

# UTHANDO PROJECT

## ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

### Our Mission

To create handmade dolls for our partner organisations in KwaZulu Natal, (KZN) to use in their work with disadvantages and vulnerable children, to strengthen relationships through play.

To create opportunities for communities for shared creativity and purpose in doll making in Australia and around the world

### Our Partners in KZN

**dlalanathi:** Works in impoverished rural and remote communities, building capacity through developing communications between carers and their children and teaching the value of play for development.

**TREE:** Training and Resources in Early Education. Provides high quality child care and early years education; training of workers in these fields and providing resources in a sustainable way.

**Family Literacy Project:** Develops literacy skills of adults and children in rural and remote communities.

**Lifeline:** Provides support and counselling to child victims of physical and sexual abuse.

**Sizabantwana:** Supports classroom teachers in their work with vulnerable children.

### Our Board

Lynne Jones	Chair
Lynne Tognolini	Vice Chair
Ann Vivers	Secretary
Pat O'Donnell	Treasurer
Robin Hamilton	
Karin Maltby	
Christine Johnson	

*Members of Uthando Project acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we meet. We honour the ancestors of yesterday, the custodians of today and those of tomorrow. We recognise their continuing connection to land and waters and how culture is held, nurtured and shared. We pay our respects.*



### HAPPY 20TH BIRTHDAY TO UTHANDO PROJECT!

We have just said our goodbyes to another few thousand dolls that are destined to be cuddled and loved by little children in South Africa, like those in the photo. It is a beautiful photo that tells so much and leaves us in awe at what the dolls are teaching these precious children. The dolls are held so lovingly and the children are showing such care for them. They are wrapped for the winter and well swaddled in their blankets. Each doll radiates the love stitched into it and carried across the world.

There is no end to the need for dolls in the communities in South Africa and we have received requests from other organisations wanting our dolls for their work with children. We would love to assist, and have in a small way, but we don't want this to be at the expense of our partners. We need more dolls and more doll makers. This year we have introduced additional Sunday sewing days at ARCC which will help us produce a few more dolls and also create connections in our doll making network. We are open to suggestions on how we might build up our network and help more children.

South Africa is facing many challenges which dwarf those of Australia: corruption, crime, energy crisis, housing crisis, land rights, healthcare as well as illegal immigration. The recent election has seen a coalition of several parties across the political spectrum form a new government. They won't solve all the problems immediately but here's hoping South African children face a better future.

## DOLLMAKING

Dolls continue to be our core business and the quality of Uthando dolls, knitted, crocheted or stitched, never fails to amaze. Each and every one of them is an individual with its own 'personality'. The volunteers at Forrestfield are privileged to admire and marvel at them all as they pass through on their way to KZN.



Uthando doll making groups still provide a warm inclusive environment for many to share their skills, joy and laughter, sorrows and tears over a cuppa. All the group leaders should be applauded for their dedication to Uthando and for opening their homes, not only to the group members and visitors but also all the materials and extras that go with making dolls.

The children who receive the dolls are not the only ones to benefit from doll making. Uthando strives to provide a network of stitchers with a sense of belonging, friendship and motivation. We all have skills that can be used in some way for making a doll, from the cutting out and stuffing to the finishing faces and hair and adding the clothing. A group need only be two people but the companionship over creating such a treasure for a child is invaluable.

Isolation and loneliness are more and more evident in today's world and doll making recently featured in an item on ABC TV, with Multicultural Services WA creating a space for coming together to make culturally appropriate dolls. The process is as important as the finished product. It was heartening to know the project coordinator had been to visit one of our Uthando groups and take away kits.

Missing our doll makers in Albany and the Forrestfield Friday group losing members, we would welcome any additional groups or individuals to help build up the numbers of dolls.

This year we have received further requests for dolls from other NGO's in South Africa. Sadly we can't accommodate them all as it would be at the expense of our major partners. However, we'll endeavour to provide an additional bag of dolls for one of these groups in each shipment and work on building our numbers.



