the Centre isn't it. Another activity.

*V: Yes, that's right those trips are very good. What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

TRA3: I just, well again, being with people, learning things I mean as a matter of fact I've been to things myself I've been to a computer class and I went to another talk on art and so I mean as well as I'm teaching there I've also gone and done things there myself, so its just a nice center just to be involved in different things.

*V: So is it the people or the locality, because it's close, is it because it's cheap?*

TRA3: Well it's in my area for a start and obviously it's the activities they run.

*V: Lovely, nearly finished. Will you continue to volunteer at the Centre?*

TRA3: For sure. I would like to be involved and I certainly would like to do some more things myself as well.

*V: Excellent. Well let me know what you want to do if you want to run anything new, I mean I don't know how you feel about teaching kids and when I say kids I'm not talking about 4 or 5 year olds but you know anywhere from say 10-16?*

TRA3: You see I'm not very good with children.

*V: Young adults?*

TRA3: Yes sort of you know...

*V: That's –*

TRA3: I'm happy to run a water colour class and I'm happy to do an oil class.

*V: But if there's anything specific that you want to do let me know because we can talk more about it then we can find out how to promote it.*

TRA3: The other thing I'm saying is we could run workshops there from the water colour society.

*V: I'd love to do that.*

TRA3: Sometimes you know we have top painters come over from Melbourne. We've had...I cant remember how many this year we've had come over this year yeah so we are always looking for places to...

*V: Well look we'd be delighted to, I mean the thing is if we can help you to promote that in the Centre or even use the Centre, or even get them to come to the Centre and maybe somewhere in their schedule maybe do a one hour or two hour talk to interested people that would be fantastic because I think it would add so much more to the cultural activity of the Centre.*

TRA3: That's right. The more things you've got going the Council is going to be pleased and make them realise that this money being spent there is well worth. I mean it is tax payers – well...

V:..... rate payers?

TRA3: ...yes, rate payers money isn't it?

V: *Yes it is. We're happy we're going into a - well I've got 2 caps on here - I've got a Councillors cap on and I've got my Centre cap on, but I can say for both entities you know we're really happy that we can offer more to utilise the premises and involve the community more because that's what it's all about.*

TRA3: Yes, you are right - that is what it's all about.

V: *.....and if we can expand our courses and maybe its one course that expands or maybe its many courses. We want to involve not only the pocket of people that come to everything but people who have never thought of coming before. Its not very conducive down there at the moment because its dark and its old and its not very amenable.*

TRA3: It's hot in Summer and cold in Winter.

V: *You know you don't walk in and go, "wow this is fantastic" it doesn't inspire you to do anything but with the new Centre we are hoping that we will get new people that will come through and say, "oh I'd like to come here and I'd like to do this"*

TRA3: I think as well its advertised and I think people will say, "oh I'd like to have a go at that"

V: *Well I'm now going to the organisations in the area like the Lions, Rotary and others. I've spoken to 2 Rotary clubs, I've made friends with the girls at the library, I'm going to the aged care facilities and senior citizens. I've been to one senior citizens and I'm saying look this is what we're doing, here are some brochures, put them up, tell your people that we're doing these things and that they're welcome to come and it's not very expensive and we do concessions for people as well so it's getting the other communities in the area knowing that we're also around.*

TRA3: It's getting it out to the people and letting them know what's going on there, that's the thing and I mean once you've got a list of people that are teaching or demonstrating or whatever that you can have something to advertise then, haven't you?

V: *That's definitely true. So what else could Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer? How can we help you? Promote you?*

TRA3: Promote me...I'm saying just the advertising of the classes I suppose, basically. I mean in theory its got to get to the people, people have got to know what's going on there, basically have them know is really and I think the newsletter I think that's a very good aspect of it is the newsletter...

V: Yes and.....

TRA3: *.....and when you advertise I think it would be a good thing to say, "would anybody like the newsletter" list all our activities and make it clear that you actually do a newsletter cause I don't think that happens, does it?*

V: *No it doesn't and the question that's being sort of being raised at the moment is - "is that really a newsletter or a program?" It really is a program and so should we be putting out a newsletter as well, should we be putting out a one page newsletter that says this month we've done this, this month we've seen that, we've had visitors from the water colour association.*

TRA3: It's more extra work from somebody I mean I think it's nice that they have the newsletter at the beginning of each term and it lists everything. Even in that you could include that say part of it at the back you could include say the past term has been very successful and our classes did this, this, this and this and we had several trips so you've got to actually...with that newsletter you know as a back page just say how good you've been going and we welcome you know new students so otherwise you know you've got more postage you've got more work so its probably easier to combine.

*V: Combine both?*

TRA3: .....combine it with the newsletter and just let people know. I think what you need to I mean I think its nice to get this and I think its nice because that's what I've done and I looked and saw the printed glass and thought, "oh I might like that" and then there was one chapter talking about the last supper.

*V: Yes, like the Da Vinci presentation?*

TRA3: .....and I thought 'oh gee that's an afternoon one I think I'll go to that', and I did so I think that this part because otherwise people don't know what's what so I think if you're advertising in the local newspaper saying that a newsletter is available, listing all the information and it would only cost whatever it is, what would it cost per year?

*V: \$30 to be a full member.*

TRA3: ....to be involved. Well then I think it is sort of getting to people and it's telling them what's coming up and what has gone on before.

*V: Good idea, very good idea. And we could promote you in that.*

TRA3: Yeah that's right.

*V: Is that okay?*

TRA3: Yes.

*V: ..because you can change it if you don't like it you know?*

TRA3: Look you know I said this to (name) - did she do it?

*V: Yes, she normally does them all.*

TRA3: I think what you need to do is to say where you are at, I mean there's a big difference of just learning art or being a bit more advanced, you know what I mean, it's a bit difficult when you've got someone who's never done anything and somebody who's been going for 12 months.

*V: So do you mind that if you've got beginners and sort of intermediates?*

TRA3: In preference its better to have all of them

*V: All the same*

TRA3: Yes, because in fairness it is good because if somebody doesn't know anything you can spend a lot of time with them than the others.

*V: So at the moment you're doing what 2 classes a week?*

TRA3: No, just the 1.

V: *You are only doing 1 at the moment?*

TRA3: Yes I'm only doing 1 class on a Monday afternoon

V: *And how many would you like to do?*

TRA3: Well just 2 a week. I'm happy to do a water colour because I've had several people ask me and I was running it before when we didn't have enough people

V: *I see.*

TRA3: If there aren't enough they just cancel it which is disappointing.

V: *Oh, okay*

TRA3: But what I'm saying is when we have the newer area there's a lot of people wanting to learn. The mere fact that we've got this water colour workshop where over a hundred people will come.

V: *That's amazing, it really is.*

TRA3: I think some people have already put their name down. It's not until next year yet. What we do-

V: *is it next year?*

TRA3: .....pardon?

V: *When is it next year?*

TRA3: 27<sup>th</sup> March. See what we do is we get all our different members some of them won't do it but those that are willing to demonstrate, so I put my name down I mean we don't get paid for it but it's to raise money for the society so that we can.....you know the last exhibition we just had at the Italian club in Fremantle cost us over \$11,000

V: *To hold it?*

TRA3: Yes.

V: *That's exorbitant!*

TRA3: You can't believe it can you? I mean just the stands and the lights alone was just \$3000

V: *Oh good grief!*

TRA3: .....and because I'm not on the committee I don't know the exact cost and I don't know how much it cost to hire the place.

V: *It would've been expensive*

TRA3: Well probably I don't know and then you've got the advertising, you've got the marquee, the catalogue, you've got the invitations, you've got the drink, you know everything has gone up you can't believe. I mean we did run a raffle that did help to raise and we did actually get \$4000, I don't know where it was from, maybe from Fremantle Council or something you know to help in the system so we have to run these workshops to raise the money otherwise we cant afford it. We do take commission of the sale of the paintings of course, which helps

V: *Very interesting. Thank you.*

## **Interview TRA4 pre**

*V: For the tape this is an interview with TRA4. Do I have permission to tape this interview?*

TRA4: Yes you do

*V: What do you consider are the benefits for the Centre at the moment?*

TRA4: At this old centre?

*V: Yes. You're a teacher, you're a tutor at the centre, what do you consider are the benefits in your perspective for the Centre members?*

TRA4: the opportunity to improve either their skills or connect with the community regardless whether they have skills – I guess what I'm trying to say is really just bringing together people that have never had an opportunity such as the Centre to develop friendships and grow.

*V: Okay, what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?*

TRA4: Well, sharing my skills and knowledge – I enjoy that very, very much, and hoping that word of mouth continues to spread so we can continue to develop and grow not only my class but other classes.

*V: okay, how do you feel about the centre relocating?*

TRA4: I'm pretty excited about that. I think it's a great idea because all our classes are growing and we are slowly outgrowing this centre.

*V: What do you consider is the culture at the Centre?*

TRA4: Multicultural. One big happy family and everyone is your friend.

*V: But what do you consider is the culture of the people that go there. Irrespective of where they come from.*

TRA4: The culture of the people in that case, is the people who have a hunger and thirst to learn regardless of their age. They come to make friends as well as to learn but there is this overriding social aspect to the Centre that is hard to find anywhere else. Friendship, altruism, a feeling of giving back to the community.

*V: Okay, and how does this fit in with what you teach?*

TRA4: same really, My students are unique, the demographics have changed from when I first started teaching where they were between 65 and 75 and now they're averaging between 25 and 89, that's my oldest student at the moment.

*V: Okay, so the imminent relocation to the new premises will create a lot of change, how do you see this is going to impact on the centre and the member culture?*

TRA4: I think the members have known for quite some time that we are relocating and I think they are pretty excited about it. I don't feel or see any negativity towards relocation.

*V: Do you think anything may be lost in the move?*

TRA4: only if we don't continue to keep our interests going in informing the outside world. I'd suggest we go into the New Year splashing our new address and our new telephone number wherever we can and get our members and volunteers talking about us.

*V: So, do you think anything may be lost from the culture of what the centre is now?*

TRA4: No, not at all. But some members may feel left out or lost because the premises will be a lot larger and may cause some anxiety – as does most things which are new.

*V: Okay, do you think anything may be gained?*

TRA4: Oh yes, in the move? Maybe if I'd given it more thought I could expand on that but my view is what is to be gained is that our own members, our own current members who attending classes at the moment they will be spreading the word through their friends and contacts and our membership should increase this way. Did I explain that well?

*V: Yep, that's fine. Talking about professionalism, do you think the centre is professional enough for what you do?*

TRA4: It could be more professional, particularly as far as reception and administration areas are concerned.

*V: So are there any particular improvement you would like to see?*

TRA4: Could I have that question again please?

*V: Sure, are there any improvements on it's professionalism that you would like to see?*

TRA4: Not really, I believe we've got a strong committee now, I just feel that the reception area needs to be manned from at least 9-5pm.

*V: Okay, do you think the relocation will change any of it's professionalism?*

TRA4: No, I believe it can only improve it because we will then have the space to be able to buy or hire the right equipment and utilise the space better growing the membership base instead.

*V: So you think the relocation will improve the professionalism?*

TRA4: 100%

*V: Okay, what is your understanding of the term 'brand'? When somebody refers to the term brand, what is your understanding of that term?*

TRA4: A brand is something that stays in your mind regardless of where you are in the world you'll always remember it, the only way I can describe branding is Coke. Coca-cola, McDonalds, you know wherever you are, you relate to those so from my point of view the Windmill is the branding for the Centre. I would miss it if it had to go.

*V: Well the next question was do you think the Centre has a brand and what is it, and you've just answer that with the reference to the Windmill. Okay, so do you think it needs a new one?*

TRA4: I think the windmill – the logo – could be improved but not the windmill, I'm very attached to it and I would like to see it stay.

*V: Okay, talking now about motivation, why do you volunteer?*

TRA4: Well, motivation, why do I volunteer? I volunteer because it gives me an opportunity to not only be a teacher but also be a student at the same time. I'm learning all the time when I'm teaching. I like the camaraderie with our members and I like being a part of a community – that is really important to me.

