



# PORT STEPHENS COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

## NEWSLETTER

December 2020

Cultural Close, off Shoal Bay Road, NELSON BAY. 2315

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### From the President

Welcome to the Summer/Christmas edition of the Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter. Following the resignation of Bernadette who had done a great job as editor for quite some time, there is now a new team working on production of the Newsletter, Meryl Miller, Penelope Highland and myself. We are hoping to receive contributions from many of our Arts Centre members, including anything newsworthy from your groups or home studios, stories, photos, local history, poetry and letters.

The Board welcomes Joana Johnston as our new member and Maintenance Director. Joana is a very talented painter, a member of the Artisan Collective and joined the Arts Centre in 2016

And what a strange year it's been with the dreaded virus constraining all aspects of our lives and limiting our activities. But there have been some positive effects of these 'unprecedented' times - more time for reflection, maybe paying more attention to self-care, diet and exercise, just enjoying the serenity and getting those long-put-off jobs around the home done. For me, one of the small pleasures of the COVID shutdown was waking up in the morning and realising I didn't have to go anywhere, phone anyone or organise anything that day - I could do whatever! Not surprisingly, this novelty quickly passed, so then I went

out into the garden.

### REFLECTIONS ON GARDENING

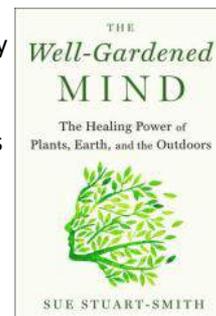
I have always enjoyed gardening but this year I got serious and started a vegetable plot. It's so satisfying to eat food that you've grown, we've already consumed the first crop of rocket, also parsley and perennial basil, the last being vigorous but disappointing in flavour. Now looking forward to the ripening of tomatoes, strawberries, zucchinis & chilli.

The gardening column in the weekend Sydney Morning Herald discussed the many benefits gardening has for mental health and also a recently published book the *Well-Gardened Mind* by Sue Stuart-Smith.

She says "physically shaping our surroundings connects us to the world and produces an increased sense of control, resilience and optimism". Gardening helps people deal with traumas such as childhood abuse, war and loss. Research has shown that prisoners who garden during their sentence are less likely to re-offend and that older people live longer and more satisfying lives if they garden.

Enough of my ravings! Have a wonderful Christmas and a healthy New Year full of art and craft!

*Carolyn Virgona*



### STOP PRESS

"The Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced that the social distancing rule would be relaxed as of Monday 7th Dec from four to two metres per person. This means that the capacity of our activity rooms can be increased".



Christmas Eve - close 1pm 24 Dec  
Christmas Day - closed all day 25 Dec  
Boxing Day - closed all day 26 Dec  
Boxing Day - Holiday open 28 Dec  
New Year's Eve - close 1pm 31 Dec  
New Year's Day - closed all day 1 Jan

# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Gallery Manager Report

Our newest exhibition *Open Your Eyes Underwater – WOW!* is now hanging in the main gallery and annex areas. It will only last till 19 January, so please be sure to drop in and take a look at this very refreshing display. You'll find all manner of sea creatures and scenery, all created by our talented members.



The feedback that our recent exhibitions has created is overwhelmingly positive. Visitors are continually commenting on the fresh, new look that the galleries now have. As well as their admiration, our sales figures are showing how enthusiastic they are about what's available for sale.

Our Christmas display will close on 23 December. Thank you to the many craft-makers who contributed. Sally and Bev have been kept constantly busy displaying the new items as they come in, and customers have found plenty they'd like to buy. Any unsold stock will be placed in the Manoora room. Please check and remove any that belongs to you, as soon as possible from mid-day on 23 December onwards.

The short exhibition *Sun, Surf and Sand* has been 'tucked in' as an annex wall filler once the Christmas Craft display comes down. It will only hang on the wall directly under the air conditioner for a few weeks.

