

The Bridge – bringing communities together culture strong

Tricia Currie, Northern District Community Health Service, Angela O'Donnell, Re-Igniting Community Inc, Esther Kirby, Kerang and District Aboriginal Elders

Re-Igniting Community is a unique community cultural development project that uses the arts as a catalyst to inspire people to grapple with issues of history, culture, identity and belonging.

Re-Igniting Community draws together Indigenous people, migrants and youth, arts groups, rural people and communities, businesses, government bodies, schools, church groups, state and federal agencies.

Working closely with these local people and project partners Re-Igniting Community aims to assist in pin pointing and vocalising critical social issues and provides innovative tools with which to begin developing sustainable cultural and socio-economic strategies to deal with these issues.

Re-Igniting Community involves the community in the creation of a high quality performing and multi arts event that examines their collective pasts and sets the agenda for their shared future. The project aims to build strong local networks focused on common goals whilst transferring skills and knowledge and introducing people to a positive community cultural development experience.

(Angela O'Donnell Company Manager The Torch Project)

The process of developing performance based on the real issues of the community means sensitivities **to the impact of telling the stories and being the “community recognised face” must be respected at all times.**

(Aunty Phoebe Nicholson speaks as a mum and community member.)

By building on a partnership through the Re Igniting Community project a model of community development based **in respectfully seeking permission to be in each others communities and gather the stories, tell the stories and celebrate the achievements of shared experience.**

(Aunty Esther Kirby Elder of the Kerang and District Aboriginal Community
Tricia Currie Youth and Family Team Leader Northern District Community Health Service.)

PRESENTERS

Tricia Currie has a background in teaching. Tricia has been involved in community health for the last 21 years and is currently the Youth and Family Team Leader at Northern District Community Health Service. Tricia is committed to supporting and helping the Youth of the District and has received an Excellence Award for her outstanding contribution to the promotion of health careers for young people. Tricia is actively involved and supportive in the Koori community and has had a long-term interest and passion for the Koori Culture.

Angela O'Donnell has a background in Drama Education having worked in the state secondary and tertiary sectors. She has a commitment to regional arts development with experience in community arts managing public art projects in the Geelong region, co-ordinating the Queenscliff Music Festival Youth program, and working on venue management with The Potato Shed venue on the Bellarine Peninsula. Angela has completed postgraduate study in Community and Political Theatre at Deakin University, where she focused on the issues surrounding contract employment in the state education system. In 2003 she completed her Masters in Arts Administration at RMIT focusing on the sustainability of community cultural development projects. Angela is currently the Company Manager for The Torch Project, a unique community cultural development company that works closely with communities to voice concerns through the arts and mobilise people to act on these concerns. The Torch Project is based in Victoria with a strong history of work in the region it seeks to engage Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in dialogue and action.

Esther Kirby is of the Wiradjiri and Yorta-Yorta Tribes and was born on the Aboriginal reservation in Balranald, New South Wales. She is a Respected Elder of the Kerang and District Aboriginal Association and is committed to ensuring that the Koori culture survives and strengthens. Esther is always willing to help the community members with her vast knowledge. Esther is a well-known artist and has been carving eggs since 1977 following on from her father Sam Kirby who was regarded as one of the top carvers in Australia. Esther has sold eggs throughout the world.