



MIGRANT
RESOURCE
CENTRE
(Southern Tasmania) Inc

MEDIA RELEASE – 92.1 FM

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“Migrant Resource Centre (Sth) Inc – a brief update
from the General Managers Office”

Interview outline with Vikki Miteff

1. **Vikki: “Cedric, I believe you have had an interesting 3 months at the migrant resource centre. You must feel like part of the furniture. Tell me some of the highlights of the first 3 months”**

Cedric:

- i. **Assembling the leadership team and leadership exercises**
- ii. **New recruit – Ann Hughes in Phoenix centre**
- iii. **Refugee Week**
- iv. **Kick start the strategic plan**
- v. **Cocktails with the Governor – William Cox**
- vi. **Meet and greet community leaders**
- vii. **Significant new business**
- viii. **New Website**

2. **Vikki: “I attended the Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony for Refugee week and saw the newspaper article. How successful was your Refugee week Celebrations”**

Cedric: Tasmania has been receiving refugees and migrants for decades. Many of these diverse ranges of communities made Tasmania their home and have enriched the culture and strengthened the economy of Tasmania. To date over 80 languages are spoken in Tasmania reflecting its multicultural base.

The refugee week celebrations were a mark of respect by the MRC, to bring our refugee communities together to share our diversity and recognize the plight of many refugees around the world.

Multicultural event on Saturday 16th June, 2007–

1. 250 people in attendance
2. Showcasing German Choir, Congolese Dance Group, Sudanese Singer Blanco Otto accompanied by guitar, Burundian Womens Dance group
3. Opening speeches from Rob Valentine, Lord Mayor of HCC and Lisa Singh on behalf of Minister Michelle O'Byrne
4. Key note speeches from myself, Marianne Potma (older Refugee community) and Kiros Zegeye (emerging communities)
5. Thanks to all involved including our funding agencies DIAC, Centacare for the loan of buses and Hobart city Council, Marisole (food).....recount making 800 meatballs on Friday afternoon with a hairnet on
6. Great event for a total net cost of \$500 – given that we fed everyone . In excess of 500 volunteer hours went into this event
7. Special thanks to my staff who donated their time as volunteers for the day and for the great team effort and spirit that they always show

**ii. Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony – International Refugee Day
Wednesday 20th June, 2007**

Traditionally, it is told that more than 1,000 years ago, a goatherd in Ethiopia's south-western highlands plucked a few red berries from some young green trees growing there in the forest and tasted them. He liked the flavour – and the feel-good effect that followed. Today those self-same berries, dried, roasted and ground, have become the world's second most popular non-alcoholic beverage after tea. The word coffee originated from the Ethiopian province where they first blossomed called "Kaffa ", where the plants still grow wild in the forest hills.

Ethiopia's coffee ceremony is an integral part of the social and cultural life in Ethiopia. An invitation to attend a coffee ceremony is considered a mark of friendship or respect and is an excellent example of Ethiopian hospitality. Performing the ceremony is almost obligatory in the presence of a visitor, whatever the time of day.

The ceremony is usually conducted by one young woman, dressed in the traditional Ethiopian costume of a white dress with coloured woven borders. The long involved process starts by roasting the coffee beans, with the pungent smell mingling with the heady scent of incense that is always burned during the ceremony. Coffee beans are then ground and slowly stirred into the black clay coffee pot locally known as 'jebena', which is round at the bottom with a straw lid. Once the coffee is ready, it is served in tiny china cups.

Often, the coffee ceremony is complemented by a traditional snack food, such as popcorn, peanuts or cooked barley. In most parts of Ethiopia, the coffee ceremony is the main social event within the village and a time to discuss the community, politics, and life. The process takes three stages to completion with 'Abol' (the first round), 'Tawna' (second round) and 'Baraka' (third round).

Special thanks to both Ethiopian community groups

- Tasmanian Ethiopian Association Inc.
- The Ethiopian Community Association of Tasmania Inc.

for sharing their rich culture and tradition with us.

And our thanks also to

- Minister Michelle O'Byrne who attended with Lisa Singh
- And the Country Womens Association for all the goodies and treats that they baked and served on the day. We hope to continue partnering with you in serving our community groups

We had about 150 guests for the ceremony. Media coverage included spots on Win and Southern Cross television on Wednesday night news and a press article in the Mercury on Thursday 21st July..