For this particular display, each member can bring in one

painting, hanging, or shelf item to the theme of Sun, Surf and Sand.

Paintings should be brought to the gallery on the afternoon of 22 December.

Other items can be left in a New Stock drawer in the wrap room, up until 21 December.

When this exhibition is dismantled on 19 January, any

remaining paintings must be taken home i.e. they will not become part of the usual rotation from the gallery and annex, into the hallway.

PSCAC Exhibition Calendar 2021 is now in the final stages of preparation. It will be sent to all members as a separate document, so please keep an eye on your in-box for this. We had a wide range of suggestions for themes, and have incorporated as many of these as possible. Hopefully you'll find something to challenge you, as well as something comfortable and familiar. As always, I encourage all members to display works for any of the exhibitions. It's a great opportunity to have something of yours placed in the main gallery and annex areas – a number of our groups are now creating a program of techniques and projects to tie in with each exhibition.

Finally, thank you for your help and co-operation through this difficult year – and best wishes to all for the coming festive season.

**Di Adamson**

## Saturday Stitchery



We have shared an enjoyable couple of hours at our first two sessions of Saturday Stitchery. Between eight and ten have attended including two young stitchers. It was wonderful to have their youthful company.

A range of interests were evident including weaving, embroidery, crochet, sashiko and knitting.

We meet on the first Saturday of the month between 1pm and 3pm (not on 2 January) and would love to see you there.

**Jenny Quirk**



When dealing with our community of fellow Artisans please remember the importance of empathy

# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Group Leaders

I would like to say THANK YOU to all our Group Leaders. This crazy year has increased your workload considerably.

When COVID-19 made its appearance back in March/April, it was necessary to cease our craft groups and close the Centre and The Barn.

Throughout this time our group leaders were in contact with their group members, some even organised tasks or activities that could be done.

Nikki Waters organised the "Online Painting Challenge" which proved extremely popular with many of our members, not only the painters. Well Done Nikki 🙌🙌

After the lockdown and before the Centre reopened it was decided to give the Gallery and Centre a thorough professional clean, which meant arranging members to come and collect their works. This chore was co-ordinated



Self-Challenge Art  
Week 23 - Tropical  
Florals



by Di Adamson, assisted by Group Leaders and Display persons.

A personal thank you all for assisting myself and Greg Cumberland as we tested and tagged all electrical appliances throughout the entire Centre during the closure. Planning for the reopening for Groups activities use only, was a massive task. Once again, the leaders were fully involved in the opening and helped make it as smooth as possible.

Unfortunately, a number of groups needed to split to comply with room number restrictions. A big year for every Group Leader, and without your help, input and assistance the PSCAC would not function as well as it does.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2021 🎄🎄🎄

**Colleen Sessions**

## Embroidery Group

Our small but enthusiastic group are back and enjoying our embroidery. We have created a new sign for our corner of the Gallery. Each letter has been stitched by a different member. It's now finished and on the wall in the alcove and we are all very pleased with the result.

Noela McCarthy has been working on this lovely basket of wildflowers.

Merry Christmas everyone enjoy your time with family and friends.

**Penelope Highland**



## Plein Air

Takes place at Roy Wood Reserve until next year when we will set our plan for 2021. We have been able to maintain social distancing and still meet to paint almost every week.

Best wishes to all for the festive season and looking forward to better days ahead.

## Life Drawing

As with every other group ours has been a difficult year



however we have used our time to advantage by honing our drawing skills, drawing each other and trying other mediums. We have set up still life and drapery. Undoubtedly, we would prefer a model but feel we have added to our areas of expertise.

The last meeting will be Friday 18th December and the group will resume on Friday 5th January. Don't forget our Christmas picnic on 18th!

Season's greetings to everyone from all of us.

**Robyn Bailey**



# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Monday Morning Painters

Like most groups, the Monday morning painters have experienced changes due to "the virus".

