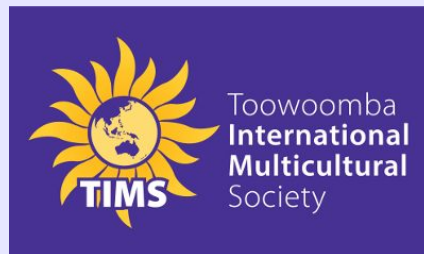




Annual Report 2021



Cover: Volunteer Appreciation and Lantern Display at the Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival

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Special Acknowledgements

Job Assist Careers Expo & The Diversity Project

The Job Assist Skills Recognition workshop held on 11 February was very well attended. This was followed by a Job Assist Careers Expo in Agriculture, Banking and Disability Care. The Expos were organised by TIMS in partnership with The CEDAR Centre as part of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work traineeship program 'The Diversity Project'. The Department of Small Business, Education and Training (DESBT) helped sponsor the events.



The workshops (pic above) were translated into Kurmanji and Arabic. They covered a wide range of topics to provide job seekers with practical information regarding their next steps in getting a job. Covid restrictions required scaling down the events. The Diversity Project students organised the events as their traineeship.



Above: The Diversity Project trainees at their graduation.

The Fifteenth Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival

Rising above Covid restrictions, over 6000 people attended the 15th Toowoomba Languages and Cultures (TLC) Festival which was held on 30 May. Mayor Paul Antonio and Minister Leanne Linard, Minister for Children, Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs opened the event. The Festival featured the contributions of the Filipino Community and celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the two countries. Mr Roberto Garcia, President of the Filipino-Australian Business Industry and Communities Council of Queensland (FABICCQ) highlighted the Filipino community's contributions in his official address. TAMS members and over 100 volunteers (cover pic) helped set up the festival. Their in-kind support is estimated at over \$200,000. All covid regulations were implemented and the event received many praises for the excellent organisation. Ms Cassandra Hunter, our Festival Director developed a Covid-safe plan approved by Queensland Health. This required incorporating six different health plans to cover all the different elements of the Festival as it is a big and complex event. People from over 45 cultures showcased their talents.



Members of the Filipino Community at the Media Launch of the Festival along with the Mayor, Cr James O'Shea and TAMS members on 29 March, (pics above and below).





Above: Filipino kids gave a gala feature performance at the Festival.

Below: The Rich Varsa Bhangra Academy brought the colours of Punjab to the Festival.



Above: The Chinese Taoist group performed the Fan and Sword Dance.



Above: Nepalese children performed their folk dances

Below: Festival Director Ms Cassandra Hunter welcoming volunteers at the Volunteer training held at the Allison Dickson Theatre at the University of Southern Queensland.



Above: Mrs Sam Adhikari, Mr Ekraj Adhikari, Ms Alice Chu, Ms Gitie House with volunteers helping with the set up.



Above and Below: Student volunteers coordinated by Mr Prince Lo (right)



Below: TLC Festival Committee Members: Ms Anna Nicholls, Ms Jenny Rix, Ms Jo Capp, Ms Cassandra Hunter, Ms Bhavna Gupta, Ms Sam Adhikari and Ms Maud Bagnall setting up the Festival.



Yumin Bah – First Indigenous Conference



The First Indigenous Conference in the region – ‘Yumin Bah – Talk Place: Healing Country, Healing Ourselves’ was organised by the Garulbo (Altogether) Committee on 8 July. 183 people attended the conference with talks on the projects being undertaken by members of the First Nations. The event is a partnership between Pureland Learning College, Traditional Custodians, Gumingurru, TIMS and Toowoomba Regional Council. TIMS is also proud to be one of the sponsors of the event. More community gatherings and conferences are being planned for next year. TIMS also received sponsorship for the Toowoomba Regional Council towards the performances for the event.



Above: Uncle Roger Knox performed original country songs at the Community Information session organised by the Garulbo Committee. Mr Ray Brearley presented special certificates to the youth who emceed the conference. The conference encourages the coming together, making friends, sharing stories, learning about our First Nations People who in the region. The event also provides opportunities for enhancing knowledge enabling conversations, collaborations and connections.

Queensland Regional Community Forum

The Queensland Government's Office of Rural and Regional Queensland held Forum meetings in Roma, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe, Dalby and Toowoomba. Led by Ministers and MPs, the aim is to advise the Government on key priorities and strategic solutions for the region. TIMS President Ms Gitie House is a member of the Darling Downs South West Queensland Forum. The Queensland Government has recently announced a number of strategic initiatives across the region in key areas including housing, transportation, employment and training based on the feedback from these meetings. Other programs will be announced in due course.