We have been holding additional workshops at ARCC on Sundays to try to bolster doll numbers, making simple dolls that come together quickly. *dlalanathi* requested 100 Onesie dolls for a special programme they run with teenage mums and their babies and that will be repeated

next year. So we'll be making another batch of these dolls which are made from polar fleece and easy for babies to hold.

Julie Dodds in Lilli Pilli NSW, continues to develop groups of doll makers in her area. Julie makes beautiful dolls, using her embroidery machine. This year has seen more dolls from NSW as a result and more embroiderers joining our project.

To assist *dlalanathi* with their workshops 'Play for Communication' we continue to send sewing kits for women participating in the workshops. Between the two shipments this year we have sent 700 kits. The kits consist of a pouch containing all the notions required for making a doll, along with a doll skin. The pouch and a pack of fabrics is then packed in a cloth bag. In consideration of the environment we are no longer sending items in plastic bags and the cloth bags are useful for the women participating in the workshops. The Sunday Sewing sessions have provided an opportunity to produce more of the pouches and bags.

## UTHANDO IN SCHOOLS

Sales of kits to schools continue but not in such large quantities and this affects not only the numbers of dolls we receive from schools but also the funds raised from the sales of kits.

Sizabantwana is the partner organisation that supports teachers in schools and they have always been the recipients of dolls made by school children here. Unfortunately the number of dolls they are receiving is dropping with fewer schools here taking up the project.

The following schools have produced dolls this year

Iona Presentation College

Rossmoyne Senior High School

Mother Theresa Catholic College, Baldivis

Swan Christian College

Cygnets Primary School Tasmania

Our Lady of the Cape School in Dunsborough purchased kits and students had fun making their own doll.



# UTHANDO PROMOTION AND FUNDRAISING

Once again we have been building our presence in the community hoping to increase our doll making network and get more dolls off to South Africa.

Thank you to the volunteers who have spoken at various community groups around the Kalamunda area. Ann Vivers, Lynne Tognolini, Robin Hamilton and Judith Allen have been our ambassadors, speaking on the benefits of doll making and being a part of Uthando Project at :-

The Jack Healey Centre for Community Organisations Network

Connecting Communities Event hosted by the City of Kalamunda at Hartfield Recreation Centre

In addition, fliers have been distributed through local libraries in the Kalamunda area.

Uthando Project hosted a morning tea at ARCC for the Hills Community Network and this was attended by representatives from The Foothills Men's Shed, Darling Ranges Hub, Bendigo Community Bank and ISKON (Hare Krishna, Kalamunda)

Participating in community markets, not only raises funds but also provides an opportunity to engage with communities and promote Uthando Project.

Our market places this year have been:-



Northern Suburbs Artisan Market

Mosman Park Men's Shed Market

Hills Destash Market, Mundaring

Perth Artisan Market

Thanks to all volunteers, especially those who arrive very early to set up the stalls, battle the payments technology and pack up at the end of the day.



# UTHANDO COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

This year the Uthando Board decided to hold a series of workshops on Sundays at ARCC. With these workshops we hoped to increase the production of items for KZN, provide an opportunity for volunteers from across the Perth area to meet up in a social/purposeful activity and to promote the workshops in the local area to attract volunteers to the Forrestfield group.

The workshops were used as a time to produce the 700 sewing kits and the 100 small Onesie dolls, all for dlalanathi. The goal was achieved and these workshops will be ongoing. The workshops were well attended and there was something to occupy everyone, from cutting, stuffing, stitching, filling ..... chatting!



The Sorrento Group held a successful Open Day at Henderson Centre, Star Swamp. Visitors saw the Uthando Project in action, sponsored dolls, dressed dolls and joined in the making of the dolls. The event was also attended by Mayor Mark Irwin and Councillor Felicity Farrelly.