*V: How long have you been a volunteer?*

TRA4: 4 years going on 5 years. Into my 5<sup>th</sup> year now.

*V: What do you understand by the term volunteer?*

TRA4: volunteer is giving up your time for others for a worthy cause.

*V: What other organizations do you volunteer for?*

TRA4: Only this organization.

*V: Okay, how many hours a week do you think you volunteer?*

TRA4: On location it's 4 hours a week. Off location with preparation for each of the lessons actually I wouldn't like to put a time on that I just enjoy doing the research.

*V: So - big question, what's in it for you?*

TRA4: A sense of belonging.

*V: ..... and what motivates you?*

TRA4: The enthusiasm of my students and also the enthusiasm of our committee that the Centre will be an organization to be reckoned with in the future.

*V: So what demotivates you?*

TRA4: Perhaps no different to any other organisation – the pettiness and negative comments only serve to hinder the process.

*V: How are you treated by the volunteers and members?*

TRA4: I believe I am treated exceptionally well.

*V: What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

TRA4: Sorry, repeat that question?

*V: What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

TRA4: It has a community spirit that I've not experienced anywhere else.

*V: So, will you continue to volunteer? Once we relocate?*

TRA4: Yes, I will.

*V: And what else could the Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer?*

TRA4: It could assist me with access to more materials, to educational materials, tools and materials.

*V: .....and if you had to sum up the Centre in one sentence what would that be?*

TRA4: .....in one sentence... a fantastic place to connect, learn and enjoy a cultural journey.

*V: Thank you.*

## **Interview with TRA5 pre**

*V: Okay, interview with TRA5 regarding the old Centre. (Name, what do you consider are the benefits for the Centre members?)*

TRA5: the benefits are to give them a variety of activities, courses, for them to enrich their lives.

*V: thank you and what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?*

TRA5: oh, interaction, as a retired principle I find that the teaching process is always very, very challenging and it does keep my mind ticking over otherwise I'd probably just retire into oblivion.

*V: and how do you feel about the centre relocating?*

TRA5: Very well, very well. I feel excellent I think we've got a lot more room and it's exciting and a lot more people we've found more members, a lot more members, and we've also increased our activities. So, I think it is a very good move.

*V: and what do you consider is the culture of the Centre as it stands now in the old centre?*

TRA5: it's hard to say the culture, I don't think the culture in itself changes, it's the additions we can put onto our strategies, courses, that change, but the culture I think will always remain that its for, directed to older people who want to maintain activity, mind or even a physical activity.

*V: and how does this fit in with what you teach?*

TRA5: ....with what I teach? Oh no, I teach languages is really only directed at brainwork mostly and memory work. Memory's most important. Older people need to practice their memory or otherwise as everybody knows it goes.

*V: okay the imminent relocation to new premises will create a lot of change. How do you see this is going affect the people there?*

TRA5: It will create a lot of changes in many directions, and whilst there is excitement and looking forward to enlarging our activities we need to be careful that we stay connected to our past – where we came from, but I don't think its going to create much of a change.

*V: okay, do you think we might loose anything when we move?*

TRA5: No we will gain lots

*V: what do you think we will gain? What's the biggest, single most important thing we will.*

TRA5: we have already covered that. We'll gain of course more interest, more space, more activities, more numbers in members we'll gain a better status in the region and perhaps even beyond the region.

*V: okay, now I'm going to talk about professionalism. Is the centre professional enough for what you do?*

TRA5: definitely yes it is.

*V: what's the best thing that it helps you with?*

TRA5: as a teacher or as a person?

*V: as a teacher.*

TRA5: well it does keep my memory, my research into languages, my – can't think of the word – flexibility in teaching. No it enlarges on my career.

*V: okay, and how does the centre effect you such as photocopying, printing, preparing documents and helping you?*

TRA5: we are talking about the old Centre aren't we?

*V: Yes, of course, are there enough resources for you?*

TRA5: no, no, we need more resources...

*V: Okay, what kind of resources?*

TRA5: ...space, more cupboard space, better furniture, that sort of thing.

*V: okay and what can it do to help you as a teacher prepare for your lessons.*

TRA5: now we're talking about the new place or the old place?

*V: old, we are talking about the old place.*

TRA5: what was the question?

*V: what can it do to help you as a teacher?*

TRA5: well I really don't know, what can it do...

*V: .....like better photocopying facilities...*

TRA5: If you are you suggesting that in the existing old centre, I don't have space for myself to sit down and prepare the next coming lessons that I should give then yes. I need to transport a whole load of books home and back again, I would much sooner like to find a spot to prepare my lessons.

*V: okay, and so that will help you if the relocation happens, when it does happen the space will help you.*

TRA5: yes from what I know, yes it will.

*V: so now we're looking at branding. What is your understanding of the term branding? Do you know what a brand is? You know like target has the bullseye, okay?*

TRA5: An icon?

*V: An icon, okay, do you think the Centre has a brand?*

TRA5: well it's got the Old Mill, hasn't it?

*V: okay, do you think it needs a new one?*

TRA5: I'm ambivalent.

*V: Fair enough, that's fine. Okay, now we're going to talk about motivation. Why do you as a person volunteer at the centre?*

TRA5: because it's in me to help people, it's in me to want to meet people as a teacher I want to keep on going with my ability to do that and it also gives me satisfaction in keeping me busy as well as a retired person.

*V: okay, how long have you been a volunteer?*

TRA5: about 6 years.

*V: and what do you understand about the term 'volunteer'?*

TRA5: to give whatever you have of yourself freely with no financial recuperation.

*V: thank you, what other organisations do you volunteer for?*

TRA5: well I used to belong to the National Seniors – I don't anymore. I also did some volunteering for Curtin University – I don't anymore because I devote most of my time with the centre.

*V: excellent. And the big question is what's in it for you? What's the biggest single most important thing you get out of being a volunteer?*

TRA5: Filling my time usefully and also time to myself.

*V: okay.*

TRA5: ...and I it fills in my time and keeps my brain cells going, meeting people, yeah.

*V: okay, and what motivates you as a person?*

TRA5: In general you mean? In anything?

*V: yep.*

TRA5: What motivates me? What motivates me is teaching. That may be a bit stupid but I like to teach.

*V: What demotivates you?*

TRA5: I just said teaching.

*V: no, what demotivates you?*

TRA5: what demotivates me is, well, cooking, I got to think about that one.

*V: okay, and how are you treated by the volunteers?*

TRA5: how do I...?

*V: how are you treated by the volunteers?*

TRA5: oh very well, they all love me.

*V: what does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

TRA5: it gives me the opportunity for doing all the things I just said. It's an avenue and it's also a very sociable avenue. There's nothing there that is too strict or too formal.

*V: okay, will you continue to volunteer.*

TRA5: as long as my old age allows me to.

*V: and what can the Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer?*

TRA5: what can it do? But I am motivated...

*V: yeah, but what can it do to keep you motivated? Nothing? It's doing everything okay as it is?*

TRA5: huh?

*V: its doing everything that it can do?*

TRA5: yes, I'm motivated enough otherwise I wouldn't be there.

*V: okay, thank you.*

## Interview with TRAA and TRAb

*V: For the record its Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Veronica Lawrance as interviewer speaking to TRA6a and TRA6b. Thank you for allowing me to interview you, and may I for the record have your permission to tape this interview?*

TRA6a: Absolutely.

*V: Thank you. So what I want to try and find out, are the attitudes and perceptions to the changes in any of the professionalism, the culture or the motivation at the Centre because of what's happening to the Centre because of the relocation. And then what I hopefully will try to do, is compare them with what happens after the move.*

*So if you look at the Centre could you tell me what you consider are the benefits of the Centre for its members?*

TRA6a: Okay well I can answer from my point of view. I think that the great benefit of the Centre is that it allows you to create mini communities - for instance when we were studying French we had a little French community and we would meet and have coffee and they would come here for a French filled day and things like that and it was really good. And even some of the other courses we've been to there have been mini-communities, and that is, as you get older, very, very important, so that's one of the things we've noticed isn't it?

TRA6b: Yes, I think that going local, especially for our age group, is so much better for people who can only get there by bus or walking or whatever but you couldn't do if you didn't have a car. But as (name) said we went to the French café because it was around the corner and I think that the communities have to be local they have to be accessible to people, especially in our age group.

TRA6: It's nice to be able to meet the same people that you go to the class with down the street here. So it's been wonderful.

*V: Okay, and what do you consider are the benefits for you as tutors?*

TRA6a: Well again that creates more little communities for us as well. We've got little writing groups since we've been doing the writing workshops and in fact we've got a new course starting.

TRA6b: This is the last one we did on the workshop.

*V: Oh, yes. I remember.*

TRA6b: So it's generated that little book and a group of people who we now know and communicate with and it didn't stop at the end of the little workshop but it carried on....

TRA6a: .....for other things, yes.

*V: So you found some continuity?*

TRA6b: .....and cross interaction and other things.

*V: and do you find that once people have attended one of your sessions that they come back? You sort of whet their appetite for more?*

TRA6b: Yes.

*V: Great, very good. So, how do you feel about the Centre relocating?*

TRA6b: It's wonderful.

TRA6a: Same, wonderful. I presume that the new Centre will look more like a learning Centre rather than an old house and that's got to be good for the attendants and volunteers, the first time we went down there was ...

TRA6b:..... the old center is too squashed.

TRA6a: We thought, "oh dear what is this?"

*V: Hmmm, that's true. Hopefully it'll be better – I have actually been in it and it's fantastic.*

TRA6a: Oh great!

*V: It's so nice and roomy.*

TRA6b: Is it going to be ready by...

*V: We are hoping to move in on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January – that's when I've booked the removalists to come and take everything away. The carpets are down, the skirting boards are in, some of the blinds are up, the only thing they have to do now is hang the doors basically, and then it's finished. So we were hoping to get a walk around either today or tomorrow but I've not heard from them yet. I have actually been in as part of the council but I'm trying to get the committee around so they can see what's happening.*

TRA6a: Oh yeah, very good.

TRA6b: I'll have to say the benefits for us as presenters - because of our age group and because of what we do, we don't want to be full-on committed say like a UWA course or whatever – it's too pressured, but it gives us little bites of something that's interesting. When the interest starts - I think that's what makes that possible.

*V: Well that's right and we're not competing with TAFE or the Universities and with the – dare I say, you know – professional learning institutes because that's not what we're about. We are a community learning Centre and that's what it needs to be, it needs to retain that identity. Would you agree?*

TRA6a: Absolutely

*V: Okay, I'm going to talk about culture now. What do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

TRA6a: I think it's changed.

*V: .....from?*

TRA6a: Well it was totally focused on the facilities that were available and the courses that were running also took that into account, you had volunteer staff the meeters and the greeters down there which have gone through a lot of change as you would expect – even through death...

*V: yes.....*

TRA6a: ...but what's happened in the last 12 months from where I'm sitting is the people are now thinking, "oh it's only a few months before we move in down there and its all going to change." So the commitment to the Centre itself has slightly gone down and there's a little feeling of dis-organisation from our point of view as presenters. But other than that the culture in the place has always been very affirming which is really good and I think that's always going to be the case.

*V: Right.....*

TRA6b: ...and I've extended the range of things to do, not just like arts and crafts and you know - other more serious stuff - which is good.

TRA6a: Yeah the, where people come together to discuss issues - that's definitely gone up in the last 3 or 4 years - more of that is needed and I think that is very, very valuable in the community to do that.

TRA6b: I think it has to keep pace with what's happening with the community changes and I think it has done that pretty well. It'll be even better when it gets somewhere where there is more room to do it...

TRA6a: ...more space.....

TRA6b: ...that's the only thing that's been the problem. The advertising needs to be better. I know that the Executive is working on that. It hasn't happened yet but I think that it's going to happen. Once you get to the new Centre there'll be more facilities. I think the newspapers, the local newspaper, might take more notice and say "ooh" rather than look at it like its the little old house, that's part of a civic community thing and whatever.

