



Heather Duggan

Heather Duggan is renowned for her work with community groups from many cultural backgrounds. Through her primary role as Coordinator of the Springvale Neighbourhood House, Heather has influenced the lives of hundreds of individuals. More recently, as Coordinator of the Sumnation Festival, Heather has helped to spread the ideal of multicultural cooperation within the wider community.

Although Heather's training was not in community work, her personal qualities ideally suit her to this role. She has also moved many times, both as a child and an adult, and so is well aware of the adjustments required to resettle successfully in a different community.

Heather was appointed as Coordinator of the Springvale Neighbourhood House in 1987, shortly after she returned to live in Melbourne from Hopetoun, where she had been Coordinator of the Hopetoun Education Centre. The Springvale Neighbourhood House was quite a different community facility. Established as a meeting place for newly-arrived migrants, it aimed to overcome their feelings of social isolation. Its philosophy was to empower ethnic organizations with the skills and resources needed to become independent, self-help contact points for their communities.

Heather built upon the Centre's early success and today it is a thriving hub catering for 45 different groups. She was also instrumental in the establishment of the Neighbourhood Literacy Centre, which provides classes in English as a Second Language for 200 students each week.