Over in New South Wales, Julie Dodds teamed up with two Pfaff Embroidery shops hosting charity doll workshops and is beginning to develop a network of doll makers. Julie made special kits for the embroidered dolls.



A Women's Social Group has been started in Mosman Park and one of the activities on offer is doll making. It's beginning slowly but hopefully a doll making group will form.

## VOLUNTEERS

6000 dolls and hundreds of balls, puppets and soft toy animals would not have made their way across to Africa this year without the input of dozens and dozens of doll makers. The joy these items bring to children is immeasurable. Thank you all!

Special mentions must go to a few people who also work behind the scenes. Judith Allen takes care of all the paperwork involved in the shipments and she makes sure all the dolls are correctly packed and labelled for the various recipients. She and her small team on Mondays do all this very efficiently and thanks go to all of them.

Judith and some of the Sorrento group also prepare the items to go with the sewing kits to dlalanathi. Putting together 350 kits for each shipment involves a lot of work. The Sunday Sewing workshops give us an opportunity to help with this and have a social day as well.

Sharen Smith is another behind the scenes worker who helps coordinate the markets and sewing Sundays. Sharen also hosted our Christmas lunch 2023 at her home. Good food and good company as always.

A special mention for Ann Jeffries who has made more than 1100 dolls for Uthando over the years. Ann arrives at ARCC a few times a year with bags full of dolls.

Our craft markets have been well stocked this year by Isabella Cowin, who has crocheted some wonderful toys for us to sell. Isabella has produced dozens of small dolls and medium sized dolls with quirky, animal hats as well as the beautiful stacking rings with animal heads.

Pauline Marlborough continues to cut out hundreds of dolls for our kits and workshops.



Ann Jeffries delivering dolls to ARCC

Some of Isabella's market stock



## SPECIAL EVENTS

This year we have been very fortunate to have had two major fundraising events.

### High Tea

Once again, Diana O'Kane and her generous band of helpers, provided the perfect environment for a High Tea. Diana's lovely garden was set out with tables bedecked in the most beautiful china and delicious supply of food for 60 people. There were raffles and a silent auction which were all well supported and helped raise funds for Uthando. A delightful get together with old and new friends.

A huge thank you to Diana and her daughters and friends who did all the catering and created a very special day.



## Margaret Sutton Exhibition

Textile artist, Margaret Sutton, very generously donated a wonderful array of wall hangings to Uthando to use to raise funds. The Board decided to sell the works through an exhibition which would be open to the public. The exhibition was set up in a community space in Mt Pleasant and was open to the public over a weekend. Margaret also supplied smaller items such as handmade cards, decorated bags and scarves to be included in the sales. and daughter Steph helped catalogue the works.

Being the 20th year of Uthando Project, it was a great opportunity to celebrate and the exhibition provided a time and space for this. Past contributors to Uthando were invited along with current contributors and the event was well publicised in local papers. The 20th Birthday was celebrated on the Saturday afternoon and was very well attended. A great time to catch up with old friends.

We were honoured to have Julie Stone and Georgia Efford, the founders of Uthando, to speak about the genesis of the project and join with Margaret in cutting the cake. Irene Swan, another early member of the team came specially from Tasmania.

A selection of Uthando dolls were on display and there was a small exhibition of some special dolls that some creative doll makers have made over the years.

Thank you to all who made this event happen, especially Robin Hamilton and Ann Vivers who took care of the booking arrangements, and of course, Margaret for her enormous generosity.



Julie Stone and Georgia Efford -founders of Uthando Project



Birthday cake!



Some special dolls on display



Margaret Sutton's Textile Art



Uthando dolls for KZN



Catching up with old friends  
Uthando Project Annual Report 2023-2024



## SOCIAL EVENTS

Twenty people attended the retreat at Shoalwater in November. There were many new ideas shared between doll makers. 'Show and Tell' is always a fun and popular activity.

There is always something for everyone at the retreat - some are happy to sit and stuff dolls and others might like to just sit! We always manage to produce a good selection of dolls and toys.