*V: Yes, it's very hard with advertising because you've got to pay for it.*

TRA6b: ...we shouldn't have to.....

*V: No we shouldn't - as a community organisation. But I used to send a media release in, nearly every week and I think that the year that I was publicity and liaison officer we got about 4 in print, and that's 4 out of 52 weeks! It was very, very hard and even if you send in a media release they say, "if you send a photograph in, it's better", but even if you do send a photograph - if something else is topical and if something is happening at the Council that can create a bit more stir in the community.....*

TRA6b: We've just had that. Tomorrow we've got this GM talk and we've had 2 or 3 now and we've had various members try to get advertising in the newspaper. I rang up last week, (name of member) had already submitted something, tried to put in something 2 weeks before, but they didn't put it in. When I rang up and said, "Can we put something in?" I'm told "oh it's too late for this week." I said, "well it hasn't happened. You know this is the third one, it's already Christmas it's very hard to get people in!" and the reply was "oh, I think we put something in two weeks ago, It was a big editorial, wasn't it?," I said, "Well I didn't see it," and they offered "oh I'll send it to you."

*V: ...but it never happened?*

TRA6b: .....and it never happened.

*V: ....and they change things. (name of person) is meticulous with what she writes and...*

TRA6b: Ohh they always get it wrong. Always.

*V: ...and they receive it, they chop it, and then they take the necessary parts out....*

TRA6a:..... they take the best parts out..... yeah!

*V: ...and then what they end up with is absolutely nothing like what you want known.....*

TRA6b: .....yep, we've had that happen over the years with all sorts of other things.

TRA6a: Actually when (name of person) was actually working with that, we had a very good relationship with what TRA6b was doing at the time...

TRA6b: .....and then (name of reporter) was very good too.

*V: Yes?*

TRA6b: Yes, but since then it's sort of dropped off and we've got to rebuild that whole rapport again.

*V: (Name of other reporter) is not bad, but I've had a couple of things with the photographer, there's a young man called (name), he's the photographer, and he just gets it completely wrong, completely wrong.*

TRA6b: He just likes his creativity.

*V: He does, yeah, he takes great photographs, but he's actually moving to the Sunday Times*

TRA6b: Oh, is he?

*V: Yep, takes great photographs but he's obviously not a Journo because he doesn't get it right,*

TRA6b: He's a photographer.....

TRA6a: ...sure is - we, he's got a nickname with TRA6b and I because we've done a lot of work with him, could we just.....

TRA6b: .....stand on one foot? (Laughs)

*V: So, how has the change in culture affected you, has it fitted in with what you teach? How does the culture of the Centre fit in with what you do there?*

TRA6a: Okay before the changes, initially it was very good, would you say, TRA6b?

TRA6b: Yes. It has been a bit chaotic though.....

TRA6a: .....yeah.....

TRA6b: ....just lately....

TRA6a: ...but this is very common. It's like when you are going to move house and you start doing things with the new house in mind and the old house perhaps doesn't get as much maintenance done just before you move. It's quite common, and I'm not, going to grieve about it, but it has been noticeable in the last year. Most of the people have got their minds set on being over there, can we put some more chairs in – we haven't got any - but when we move, you know?

TRA6b: Yeah.....

*V: Oh right. So it's things like the set up and...yeah okay. Okay the imminent relocation to the new premises is obviously causing a lot of change, and do you see that this is going to have an impact on the Centre and the culture of the members when we move?*

TRA6a: Well if we do achieve a move in January we've got the opportunity to make it all brand new and I think all of those woes will just go away as we'll be so happy to go there, but I'm sure your attendance will go up. I mean everybody likes something new don't they? It's almost a certainty...

*V: Do you think that anything may be lost in the move?*

TRA6b: Maybe, because, like anything getting bigger you tend to sometimes lose some of that coziness feel - that could be lost. And I have to watch that they keep. As you said, non-bureaucratic and none of "Oh we're going to have UWA status!" So, well, yes, I think you'll have to watch out for that.

*V: Well we are trying very hard not to do that. Nobody likes change and I think what you're experiencing is the fear of change...*

TRA6a: True – when getting bigger there is always the risk of a feeling of loss....nobody likes change because of the fear of the unknown.

*V: ...and they are sort of, they're holding back - not because they're waiting to get there because there are worries about what's going to happen when they get there and they sort of lose focus. I've seen it myself, they sort of hold back . I think, "We're not there yet but there's nothing really to be scared about." I've tried to put plans up and pictures and get them engaged, and they are engaged, but there's still that one step backwards when you talk about the new Centre because there's just that fear that it's not going to be the same, and because they've been there so long there's this fear of losing the friendships and the...*

TRA6a: .....cosiness as TRA6b says.....

*V: ...yes, the amenities - not that they've got amenities there, but you know it is cosy, it's safe, it's their little comfort zone.....*

TRA6b: .....it's their little cottage, its gorgeous, non-threatening.....

*V: ..... that's right and yet they complain all the time that it's cold in winter, too hot in summer, this doesn't work, that doesn't work.....*

TRA6b: .....you can't put this bit into that bit.....

*V: .....that's right. But they're not focusing on the good things that will happen, they're focusing on us losing the good things about the Centre which is the ambience, the friendships...*

TRA6b: .....well there's no need to, it's not that far away that people who live on that side of the highway can't get there, but I know a couple of people mentioned to me, "Oh I don't know if I can get to it." I said, "It's only 5 minutes away."

*V: It's on the bus route actually.*

TRA6b: In fact that may be something to emphasise, the fact that the bus does take you from there to there and because a couple of people said, "Oh I don't know if I can go much further," or whatever, in the last year, but that's because of the age of the people and that's something interesting - whether that will change the demographics of the age of people that will go to the new Centre or not.

*V: Absolutely. It might. It depends what we offer, it depends what we can offer and what we are prepared to offer.*

TRA6b: That's another thing. A couple of people said to me you know, "Oh yes you've got a brewing course. I'd like to go to a barista course today but I can't because I have work." So people who aren't retired can't get to things during the day and that's the reality.

*V: The council have said to us, and part of our agreement was, they would give us these new premises if we maximize the resources which means we can't really open from 9.30 – 3.00 every day we've got to extend the hours, which can only be good for us...*

TRA6b: ...yes, as long as we get the volunteers to go and the manager to support it.

*V: Well some of the volunteers won't because they only want to work until 3pm so it's a case of finding other people who prefer the later hours. Maybe if the demographics change the age of the volunteers will change and people who have children doing sport at night, people who are working during the day may want to get involved with the community and will volunteer at night. We're also thinking that we do have the capacity to have people like yourselves in at night to maybe do a 7pm to 9pm session and*

*you'll just get a key. The key will open up the rooms that you need and you just pop the key in the door in a lock box when you finish, so there is the opportunity to grow.*

TRA6b: I think that's great!

*V: ...and to offer and to get those demographics that we haven't had before, you know like the working couples, the working mums...*

TRA6b: ...yeah a lot of people have said to us, "we'd love to come to do this but can't."

*V: Well I get lots of enquires from people that want to do languages, but they want to do it at night when they finish work they say, "I'd like to come at 5:00 pm straight from work," but they can't because we're closed then.*

TRA6b: Yeah, it's a problem.

*V: Anyway, so what do you think might be gained then from the relocation?*

TRA6a: Well I think the changing demographics is one of them, I think that will change particularly as you just said. If you can go past 3.00pm you open up a whole can of worms really, its going to be very good.

TRA6b: ..... and hopefully as you said, some more interaction with the Council and what's happening there, the library, yeah tying things together a bit more so you use resources to maximise .....

TRA6a: .....once the library relocates back to the Centre.....

TRA6b: .....which would be wonderful.....

TRA6a: ..... then there's an opportunity for advertising on a continuous basis.

*V: So true.*

TRA6a: Which is brilliant!

*V: Well we've started to set up relationships with the library staff and we've agreed that we won't compete with them if they won't compete with us because they want to do things in the library and that's fine, but they've also been very good. The director in charge has given them a budget to buy books that will complement what we are doing at the Centre. For instance we have a book club and they've said if you tell us what books you are doing in advance we'll try and get them in for you. And they've also said that if you're doing special talks, if you're doing anything special we'll try and get books in, like we've just done one on Madagascar - you know we'll make sure we have books in our geography section on Madagascar or social politics, you know those kinds of things.*

TRA6b: Because I've been trying to do that when we do have a talk I go to the library and get whatever books are there because they've been locked up and been told some of the books - "oh we haven't got any of those" they are locked up in storage, or whatever.

*V: Yes, the girls have been great at the library, they really have, and we keep in touch now, on a by monthly basis and tell each other what we're doing, which of course will be better when we all move because we will be able to have regular meetings and talk about it more.*

TRA6a: Well the library has facilities for having little functions they will continue that I suppose?

*V: Yes, they will.*

TRA6b: That's what 's going to be new at the library.

V: Above where we are, have you seen the plans at the Centre of where we are going?

TRA6b: No.....

TRA6a: .....yes.....

V: Okay, above where we are there's a big hall, we are the lesser hall then there was a great hall upstairs, which they've redone. It's huge but it can be sectioned off into one big one, two fair sized big ones and/or four medium sized ones then a couple of small ones. It's got a huge, massive commercial sized kitchen as well so it will be good.

TRA6a: Oh very good because that presentation we do is out in Osborne Park and they've done that, exactly like that. They've got this quality area for the library but there are these presentation areas, little TV rooms and things like that which are wonderful.

V: Yes, it is, and it's really so good how they've done the upstairs with all these sliding doors where you can section parts off. It's very nice and state of the art technology too which is hopefully what we'll have in our two front rooms. We've got projectors from the ceiling so you can just plug your USB in and away you go, you know?

TRA6b: You won't cut out the hot water system like at the old Centre?

V: No, and you can still grab a cup of tea at the same time, that's right. It's all going to change.

Okay so if we talk about professionalism now, is the Centre professional enough for you, for what you do? If so, why? If not, what can it do to improve?

TRA6a: That's an interesting question, isn't it?

TRA6b: It's good. Well I'm happy for the people who have accepted that enrollment process as enrollment is a shambles, but once you get there, I mean (name) for instance has been really starting up on what we've been doing with GM, yeah that could probably join in a little bit more with what she does but not too many of the other tutors. I would like to have a few more in our groups.

TRA6a: In general the volunteer staff are quite good. What happens when you're enrolling is that there are volunteer staff to do the enrolments and every time you go its different and the people are different, well of course they are going to be because they are volunteers, but there does seem to be, to me, to be a need for the volunteers who do the enrollment to be trained because you go in and you put your name down on one form then you go out to somewhere else to pay for it and there's no communication between where you've just enrolled to the bit where you are paying so you are kind of dragging documents with you backwards and forwards in order to get the thing properly concluded.

TRA6b: I think that'll happen because you'll have the facilities of computers properly being linked and things like that so as long as you've got a computer guru who does that well, with that in mind I think that'll be alright. As you said I think you need to train the staff and I think that's a problem because the older staff sometimes can't use a computer.

V: Yes, that is a big problem.

TRA6a: Yes, it is.

V: It's a big problem, and the age group is reluctant.

TRA6b: Well. You've certainly got a paper shuffle so I don't know how you are going to get around that...

*V: It's like the two ladies that do the Eftpos and the banking, they have some book keeping slash computer experience but the others won't touch it – they are not interested in using the Eftpos machine. They'd rather write a cheque or pay cash but yes it's very hard. Okay, well that's good.*

TRA6a: The only place we see that there's a lack of professionalism is right there in the enrolling process which of course is a really important part. You can turn people off and they never come back.

*V: Absolutely. We know it is a problem.*

TRA6a:..... and so the paper flows and that has got to be examined so you say, "hey, how does this work?" you know?