Peace Education Programs



TIMS members Mr Ray and Mrs Helen Brearley ran a series of the Peace Education Program (PEP and also a series of Facilitator training sessions. PEP is developed by The Prem Rawat Foundation (TPRF). The topics covered included Peace, Appreciation, Inner Strength, Self awareness, Clarity, Understanding, Dignity, Choice, Hope and Contentment. The classes are very popular and have received tremendous feedback.

Group Members' Activities

TIMS welcomes the Indian Communities of Toowoomba

Indian Communities came together to celebrate India's 75th Independence Day. Covid restrictions limited the audience to 300 people. Indians from many parts of the country enjoyed the event. Cr James O'Shea said that The Indian community is the largest new migrant group in Toowoomba and makes a huge contribution to the region in every field.



Above: Indian Communities Committee with Coordinator Mr Yaju Mahendra (right).

Jay Jay Girva Gujarat Group

Three hundred people danced away at the Navratri celebrations organised by Gujarati Community coordinated by Mr Yaju Mahendra. The program included the traditional folk dances of Garba and Dandiya,



Toowoomba Nepalese Community

The Nepalese Community celebrated their Independence with full fanfare.



Sri Lankan Community



The Sri Lankan Community celebrated the Kathina Festival and Language culture.

Women In Harmony Choir

Music Director Ms Elaine Coates said, "Women in Harmony threw off the shackles of Covid restrictions with a spectacular story-concert performance at Mt Tamborine in March, 2021 (pic below). In song, poetry, dance and word, we told the story of the way we kept connected during 2020 and came out the other end stronger than we started. That experience was so empowering, we decided to repeat it at home in Toowoomba, and a fortuitous discussion about Protea Place convinced us to make it a fundraiser for this very important womens' support service. Success all round! The rest of the year was a welcome return to normal but with another "out-of-town" event to finish - a joint Christmas concert at Esk with the Esk Community Choir in December. 2022 is already looking like an exciting year with other new experiences in the diary."



Above: Women In Harmony performing at the Candlelight Vigil.

Candlelight Vigil

Hundreds gathered for a Candlelight Vigil held in the Civic Square to show their solidarity for those who have lost loved ones due to Covid-19 and have faced ongoing pain due to separation. The event also showed their gratitude and support for the front line workers across the health, education and community sectors. TIMS is proud to be a sponsor of the event which was organised by the Healing Hearts Group and led by Mr Ekraj Adhikari and Mrs Samjhana Adhikari with assistance from Ms Maud Bagnall. After the speeches, the community gathered on the lawn and formed a heart with tea candles.



High School Language Awards

TIMS continues to sponsor the Language Awards in the participating schools: Harristown State High School, and Centenary Heights State High School. This year's winners will be announced at the School Awards nights later in the year.

TIMS Strategic Projects

TIMS runs a number of significant programs:

- a) **Signature Programs:** These are run and managed by TIMS.
 - Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival
 - Mindful Wellbeing Expo
 - School Language Awards

- b) **Cultural programs:** These are held when possible depending on time, resources and availability.
 - Diwali – Indian Festival of Lights
 - Youth Festival/Youth week activities
 - Multicultural Fashion Shows
 - Dance Concerts

- c) **Workshops:**

TIMS has run workshops on Event Management, Business Planning, Health and Video/Photography tools. These workshops are free for the attendees and depend on funding from various grants(e.g. FRRR, MAQ, CBFQ).

- d) **Forums, Education & Cultural Programs with partner organizations:**

These are managed by other organizations with TIMS providing vital assistance in organizing the events:

 - Peace Education Program (PEP) in partnership with the Toowoomba PEP group and The Prem Rawat Foundation (TPRF).
 - Harmony Day (with TRC, USQ and other organisations)
 - International Fashion Shows (with Mercy Community Services and other organisations)
 - Multicultural, Peace and Multi-faith Forums with USQ, Pure Land College and others as they arise
 - Others – as they arise.

- e) **Cultural Programs run by Group Members:**

These are events run by TIMS Group members under TIMS insurance. TIMS does not organize these events but may assist if required and where feasible.

New projects/events are taken on the basis that their workload and financial requirements are feasible and do not interfere with existing commitments or impose additional workload from the existing project coordinators who are already fully committed.

Around the Ridges



Ms Gitie House at the Winton Australia Day function.



Ms Maud Bagnall and Mr Ron House at the Iftar dinner.



Ms Feli Gayat and Mr Ray Brearley at the CDN Meeting.



Ms Dipika Aggarwal and Ms Gitie House laid a wreath at the Mothers Memorial on Anzac Day.



The Indian Communities Group planning meeting.



Ms Maud Bagnall and Ms Feli Gayat at the CDN Meeting.



