

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE 2010 AGM**

2009 was another incredibly busy and successful year for Strathnairn Arts Association (SAA). The introduction of our new administrator Leah Molony following our successful grant application to artsACT in 2008 and her performance has considerably eased the very heavy burden of the Management Committee. However I am always conscious of burn out with some of our best contributors.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Leah has settled in very quickly and has been very helpful and available to our membership.

The exhibition program under her administration has been very successful and while many of the exhibitions were in place at her arrival, she has organised publicity and invitations and been very approachable for exhibiting artists. She has also developed the program for 2010 and 2011 and is hoping to produce an advance calendar of exhibitions. This is difficult to do for other than our permanent fixtures as we often have cancellations and fill in exhibitions so the web site is still proving to be our best marketing tool.

### **GALLERY AND OTHER EVENTS**

2009 began with a wonderful textile exhibition, '*Australia Naturally*'. This glorious exhibition of small shibori works had arrived from Paris and is now on an extended national tour – is currently in Alice Springs - and had a very favorable review in the Canberra Times.

The following exhibition was by two first time exhibitors, Jacqui Malins '*Accretion*' ceramic works, and Susan Hey, with an exhibition '*Behind these Lines*' of mixed media works.

Strathnairn printmakers Jo Hollier, Cary James and Maryann Mussared invited their tutor Barak Zelig to exhibit with them in their solar plate etching exhibition '*Under the Sun*' which ran at the same time as Michael Winters work in progress exhibition.

The winter season opened with a two exhibitions- '*Memento*' by Barbara Jackson in Gallery One and '*Lake Ginninderra on Silk*' by Carole Osmotherly in the Fireside Room. Congratulations to both artists and a big thank you to Carole for giving Strathnairn such good publicity in her interview on Artsound FM Radio.

SCOOP continued our calendar of events with their annual exhibition and Peoples Choice competition, *SQUARES*. The hotly contested prize very deservedly went to Elizabeth Faul for her beautiful painting 'A Square in Venice'. Congratulations and thanks to

Carole Osmotherly and August Cole – as well as and Ray and Kevin - for the huge amount of time and energy they put into making *SQUARES* such a success.

Our Emerging Artist Support Scheme exhibition *Speaking with Objects*, showed work by three recent graduates of the ANU School of Art: Diane Libke, Rachael Freeman and Gosia Pilat. It was a beautifully presented exhibition and Strathnairn Arts Association wishes them all the best for the future.

A select group of celebrated Canberra artists came together to exhibit special and unique objects in a pre-Christmas exhibition and gift sale in *Objects of Desire*. Beautiful gifts to treasure included handmade boxes and paper, artist's books, ceramic and glass vessels, jewellery, textiles, collages, hand made beads, paintings, unique prints.

During 2009 the Gallery also played host to an exhibition of drawings by Strathnairn artists, an exhibition by 'Cataboxers' a group of Canberra art teaches, a studio holders exhibition as well as our every popular Members Exhibition, which supported the annual Soup and Bowl fundraiser.

2010 started with a very successful exhibition by Susan Pieterse with support from our local Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mary Porter.

Our wonderful senior artists Dirk and Ann Bouma had another exhibition of their work recently and a launch of Dirk's book which makes very interesting reading.

Michael Winters has presented his final Artist in Residence exhibition – '*Chocolate Box Landscapes*' - that was the fruits of his residency in 2009 with some very good attendance at the floor talks.

### **STRATHNAIRN'S 2009 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE (AIR) PROGRAM**

Strathnairn was privileged to have had Michael Winters as our first non ceramic AIR for 2009. Michael held some very successful workshops and a very successful exhibition of preliminary works last March.

Following Michael was Lindsay Osterritter, a wood-fire potter from the USA, who was here until August. While Lindsay was unknown to the potting fraternity she held a very successful small workshop and a hugely successful exhibition. Lindsay has also been published in the LOG BOOK in USA where she mentions how wonderful her time at Strathnairn was and what a fantastic place Strathnairn is. It is publicity we couldn't afford to pay for.

The internationally renowned Australian ceramic artist Dr Owen Rye followed in September and October, when he held a very successful weekend workshop.

### **2010 AIR PROGRAM**

2010 is shaping up well for our highly regarded AIR program - Roseline Vedrines from Paris is our current AIR, so please look for her workshops and exhibition in the near future.