*V: Yes, and I guess in our defense, because the rooms, all the rooms lead off one another so you've got to walk through one room to get to another room to get to another room to get where you want to be, and then you've got to come all the way back to get to the cashier and I don't know why you just can't go in and tick as many boxes as you like instead of having to go to the desk for languages, a desk for this, a desk for GM, a desk for, you know what I mean? It just seems a bit silly. Why not just have four or five people process one person, tick the boxes, add it up, take it to the cashier, it would seem to save an awful lot of work for one person, anyway we'll work on that one.*

TRA6a: In all other respects the professionalism of the people you've employed in languages is really good.

*V: Excellent. That's what I like to hear.*

TRA6a: I think you could get better if.....

*[A telephone rings and TRA6b answers it, leaving the room for a second or two. Pause until TRA6b returns]*

*V: Okay, do you think the relocation will change that professionalism? Do you think it will get better or worse?*

TRA6a: well I would think it should get better because like we said earlier if you're going to change the ages of the people who are able to come which we will do by having an after hours thing...

TRA6b: ...you might get some more people

TRA6a: ...you give, you've got a possibility like the young people who will come into the Centre because of the later courses will most likely have some computer skills which the majority of the volunteers at the moment don't have, especially the older ones and you cant blame them I mean its...

*V: ..... it's a big thing isn't it, moving from manual to...we just had a guy come in and look at our data base because its pretty old and he walked past the desk and he said, "what's all that there" and we said, "that's the enrollments" and he said, "why aren't they done on computer" and (name) and I looked at each other and said, "it's a long story. We're working on it."*

*Okay so just for something a little different, what is your understanding of the term brand or branding?*

TRA6a: Well that would be what we try to do at the association, the brand is about what we do.....

TRA6b: .....marketing.....

TRA6a: ...yeah, the marketing habit.....

TRA6b: .....perception by the community.....

TRA6a: ....yes, what's well done, what's very good.....

TRA6b: ....logos and what-not....

V: *Okay, so do you think the CENTRE has a brand?*

TRA6a: Probably not...

TRA6b: .....no.....

TRA6a: .....most people have never heard of it

V: *Yes, that's true.*

TRA6b: Even people in the library have said, "where/what is it?"

V: *Is there anything you would point to and say "oh that's the Centre", or anything that happens that you would offer up...?*

TRA6a: We could point to a lot of things, but your average Joe bloke won't, I can tell you that we are out there in the street saying, "oh we're having this thing, at the Centre", and others are saying "where is it?"

V: *So, it's pretty anonymous is it?*

TRA6a: Yes, it is really.

V: *So, do you think it needs a brand?*

TRA6a: Oh yeah, absolutely

TRA6b: Yes, I do.

V: *What do you think it could be?*

TRA6b: Good question.

TRA6a: I reckon it's not a learning Centre but a community – and that should be right up there - part of the brand.

V: *Okay.*

TRA6a: You come along and you can learn something and you can also come to meet people, it's terrific. Just speaking as an older person – as we both are now

TRA6b: The Centre is more of a community maybe, but still having a jazzy logo of some sort would be something modern to go with. The modern yellow or whatever it is.

TRA6a: Does the Centre have a website?

V: *Yes, we've got a website. It's not very good.*

TRA6a: That's interesting, I've never seen it.

V: *Yeah, its got a website. We've also got a blog. I do the blog, I don't do the website, but I'm trying to get the website – the website's done by a volunteer which is fantastic but I'm trying to get it upgraded and there's a bit of resistance because of lack of experience and inability to do it.*

TRA6a: .....of course, it takes time too.....

TRA6b: Right. Well that's interesting because the consumers for GM free foods are trying to get their website updated for the very same reasons

TRA6a: Unfortunately when you put up a website by a volunteer or a member of your group you almost always got some inefficiency in total ability, almost always.

*V: Yep, and it becomes very subjective too because if you say I don't like this I want that then you are offending them and it's a bit, it can be very awkward.*

TRA6a: Well our own website because we had to pull it off because the people who did it just simply really didn't know how to do it and we had a person we know come and do it for us, its been quite good.

TRA6b: The main thing is also thinking about the age group, I've had the problem, (TRA6a) not so much because he's been computing forever but because I started computing stuff lately in the last 5 or 6 years I find it hard to focus and commit myself to going back and updating stuff and if I do I think, "oh I should be doing this in a better way getting more, you know, cross whatever fertilization stuff and using Facebook and in fact it just came up recently that that was a problem was something I was sending out on distribution lists and a couple of people objected to that because I didn't blind CC it and things like that and I think, "oh there's more I got to learn I've got to do this I've got to do that I should be doing this I should be into facing it like that I should be blogging" and I just wrote back yes I know I should be doing all these things but its just...

*V: ...it is time consuming....*

TRA6b: It's time consuming and I think to myself, "oh I'd rather be doing practical stuff" so it does need somebody who loves doing it and who knows how to do it, to do it well.

*V: I agree*

TRA6b: we just give them our information and.....

*V: .....and it's hard to get into that discipline of saying, "you have to look at it every week, update it ever week, keep it fresh"*

TRA6a: .....and give you information in a format that you have to chose and do it.

*V: That's the hardest part*

TRA6b: I did a newspaper for 5 years and that's the things that I found, it's a poetry sort of thing, and I found the younger kinds were terrific, "oh yeah I'll email that to you I'll format it right and I go, "can you put it in for tomorrow?"

*V: .....and it's the things they leave out that you have to guess and then you become like the local community newspaper you start putting things in that aren't true.*

TRA6b: Exactly, yes.

*V: It's the same the world all over, unfortunately. Okay I'm going to talk about motivation now. Why do you volunteer? To do what you do...*

TRA6b: Pure satisfaction, I suppose.

TRA6a: Yes, we find a lot of feedback and that motivates us greatly

TRA6b: We get great satisfaction when we do something for the community. If we think to ourselves we've only got a limited amount of time and whatever to affect anything and if we don't start with our own community there's not much point so our family and our own community

TRA6a: We are both altruists I suppose we share our good fortune with the other people in the community and like all other altruists we do this thing which you get a lot of satisfaction out of, and so our contributions to the Centre is along that line.

*V: Okay. How long have you been volunteers?*

TRA6a: How long have we been together? 11 years?

*V: 11 years.*

TRA6b: Not always locally, obviously.

*V: ..... at other places. What do you understand about the term volunteer?*

TRA6a: Well it's a volunteering of time and effort and commitment to things.

*V: How many other organizations do you volunteer for?*

TRA6a: Well the Salvos, the association for the blind.....

TRA6b: ....the Rejoice choir

TRA6a: yeah, the Rejoice choir

TRA6b: I suppose I could put consumers for GM free food sort of as an activist group but it is a volunteer group...we do things in a volunteer fashion hopefully for the community.

*V: .....and so how many hours a week would you do volunteer work?*

TRA6a: Well if I can answer for TRA6b, she'll probably do 30 hours a week

*V: Wow*

TRA6a: I would be less than that - I would think

TRA6b: Not much less. You do more for the association for the blind than I do, we just do different things

TRA6a: Maybe. Maybe about 20 hours a week, that's probably what I'd put in.

TRA6b: Oh, absolutely.

*V: You probably do twice as much because you don't count time, it just happens, there's no "oh it's 5:00! Time to go home!"*

TRA6b: yeah you don't clock in and clock out that's for sure, you're not worried about hours either.

*V: Okay the \$30 000 question, what's in it for you?*

TRA6a: Just feedback that's all

TRA6b: Feedback is wonderful. In this age you do it for love and nothing else, but it does satisfy you.

*V: Absolutely, there's nothing wrong with that, we all like to feel good*

TRA6a: In fact, just to round that off, when we first became involved in the association for the blind (TRA6b) spent quite a bit of time searching the internet for organisations which had donated funds and told you what they do with them and the association for the blind was the only one in Perth that told you exactly what they do with your money and they have kept it to the letter and they – all their volunteers and their donors for the guide dogs become part of a family and they treat you like you are part of their family and it is absolutely wonderful and I'm hoping that with the new facilities they've got down here maybe the center might be able to do the same kind of thing.....

*V: Oh the Centre would love to, yeah we would.....*

TRA6a: It would boost the kind of things we are having now .....

*V: I'd like to get somebody from the association to come in and give a talk and maybe bring somebody in who's blind with a guide dog and education...I'm all about education and educating people and I don't care what it is I think we can all learn. I learn something new every single day and I think the more knowledge we have the more powerful we become in order to make the changes. You know if you have to make a decision its going to be an informed decision, you don't go with the flow you go with it because it feels right in here, not because somebody else is telling you to.....*

TRA6b: .....and you're right it is about power and power to your local community level, because it is the only level you really do have power apart from a vote every 4 years which elects people you don't really know, that's where your base is

*V: Well that's right, that's why I joined council because I decided that if I didn't do something myself, there's no use in sitting on the sidelines saying they are doing it wrong, they are doing it wrong. So I put my money where my mouth is and got up there to do something and it doesn't matter if it's small, if it makes just makes one person stop and think before they just give a blanket ruling then I'm satisfied that they've managed to have a look at the other side*

TRA6a: Well we would put our hands up and say we would probably have some expertise in getting to know our way round this, we've donated quite a few dogs and we know the people who have got those dogs and some of them think it's marvelous, absolutely marvelous. It takes so much though, we are in the process of writing a third novel and it would come out quite different to what we originally planned it, it will be a big expose in letting people know what goes on in the association for the blind and how good it is when you've got an organization that has no funds from the government at all, not one cent and look what it does you know so yeah...

*V: I can see you are very passionate about it*

TRA6a: Oh absolutely

*V: I had the privilege of meeting (name of person) a few times before he died and he was just so motivating and so inspiring and I used him as guest speaker for a couple of functions that I did and everybody just came away and said wow if he can do everything that he has done and he's blind then you know I've got nothing to complain about really. He was a nice, lovely man.*

TRA6b: We've got to do something - we're going to move across the road from Curtin and talk to (name) who works at Curtin as well who is doing a course.

TRA6a: She was the first dog we sponsored and oh she is just marvelous

*V: Oh how fantastic*

TRA6b: But they need to get more trainers and what we are going to try somehow or rather is get them to Curtin to get them to do a course or do something to train dogs...there are no trainers anywhere

TRA6a: The association for the blind has 5 trainers...

TRA6b: They have 2...

TRA6a: They have 2?

TRA6b: .....and they are absolutely swamped!

TRA6a: They have 40 dogs

TRA6b: .....and there are only 2 or 3 places there's Canada, Ireland, England.....

TRA6a: .....and one over east.....

TRA6b: .....and one over east that trains these dogs.....

TRA6a: .....trainers.....

TRA6b: There's nobody, and every single association is competing for the same people and it would be so easy to combine a psychology and veterinary and something-or-rather course and do it at Curtin which is just down the road from Victoria Park....

TRA6a: .....even from Murdoch

TRA6b: .....we just think, "they've got to get some trainers" so we are going to see if we can get something happening.

TRA6a: We set ourselves a target and aim to keep to it.

*V: I was talking to a lady on Saturday night who works at Murdoch, I can't remember what she does, she has something to do with one of the vice chancellors and she was saying that Murdoch are in trouble financially and they are thinking of closing the vet school down because it's not making any money, now that would be an absolute shamble if they did that because I think they take about 20 students a year.....*

TRA6a: Oh gosh

*V: .....and it's the only place in WA, so any kids that want to do vet science is going to have to go over east of they shut it down but they are scrambling at the moment, people are leaving Murdoch left right and Centre and they are scrambling at the moment to sort of keep an even keel and what they need is a financial director to go in there and to shake it up and look at what they've got and you know, look at the funding and put it back on even keel but she said people are downsizing so lots of staff are going. People who have been there 30yrs they are letting go, they are letting all the experience go and getting younger people in because they are cheaper – which they can't be if somebody's been there 30yrs and you pay out their superannuation and their holiday and this that and the other it costs a fortune but...so Murdoch's in for a big shake up.*

TRA6b: Dear, oh dear.

*V: what motivates you guys?*

TRA6a: .....what motivates us?

TRA6b: .....what, as people or.....?