At this retreat we welcomed Julie Dodds from NSW who shared some lovely clothing patterns as well as her methods for making the fabulous hair on her dolls.

Once again the accommodation was comfortable and the food delicious and plentiful.

The same could be said for our Christmas lunch which was hosted by Sharen in her lovely home among the trees. Good food, great company.



## UTHANDO SHIPMENTS

Once again, two shipments have been sent this year. The first left in December 2023 and the 2nd in July 2024. A total of 5363 dolls, 1418 balls, 334 animal toys, 22 puppet sets, all packed into 126 bags.

In addition to the dolls etc, this year we have sent a total of 700 sewing kits for dlalanathi.

When dolls arrive at ARCC they are sorted by Judith and packed into the relevant bags for the various partners. Each of the bags has to be labelled with the list of contents, the information is entered onto a spreadsheet and the forms required by the shipping company completed.

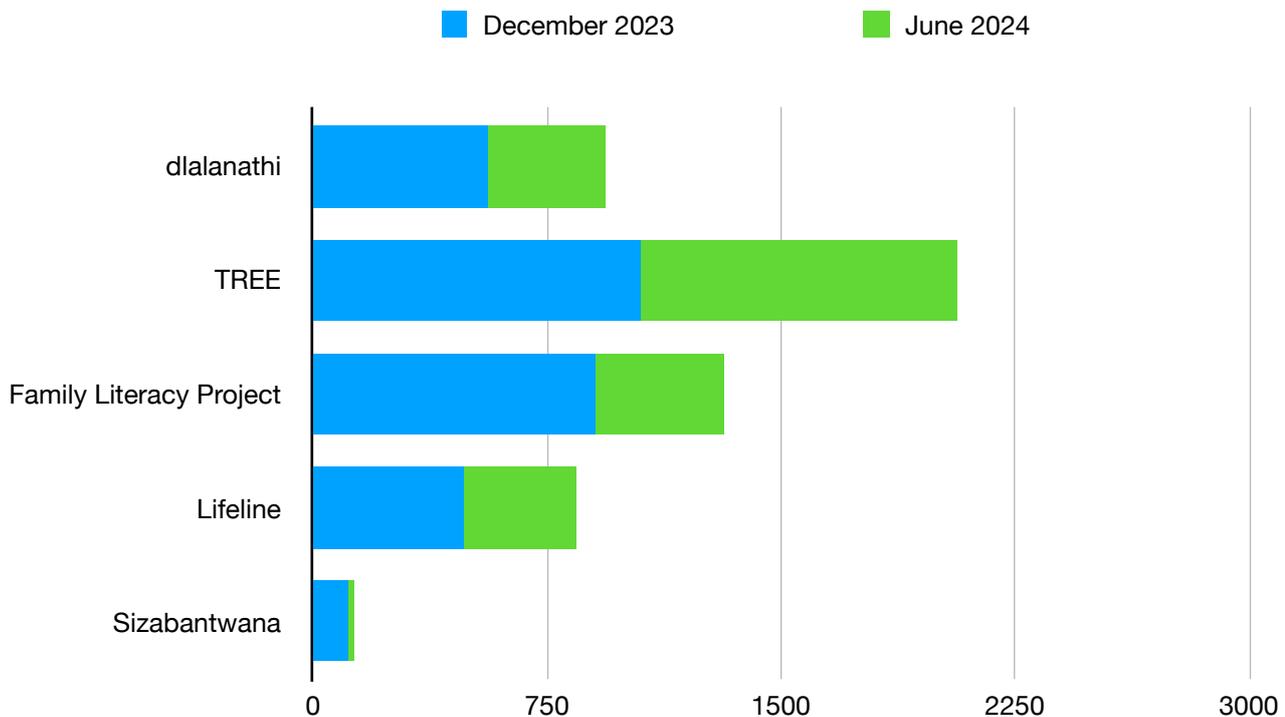
Judith does all this in her Monday afternoons at ARCC and appreciates the assistance of any volunteers who drop in.