Following Roseline, we have Tony Nankervis from northern NSW. Tony is re-establishing his very fine wood fire practice after an illness and we look forward to having him here

The final AIR for 2010 is Brenda Danbrook from Canada. She is a recent graduate of the Distance Diploma ANU. Brenda has fantastic throwing skills and is a passionate soda fire potter - we look forward to her workshops and exhibition

\*Some recent news of Daniel Evans who was AIR in July- August 2007.

Daniel and his partner Shu-mei Chan were so impressed with their stay at Strathnairn that when they returned to America they bought a farmhouse and have initiated 'Bloomington Clay Studio', Indiana's first and only ceramic art residency/education centre open to artists of all disciplines.

Other than a small promotion at the Ceramics Triennale in Sydney in June we have still not advertised our AIR program widely other than through our strong connection with the ANU and word of mouth, but this has provided us with some remarkable AIR opportunities.

We will close applications for 2012 in October. The line up for 2011 is still not confirmed but promises to be good and we have a surprise return of Stefan Jacobs from our AIR program in 2008 for another IKEA BIN Raku Kiln workshop in May 2010.

Please see our website for the important upcoming exhibition '*Out of Strathnairn*' at Belconnen Art Centre opening May 7th when we take selected members work to a new audience in a very prominent public gallery.

## **MARKETING AND OUR WEBSITE - [www.strathnairn.asn.au](http://www.strathnairn.asn.au)**

Our website continues to be our best marketing tool. Leah has been updating constantly with all the latest news and while we still have one or two members who are not on email or entirely computer savvy, most enjoy the very excellent website maintained by Mark Dale and we have lots of people from overseas looking at us. This is part of our advertising budget and is very good value.

## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

The membership of Strathnairn Arts Association has been gradually increasing and is currently just over one hundred. We also have seven members in the new category of Friends of Strathnairn. Last year approximately two thirds of the members renewed. The remaining one third are new members who we warmly welcome.

At the Special General Meeting held in May 2009, a new category of membership titled 'Friend of Strathnairn' was ratified. For \$20 'Friends' will receive information by email about news and events at Strathnairn.

The existing category of full membership will be specifically for:

Studio Holders,  
SCOOP members,  
Kiln users; and  
Members who would like to exhibit in the Annual Members Exhibition

## **MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance continues to be a big job for such a large property. The Management Committee has reviewed the duties and role of our long-standing and hardworking Manager and Caretaker Michael Sainsbury. Michael has provided a careful analysis of his daily, weekly and monthly duties and complex schedule of work. The Management Committee has separated his caretaker and management duties and as notified, have organised an appropriate salary package for him. This is long overdue and the Committee is pleased that it is finalised for presented with the projected budgets for 2011 and 2012.

Michael continues to play a most vital role for this organisation and we thank him very much and hope we are able to give back in some way for his long and continuous service.

The completion of the change from our Lease with ACTPLA to License with artsACT has saved the organisation a large amount of money in relieving the organisation of the need to pay annual rates. It is this significant event that has help facilitate the budget to provide for this important change to our management structure.

## **FOUNDRY AND WOOLSHED**

The Foundry and Woolshed plans have been approved and building should be underway very soon. The ACT Government has allocated \$100,000 for the foundry and \$50,000 towards landscaping.

Strathnairn Arts Association would like to thank and congratulate the Foundry Group for their tireless dedication and commitment to achieve their goal. The Foundry Group will establish themselves as a formal sub-committee and thereby be able to make submissions to the Management Committee at their monthly meetings. There is a separate update on the foundry news for members to read (a few copies are available)

## **STUDIOS**

This year all studios have been fully occupied and in full use.

A few moves have taken place throughout the year. Most recently Helen Martin has vacated with Dimity Goldie moving back in. Dimity is a former studio holder who has returned after 3 years overseas.

Also welcome to Belinda Jessop who has moved into Studio 6 following refurbishment.

The studio waiting list continues to grow. We look forward to new studios in the old woolshed being ready for occupation as building restoration is completed later this year.

Repairs to existing studios have been carried out as part of our normal property maintenance. The addition of shade sails to the large studio and studio 1 have been a most welcome addition for the occupants of those spaces

We plan to have two more studios available in the Woolshed development. Studios are allocated to artists on the order on the waiting list and space appropriate for their art practice.

We would like to remind all studio holders to read their studio holders agreement and make sure they adhere to the conditions. Because of the busy year for the committee we have not had time to review the agreements but we hope to do that review before June .

## **SCOOP**

SCOOP continues to be the successful retail face of Strathnairn. As the President I have had discussions with SCOOP about proposed changes to how SCOOP operates. The Committee has presented the proposed changes as discussed and approved by the Management Committee and in turn, this will now be discussed at the next meeting of SCOOP members.