*V: .....with what you do*

TRA6a: I think we both share a feeling we want to do something for the community as a whole but particularly for our local community because we feel as we do the most good

TRA6b: I think locally, from a selfish point of view too, is we don't have to travel as far. I mean its practical reasonable and we are 60 and 70 so you know we are getting older but we still want to and you cant give it if you've got to travel for 100km or being something that's too big or too bureaucratic or whatever that's what motivates us to do things

TRA6a: Yeah we are small business people

TRA6b: Yeah, small.

TRA6a: I have a passion against intolerance and globalization and so working at a community level works for me and I'd much rather be doing some volunteering and giving to people where you can know the CEO and the cleaner

*V: Oh right.....*

TRA6a: ....yeah, that's where we like to be.....

TRA6b: .....and I like it too because if it's local and it's small you can be more creative without restrictions on what you do, when you do it, how you do it, and all these sort of things we've always both worked sort of in margins in the side lines of big groups for that reason because we both offer more creative than some form and that doesn't suit big organizations because they need to have it, you know, organized

*V: Okay, so on the other hand what demotivates you?*

TRA6a: Hierarchies. Big – anything! What I said before, where you can know the CEO and also know the cleaner is the kind of place I would like to work in.

TRA6b: Yeah more personal and informal

*V: .....and they in turn know each other as well*

TRA6a: Yes

TRA6b: Yes

TRA6a: Exactly

TRA6b: But in a personal world we don't like to go to Coles, Woolies you know we sort of shop around.

TRA6a: Actually, when we first got together the first thing we did was to go around this community down here and get to know all the shop keepers and we go in and you know how they say, "oh how are you today? How are you doing" and you say, "oh fine" that's what you normally do, we say, "oh really good thanks" or "absolutely fantastic! And what about you, how do you feel?" you know and they, "what do you want to know that for" and eventually they got used to us doing that and suddenly there a queue's of people at the check out chick queue and they'd be talking to one another instead of all standing there looking into space

*V: That's right*

TRA6b: and I think another something that demotivates us would be .....

TRA6a: ..... people who don't care !

*V: ....and that's normally because they don't know and nobody's bothered to tell them and we all sort of you know go around and I've been through several phases where you don't know your neighbors, you know your neighbors, working until 6:00 you don't get to know your neighbors, trying to organize street parties and you know all those kinds of things its hard when you don't know people...*

TRA6a and b: Yeah, we know.

*V: But sometimes people that's all you need is a knock on the door and a, "hello" "oh, hello" and you know you've got to have the courage I think to start things off which obviously you guys have done with what you're doing. How are you treated by other volunteers and members, when you go into the Centre as tutors?*

TRA6a: Oh very, very well yes. We are universally well accepted

*V: Good. This age group is the kind of age group that if someone knows something more than another they tend to hold back a bit, I don't find that at the Centre, I find that they all kind of like treat everybody alike, and the age group is if a doctor walked in they'd all sort of be like take one step back because he's a doctor, but I think you'll find most of them have had a profession in their life so they are not quite as intimidate by anybody of the profession*

TRA6a: Yes, we haven't had any account of that at all and I must say it is really, really good cause there's nothing worse than feeling like people won't talk to you because they think you are some god or something

*V: Yeah, well they think I'm a bit weird because I go in and I'm very loud and brash you know, "do you want a cup of tea" they look at me but that's just me, I don't stand on ceremony with anybody and I just treat everybody as equal and I just think they look at me sometimes and think, "what's she on?"*

TRA6b: (name) is a bit like that too so that's wonderful

*V: Yeah they are and even people like (name of tutor) who's getting on a bit – he's slowing down a bit now but you know...*

TRA6b: Now he's doing 5 lectures instead of 4?

*V: Well he's told me next year he only wants to do 2 sessions and he wants to drop Italian because he finds it too hard to go from Italian to French cause he's doing 4 lessons a week, he does Italian from 10-12 and then French from 1-3 and he said, "I get confused, I start talking French in Italian and Italian in French" so he said, "next year I want to do 2 sessions I'll do French beginners and French intermediates and that's all I want to do," which is very sad for us but you know we don't want to wear him out altogether*

TRA6b: .....but he should able to find other times where he can surely - there must be other native Italian speakers.....

*V: Yeah, she's pretty good, I don't know if you've met (name of tutor) she teaches Italian. She is Italian and she has got heaps of friends who are Italian so we're signing them up*

TRA6a: Good, good.

*V: What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

TRA6a: That's the opportunity to give I think yeah

TRA6b: Yes it is personal, and informal - as I said I wouldn't want to go and teach at UWA or places that are too big yeah personal I think is the word

*V: Will you continue to volunteer at the Centre?*

TRA6a: Oh yeah absolutely

TRA6b: Yeah

*V: Oh, that's good! That's a \$30 000 question! And what else can the Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer? When we move, what can we do that will help you with what you are doing which will...*

TRA6a: Okay, well.....

TRA6b: I think its mainly getting things advertised

TRA6a: Yeah advertising and the enrolling procedure need to smarten up a bit

TRA6b: Yeah they are the two things.

TRA6a: .....and if it does it'll motivate me more, yeah

*V: Okay, alright that's it. Thank you very much indeed.*

## Interview with TRB1 post

*This is an interview with (name) on Wednesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of October do I have your permission to record this interview?*

You do.

*Thank you. So in relation to the centre, now that we've moved very successfully, can you tell me what you consider are the benefits now for the Centre members since the relocation?*

The benefits: there's more room, better facilities, better atmosphere I think despite the fact that people said that the old place had a better atmosphere, and I said that the people make the atmosphere, better parking for those with cars and yeah just a better environment.

*Thank you. What do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor?*

There's more room and better facilities, also the fact that there's the overhead, more technical assistance, easier access, it's just a better environment to go to.

*So what's your overall feeling about the centre's relocation?*

Long overdue, and the place will only get better and better as time goes on, I think.

*Thank you. Okay, moving now towards to culture of the Centre. Do you consider that the relocation has impacted on the culture of the learning centre volunteers and people associated with it?*

I think that there's probably a negative feeling for some because of the positivity of most, as I said earlier, some people at the old place thought that you can't take the culture with you and that the old place had some great ambience, and the new place is cold, and sterile and whatever, and I said no, no, the people bring the culture, and the new people have brought their ambience and attitude too, so it's made it better.

*Okay, and how's that impacted you as a teacher?*

It has, because I'm getting more people has a starter, and I don't think it's down to me.

*Okay, the relocation to the new premises has created a lot of change, how do you see that this has impacted on the centre itself and the culture of the members and volunteers?*

How has it impacted?

*Changed?*

Well obviously the first term was difficult – that was always going to be difficult, I think the change went smoothly, even with the problems and so on, and they need time to get over those things and people will have moved on and the good thing is the people, the volunteers in particular, are adaptable, they work things out, they're not afraid to ask, I think, some maybe are but some aren't, they have a great impact and plus the fact you might lose people moving, but you gain a whole lot more. You gain more people, you gain a different demographic as well, so that adds to the culture as well.

*Okay, and do you think anything has been lost?*

No, not a thing. I think there's only been positive.

*Fantastic, thank you. Going on to the professionalism of the Centre do you think the centre is professional enough in its dealings with you as a tutor?*

I could never fault anyone at the Centre you know, I've been treated so well during my time here - much better than at some of the other places where you're regarded more as an inconvenience - but not at the Centre - not here.

*Okay, and is there anything we can do to improve it?*

I can't think of anything to be honest.

*Has the relocation changed anything that you do? Have you had to change anything that you do to fit in with the new changes?*

Probably get more professional, the move has made me more professional, because of the conditions in which you work, it raised my level. So, it's been a benefit for me.

*That's good. And looking at the Centre itself, what is your understanding of the term brand? If I said to you what is the brand of the Centre how would you describe it?*

Gosh, um...

*Does it have a brand?*

It probably does, it probably has escaped me, but it probably does. I once said to someone you could change the L for Language instead of L Centre. I think it's just a great environment for people in the area to meet and the brand point of view, I think, it's a great meeting place as well as a great environment for learning and the people to meet other people but that's probably not...

*Well would you say its reputation is its brand?*

I think its reputation is... well I think so, and I think the move has increased or promoted the brand or the reputation because I would think that people would have left, or not come in the old place because it was past its used by date but yeah I think that you're probably right.

*Okay, thank you. Going on now to the issue of motivation. Why do you volunteer?*

Why do I volunteer? It gives me pleasure, it gives me an opportunity to meet people I wouldn't ordinarily meet, it gets me out, it gets me motivated, but I learn, I learn a lot not only from the things I teach but I learn from other people.

*How long have you been at the Centre?*

More than 10 years.

*Right, okay, and what do you understand about the term 'volunteer'?*

Giving your time to an organisation without any recompense or sometimes that might be the case, sometimes not but giving up your time to help others I guess.

*Okay, what other organisations do you volunteer for?*

None other at the moment.

*None. So how many hours a week would you do volunteer work?*

Well I do 4 hours teaching and add on research, and about 10 maybe, I don't know, but certainly 4 hours and research would go, well, 8 – 10 times that I guess.

*Okay, thank you. And the big question: what's in it for you? What's the biggest thing you get out of it?*

Self-satisfaction really, and seeing people going from nothing to something and they have a different view on things I teach and know that they didn't really have any interest before, and they've expended themselves. They're now going online and finding things that they wouldn't expect to find and they can understand or watching the news and looking at things in a different light. They're growing, the people are growing and that's what I find really good because I've done that myself and I can see it in other people, and it doesn't matter their age you know which is great. I've had 80 year olds and they're trying to challenge me all the time, so that's great.

*Seeing people grow?*

Yes

*Okay, and how are you treated personally by the volunteers and the members you teach?*

Like a member of the family. Actually, better than a member of the family.

*So you feel like it's one big happy family?*

Yes, I think so, yes.

*Well that's good to hear. What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there as opposed to somewhere else?*

Better culture, friendlier people, obviously the new centre makes a difference, but I was at the old centre, just the culture and the people and the volunteers and the executive committee friendliness, yeah all those things.

*Great. Will you continue to volunteer?*

At some stage yes, I will. It's in my blood I guess, you don't stop doing it. You take a break but you end up doing something.

*You're going to be a bit busy next year.*

Hopefully yes, but while I may not be there with the guys I'm with now, for better or for worse you won't be losing me.

*That's good to hear. Is there anything the Centre volunteers, member or committee members can do to motivate you more as a volunteer or help you keep your motivation going as a volunteer?*

You mean more? No.

*What more can we do?*

I don't think you could do more, I mean, you can't give 120%. You give 100%, you can't expect anymore than that. So, no I think that the culture will remain irrespective of who comes and goes, the culture will be there and all the people who volunteer, they have got motivation anyway, so it's in their DNA I think. So there's nothing more that I think could be done because it's all been given, and continues to be given.

*Thank you*

## Interview with TRB2

*Do I have your permission to tape this interview?*

Yes indeed.

*We spoke before about the Centre and we spoke about the culture, the professionalisation, and motivation of the volunteers, but this was pre the relocation, so now I want to talk to you about the same kind of things that we talked about before but obviously pertinent to the centre now that its relocated. I'm going to do that in 4 sections, talk about the centre, talk about the culture of the centre, about the professionalism of the centre and then about the motivation of the volunteers of the centre. So to kick off what do you consider are the benefits for the Centre's members now that we've moved?*

Probably better parking

*(laughs) Everybody says that*

I guess I'm probably looking at this partly from the point of view of a presenter but also from the point of somebody receiving the projections up onto the walls they are so much better and clearer

*So Information Technology has made a difference?*

Yes it has and I like the idea of having this little sitting area as you come in you can have a chat with people.

*Good, What do you consider are the benefits for you personally as a tutor at the Centre?*

Well I've just mentioned one, the ability to have better projection, the acoustics are much the same there was no problems in the old place because it was so small; probably the seating accommodation for the people you're talking to is better so that you can arrange it so their either all round a table or you can out them in rows but I think the rooms are a bit bigger to some extent than the old place, this just makes it so much easier.