Fortunately the total cost of the shipments was less than the shipments during the COVID years but unfortunately there has been a sharp increase in the recent costs.

We are grateful for the assistance of members of the Foothills Men's Shed who come along on the day the dolls are being collected to load the truck for us.

TREE, being based in Durban, assists by receiving the shipment when it is released by customs in Durban and stores all the bags until the other organisations collect their share.

### Distribution of dolls to major partners



The average cost per bag in December was approximately \$100 and for July it was \$168 - indicating shipping costs are rising again.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Uthando Project is in a strong financial position and will continue to ship dolls approximately every 6 months for the next year at least, though with the recent increase in costs, possibly due to crisis in the Middle East, we'll reassess next year.

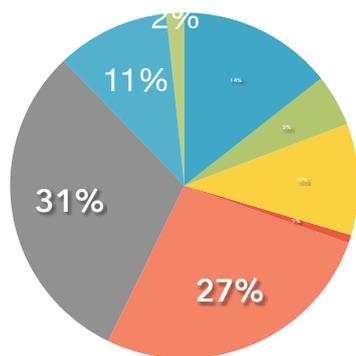
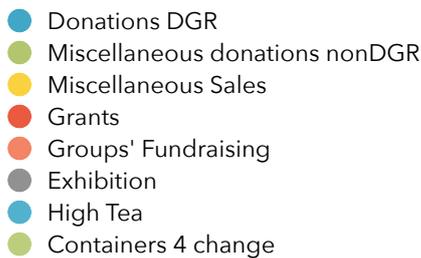
Given that we have sufficient funds, the Board has agreed to make monetary donations to our major partners which will allow them to purchase items otherwise outside of their budgets.

We are grateful to all those who make donations to Uthando, no matter how small. Having Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR) means donations are tax deductible.

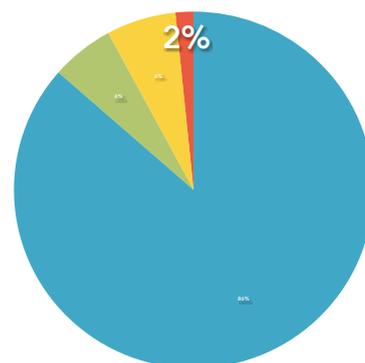
Group members are extremely generous in giving not only their time to make beautiful dolls and toys but also in helping towards the cost of the shipping of the dolls.

Funds have been raised in the past year through the Exhibition and sales of Margaret Sutton's Textile Art, Diana O Kane's High Tea as well as craft markets, Destash Markets and other sales of dolls, kits, books and fabric, including online sales as well as donations from individuals.

## Income



## Expenditure



Administration costs include website management.

Thanks to the following groups, individuals and organisations for their generosity which has helped keep Uthando costs to a minimum

City of Kalamunda — Anderson Road premises

Michael Efford — Website management

Ian MacCallum — Auditor

Mosman Park Men's Shed, Scarborough Rotary, Perth Hills Events — for market stalls  
Gabrielle Doyle Principal Our Lady of Grace PS for use of hall for Sorrento group

## SPECIAL THANKS

To all the group leaders, who coordinate the production of so many dolls and prepare them for their journey across the world - a very special thank you for your dedication and organisation. Belonging to a group has so many benefits and you are serving your communities in providing a safe space to share stories, creativity and friendships whilst members create something special for the most needy of children.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
Tasmania	Irene
Sorrento	Robin and Ann
Hamilton Hill	Doris
Kwinana	Gerry
Bunbury	Carolyn and Janet
Mindarie	Mary
Mundaring	Wendy
Gosnells/Bentley	Marlene and Gay



Thanks also to Julie Timewell in Victoria who flies the Uthando flag for us.

The members of the Uthando Board give their time in many ways, from attending meetings to organising workshops, craft stalls and exhibitions.

