

SUTHERLAND SHIRE OLDER WOMEN'S NET WORK CELEBRATES 15 YEARS

The active members of the Sutherland Shire Older Women's Network celebrated the organisation's 15th anniversary last week in the typical way.

They played ukuleles, did Tai Chi, brushed up on their computer skills, paused for meditation and indulged in a spot of drumming.









Sutherland Shire Older Women's Network 15th anniversary Members of the Older Women's Network have many strings to their bows.

It was all part of a normal week of activities for them.

There was also a celebratory lunch and cutting of the birthday cake at the Lucky Dragon Restaurant at Sutherland on Thursday, May 19.

The Sutherland Older Women's Network. (OWN) Wellness Centre was established by Noreen Hewett and Barbara Burnham, who were members of OWN at the Rocks.

OWN at the Rocks was founded by Noreen and when she and Barbara came to the Sutherland Shire they researched the needs of older women, aged 55 years and over, and found that social isolation of older women was a priority.

At their instigation, Sutherland OWN started in May 2001 with a grant from the Sutherland Shire Council.

In 2001 and 2002, South East Area Health Service allocated grants to Sutherland Wellness and, as this funding ceased, Sutherland District Trade Union Club allocated successive grants each year as part of its Community Development Support Expenditure grants.

Today, Sutherland Wellness is run on a day-to-day basis by volunteers with around 150 registrations and an extensive range of activities.

Members meet twice a week at the Sutherland Seniors' Centre at 749a Old Princes Highway, Sutherland for all activities except meditation, ukulele classes and the Book Club, which are held at Sutherland's Club on East.

The centre is committed to providing a holistic approach to achieving and maintaining health and well-being through a range of affordable self-paced physical, educational and social activities.

It aims to provide a caring and supportive environment, allowing older women to make informed choices regarding their own wellbeing.

The range of activities include Tai Chi, Feldenkrais, gentle exercises, mid-strength exercises, morning teas, social outings, performing, meditation, drumming, ukulele Classes, and computer courses.

They also have regular Keeping in Touch lunches at the Karimbla Restaurant once a month.

Starting up the centre 15 years ago Noreen and Barbara drafted a mission statement.

“At our Centre we believe older women have substantial and significant life experiences to contribute and a strong desire to be socially active in a meaningful way,” they said.

“Our aim is to provide members with skills to maintain their health and wellbeing in an all-inclusive and welcoming environment.

“We operate under the philosophy ‘For older women by older women.’”

Sutherland Older Women’s Network is supported by Sutherland Shire Council, Club on East and Tradies.

More Information phone Margaret Ward on 0434 630 421 or Pat Patterson on (02) 8502 3265.