*How do you feel about the centre now that its been relocated?*

I don't think I've changed actually, it's about the same distance from home

*Talking about culture now, what do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

That's difficult (pause). I'm probably answering this more through my wife's eyes rather than my own. Since I've been swatting for my exams she's been doing my Italian for me on Thursday afternoons and she is just so much more impressed now by the general friendship and how people are relaxed, how this is affected by the location but it's just, in our Italian group there's been a lot of new people that have come and this sort of particularly in a conversation class is very important. I think being adjacent to the library is going to attract more people they're much more aware of it so yeah I think these are all going to be beneficial

*And how does this fit in with what you teach at the centre or what you taught in the past, how do you feel it is going to be benefit?*

Apart from the fact that I did a thing on aboriginal art and at the end of the couple of talks I also had a guided tour, which unfortunately I scheduled for Tuesday when I should've known better because that's the day the gallery is closed (Laughs). I rather screwed things up. People responded and took it easily and made arrangements so I think this is again part of the volunteer organization culture, people just accept that you screw up.

*Ok the relocation to the new premises has created some change, how much change has it created and what kind of impact do you think this has had on the centre and on the members?*

I thought I'd feel a bit of nostalgia for the old place but I haven't and I haven't heard of anybody else muttering about it either. I think just the general fact that it's much more light and the old place was probably spotless clean, but this looks cleaner, just the more space just makes you feel a little bit better about the place.

*Do you think anything's been lost in the move?*

No I don't think so, as long as we keep the Mill as our symbol

*Is there anything that really stands out that has been gained in this relocation? Is there one thing that sort of slaps in you the face and says right this has had a huge impact?*

It sounds silly but the people on the desk seem to be much more... they are the same people they just seem much more excited about it, its funny.

*So there's a bit of excitement there?*

Something like that.

*OK I'm going to talk about professionalism, and what I want to know, now that we've moved, do you think that the centre has become more professional in catering for what you teach?*

Well again, the equipment has made it much better as far as I am concerned, the Italian conversation class I don't think has had any significant changes. I'm still allowed to have a guide dog come in, a training guide dog, which was probably the only guide dog that was ever coming back to service speaking Italian. I think, I did offer to take introduction to Japan because I lectured in Japanese business and I forget what the other thing was at Murdoch, more or less Japanese culture and I have done the language and it was just a general introduction language, culture and the whole lot, but there was only 2 takers so it never happened so I don't think this has anything to do with the centre or just the wrong topic.

*It might've been the wrong time because we were already offering Korean and other things and*

Yep, well it wasn't a language it was just Japanese culture and just a basic introduction and maybe I think it was a series of lectures, it was probably too long.

*Well we can advertise is again and see what happens. So in regards to the professionalism of the centre is there anything that it can do to improve, improve its professionalism?*

I don't know I haven't been looking at the other subjects as much so probably, no I think I've got a too limited scope to make a meaningful comment on that.

*Not a problem, what's your understanding of the term 'brand', if you brand something what is your understanding of the term brand, for instance does the Centre have a brand as such, and if so what do you think it is?*

Again this is a little hard to judge because being associated with anything now you don't get any impact, I think it probably does, and its probably again a word of mouth thing that people start talking about what their doing there with their friends and this sort of easy-going and the fact that it is voluntary, I'm just trying to think of one of the other learning centre's where I was asked to give some talks, much the same sort of feeling, I think these volunteer organizations/ learning centre's have sort of a similarity maybe we could interchange more with other learning centre's

*We've tried that, the problem that has been in the past is a lot of the learning centre's have crèches attached to them and do things during the school holidays for children. We surveyed our members, who have decided that they don't want to be involved with children so its quite hard to sort of marry 2 learning Centres up unless they've got exactly the right kind of relationship. We can cross promote courses and activities, However, at the (Name) Centre they're short of adults, they only run about half a dozen adult classes whereas we fully concentrate on adults and they run most of their centre on the children and school holiday programs. They make a fortune out of that, I think they raise about \$250,000 a year from the afterschool care and during school holiday programs, which would be a great bonus for us, but then it means the adults can't use it during those holiday times. So before you just talked about, you said something about the mill and keeping the mill, would you consider that was our brand or logo or...*

Yes I think, for me, I identify with that...

*You do?*

Yeah....

*Well you'll be happy to know we are keeping the logo of the mill*

Good!

*We are trying to update it so we get more of a modern theme to it*

Modern?

*Well, to get away from the sepia and the cream colours and make it a bit brighter and a bit more, I guess, attractive to different audiences. So I'd like to talk now about volunteers and motivation, why do you still volunteer?*

Force of habit

*How many courses have you done this year since we've moved, how many...*

I've only done the Italian

*As a tutor?*

No, no, as a victim (laughs)

*Have you done any as a tutor this year at the new centre?*

No.

*Apart from the aboriginal art one?*

I think that one was, yeah that was at the new centre, yeah. And that was the one that was taken into the other learning centre, wherever it was, somebody asked if I could do it there as well

*So have you got any plans for next year, for 2012?*

Well what I'm doing at the art gallery is I'm training the new guides there on indigenous art and that will be 4 sessions so I mean that's the sort of thing you could easily do here

*That would make a nice talk - training volunteers and training guides for at the gallery.*

Yeah I think that its going to be hard on the training team so I always avoid it because I haven't basically agreed with their training methods so I sort of shied away from it but I'm going to train a particular aspect

*I'm sure you could find something very interesting to talk about. So how long have you in your whole career been a volunteer?*

How old am I...hmmmm... since about the age of 7 - I think

*Wow. So nearly all your adult life then you've been a volunteer?*

Nearly all my life, and I still remember the first thing cause I learned and my mother was president of the organisation.

*If somebody throws the word volunteer at you what do you immediately conjure up in your mind, what do you understand by the term 'volunteer'?*

I'm becoming very cynical so probably somebody's work that it not paid for and therefore not appreciated!

*I understand what you mean, I know where you're coming from. What other organizations do you volunteer for at the moment?*

At the moment the art gallery, the zoo, neighbourhood watch....

*Yeah I'm in there myself, neighbourhood watch*

I think that's enough at the moment, for me.

*So how many hours a week would that take up of your time?*

The zoo is 2 days and 2 appearances a month, the gallery is similar, so probably about a day a week

*One whole day a week?*

Roughly, it might be a bit more, a day and a half a week, maybe 2 days a week

*So about 16 hours?*

Yeah something like that

*What's in it for you as a volunteer? What do you get out of it when you volunteer your time? As much as it's a force of habit. What I'm trying to get at is do you still get that sort of buzz when you're doing something as a volunteer?*

Well it's.... neighbourhood watch for instance, first of all yeah I thought I was doing something really worth while until the Council said it's a waste of time doing all this and we don't want to print the things and I lost half of my distributors and just general feeling of depression has affected me too and so I'm doing that now because its only a couple of hours a month or something like that. The zoo I think is much approaching the same thing because it's getting a bit repetitive and the only reason I went there was because I live opposite the zoo but I'm now taking on snake handling as well, I need something there to get me going again.

*So a bit of a challenge then?*

Yeah - a bit of a challenge yeah

*Don't get eaten by the snake!*

(Laughs) that's right too. That's the question people ask, have you been bitten by a snake and my answers always, not yet. I'm probably going to lose that now.

*What - snake handling?*

Yeah snake handling, because yesterday I had to give a presentation and I had a little Stimson python and was saying it's a boy and so many years old and this one hasn't been named so would you all like to suggest a name, and they were all mucking around and they said what about Slippery Pete, so when that gets back to the authorities they'll think that's my last presentation.

*(Laughs) I think that's excellent, I mean look get the conversations going, get people talking and interested and engaged. So what buzz do you get out of the art gallery? Your love of art or something else?*

I think my wife and I were looking for something a bit different and so we went along and tried there and probably the love of art because after our training they said well you don't know anything about art you better find something out that nobody else knows anything about and concentrate on that until you're confident, so I opted for indigenous, which is not aboriginal, again.

*We've gone backwards, I can't keep up with it all*

And now I can't get out of it because nobody else can do it

*And you know so much, you've over educated yourself!*

I quite enjoy that and in fact this afternoon there is a session on employment for aboriginal people, but I'm not going to pay \$1000 for the day and I don't know if I'm going to get the \$500, I'll ring up and see if they have sponsorships.

*The City offers a \$1000 community grant what they call a quick turn over grant, you just go onto the website, the City Community Development. If you want to talk to anybody talk (name) or (name) and they'll let you know, if you just say this is what I'm thinking of doing, if it's going to benefit the City then they're very into indigenous programs at the moment, you might get the \$1000!*

This is one of the things that I probably only need \$200 if I can get that, so annoyed I didn't know this guy who has just become a politician lived in the area, I mean we could've tapped his knowledge.

*Absolutely, who was that?*

I think it was federal parliament, from Fremantle but he now lives in South Perth, I forget his name

*I live next door to (name), son of (name)> He lives next door to me, and I know the Mayor, she's very friendly with the guy up in, what's his name, the young aboriginal guy that's just up on Albany Hwy, I can't remember his name, but anyway, look I reckon, in fact I actually got the forms if you want me to email them to you when I get home.*

Yeah, why not. It's next week so I have to do something quickly, but I'll ring the people first and see.

*Alright, well ring those people at the City*

No, I mean, people or the organizers

*You might even get it retrospectively cause if its going to benefit, if you can word it so it benefits the community*

I think I sort of happen to believe in work

*Of course, absolutely, yeah, and I reckon it would be a perfect thing to do and for the City to get involved in it, go for it!*

I worked in a mining company and when I came over here we got involved in Indigenous art... do I know any aboriginal people? No, but what about all the people on the Island? They weren't aboriginal they were my mates.

*I know, I know, it's like that isn't it, but try it because I'm sure it'll be something worth your while and you know if they are going to pay for it, go for it!*

*So tell (name) that I sent you, cause she has been really good to us at the Centre, she lets me know if there are any grants that we might be eligible for she'll flip them over to me and say look I think you might be able to get this because... and I'll have a look at them and do them. We got an adult learners week grant last year, \$5000 to teach people about social media, I've just put in for a Telstra grant now to teach people how to use their mobile phone to their best ability and look at cyber safety and you know how to stop your number being accessed by people you don't want to, all that kind of thing, so she's very good value, she's lovely. What motivates you as a volunteer?*

I guess I've just always done it so I have no idea.

*So in opposition to that, what demotivates you?*

That's easy, at the zoo they get us to fill in this form saying what our problems are and do we need somebody to tell us when we're past our prime, I can't remember what's in it and it was supposed to be self assessed and hand it in so having read all the questions I said I had self assessed I said I can't see why anybody else has to judge my self assessment and next time I have to fill in this form will be the last time!

*So what would you call that?*

I think it's sort of over regulation sometimes

*Okay, I can use that as an example. And going back to the Centre how do you feel you're treated as either a tutor or as a member*

Fantastically, couldn't be better.

*You're happy with what happens? With the communication that comes through and all that kind of thing?*

Very happy, even to the point where people take it home and they say g'day and meeting people you didn't know before

*It is a nice, friendly place. What has the Centre got that might be different to anywhere else that you volunteer that would attract you to volunteer there? Does it have anything or is it just same-old same-old?*

No I don't think it is, I guess it's a more relaxed atmosphere

*Would you consider volunteering to do anything else at the Centre in the future?*

Probably, but not in this direction

*No, I mean as a tutor or that kind of thing*

Yeah, probably again I would do the cross relationship, just thinking now we've had this Guggenheim thing and did a whole heap of stuff on that, I have presented what is in the Guggenheim and what we should be looking for and then follow it up as a guided tour

*That would be fantastic and if there's anything else coming up at the art gallery people are interested in going and you could tell them what to look for.*

And do a guided tour?

*That would be great. Is there anything that the Centre can do better in your eyes?*

Well, after this morning I need somebody to tell me the fundamental stuff like using a computer

*What do you want to know? Have you done a computer course at the Centre?*

I did yes

*A long time ago?*

What did I do recently, the other one, with excel

*Oh yeah?*

Which I still can't work, I just did the fundamentals...