I am grateful for the support of all members but express special thanks as always to Pat and Ann who take care of the necessary administrations and keep Uthando Project compliant with rules and regulations governing charities.



An Uthando Family  
Uthando Project Annual Report 2023-2024

## VALE

This year we have lost some special people who played a very big role in their time with Uthando.

As well as being a doll maker, **Susan Cromb** was a member of the Uthando Board for many years. Susan was a compassionate and caring person who was happy to the end to take on any tasks, even attending Board meetings via Skype from her bed. We miss her thoughtful input and her ever-positive attitude.

**Anne Bell** was a member of the Uthando group from the early days in Gooseberry Hill. She loved to knit and developed some beautiful patterns for our doll clothes and her knitted monkeys were very special. We miss her cheerful personality and her efficient tea and coffee making - Forrestfield hasn't been the same without her!

**Delis Hague** was a founding member of the Fremantle/Hamilton Hill group and was a keen group member and doll maker until she went to New Zealand to live closer to family.

To the families of these beautiful souls we send much love. We are very thankful for the times they shared with us and the happy memories they have left behind.



# Welcome Social Work Students



To all who are part of this wonderful web that is Uthando, connected by love for the children of the world, creating dolls that light up the lives of so many children and their carers, thank you for keeping this beautiful project alive and strong. You all give so generously - much love to you all.

# REPORTS FROM UTHANDO GROUPS

## HAMILTON HILL

Another year gone and we are still meeting every Thursday to make dolls and all the other things appreciated by the children in KwaZulu Natal. It is always such a joy to get feedback from our NGOs and to see the smiling faces of the children!

But there is more than that to our meetings: we enjoy each other's company, share our ups and downs and solve the world's problems in general. 😊 The numbers of the group are fluctuating - sometimes there are just four or five of us, at other times it's full house!

Our main purpose is still making dolls, but we also contribute animals, balls, dolls clothes and sewing kits - managed 302 and 201 dolls respectively for the two shipments this year.

Barbara is once again concentrating on family groups, even doing a tiny baby in a sleeping bag!

After the recent shipment there are already more bags filling up - we hope to continue for as long as there are children who are looking forward to our contribution!

Doris Van Keulen



## TASMANIA - Uthando Group Report 2023-2024

Uthando Tasmania continues to be very busy with 3 external groups at Howrah, Blackman's Bay and North Hobart regularly delivering their lovely dolls to our headquarters at Cygnet. We have also supplied unstuffed doll skins and balls for Mary Richardson's ladies in WA to finish. Through our connection with Mary's family members now living in Hobart we have been blessed to have an occasional courier service delivering our dolls to WA HQ thus saving us considerable funds for postage.

Cygnet Primary School are now in their 16th year of making dolls as part of their senior program under the support of teacher Catherine Fairs-Morris. We love to receive any new ideas and patterns and continue to enjoy our weekly meetings where there is always lots of fun and laughter.

Irene Swan



Irene at the Margaret Sutton Exhibition with Tasmanian crafty doll

## NEW SOUTH WALES

I'm really delighted with how this year has progressed. I have been teaching machine embroidered dolls in rural NSW at port Macquarie and Newcastle. The students at port Mac meet monthly now at the pfaff/patchwork shop. Their aim to complete 50 dolls by Xmas.

As you know I have been encouraging others to join me making dolls. It hasn't been easy as I find most people are time poor.

I'm happy to say I have asked a friend Maria, to be the western suburbs Uthando co-ordinator, she takes the pressure off me when I'm away.

We have started a group of stitchers in Hammondville, at a retirement village, & meet 2nd wed of every month. These ladies are fabulous crocheters and knitters and are using their skills to make beautiful garments and wigs. Some of the ladies are challenged with dexterity but are keen & willing and we find something for them to help with.

A fun fact - our dolls travelled by Tesla across the country with Duncan, a friend of Ann's, who helped me organise the transfer.

Looking forward to seeing everyone & getting inspired at our retreat in November.