Numbers of attendees dropped initially, returning to close to the number permitted in the Westralia room. Painters happily accepted the requirements of the health regulations and everyone seemed to enjoy the company.

Several potential new starters attended over the last few months but most failed to carry on joining the centre for various reasons.

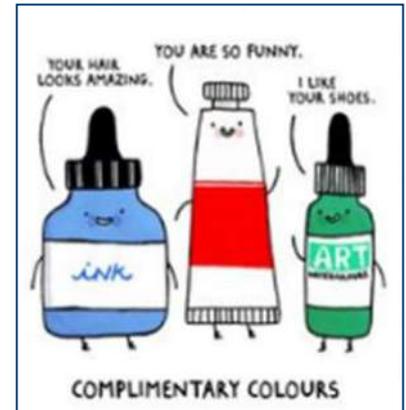
On 30 November we hosted the Christmas party in the rear courtyard which was well attended by most of the painting groups. This turned out to be the best option considering the COVID situation and everyone enjoyed being together once more. Many thanks to Moira for her efforts in making it a success.

We are looking forward to the new year and, due to the

success of the last tutorials, plan, in collaboration with all the painting groups, to arrange more to come. Subject to health requirements.

From all the Monday morning painters.....Merry Christmas to all, and a happy and healthy new year!!

**Stafford Bennett**



## Monday Watercolour Painters

MERRY CHRISTMAS & ALL THE BEST FOR A GREAT NEW YEAR.

2020 has been a very unusual year, we are very proud to have presented our first Watercolour Exhibition; it was a joy to see everyone participate, many of our new members selling their first paintings, congratulations all. Everyone has been busy these last few weeks preparing for our next centre exhibition being hung this week. Look out for these lovely watercolour pieces.

I am hoping that some of our restrictions will be lifted by the New Year so that we can have enough seating to welcome more new members to our group. Our last day for this year will be Monday 18 December; we will restart late in January. We have two topics for the January exhibition, large colourful canvases or black and white paintings with a hint of colour, so if you are looking to get the paints out during the holiday period, look for a subject



that will fit this description.

Thank you all for a great year,

**Nada O'Loughlin-Yonge**

## Monday Afternoon Painters

Lots of Creative Energy filled the room on Monday 26 November with an in-house workshop. Thank you to Bev Henry on her wonderful delivery using her knowledge and application of Abstract Art on a large canvas.

Look forward to developing individual styles in an interactive group environment.

Wishing you all a happy and safe Festive Season.

**Marianne Newton**



# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Woodies

The Woodies, just like everyone else experienced a year like no other.

During the three and half months that we were closed we took the opportunity to review Policies, Test and tag, Deep cleaning, installing solar panels, servicing machinery and keeping in touch via Zoom.

We reopened on 10 July observing strict social distances to the delight of our members.

Our community work at Schools, Harbourside, Lifestyle Solutions etc have been cancelled for this year but were still able to support the Year 12 Woodworker of the year at St Philips and Tomaree High school and support the Newcastle Show.

Prior to COVID we had collected and restored a large quantity of furniture for the bushfire victims. Due to COVID we distributed to local needy families, receiving a few cash donations, we were happy to donate these funds to the



Yacaaba Centre.

Our members were kept busy not only with their own projects but also with making fundraising items for selling in raffles.

January saw us raffling a beautiful rocking horse as our main fundraiser for the year. Presently our members are working on wooden Christmas trees which are for sale and also a wooden garden wheelbarrow which will be raffled in January.

This year is our 25th Anniversary and we will be celebrating at our Christmas Party with past members including life and honorary members, past

presidents and senior Art Centre committee members being invited.

The Woodies wish you all a very Merry Christmas and safe and happy New Year.

**Ines Thomas**

## Paper Craft

As we near the end of a very interesting and challenging year our group is feeling positive about the next year. We will be having our Planning Meeting for 2021 early this month and we're all looking ahead with confidence.

Despite having to work as two smaller groups for most of this year our members have produced some beautiful and very creative items.