*I know it's so frustrating you just get into using one version and then they bring out another version and you just have to start all over again and its hard.*

My computer has suddenly stopped sending replies to and it comes up that it puts it into the draft, and then I go into the drafts and try to send it from there and there's another thing that puts it into drafts and then this morning I went and did the same thing again and it sent this time

*OK it sounds like you need to look at your settings under tools - what are you using - outlook?*

Yeah

*Go up to tools on your top bar and then go into where it says messages send and receive and pull the tab down, you might have inadvertently - don't ask me why sometimes they tick themselves - ticked a little box that says always keep a copy in my drafts folder. Do you know where I am talking about?*

Yes I do – thanks.

*No, Thank you for your time.*

Interview end

## Interview TRB3 post

*Okay, so for the tape it's Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2011. I'm speaking to Tutor Respondent 3 This is the second interview about the relocation of the Centre do I have your permission to tape this interview?*

Yes you do.

*Thank you. What I want to find it is what the changes have occurred for you as a tutor at the Centre, seeing as we have now moved and we've been in it for nearly 12 months, which is great, and so I've got four lots of questions for you. The first lot is about the centre itself, the second is about the culture of the people in the centre, the third is about the professionalism of the centre – whether it's changed or not – and the fourth lot of questions is about motivation of either you as a tutor, the members, or the volunteers. So to start off with the centre, could you tell me what do you consider are now the benefits – the different benefits – for the members of the Centre since the move?*

Benefits I think are the extra parking, which I think is great. It's nice and clean and new, which is nice. Against it I find all the technology is a bit of a problem, you know you can't switch off a light and you can't open a window. I find that a bit frustrating. I mean, well, I think that's it I think. I mean everything is nice and knew there and pleasant, you know. We got all the equipment we need and so on.

*And in comparison to the old centre?*

Yeah, well, like I'm saying it's much nicer but, like what I'm saying there's a lot of parking, which is better. I find it frustrating I can't open a window or turn off a light.

*I agree. And now what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor, have they changed?*

Yeah well I suppose I've got a slightly bigger area, which is better. The room really wasn't very suitable for oil painting, it's better for watercolour because it's cleaner, but you know if you're doing oil painting you've got to have an easel and space which the rooms really are not big enough to have a model and easel's and so on.

*Right.*

So from that angle I don't think it was very successful. Watercolour is more successful because you know we all just work on a table and there are plenty of tables there.

*Right. So, overall, how do you feel about the centre relocation?*

Well it's much better obviously than the old house. I mean before I was teaching in the garage there, which was really jolly hot in the summer.

*Yes, and cold in the winter. Okay so we'll go onto the second lot of questions now about the culture. Do you consider the culture of the Centre has changed?*

No, I don't think so, and we've got the same people there and, no I think the cultures the same. The same pleasant sort of people and same sort of students. No, no, the culture's the same.

*Okay, and how does this fit in with what you teach? With the students you teach? Have you seen a change in the culture of the students?*

No, not at all. No, no, no.

*Okay, the relocation has obviously created a lot of change in many, many aspects of the centre, do you see this as having an impact on the centre and the culture of the members?*

Well I think it has become more popular, hasn't it? More people are involved. I think they're running more classes there too, so more things are going on there and the facilities are generally better, you know especially for showing film and the computer room is much better, isn't it?

*Yeah. Do you think that we've lost anything by moving?*

No, not really, other than I can't open a window. Or turn off a light.

*Do you think anything has been gained?*

Everything has been gained, you know, it's much more pleasant.

*So we've had more gains than losses?*

Absolutely, yeah.

*I'm now going to talk about professionalism. The relocation, has that altered the professionalism of the people who work at the centre, or the centre itself?*

No, I think they're still the same people, I think they're still doing great job. No, no, it hasn't changed I don't think.

*Okay, is there anything you think they could do to improve?*

Not really, no. Only to let me open a window, and turn off a light.

*We're working on that.*

No, I mean, the structure is the structure you can't really change anything anyway can you. It is as it is.

*Do you think that the Centre has retained its brand or its identity?*

I think so, yes, I think it has become more popular. It's much more central too, to people, isn't it really? And the parking makes such a big difference. You know that was always such a hassle in the other centre. People used to have to try find something on the other... I'm sure it put a lot of people off actually coming to when you can't find anywhere to park.

*No, that's true. If I asked you what the brand of the Centre was, what would you say?*

The brand? What do you mean by that?

*How is it identified, how's it recognised?*

Well I think it's just basically people are always looking to do something interesting, and they can learn something, to be with other people which is important, and I think that the bus trips are really good, I have to tell you, they're really popular the bus trips they organise.

*They seem to get full up quite quickly.*

Very quickly, yeah. I think they seem to have more in the classes, don't they? The classes are quite successful.

*Yeah. So if there was a logo or something that identified the Centre, what do you think it could be?*

That's a good question, a logo, I don't know I'd have to think about that. It's got its title, which is probably enough in itself. It is the 'centre' which is, what is, isn't it? We all hope to go there and learn something.

*That is quite true. Okay, we're going to go onto motivation. Why do you volunteer your services?*

I just enjoy being with people and I enjoy doing watercolour.

*How long have you worked at the Centre?*

Oh, quite sometime. I can't honestly remember, but quite a few years I think. I honestly can't remember, quite a few years.

*We'll have to check that one out.*

Yeah, check it out. But a few years, I'm not really sure.

*Okay. What do you understand about the term 'volunteer'?*

You're just doing something you enjoy for very little money, well no money.

*That's true. Do you work for any other organisations that you're a volunteer?*

No I don't, no, no. Well I used to but, you know, I used to be secretary for the watercolours society, but I don't anymore.

*About how many hours a week do you volunteer?*

Well I'm only there Monday afternoon.

*About 3 or 4 hours?*

Yeah, about 3 hours.

*What's in it for you?*

What's in it for me? Well I just enjoy being with people, I try to make it a fun class and I guess it's passing on your knowledge to somebody else basically.

*You've moved this term from oil painting to watercolours, has that had an impact?*

Yes it has, there seems to be more people doing watercolour than oil for some reason, yeah, hardly anybody was interested in oil for some reason at all. I mean I'm only an oil painter to be very truthful, but

no, they seem to like the watercolour. It's the same as our watercolour society, every month we have people wanting to join that, every month.

*That's amazing.*

Yeah, it is. Well we just had an exhibition in Fremantle, it was the most paintings we ever had, I think it was something like 237 paintings I think in the exhibition.

*Excellent. You should bring a poster and put it up at the centre and encourage people to go. What kinds of things motivate you? Down at the centre, what kinds of things motivate you?*

I don't know, just being there really. It's nice and clean and pleasant people. Everything's new isn't it?

*And what kind of things would demotivate you? What would make you feel like...*

Like you can't be bothered anymore. Well if nobody was really interested, if nobody turned up to the class.

*Can I ask you how you are treated by the volunteers?*

Very pleasant. I can't think of anybody that's awful.

*Are they helpful?*

Yeah they are really. I think they're trying to do their best.

*And the members that come to your class?*

Yes, they're all pleasant people at the moment, I'm getting on okay.

*No obstructionists...*

No they're all people who really want to dabble in a bit of watercolour really. How far they'll get you don't know, but...

*No protégés on the horizon.*

Well we haven't actually started yet and last week was our first week of course and so I was really just giving them the material we're going to need and the colours and brushes and that kind of stuff, but next Monday we will actually start talking about colours. We'll get into it next week.

*Okay, and what does the learning centre have that attracts you to it?*

I just think what it stands for really, people learning something and people being together. I think otherwise we all become so isolated, don't we, in our little homes sitting on our computers. I think it's a way of people being together, especially like the bus trips – they all love them. I think a lot of the classes are doing better this year aren't they?

*Much better.*

You know, so, people really, as you get older its nice to be doing something, keeping your brain active as you get older otherwise what happens, you sit at home just watching your TV or eating your cakes or something, don't you?

*Yep.*

At least it gets you out of the house, and gets you with other people and gets you doing something positive, I think.

*Yep. Will you continue to volunteer at the centre?*

If they need me. I mean I need to have somebody in the class, don't I? Isn't it 5 or 8 or something? So assuming that im needed, I shall turn up, yes.

*Is there anything the centre can do to help you along, or to provide for you?*

No, I don't think so. I've got the room and enough tables and chairs, I don't think there's anything I absolutely need really. No, it's quite sufficient.

*So you're quite happy?*

Yeah, at the moment. I haven't had any complaints yet.

*But you'll let us know when you do.*

Yeah, I'll give you a ring.

*Thank you*

## Interview TRB4 post

*This is an interview TRB4 on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, and do I have your permission to tape this?*

Yes you do

*Thank you, so what I'm trying to find out is what your feelings are now that we've moved from the old to the new. I'm going to do it in four sections. I'm going to talk about the centre, the culture of the centre, we're going to talk about the professionalism of the centre and we're going to talk about the volunteers of the centre. So what do you consider are the benefits for members now that we've moved?*

Oh, countless. Countless benefits, primarily the parking...

(noise in background)

*What do you consider are the benefits now that we've moved?*

Countless, so where do I start. The parking comes to mind immediately, no longer do we have problems parking and parking fines that we had in the past. Ample parking is a great benefit to all the members.

*And what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor now we're at the new centre?*

Again, countless. One, for me as a tutor, having large classrooms so we can increase our number of students. Number two is the variety of the rooms that we can combine the groups. As a teacher, number 3, I just think the variety of the rooms and variety of courses that we can offer students now speaks for itself.

*How do you feel overall about the centre now that it's relocated?*

Over the moon. I never actually anticipated for it to have such an enormous positive effect. I had an inkling that it was going to be vastly different from the little cottage but the benefits are countless.

*Talking about the culture now, what do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

To me the culture - and looking at the students coming through the door - its basically baby boomers culture. I think it's a new gathering ground for baby boomers to share knowledge and experience.

*And how does this fit in with what you teach?*

The very same reason, the baby boomers today can spoil themselves, treat themselves, doing the things they couldn't do in the past - mainly because they were working or looking after children, grandchildren - now they escape from all three and come and exercise their minds doing what they enjoy.

*The relocation to the new premises has created some changes. How much change has it created and how much has this had an impact on the centre and it's culture?*

There has been little change in the culture, but I'm actually seeing a younger group walking through the door now, who also see adult learning as primarily a desire to learn. At the previous place I sensed that it was more a gathering for senior citizens which held educational and social aspects. I sense this is true of newer and younger members too.

*Has anything been lost?*

Not in my opinion it hasn't. Maybe there is some nostalgia for the old place, but apart from that no.

*Has anything been gained?*

Enormous gains have come through relocating to a large centre. We now have more teachers interested in sharing their knowledge in a variety of fields, something we couldn't offer the students before.

*Looking at the professionalism of the centre now, now we've moved, is the centre more professional to cater what you teach, and if so why?*

The centre is certainly more professional in its organisation, and I am able to source my material much better than before. Eventually I hope to have included in our growing library a variety of Italian books that my students can also enjoy. Currently at the Library there is a limited choice of Italian books.

*Can it do anything to improve?*

In my opinion, yes it can certainly help me source Italian books – pre-loved Italian books. That would certainly help me enormously, that's on my to do list for 2012.

*Has the relocation changed anything in particular for you in a professional sense?*

I find that the volunteers – a number of volunteers – are now interested in learning more from a being more organised point of view. Some volunteers were a little frightened to tackle issues such as photocopying, technology etc, so that sometimes it was a little bit difficult. But all in all I think the volunteers are certainly more professional and the new volunteers we are getting on board are certainly very keen to be getting involved.

*Now looking at the PR and marketing part of the centre, what is your understanding of the term "brand"?*

Branding for me is what the adult learning centre needs to have to be recognized in the broader and local markets.

*Okay, so branding for you means recognition?*

Yes, recognition, image, reputation, standing in its community.