TLC Festival meeting with the FABICCQ Committee



Ms Anna Nicholls and Ms Samjhana Adhikari helping setup the Volunteer training.

Other Events Include:

- Cultural Diversity Network Meetings – Ms Maud Bagnall, Mr Ray Brearley
- Garulbo Committee Meetings and events – Mr Ray Brearley, Mrs Gitie House
- Iftar Dinner – Multi-faith Islamic Community – Ms Gite House, Mr Ron House, Ms Maud Bagnall
- International Peace Day: Mr Ray Brearley, Ms Trudy Moses, Ms Gitie House, Mr Ron House
- Refugee Migration Round table Forum – Ms Gitie House
- Refugee Employment Group – Ms Gitie House
- Filipino Independence Day – Ms Gitie House, Mr Ron House
- You Belong – Radio Program - Ms Gitie House
- Queensland Government Small Business Consultations – Ms Gitie House
- The Diversity Project – meetings – Ms Gitie House, .
- Luminous Lantern Parade – Ms Gitie House, Mr Ron House
- In Conversation with Prof Jock Collins – Ms Gitie House, Ms Maud Bagnall
- Virtual Forum with Deputy Premier – Mr Steven Miles MP – Ms Gitie House
- Navratri Festival – Ms Trudy Moses, Ms Bhavna Gupta, Ms Phyl Charlton, Mr Ron House, Mr Ekraj Adhikari, Ms Feli Gayat (see pic below).



Special Acknowledgements

Multicultural Australia (MA Ltd): Our special thanks to the MDA for their support for the TLC Festival. Many thanks to Director Ms Kelly Buckingham and her team for their tremendous help and support for the TLC Festival. Special thank to Mr Prince Lo for organising the Schools volunteers and his assistance with the Volunteer training and throughout the Festival.

Sponsors and Partners: We gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship and support of our partner organisations and individuals who make these projects possible. For the TLC Festival Toowoomba Regional Council, Multicultural Affairs Queensland, Multicultural Australia, University of Southern Queensland and TripleM. Special thanks also to Ms Cassandra Hunter and her team at the Event Group Toowoomba and to Ms Jessica Baker, USQ. For the The Diversity project and the Job Careers Expo we thank the CEDAR Centre, Ms Nancy Yong, Ms Claire Morris and the Department of Small Business, Employment and Training.

TIMS Committee and Members: Special thanks all the committee members especially our Treasurer Ms Dipika Aggarwal, Vice-President & Community Development Officer Ms Maud Bagnall, Mrs Bhavna Gupta (minutes Secretary) and Committee member Mr David Wallis. We also thank members Ms Anna Nicholls, Mr Ron House, Mr Ray Brearley, Mrs Helen Brearley, Ms Alice Chu, Mr Nishit Gupta for their help and support. We also thank our group members and their community leaders. Special thanks to Mr Ekraj Adhikari, Mrs Samjhana Adhikari and the Nepalese Association of Toowoomba for their tremendous efforts.

TLC Festival Management Committee Members: Big thanks to the Committee members and Festival Coordinators: Festival Manager Ms Cassandra Hunter, Ms Cecily Bisshop MLTAQ), Ms Jessica Baker (Outreach and Engagement Officer, USQ), Mr Angus Moffat (Media Relations Office, TRC), Mr Roberto Garcia (Multicultural Development Officer, TRC), Ms Kelly Buckingham(MDA), Ms Jenny Rix (Bonjour), Ms Anna Nicholls (TIMS) and Ms Penny Pyke (DHPW).Ms Maud Bagnall (TIMS, Volunteer coordinator), Mrs Bhavna Gupta (TIMS, Minutes Secretary TLC Festival), Ms Samjhana Adhikari (TIMS, Assistant Performance Coordinator) and Mrs Gitie House (Chair & Festival Director) for their massive efforts in organising this year's festival. Pic right: TLC Festival Committee debrief meeting. Special thanks also the The Event Group Toowoomba team – Ms Cassandra Hunter and Ms Jo Capp for their tremendous efforts in organising the festival. We also gratefully acknowledge Ms Kim Walmsley for her gracious Acknowledgement of Country.

Toowoomba Regional Council: A special thank you to, the Toowoomba Regional Council staff Mr Angus Moffat and Mr Roberto Garcia for their work on the TLC Festival. We are also grateful to Mr Darryl Bates, for his support. Special thanks to Mayor Paul Antonio, Deputy Mayor Carol Taylor, Cr Megan O'Hara Sullivan, Cr James O'Shea and Cr Geoff McDonald for their support with this year's TLC Festival.

Friends and Volunteers: A very big and special thank you to the hundreds of friends and volunteers who help us each year with our projects. Their friendship and efforts have enabled us to deliver such a range of successful projects every year.