Evidence of this is the high standard of cards currently on display for sale. It has been challenging keeping up the supply of Christmas cards since the Gallery re-opened in October. Due to increased demand for handmade cards



for "that special person", we relish that kind of challenge!

Our very enjoyable End-of-Year Luncheon was held on Monday at Salt Water Restaurant. It was wonderful to be together as a large and somewhat noisy group again: laughing, chatting and generally supporting each other are our specialty.

We'd like to thank the Board Members for being so supportive of us during these past nine months especially, and also thanks to Jeanette for ensuring that we always have the equipment to keep us COVID safe.

We extend our sincere best wishes to all PSCAC members for a happy and safe Festive Season.

**Helen McNamara**

## Bonsai

Another year has come and gone and what a strange year it has been but at least we have had plenty of time to attend to our trees.

### TIPS

It is necessary to protect Maples and soft leaved plants from the hot sun and winds to prevent leaf burn. Trees in shallow pots may need to be watered several times a day so keep an eye on them. Figs, Elms and Maples can be de-foliated later in December to produce smaller leaves. Most natives and

tropical evergreens can be re-potted in early summer. Continue to fertilize with a liquid fertilizer every two weeks

Wishing everyone a Merry and Safe Christmas and a Happy New Year

**Carol Rigby**



# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Café

Garden Cafe is open for business on Saturdays 10am – 2.30pm only exception is December 26.

A menu of beverages, cakes, scones and savoury muffins will be served. It is working well and we have many delighted customers.

In February we are hoping to open on



both days of the weekend with a light lunch included.

This can't happen without more volunteers I'm afraid. The menu is cut right back, so the workload is significantly lighter than it was, hopefully this will encourage you to sign up! Thank you so much to all of my current volunteers, you are indeed Godsend, words are not enough to express our gratitude.

*Madeleine and Kathy*

## Patchwork Groups

The patchwork groups have been enjoying their time being back together after the Covid-19 shut downs, chatting with friends over a cuppa while making a few stitches in our work. While we were not able to meet, many produced new quilts and other items. Many of these will be on show in our exhibition next March, as well as the quilts that were already entered.

The theme of the quilt exhibition will remain the same. This being, 'The Hearth of the Home', and Log Cabin quilts made as a challenge will be featured. If you have any new quilts to enter the exhibition, or you have decided not to enter any one of your quilts from the original Quilt Exhibition dates, please let Lyn Cummings know.



Thursday ladies have been enjoying a 'Block of the Month' challenge, with most of the blocks now finished. Ladies from both groups will be attending a workshop with

Wendy Nutt on Foundation Paper Piecing using Freezer Paper on Saturday December 5.

Both groups enjoyed a few days away at Tocal College (in two separate bookings), where many a stitch was made and a good time of friendship and creativity

was enjoyed by all. We wish all the members a safe and happy Christmas break and look forward to a creative New Year at the Centre.

The photo is of the eight ladies who went to Tocal in September with the Tuesday Group.

*Lyn and Margaret*

## Pottery

Season's Greetings to everyone.

The pottery shed has the feel of Santa's Workshop with an Australian twist, the temperature mainly. Lots of interesting new pottery lined up and ready to fire.

Carole Driver and her team of Merry helpers have done a wonderful job with the gallery. A big thank you to them all.

Hanna Whitney's Xmas pit firing was all set to go last Sunday. You'll probably remember that it was hot enough



to cook the pots without a fire, so a postponement until things cool down a bit.

Looking towards 2021, we hope that some of the potter's collaborations with other groups will bear fruit. An exciting year ahead.

Thanks to all the Arts Centre volunteers. Your help in keeping everything up and running is always much appreciated. Merry Christmas.

*Dave Briskham*

## People's Choice

The People's Choice Award is back in operation and I would ask people doing desk duty to encourage visitors to the Gallery to let us know what catches their eye. The Award is open to all items in the Gallery and previously we have received votes across all groups and categories. It is drawn at the end of each exhibition period and the winner receives a voucher for the Café.

