

Glyde-In Birthday Speech – Mal Christison, Chair

Good afternoon everyone. May I offer you all a warm welcome to our **Glyde-In 40th Birthday Party!!** We particularly thank our guests from the Town of East Fremantle and Linkwest. Thank you to Lesley Sylvester and Mike Murray for the Glyde-In song, sung to start these proceedings

We begin by stating that Glyde-In is proud to acknowledge the Whadjuk Nyoongar people as the traditional owners of these lands and waters.

Glyde-In commenced as a small group of enthusiastic young women keen to create a community learning centre in East Fremantle. The idea began in 1981 when Maureen Wright, who held the position of Recreation Officer in the town council, contacted **Pam Jones** to ask if she could help set up an organisation similar to Tresillian in Nedlands. Pam had recently moved to East Freo from Nedlands and Maureen knew that Pam had experience at Tresillian.

Pam knew no one in East Freo, so she advertised for like-minded people and had a good response. Maureen suggested the name Glyde-In and arranged for the council to provide our lovely cottage for a peppercorn rent. The cottage and the gardens were in disarray but the kitchen was functional. The Glyde-In Community Learning Centre commenced by offering cooking and patchwork sewing classes. Pam was our first coordinator and Colleen Wallace our first Assistant Coordinator.

The women had a variety of ethnic backgrounds so each began teaching traditional cooking. Anne Marie Metcalf taught French cooking and Leda Ottaviano taught Italian. Others taught Swedish and Greek. The group members agreed to attend all classes which made them viable.

These were young women with children so they set up a crèche on the original back veranda run by Olive Harding. I understand there are some of those original 'young mums' with us here today; please raise your hands. Sadly we are prevented by legislation to provide this service today.

Maureen helped create the Glyde-In constitution that still guides our Management Committee today. There were no computers in those days so the Town provided typing and copying services.

A strong group of volunteers formed around the centre and began rebuilding the cottage and the garden. Jono Farmer supported the Glyde as a councillor and then, with many others, as a dedicated volunteer. Our Birthday Committee has set up a photographic display in our front room of the early days. We thank Steve Grant from the Fremantle Herald for his help in finding archival materials for our display.

About 20 years ago the centre was struggling to operate as an entirely volunteer organisation. In what was described to me as a last-ditch effort, the committee appointed Ann Reeves as a full-time paid coordinator. Ann Reeves and Ann Edwards reviewed the finances and realised that the centre was unviable without a significant increase in financial support from our Council. They must have put a strong case because our Council increased funding substantially and Glyde was able to grow into our current form.

Unfortunately, Ann sends her apologies for today and asked me to say how much she appreciates the wonderful support that she received over her 20 plus years at the Glyde. She particularly wanted me to thank the Fabulous Sandra Bantoft and Ruperto Nunez, who began his time at Glyde teaching Tai Chai.

Someone special we do have here today is Pam Jones, joint founder and our first coordinator. It is wonderful to consider that her actions, so long ago, provided the seed for our community centre. Pam has agreed to speak here today, so please give her a warm welcome.

[Pam speaks.]

We thank the Town of East Fremantle for their generous support throughout our 40-year history. Without the town's support, Glyde-In would not exist. Deputy Mayor Jenny Harrington is a good friend of the Glyde-In and is here to represent the council today, along with Cr Cliff Collinson. I ask that we show our appreciation and gratitude for our excellent council with a generous round of applause.

[Presentation of certificate of appreciation to council rep]

We also thank our Birthday Party Committee, Sandra, Jan, Tess and Nikky for doing such a wonderful job of arranging this celebration. Special thanks also go to our dedicated gardeners, Lynn, Jan, Jono, Win, Paddy, Kaye, John and Ann for making our garden such a joy. Please thank our birthday team and our gardeners.

[Presentation of flower posy to Sandra]

I will take this opportunity to remind you that our AGM will occur on Tuesday, September 28 at 2:00 pm, in the Glyde-In Garden Room. This is your opportunity to get more involved in the running of the centre. Nominations are open for new committee members.

Thank you all for your support today, we sincerely hope you enjoyed our celebration. I now propose a toast: ***to Glyde-In and the next 40 years!***