Happy stitching

Julz

Julie with Maria, Coordinator at Hammondville



Dolls on their way across the Nullarbor



## BUNBURY

We have 18 women on our contact list and about half these attend Monday morning sessions every week in the Moorabinda Croquet Club Rooms. There was a forced break in May when a tornado ripped a path through Bunbury, taking off the roof of our neighbouring building - the PCYC. The local paper reported the “crochet club” was closed to minimise the risk of anyone breathing in asbestos fibres from the destroyed building.

Our packing records show the type of dolls we like to make. The classic dolls always go with a bag, a blanket and a change of clothes, maybe even a beanie and some socks.

In November '23 we packed 168 dolls for TREE, 216 classic dolls, 103 assorted soft toys, including 40 balls and 18 monkeys.

In June '24 we packed 157 simple dolls, 211 classic dolls, and 84 soft toys including 31 balls and 32 monkeys.

I was able to get to the Uthando 20 year anniversary celebration in Perth in March, with a local friend who had been at Bunbury Senior High School with Julie Stone (as had two others in our group). It was good to see Deborah Campbell's original banners decorating the venue.

Ready for school by Dale



Not that we are counting - but Dale must have the record for the most dolls made and she also continues to adapt patterns. Her variation of the simple doll pattern makes joining and stuffing a lot easier. We all learn from each other.

Caroline is an excellent treasurer and custodian of the bank account. We raise some money by being part of the Containers for Change program. Caroline has restarted our Facebook page (Bunbury Dollmakers for Uthando). Barbara continues to arrive with fabric gleaned from the Stirling Street Arts Centre (her other home). Colinda has become the bag making specialist. Others provide morning tea treats from time to time. Pam, is one contributor we see only when she delivers hundreds of crocheted outfits to us and we get to choose what we want for our dolls.

We welcome new members. Find us at the Moorabinda Croquet Club, 16 Wimbledon Way, Bunbury.

Carolyn  
0498 361 338

We gratefully acknowledge local air conditioning firm, Ford and Doonan, for continuing to supply us with polyester stuffing.

## SORRENTO

Sorrento group has had another wonderful year of fellowship and connection through doll making for Uthando Project. It is frequently noticed that we might be getting as much joy from the doll making as we hope the recipient children will have from the resultant dolls.

Our sessions always include a sumptuous spread of afternoon tea items and a table or two of "share" materials, overflowing with free fabrics and yarns from someone's "stash" to be taken by anyone who needs it. We all enjoy seeing at future meetings, what use has been made of the donated fabric or yarn, especially scrap remnants which would otherwise have gone to waste. There is regular discussion of how to manage waste textiles with some doll makers collecting group waste to take to collection points at the retail clothing store H & M while others share ideas about reducing and reusing textile waste.

We had a wonderful Christmas lunch at Robins's home, with live keyboard and violin accompaniments from dollmakers Pauline and Meg and even a special composition by Lynne D. Uthando Project

Monthly meetings are regularly held on the first Sunday of each month at the home of Robin Hamilton. This year additional workshops and meetings at Our Lady of

Grace School Hall in North Beach, the Henderson Environment Centre in North Beach and occasionally at other private homes have provided extra opportunities to meet. A large fundraising High Tea was hosted by Diana O'Kane and her family, at her home in Duncairn and well attended by friends and families of Sorrento doll makers. This event raised over \$3000 for Uthando Project. Regular donations and contributions such as through the Cash for Containers scheme by Sorrento doll makers are ongoing fundraising efforts to meet the cost of shipping dolls to KwaZulu Natal. A stall at Northern Suburbs Artisan Market, North Beach selling specially made dolls and kits raised over \$400.

Sharing ideas and materials forms an integral part of our group. A large collection of patterns is held in a file that is available at meetings and where available, electronic files are held in the files of our private Facebook group so that members can access them there.

