

Busy bees at work

A 12-YEAR PARTNERSHIP HAS BLOSSOMED BETWEEN RACING NSW AND A CO-OPERATIVE THAT SUPPORTS SYDNEY'S SENIORS & PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITY WORDS: MARK BRASSEL



Workers at Beehive Industries prepare testing kits bound for ARFL

From small beginnings, Beehive Industries Co-operative grew out of a Council of the City of Sydney financial assistance program designed to help widows and invalid pensioners with additional expenses at Christmas time.

The Council wanted to assist residents in more fulfilling and productive ways to improve their long-term well-being, increase their independence and reduce their social isolation – the result was Beehive.

“Beehive has been assembling and packing testing kits for Racing NSW and the ARFL (Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory) in Darlinghurst since 2004,” said Beehive’s CEO, Brendan Lonergan.

“These testing kits were then sent over to the lab at Randwick where lab staff scanned each kit and then prepared all of the orders of satchels to

go out to the Racing NSW Stewards.

“Beehive Industries took over doing all of the satchel preparation and dispatch work that had previously been done in house at ARFL in July 2015.

“This additional contract work from Racing NSW has allowed Beehive Industries to support an even greater number of seniors and persons with a disability.”

Racing NSW’s Chief Executive, Peter V’landys AM, said: “Beehive Industries has been assembling our testing kits for a number of years now and they have always done it with professionalism.

“They are reliable and our partnership is a win-win situation for all.”

Since its humble beginnings in 1971 when the organisation had the capacity to support up to 30 members a day, Beehive has moved, expanded, amalgamated and welcomed the opening of the leisure centre.

Over the course of 45 years, the organisation has been reflective of the changing needs of society and now serves almost 200 members.

Beehive continues to be supported by the City of Sydney, public and private companies including Racing NSW and Telstra and is the recipient of NSW State Government funding through ADHC.

A membership-based social enterprise located in Darlinghurst, Sydney, Beehive provides programs to assist with social isolation, including:

- meaningful work, such as packaging, labelling and mail sorting, provided through contracts with the private and public sectors;
- assistance with employment preparation and work schemes;
- social activities and outings; and
- health and wellness related programs such as daily meals and a ‘Low Cost Meals for Seniors’ program. **RNSW**