Committee Member Avi Amesbury has offered to explain the financial structure and good governance necessary for these proposed changes and hopefully we can have some agreement in the near future. The process has been lengthy simply because SCOOP members only meet monthly and it is important that all parties understand and accept the reasons for the proposed changes.

## **2009 PLANNING DAY**

The Planning Day (Strathnairn third in the past decade) in October saw us review what had been achieved since 2006 and gave us some goals for future planning. These goals have been included in our almost complete Business Plan. Former SAA Treasurer Rex Hollier has been working on this for some time in a volunteer capacity and we appreciate his efforts to gather the material necessary for this impressive document.

## **VILLAGE HALL**

The Hall continues to be hired out by artists and community groups for art related programs. We have implemented new conditions and fees that are posted up in the Hall. It is intended that we review annually the fees and usage of this very valuable facility.

## **CAFE**

The Cafe still poses some problems for us although we have set a wage for casual staff. With some support from Noonee Doronilla, we have a casual employee Carmel who is a hospitality student at UNCAN. We hope the new arrangement will continue to service the visitors we have on weekends.

## **PIZZA DAY**

Michael has reinstated the Pizza Days and he will be calling for volunteers. This is a promotional event rather than an income source and adds to the atmosphere that we have developed over a number of years. Please encourage your friends and networks to book!

## **ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE**

Committee members have worked very hard this last year with the continuing increase in activity that has come with our grant from artsACT and opening of the four new studios in late 2008. Even though the Management Committee has the support of two paid employees, the demands on the committee members are still considerable.

On behalf of the members of Strathnairn, I would like to thank all the committee members for their countless hours of voluntary support. The formation of a number of sub-committees has placed an added but necessary commitment from all of them.

I think it is important for members to be aware of the level of responsibility that individual members of the Committee undertake.

**PRESIDENT:** My role as President continues to be a very 'hands-on' in all aspects of the organisation, taking many hours of meetings and consultation with artsACT and the Chief Ministers Department. While these duties are often onerous, they are ones that I have enjoyed because of the support from the other members of the Management Committee.

What has been invaluable is everyone's commitment to their art practice as well as the organisation and many times Committee members have stood in for me. Each member of the Management Committee and many individual members have made major contribution to Strathnairn Arts Association.

**SECRETARY:** Maryann's role as Secretary has covered general secretariat duties including agendas and minutes for the monthly Management Committee meetings, prioritising timelines for grants, governance training and external exhibition opportunities

such as our forthcoming '*Out of Strathnairn*' exhibition at the new Belconnen Arts Centre.

TREASURER: The Treasurers responsibilities are considerable and with many changes this year Vivien Lightfoot has been supported by Avi Amesbury. Avi has worked with Rex Hollier on projected budgets and facilitated the MYOB accounting system and we have employed a book keeper who will have a good overview of our accounts and will report to the committee via the treasurer. Avi has brought her considerable knowledge and financial skill to the committee and given us a new professional level of operation.

Studio and general committee members Jo, Carole and Avi have made major contributions to all facets of the organisation with their involvement in sub-committees, business planning, grant writing, reviews and budgets. The need for another general committee member because of Michael's changed position will be a welcome addition.

To Committee Members Maryann, Jo, and Avi who are stepping down from the committee I give you my heartfelt thanks for your contribution and support. Maryann has a major solo exhibition to prepare for in October and Jo also has major exhibitions and family commitments that require more of her time. Avi as announced in the last newsletter has been appointed to the position of CEO of CraftACT.

All have promised their continued contribution in the form support for sub-committees such as the Financial/Budget Planning sub-committee and Marketing /Promotion sub-committee. I would like to thank them for the commitment to the ongoing support of Strathnairn.

For the returning committee members my very heartfelt thanks as I feel the importance of continuing corporate knowledge is vital and we are very lucky to have that with many of our long time contributing members.

I am proud of our achievements of 2009 and look forward to the completion of major projects in 2010. As Strathnairn goes from strength to strength the future is looking very good. The Chief Minister, who has taken a great interest in Strathnairn, would hope to further develop Strathnairn with more capital works that would give us more studios, improvements to the homestead, and even another AIR accommodation. This of course would give Strathnairn a larger critical mass of people using the facility and increase our income potential.

The Foundry and Woolshed will be the start of a new audience and we realize these new facilities will take time to establish. However we look forward to an increase in membership, activities such as workshops, classes (in papermaking) and events that will add to the rich tapestry that is Strathnairn Arts Association.