Sorrento meetings are attended by 10 - 20 supporters and visitors, with transport and mobility issues sometimes challenging, however the group remains very productive, welcomes all skill and ability levels and has contributed many bags of dolls to the shipments. Sorrento group continues to seek opportunities to grow and held an Open Day in North Beach, which was widely promoted in the general community including through the local Council Calendar of Events.

This year doll makers from Sorrento Group have supported other groups, such as the one in Mindarie and another small group at St Pauls Anglican Church in Wembley Downs by sharing supplies and stitching doll skins, finishing items, packing and transporting the dolls to Forrestfield Headquarters for shipment to KZN. Several Sorrento ladies attended the 2023 doll making Retreat at Shoalwater, as well as the 20 Years of Doll Magic Exhibition at Canning Bridge in March. Robin Hamilton billeted Irene Swan from the Tasmanian group for the duration of the Exhibition and Irene enjoyed reconnecting with Perth doll makers. A wonderful thing that came from that was that Irene personally met Mary Richardson from the Mindarie group and there is now a terrific collaboration between the two groups so that pre stitched work is posted to Mindarie to support non machinist doll makers from Tasmania, while friends and family from Mindarie travelling to Tasmania are carrying completed Tasmanian dolls back to Perth, saving the Tasmanian group considerable postage costs and reducing the pressure to fundraise for that group.

Sorrento doll makers have also attended workshops and sessions at Headquarters in Forrestfield assisting with production of sewing and doll making kits for supply to dlalanathi in KZN and are very enthusiastic in this work, which supports beginning sewers in KwaZulu equipping them with basic supplies.

If there was one shared regret for our group, I think it would be that we cannot hold onto each other forever. This year we lost our special friend Susan Cromb who passed away in September after a long illness. Susan was a long term member of the group who will always be remembered for her kindness, generosity of spirit and bright

creative crochet work which put many beaded, dreadlocked wigs on dolls, as well as fabulous animal rattles into the tiny hands of babies to be entertained and soothed by. A memorial service held by Susan's family was attended by many of our group. She is never far from our thoughts.

Our group continues through to the 2024-2025 period committed to making more dolls within our supportive inclusive network, for the children in KwaZulu Natal.

Ann



Pauline demonstrates creating doll face to Sorrento Group

## MUNDARING

Mundaring Uthando Group still meets at Mundaring Adult Learning Centre in Mundaring every Monday afternoon during school terms. We have a nucleus of 6-7 very conscientious ladies and occasionally others who are drawn in from enrolments at the Centre.

Our ladies still contribute dolls, animals and bags etc. as we can and as we are instructed that may be needed in particular.

We are a very social group and enjoy each others company over sewing and a cup of tea and cake.

We will keep on keeping on. We enjoy it and it is a valuable contribution.



Wendy Bart

## MINDARIE

This has been a hard year for most of our group which meet every Tuesday between 12 and 3pm. There have been health and family issues a plenty and Tuesday's doll sessions have been a life line to a few. They know as they come and create, they have a supportive group who have their backs.

The love that permeates from the whole Uthando community is something very special. When I sent out a plea for doll skins that still need to be turned the correct way so that our ladies who have eye issues have purpose The Tasmanian group sent me over 200 doll skins and even more sewn balls ready to be stuffed. The fact that some people outside our group cared enough to help out gave our ladies a tremendous boost.

All the skins have been turned so we are ready for more and the dolls are being stuffed and dressed at a rapid rate. We have ladies who have a passion for every stage of the dolls being completed. This year we have gained 3 new very valuable members who are happy to put their hands to anything so we are able to complete about 8 dolls every session.

Over the last few months, we have had a lady from Canberra join us as she has been here looking after her daughter who has been undergoing cancer treatment. She went back last week and belongs to a bring your own craft group. She was telling us that they needed a reason for their craft and so has gone home with one of our books, a couple of completed dolls and a couple of skins to show and tell. Who knows where that might take us.

I believe that Uthando is a beacon of light that proves how a group working together can make a difference in our sad little world.