

Community Development Queensland Seminar 2021

50 Years of Developmental Practice: Stories, Highlights and Reflections



Wednesday 21st July 4-6pm

A “hybrid” event - both F2F at Griffith University Southbank, Building S07, Room 2.16_18 (enter behind the Ship Inn at the Goodwill Bridge end of Southbank), and on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82380831081?pwd=LOVKeFN0d0RiWHRwbHIHMk5ZSkZnZz09>

In 1969, Les Halliwell published a set of short case studies called *People Working Together*. These were stories of people who, in Les’s own words, sought to “*discover how people work together to improve their lives and their communities*”. Les believed that the people themselves rather than practitioners, public servants or academics were key to any successful community change initiative. His mantra was to “ask the people, be with the people, listen to the people, work with the people!”

Anthony Kelly and Carmel Daveson are two Queenslanders who have built on Les Halliwell’s work, seeking to reflect, and engage, with others to identify and articulate the patterns of this work, the principles and approaches, and the theories which can take the work forward.

Today, as in Les’s day, those of us seeking to work in this way have an uphill struggle against the weight of a public world more intent on *doing to* people and communities, rather than *working with*.

So, in 50 years what have we learned, what do we now know, and how can this history be drawn on in our current efforts to practice and to develop the practice further?

We invite you to join with us for a very special seminar at Southbank, to hear from, and discuss with, Anthony and Carmel, the experience of 50 years of Community Development Practice in Queensland.

Our Presenters:

Carmel Daveson AM graduated from the University of Queensland in Social Work in 1964. She had an intuitive style of practice that recognised the importance of the engagement of local people in the decisions that impact their lives. In those early days, there was no name for this practice. She was a young practitioner when the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP), was introduced by the Whitlam Government. Her then mentor, Les Halliwell (UQ) supported her engagement with a range of National level processes of locating methodologies relevant to a community-level participatory policy approach. These methods became known as community development or participatory developmental work. At that time, Carmel was instrumental in the establishment of a regional organisation in Mackay (still surviving as Greater Whitsunday Communities) as a structural mechanism to enable the people of the region, including those of the more remote localities, to have a voice in decision making and to work together for change.

Carmel became an elected representative of Mackay Regional Council, and again, endeavoured to understand and engage others in exploring, the relevance of this approach within the context of local government. She has broad experience of the Community Service and Arts sector, and continues to promote approaches which give local people increased power in relation to resources, relationships, decision making and information. She has contributed to community development programs at TAFE and at University. Carmel is currently a member of the community development sub-committee for the peak body, Queensland Families and Communities Association. Another passion of Carmel's is choral and instrumental music. She has worked tirelessly with handbell ringers all over the world to contribute to peace and goodwill through building an international community of handbell ringers.

Anthony Kelly has been involved in development work for fifty years.

Across the years he has worked with staff from all three levels of Government in Australia and at all levels, from inductees to Ministers. He has had the privilege of working with community organisations in every state, in urban as well as the most remote parts of Australia. His international work has taken him around the world.

He moved to Queensland in late 1973 to become the first Director of the peak body Queensland Council of Social Service during the innovative, turbulent and exciting Whitlam era. After post graduate studies he moved to the Northern Territory to work with Aboriginal communities and that experience had a profound impact on him that he has treasured ever since.

In 1980 he began teaching development practice at the University of Queensland, a position he held for 25 years until 2005. The focus of Anthony's educational work was always the development of the professional skills of staff to manage and sustain helpful interventions. Educationally, his ideas have been deeply influenced by the Gandhian tradition and was taught this tradition by someone who knew Gandhi personally. His education and training processes have also been influenced by the work of Paulo Freire and the multitude of applications of his seminal ideas. Much of his NGO international work has been in Asia, particularly India and his colleagues there have influenced him both theoretically and by their innovative practice which they so generously shared.

After leaving the University and following on 30 years of voluntary involvement with Oxfam Australia he worked part-time with them for four years as their Training and Education Coordinator. This work involved extensive travel both nationally and internationally.

Finally, in the last ten years of his career until his retirement, he worked as an associate for the Centre for Social Response, which was made up of a small group of people committed to improving the responses of the corporate world to community issues. In particular he worked with a range of transnational mining companies in many parts of the world helping them form productive relationships with the communities with whom they had contact.

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