On the subject of media Vikki....I saw your lovely face on page 21 of the Mercury on Thursday 5th July. The MRC has nominated you from MCOT as a contender for the Pride of Australia medal. Can you tell us a little bit about your wonderful nomination and the great knitting work you are doing ? (read from article from the paper or ask Vikki to speak)

Vikki : Speek regarding Pride of Australia medal.....

Vikki : "Cedric I believe that you have a new Phoenix Centre Co-ordinator. Can you tell me a little bit about the new person"

Cedric : "For those listeners that don't know what the Phoenix Centre is

Ann Hughes is a trained social worker with 35 years experience in the field. She has worked in a vast number of community based areas including mental health, alcohol and

drug services and most recently has worked in business development at Red Cross. She has a vast wealth of knowledge in the areas of community development and is a strong active advocate for social justice concerns. Ann is also the president of the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Association of Social Workers so is very well positioned to lead a team of counselling professionals. We are very proud to invite Ann into our organisation and we are all very pleased to have her on board.

Vikki : “Cedric, I have heard through the grapevine that you have also won a significant piece of business out of the Phoenix Centre in the past month”

Cedric: “ Vicki, yes we have. I am pleased to announce that we have received a one-year funding project from Dept of Health and Ageing for suicide prevention services with particular reference to CALD communities in rural and remote communities. This project involves working closely with the UTAS in particular the University Department of Rural Health. We are presently in the design stages with University of Tasmania – and by the next time we speak on air – I hope to inform you in more depth as to the project plan and outcomes. This funding represents an increase in base funding for our organisation of around 25%.

Special thanks to Ann Hughes and also Dr. Peg Levine in their efforts in getting this project underway. I believe this will give the MRC a much valued program under the auspices of the Phoenix Centre to provide suicide prevention services to those in critical need.

Vikki : “**Cedric, I beleive that you head drinks with the Governor on June 14th at Government House.xx**”

Cedric: “ Yes that right Vikki. It was also my Birthday that day and I was delighted to take my new team member Ann Hughes to this event. It was a black tie affair. Just before the Governor gave his speech the orchestra played God Save the Queen (because of course this was in honour of the queens birthday), and although I’m not a royalist, it did stir a few emotions up. I thought to myself at one moment, I’m in a black tie dinner suit, mingling with lots of interesting people, at Government house, with great music, and of course some alcohol, and its my birthday. Life does not get much better than this. It was also a great way to commemorate my first two months in my General manager’s role at the Migrant Resource Centre.

I ‘d like to send a little cheerio to Theatre and Max, Who I met on that night. Max Angus is an order of Australia title holder and a well know Tasmanian artist, him and Theatre have been married for 67 years, and they both still have that sparkle in their eyes for each other. I remembering chatting away to them both, and thinking.....although they’re in their 90’s they are still quite spritely and young at heart. IN fact I would like my parents to meet them – so my Mum and Dad, who have been married 57 years can see what their life will be like in ten years.

It was great wondering around the halls looking at all the artwork and just experiencing this event.

Vikki ; “Cedric.....I have heard that you have some exciting projects going on at the Migrant Resource Centre. Can you tell me some of the new business projects that you have been working on”

Cedric: “Vikki, one project that springs to mind is the Australia Council for the Arts project. We recently submitted an application for an Arts project, working closely with 4 of the major 7 councils in the south of Tasmania. And just before I tell you about the project Vikki, I would like to say a very big thankyou to all the community development teams at Kingborough, Clarence, Glenorchy and Hobart city councils, who have assisted us in putting together , what I feel is an exciting proposal.

The project is centred around creating a brief book on Migrant stories in Tasmania. Vikki, it's a similar to that book you were featured in called “Here and There”. We will feature local writers, local photographers, local graphic artists in creating a new book showcasing the lives of local migrants and representative of youth ,elderly and respected individuals from a vast cross-section of cultures. We will work collaboratively with the Arts co-ordinators in the 4 councils, to host a multi-cultural event in each council with narrations featuring snippets from the book and performances from community group members ranging from, song to dance and narration”

Whilst the grant is not significant in \$ value, it does give the MRC a big boost in terms of creating funded festivals to share our art and culture with our broader Tasmanian community. Art is a way of bring diversity together, it generally is non-judgemental and what I feel is a significant chance to participate and get involved with the community spirit particularly where English language skills are lacking. I was particularly impressed also by my own teams capability...and a special thanks to Simon and Suzanne for taking the lead on this project. Witnessing how we all pooled our skills together, made me feel very proud and also again showed me what a great team I have at the migrant resource centre.