*Do you think that the Centre has a brand?*

Yes it does, and that is why it is now widely known in our community, but perhaps not outside the community.

*What do you think that brand is?*

The Centre is the brand. We can certainly expand on it. There's been talk about putting the word "adult" in its full title - not that to me is going to make an enormous difference - but I think that we are going to continue to work with the Centre's name as a brand because it is what we are known by and enhances our reputation as a caring sharing organisation.

*Going on now to motivation and volunteers. Can I ask you why you volunteer at the centre?*

I volunteer at the centre because I live in this area and I have a great affinity with this community and this area and I want to contribute my time to something I really enjoy.

*How long have you been a volunteer?*

Going on to 5 years.

*What do you understand about the term "volunteer"?*

To me the term "volunteer" in the genuine context is the giving of yourself.

*What other organizations do you volunteer for?*

(Name of organisation) with their special learning needs with primarily adults.

*And how many hours a week in total do you volunteer?*

5 hours a week.

*The big question: what's in it for you, what do you get out of it?*

What I get out of it, is just the pleasure of meeting the people that I'm involved with and seeing the pleasure they're getting from learning, something that they thought they could never accomplish.

*Can I ask, what motivates you? What gives you that buzz, what motivates you?*

What motivates me is the pleasure I get in watching and listening to people who step beyond what they believe they were capable of doing.

*What demotivates you?*

What demotivates me is negativity from the volunteers or the students themselves when they express, "I can't make it" or "I can't do it" is beyond me, so that demotivates me.

*How do you feel you are treated by the volunteers and the members at the Centre?*

I feel like a family member, and to me that's very, very special.

*What does the Centre do that has attracted you to volunteer there? Why there and not somewhere else?*

It's in walking distance, its location, if you're volunteering at a place you don't want to be spending all your spare cash travelling somewhere, and more importantly of course is that I've now lived in this area for 10 years, I see myself as never moving from this area so it's important to be to be active and be part of this community.

*Will you continue to volunteer?*

Yes I will, I will always find time to volunteer and give back to my community.

*And is there anything else the Centre can do for you to motivated you as a volunteer?*

Continue what they do best and continue to recruit positive thinking adults, people, anyone who wants to contribute. Continue to recruit more and more volunteers with the enthusiasm that I have in becoming involved in this little gem in a corner of the world.

*Okay, thanks (name), that's the end of the interview.*

## Interview with TRB5 post

*Hello, for the record would you please verify that you give permission for me to tape this interview?*

Yes that's fine

*Great! Now I'd like to just let you know about the format for this interview, I'm going to ask you some questions about The Centre now that it has relocated and please feel free to ask me to explain if you don't understand where I am coming from.*

*Now, What do you consider are the benefits for Centre members now that we have moved?*

Well, the Benefits must be better furniture, brighter rooms, bigger rooms. More resources such as the automatic projectors and screens and other technology. There are also more topics to select from like our cooking demonstrations and much better parking.

*OK, and what do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor at the new centre?*

Well, all of what I have previously mentioned impact on the lecturers too. The room dedicated to the staff is a haven for me to prepare my lessons and I also appreciate the lockers which have been provided so we can leave our stuff behind.

*So how do you feel about the centre now it has relocated?*

Hmm, I like the relocation and I feel much happier belonging to an impressive institution which is what it really has become.

*That's nice to know, so OK, now I am going to ask you about the Culture at Centre. What do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

This is a difficult word to be precise about, but for me I would say that our Centre's culture is dependent on two facets - one we offer educational and recreational activities for adults and two, we try to stimulate some kind of socialisation among our members through the activities we offer such as talks, excursions, events etc.

*OK, and so how do you feel this fits in with what you teach?*

Well, for the most part I find that all of this fits in quite well with my methods of teaching adults and I try to make teaching a sense of enjoyment as well as learning – you know have some fun as well as the have-to-stuff.

*So the relocation to new premises has created some change – how much change has it created and how has this had an impact on the centre and its members' culture?*

Well, the changes have already been talked about, but the relocation has certainly given us a more professional presentation and feeling. Our volunteers have felt this as well as the teachers. We have graduated from a "tin-pot" shack to a recognised institution.

*So what do you think may have been lost in all this change?*

What has been lost? Well, some might say a closeness between members, but I certainly don't feel it. If that is indeed so then I suggest we have more time when we can gather as members and enjoy each others' company like we did on Melbourne Cup day, have bbq's in our open area, evening soirees, more outings. Maybe we could establish a committee that would look into this sort of involvement?

*Good ideas, so on the other hand what do you think may have been gained?*

What has been gained? Well one short answer to that, we have come of age and we have in many instances put South Perth on the map.

*OK, thanks for those insights, I'm now going to talk about Professionalism, and now that we have moved to our new building, in your opinion is the centre more professional to cater for what you teach? If so why and if not what can it do to improve?*

The answer to this question is YES. It could be the result of a number of things. The ambiance around us....the extra facilities and resources....the increase in our numbers.... the extra subjects we are offering, even the fantastic site we now occupy in contrast to our old premises, not forgetting the attention we receive from the City and other groups/institutions around us. Improvements? Well we can always improve. We must never rest on our laurels....we must seek new members through a number of channels and teachers and members should all be given ways to communicate to us ways of improvement.

*OK. Now what is your understanding of the term 'Brand'?*

I'm not sure what you mean here – are you suggesting that a brand is a trade-mark, and how does this apply to us?

*Well, does the Centre have a brand, a trademark, something which differentiates us from other similar groups?*

Are you referring to our logo...The Old Mill?

*Well is that what you consider our brand?*

Oh, right, well I don't think we need a brand as I understand its meaning. I recall our old motto -caring for and sharing with our community - could this be what you had in mind?

*Well it could be if you think this is what differentiates us from other similar groups.*

I didn't think very much of that motto as I don't think its message is valid for what we do, and we have really gone beyond our local community.

*So do you think Centre needs a brand, logo or motto?*

We need to think more about this and involve as many members as possible.

*Thanks now I want to talk about motivation and volunteering, why do you volunteer?*

I volunteered because I wanted to belong to a very special group, and I felt I had some valuable experience to offer.

*OK, and so how long have you been a volunteer?*

Probably.... Well... I think that I have been a volunteer for about 7 Years now.

*And what do you understand about the term volunteer?*

Well to me, to volunteer means to give your services, your time, your experience freely but with commitment.

*Right and what other organisations do you volunteer for?*

In the past I have volunteered for organisations such as National Seniors, Learn Write Now, a political party, the Centre, some sporting groups such as cycling for over 55's and have held executive positions in all of them.

*Wow you have been busy, how many hours per week do you do volunteer work?*

Currently I do six hours per week for the Centre, I used to do much more but I'm cutting down

*So the \$40,000 question, What's in it for you?*

What's in it for me is the satisfaction I get from doing something I like to do and am able to do so far.

*Right and so what motivates you?*

People motivate me, the people I come in contact with at the Centre, eager to learn is a great motivator.

*And what de-motivates you?*

De-motivation comes in when I feel that I can no longer offer what I have been doing to mine and everybody else's satisfaction.

*That's understandable especially with your background in teaching. OK so off on another tangent, let's talk about how feel you are treated by volunteers and members.*

Ah, well I have always been treated most favourably and pleasantly by our members, our volunteers do a great job and I appreciate all they do.

Good, that's good to hear and what does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?

Well I think that this answer is self-evident from all what I have said, but I would like to say that I have found a second family at Centre.

*So will you continue to volunteer at the Centre?*

(Laughs) I will continue to volunteer in some capacity wherever it is offered, if I can't teach in French or Italian anymore.

*So what else can the Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer and entice you to stay?*

Now you're asking....but really I don't think there is nothing else that Centre can do to motivate me as a volunteer, I'll do what I can for as long as I can.

*Thank you for your time.*

Interview ends

## **Interview with TRB7 post**

*What do you consider are the benefits for Centre members now that we have moved?*

The location, the building and everything in it. Room to move, room to grow.

*What do you consider are the benefits for you as a tutor at the new centre?*

The ability to do more things, create an environment where people have room to broaden their horizons and being modern look more professional

*How do you feel about the centre now it has relocated?*

Positive, very positive. I think the members will enjoy being in a modern building with all mod cons and ability to move around, have a friendly chat without having to stand up against the wall or being ushered out of the classroom for the next lot to come in.

*What do you consider is the culture of the Centre?*

The culture is one of sharing and caring. For a while now we have used the motto 'Where great things happen' and this is so true of the Centre, because it is made possible by excellent volunteers, tutors and members. The people make the culture, who they are, where they have come from, their beliefs, values and principles.

*How does this fit in with what you teach?*

Well I teach because I care about giving information or knowledge so in a way I am sharing and caring, and a lot of the other tutors feel the same.

*The relocation to new premises has created some change – how much change has it created and how has this had an impact on the centre and its members' culture?*

I think the biggest change is for the committee who have had to evaluate what the Centre does, what it stands for and how it needs to do more such as opening longer hours and being more professional in dealing with people. With an influx of members we have had an overwhelming increase in paperwork and are trying to computerize everything except there is some resistance to using computers at the front desk. Technology has changed a lot of things like automatic projection and fancy photocopiers which do colour, double sided and A3. People don't like change.

*What has been lost?*

Only the negatives have been lost such as dreary rooms, lack of space, shabbiness of the centre that no amount of cleaning could fix, dim lighting, cold in winter, too hot in summer.

*What has been gained?*

Modernity, technology, ease of moving equipment about like the fold up tables with wheels on them, light efficient and accident proof. A pride in our new premises which wasn't really there at the old place.

*Now we have moved is the centre more professional to cater for what you teach?*

*a) If so why?*

Yes of course! (laughs) it looks so much better and people feel they are getting value for their money now, not paying for being in a 'dive'. There is even a resource office for me to use a computer, printer and photocopier, much more professional than before.

*b) If not what can it do to improve?*

The future will always bring new technology so it is up to the Centre to create funds so that they are never left behind.

*Has the relocation changed either of your answers above?*

No, the relocation has been good all round and for everyone – the members, volunteers and tutors. The only problem is our address, people can't find us and we are a bit lost under the City of South Perth.

*What is your understanding of the term 'Brand'?*

Brand means reputation, image, recognition, integrity – something that identifies the Centre.

*Do you think the Centre has a brand? If so what is it?*

Well it used to be the logo of the old mill but as we are not in the vicinity anymore it should be changed to something more appropriate. Our brand is really what we do, we are unique and specialised.

*If not – does it need one?*

Yes, I think for visibility and identity. We need to maintain our image that is one of caring and sharing, if we have to have a graphic to depict that then I guess we should start looking at what would say that.

*Why do you volunteer?*

Because I 'm an all-round nice guy? Because I want to put something back in the community and I enjoy meeting people and sharing my experiences and knowledge with them.

*How long have you been a volunteer?*

About 5 years here but about 10 years in other organisations sitting on committees etc

*What do you understand about the term volunteer?*

You do it for love not money!

*What other organizations do you volunteer for?*

Schools, local community and not for profit organisations

*How many hours per week do you do volunteer work?*

Anywhere between 4 and 12 hours a week

*What's In It For You?*

Self satisfaction and smugness – no really I feel good about myself and hope I can help others feel the same way about themselves too.

*What motivates you?*

Life, energy, watching the light bulb go on when something clicks. Watching people enjoy themselves and learn something at the same time.

*What de-motivates you?*

Negative people. There is no such word as can't – won't or don't want to – fine but can't is not in my vocabulary.

*How are you treated by volunteers/members?*

With great respect and friendliness and sometimes fear! No not really, they couldn't be more helpful and amiable.

*What does the Centre have that attracts you to volunteer there?*

People. Pure and simple, I love talking to people and listening to their stories – everyone is unique and I am thrilled to be part of it all.

*Will you continue to volunteer?*

You betcha! For as long as I can and for however long they can find something for me to do.

*What else can the Centre do to motivate you as a volunteer?*

Look to the future, be proactive and above all be brave enough to step out and embrace new ideas, thoughts and activities.

*Thank you.*