

## Tim Muirhead

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### Starting

I began with a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Adelaide University) focusing on Psychology, Human Geography and Anthropology. The mix of individual focus (Psychology) and structural/cultural focus (Human Geography) was, at that time, unusual, though a mentor predicted it would prepare me well for the future, as the connection between the personal and the cultural would become crucial.

### Travel

After a brief stint as a research officer in the University's Department of Community Medicine (doing VERY bad research) I decided that travel would be more enriching than further studies, a decision I still celebrate.

This travel included 10 months in North America, 4 years in the UK, and 11 months in the subcontinent and South East Asia (in 1984).

During this time I worked (via Save the Children Fund) as a Community Development worker with Travellers who lived under a freeway in London. This was my (wonderfully confusing) introduction to genuine Community Development and immersed me in learning. It launched me helter-skelter into my career, and life-long passion.

At the same time I also worked in a community-based child care and education centre in the (then extremely multicultural) neighborhood of Notting Hill. It had a catchment of, literally, 6 streets. This, combined with the connection with the Travellers (in the same locality) was a rich experience of being immersed in community. (I was also housed by the associated Housing Co-Op.)

My 11 months in Asia (in 1984) were massively informative. (I kept a detailed journal, and still re-read it to refresh the intensive learning.) Much of the time was spent in villages where I was able to see what strong community actually looks like. I began to sense that in the west are functionally illiterate about 'community'.

My 'reverse culture shock' on my return to Australia led to my own CD framework (influenced by the mentorship of Tony Kelly), which became a touchstone of my practice, teaching and writing in relation to CD. (The most succinct description of the framework is 'Developing Community, Capacity and Spirit'.)

This Framework (which also equipped me to more readily see and understand others' frameworks)

is at the core of my two books *'Weaving Tapestries: The new handbook for developing community'* and *'Finding Heraan'* both of which have been used as CD texts in tertiary institutions.

### Perth CD jobs (1985 – 1993).

Relevant aspects of my work experience in Perth included:

- Research Officer at the ***Child Care Planning Committee***, supposedly using a 'CD approach'. This work helped me understand what community development *isn't*, and, more importantly, the damage that can be done by pretending.)
- Regional ***'Community Funding and Development Officer'*** (with then Department of Community Services) where I came to realise confused and/or inarticulate we are around CD, and just how much this inarticulate confusion stymied productive dialogue and practice. (Confusion is GREAT, but only if we are willing to explore it, and use it as fodder for dialogue and learning.)
- ***Director, Community Development at WAMA*** (now) WA Local Government Association (WALGA).

### Stepping out again (1993 till now)

Because WAMA and I were at that time culturally incompatible (this has since changed, and I've learned a lot since then!) I quit and became a 'consultant' (it sounds better than 'unemployed') with a primary focus on CD. Since 1997 I've been particularly immersed in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations.

I've listed, below, some of the relevant work I've done since then. (I've ***attached*** a more detailed CV.)

- **Writing two books** that have been used as texts in CD courses at universities and TAFE.
  - *Weaving Tapestries – the new handbook for developing community*, and
  - *Finding Heraan*.
- **Social and Community Planning** in relation to the rapidly expanding northern suburbs (for Cities of Wanneroo, Joondalup, Mandurah, Swan).
- **Co-coordinator 'Australians for Reconciliation'** (from 1997 – 2001) – developing a 'people's movement' for Reconciliation.
- **'Kimberley Making Connections' Program** – Design and delivery of a community leadership program for 20 - 25 people (per course) in the Kimberley – half Aboriginal and half non-Aboriginal.
- **Cross-Cultural ("Towards Partnership") training** for over 20,000 people in a huge range of organisations (with Danny Ford, Kim Bridge, Rose Walley and many others).
- **Community Development Training** including:
  - 'Community Engagement; Making it real'
  - 'Developing Community, Capacity and Spirit'
  - 'Public Involvement'
  - 'Managing Effective Meetings'
  - 'Working with Diversity'
  - Gender partnership (with Dr Jen De Vries)
- **Design and delivery of Community Development unit** for Edith Cowan University (in partnership with the late Mary del Casale.

- **Development of Local Government community/cultural development strategies, RAPs and/or community visioning workshops** for
  - Armadale,
  - Stirling,
  - Port Hedland,
  - South Perth,
  - Subiaco,
  - Vincent,
  - Bassendean,
  - Nedlands,
  - Mandurah,
  - Denham (tourism)
  - Manjimup,
  - Swan,
  - Northam,
  - Perth,
  - Kalamunda,
  - Rockingham,
  - Fremantle
  
- **Community involvement facilitation** for dozens of community, cultural, social or urban planning processes
  
- **Collaborative Strategic and Organisational plans** for non-government organisations such as
  - South Perth Learning Centre,
  - Anglicare,
  - Mercy Services,
  - Boogurlarri Community House,
  - Challenger TAFE,
  - Moorditch Koorlak Aboriginal Housing Corporation,
  - Mooditch Keila (South Perth) Aboriginal Corporation,
  - Indigenous War Graves Inc,
  - Brockman Community House,
  - Central Midland Aboriginal Progress Association,
  - Hope Community Services
  - Yorgum
  - HOPE Services
  - Wadjuk Northside
  - ...and many, many others (as well as.
  
- ...and many others, as well as many state, local and commonwealth government agencies and as well as universities.
  
- **Collaborative development of Wiluna Regional Partnership Agreement** (via Council Of Australian Governments). Supported the Wiluna Community (primarily Aboriginal) in discovering how they can build their own capacity and respond effectively to opportunities and challenges presented by mining activity. (with Kim Bridge, Alan Steward and local Martu woman Tracey Latu Kuli Kefu)
  
- **Community based “Aboriginal Justice Plans” and “Stronger Family and Community Plans”** – Goldfields; Ballardong country; Binjarab country
  
- **Chair, WA Ministerial Child Care Advisory Council**
  
- **Voluntary Chair and Board member** of several community-based organisations including child care centres and Donnelly River Village.
  
- **Supporting Ngadju T/Os to provide training** to miners on their country.
  
- **Collaborative development of Goldfields “Indigenous Consultation Protocols”** (with Kim Bridge), community collaboration with Aboriginal and Non- Aboriginal leadership of Kalgoorlie, to address racism issues, as highlighted by the Human Rights Commission.