*Melanie Delaney*



# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Tai Chi

Roy Wood Reserve continues to delight our Tai Chi group who meet here Monday and Thursday mornings at 10am. We have quite a repertoire now and all are especially enjoying the fan and learning our new piece the 42.

42 is an amalgamation of four types of Tai Chi, Yang, Chen, Wu and Sun which is practiced and recognised internationally. Initially used in Competitions including movements familiar to each discipline and was chosen as the form to represent Tai Chi at the Beijing Olympics.

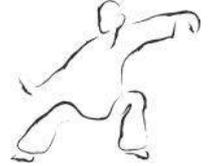


Previously we have learnt Yang style 40 and Yang fan plus the 8 which is a form that can be done in a confined space

and consists of beneficial movements and is short, often used in hospital or similar situations. We also have warm up and cool down Qi Gong routines needless to say all the above are beneficial to mind and body.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

**Beryl and Robyn**



## Spinners & Weavers

The Spinners and Weavers group will be finishing up for the year next Wednesday with a return to Dutchies Beach. We are planning a COVID safe Christmas Lunch with take away from the local Thai restaurant.

We will also be exchanging items made over the last couple months as part of a Group Fibre Exchange. This was modelled on the International Scarf Exchange which occurs worldwide between Spinning Groups.

Each participant provides 150 grams of clean, carded fibre (wool, silk, alpaca etc) and their preferences/dislikes for colour, item (scarf, wrap, bag) and process (knitted, woven or

felted). This is exchanged (anonymously) with another participant who uses their imagination to create the item.

They can add additional fibre and embellishments and should keep in mind the theme "The Beach". We are planning lots of fun and surprises when the ten participants open their parcels!

Merry Christmas everyone

**Melanie Delaney**



Have yourself a merry little Christmas

## Raffles

The Big Christmas Raffle is underway with prizes and hampers from all of our activity groups. Get your tickets now! It will be drawn on 18 December in the Gallery.



The next raffle will be an absolutely brilliant mobile made by the FUSION Group during lockdown. All the *inchie*s made up of intricate needlework has been combined to form this wall hanging. Something we all would love to win and hang on our wall

**Diana Atkinson**

## Calling all Artists

AGL with the Tomaree Museum Association will be staging the Port Stephens Art Competition over the holiday period, with an exhibition at *Boughton's at the Bay* - Balcony level, d'Albora Marina in Nelson Bay from 23 January 2021.

The Competition will reflect the heritage and sustainability themes of the Tomaree Museum Project and the artwork will help define the identity of the Port Stephens community.



Any artists wishing to enter this event can view the entry conditions at [www.tomareemuseum.org.au/tma-agl-art-prize](http://www.tomareemuseum.org.au/tma-agl-art-prize) or email [tomareemuseum@gmail.com](mailto:tomareemuseum@gmail.com).

There is no restriction on medium or art type the only restriction is that your work needs to be able to be hung on a wall.

Prizes: 1st prize \$2000

2nd Prize \$1200

3rd Prize \$800



## Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

### Pastels

The Pastel group has continued to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month 10am until about 2pm. We have a strong core of participants who continue to grow in their skill and creativity. Each session a demonstration of a technique or method is given to encourage learning and development of pastel painting.

Check out some of the work done this year these are work in progress shots!

***Christine Leaming***



### Garden

Thank you to the amazing team of gardeners for all the work they put into creating our magnificent native garden which is filled with exotic native flora and fauna.

An inviting entry to the Gallery!

***Yvonne Hill***



**Why did the art thief's van  
run out of gas as he drove  
away from the museum?**

**Because he had no Monet to  
buy Degas to make the Van  
Gogh.**

**CENTRE NEWS IS A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBERS OF  
THE PORT STEPHENS COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE NELSON BAY**

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