On the subject of Team;s Vikki and listeners, that reminds me..... a very big cheerio to Ethiotas who had a great result on the weekend. Ethiotas is a youth soccer group...consisting of young Ethiopian men. They had a win on the weekendthe score was 9-1. Well done lads....lets keep up the winning streak. Also a very big cheerio to our mates at Hobart United...who had a bye this weekend.

Vikki ; “Cedric, apart from winning some significant new business from DoHA and submitting funding proposals, I have heard that you are also in the midst of creating a new website for the Migrant Resource Centre?”

Cedric: “Vikki, yes that is right, I have just got Board approval to spend some additional funds on a new website. I have subcontracted this exercise to a firm called “Doodlefish” and Deb if you are listening....love your work. The new website will be state of the art graphics and search engines, with translation competencies that will provide better functionality and information to the Community organisations and individuals that we serve. In preparation for the Launch, the Migrant Resource Centre had a photo-shoot with Australian Idol photographer Mr. Stuart Bryce, who took photo's of all team members including group shots. I'm hoping the new site will be ready in time for the

Ethiopian Millenium and we will be able to celebrate the website launch concurrently with the Ethiopian celebrations planned for the week commencing September 10th.

There were times when Ethiopia's prominence reached its climax on several occasions; times when Ethiopia inspired the world as one of the pioneers of early civilization, not to mention its reputation as the cradle of mankind. And there were times when its eminence hit rock bottom; times when Ethiopia unwillingly developed certain notoriety for being a land of despondency. Good days have come and so have bad ones, because good days, bad days, they come and they go.

Yet Ethiopia has gone the distance from the early days of its ancient civilization to the present, to make it to another millennium of its own and with all its pride intact. The concluding millennium has seen Ethiopia prosper and decline both politically and economically. It has been fortunate and unfortunate.

The new millennium, on the other hand, gives Ethiopia a chance to reflect on the past and an incentive to move forward and energize. So it is **time to celebrate** believing that things will change for the better as of the new millennium.

The official Ethiopian celebration actually falls on September 11th, however I think in all essence in Hobart, a celebration will take place on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September. Watch this space !

Vikki: Cedric, I believe that you have also recently joined Rotary....how do you keep up with all this – you must have a lot of energy

Cedric: “Vikki, yes I do have too much energy at times. So much so that I have been referred to as a hurricane. I would prefer to think of myself Vikki though as a cool tropical breeze”. My team at the MRC are doing a sterling job in staying up with me, and I commend them all in the way they have embraced the engines of change at the MRC>

Now Vikki, to your question...I have joined Rotary, Hobart Rotary in fact. One of the reasons I joined is that Rotary has been quite a significant supporter of the Migrant Resource Centre. They have worked with us on many events. Joining Rotary gives me the opportunity to return the favour that has always been so kindly extended by Rotary to the MRC. I'm really looking forward to my involvement with the club, and would like to say a big hello to all the Tasmanian Rotarians out there. Well done team....thanks again for all the great work that you do in supporting our community groups.

Vikki ; “Cedric, what is some of your upcoming events”

- Immediately internally – Strategic planning cycle. Workshopping Stakeholder Analysis, with Funding firmed up for next year we will then begin the cycle of budgeting. In fact I'm reading quite a good book at the moment called “managing to Survive – Mangerial Practice in not for profit organisations. It has helped me get across the great cultural divide in getting my head around moving from the private sector into the community sector
- Ethiopian Millenium Ceeremony – September already spoken about

- Seniors Week – October
 - AGM – 18th October
 - Hobart City Council Christmas Pageant. Interestested persons to march with MRC.....its great to come into contact with so many people that used to work at the MRC and hearing their stories. One thing I keep hearing is how good the people are that work there.... I Vikki, would like to second that comment. My staff and volunteers do incredible work in the every day lives that makes each day special for our client groups. Thanks for your untiring efforts in helping make Tasmania a better place for people from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds. And to all those people that use our services or who have worked at the MRC please come and join the Xmas pageant walk with the MRC
3. **Vikki** : “Cedric thanks for coming in today, how do we access services at the migrant resource centre?”
- **Establish how we can help you Email reception@mrchobart.org.au**
 - **Tel 03 6234 9411**
 - **Fax : 03 6231 1264**
 - **49 Molle Stree, Hobart. 7000.**

Cheerios: From Marianne to the staff at Hawthorne Village at Blackmans Bay – thanks for the great job that you do