



# PORT STEPHENS COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

## NEWSLETTER

December 2023

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

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### President's Report

As we approach the festive season, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've shared throughout the year. It has been a year filled with creativity, collaboration, and the wonderful spirit that defines our arts community. I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to all members.

The Arts Centre volunteers are the lifeblood of our Arts Centre. Your dedication and passion infuse our space with energy and creativity, ensuring the smooth operation. Special events in 2023 were the Art Prize and Spring Affair which helped raise our profile. Thanks to the Group Leaders who organised workshops to increase our members skills. Our members created unique works allowing us to run nine magnificent exhibitions during the year. Thanks to the display teams for ensuring our Gallery is always so well presented. It's wonderful to see how creative our vibrant community is. Thank you to all our members, your invaluable contributions enhance efficiency, foster a sense of community, and make our Arts Centre a vibrant cultural hub.

Stage one of restoring the exterior of our building has been completed. Thanks to Marianne for overseeing the replacement of the roof in the Café as well as the change in slope for drainage on our roof. We are still working on the colour scheme. Painting of the exterior is due to commence in March 2024.

Thank you to Antonia Creese for managing the reopening of the Café as well as our Café volunteers.

Wishing You a Merry Christmas: May this festive season bring you joy, and moments of inspiration. May you find time to relax, rejuvenate, and surround yourself with the love of family and friends. From all of us at the Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Committee, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you for being an integral part of our artistic family. I look forward to the continued journey of creativity and collaboration in the coming year.

**Meryl Miller**



### People's Choice

Congratulations to Milja Phillipson the latest winner of The People's Choice award for her Paper Toile piece of **'Two Butcher Birds'** she made of photos taken of birds in her backyard. A great variation of entries this time with votes for pottery, embroidery, bonsai and painting.

Desk duty volunteers please keep up the good work encouraging our visitors to enter the People's Choice Award. Milja I hope you enjoy your coffee and cake for two at the Garden Café.

**Melanie Delaney**

# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Mosaics Group

We have been busy creating projects for not only ourselves but for our exhibition in the Annex area from 22 December to end of January. We hope you will enjoy our work.

People are more than welcome to pop up to The Barn, second and fourth Wednesday each month and see what we do.

Wishing all a safe and happy Christmas

**Kim Reilly**



## Create NSW Funding Grant



Kate Washington, Member for Port Stephens was very impressed with our Gallery and Interested in our artists and how they create.

When officially announcing the grant, Kate Washington MP said, 'The Port Stephens Community Arts Centre plays such an important role in local people's lives, fostering creativity and connections across our community. The Minns Labor Government is delighted to be able to assist the Centre's hardworking volunteers to recover from the impacts of last year's floods.'

I asked Kate to pass on our gratitude to the NSW Minister for the Arts, John Graham, stating that Port Stephens Community

Arts Centre appreciates this generous grant from Create NSW. The Grant will help us improve the facilities we have for our members. Receiving the funding is a testament to the importance of the arts in our community as most of our members are Port Stephens residents. It will enable us to further our mission of fostering creativity, providing accessible cultural experiences, and strengthening the bonds that make Port Stephens unique.

**Meryl Miller**

# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Gallery Manager

By now everyone should have received an email copy of our Exhibition Calendar for 2024. If you've missed out, please let me know so I can get one to you. Following on from the success of our Beanie Muster in 2023, this time we have two different opportunities for all members to be involved with an exhibition theme.

The first is **Easter Delights** – following on from the Quilts display in the Hallway, from 18 March we will have Easter-themed art works in the hall, and other handcrafted Easter items in a designated area in the craft room.

The second is a **Miniatures** display in the Annex following on from the Christmas display. Artwork miniatures should be 10cm x 10cm for the actual work (not including a frame if one is used). Limit of one per artist. Handcrafted miniatures can be mini-anythings – so get your imaginations to work!

Gallery sales tags: please remember that we only work in whole dollars, or

amounts ending in 50c. This makes life easier for our desk duty staff. Also, no extra wording such as SALE should be added.

I hope everyone has a pleasant holiday season, and I look forward to seeing your new creations in the gallery soon.

**Di Adamson**

[Rnd22315@gmail.com](mailto:Rnd22315@gmail.com)



## Wednesday Pastel Group

The Pastel Group has been meeting on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

On Saturday 7 October we welcomed Gwendolin Lewis to the Centre to conduct a workshop on behalf of the Monday morning painters and the Pastel Group. 12 people participated and the day produced some excellent paintings in soft pastels.

We are hoping to hold another workshop in 2024. I would like to thank Robyn Killen for her organizational skills which made the day run smoothly in her absence.

**Christine Leaming**



# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## Café News

A very busy Sunday 26 November with more than 30 visitors to the Café.

Sadly, the regular Saturday and Sunday café openings will finish on 3 December due to staffing issues. If you would like to be involved in 2024 please contact Antonia.

But watch this space, because we hope to have some new café events and initiatives next year.

An enormous thankyou to ALL the ladies who have helped out with retraining, cleaning, serving and cooking.

**Antonia Creese** - Email (creeseanty@gmail.com)



## Pottery Groups



WONKY POT  
Wonky Pot  
not made  
by AI  
made by  
hand  
wet  
sticky  
mucky clay  
bash it  
bang it  
squeeze it  
throw it on the wheel  
coil it  
pinch it  
slab it  
stick shells on it  
in the kiln  
let the fire  
do it's job  
transmute  
it's rawness  
into  
wonky pot  
beautiful.



There are many perfect clay forms in pottery, as well as our lovely wonky pots.

Here Milja Phillipson shows her elegant palest blue coffee mugs, perfect.

**Carole Driver**



## Monday AM Painters

2023 has been the year of the “OBE’s” for some of our painters. The attached photo illustrates the joy experienced when our group helped Stafford celebrate his special day with a yummy morning tea. Sadness has also crossed our path as we have lost some loved members who are dearly missed.

It is truly amazing how quickly this year has passed especially when one is busy enjoying life, being creative doing what and when one wants and for our group, that is painting.

Our members are busy finishing their paintings ready to hang in the annex from 24 January to 5 March 2024 for our Monday AM Painters Exhibition, can't wait as I know it will be great.

To round off the year the combined painting groups are having their Christmas Luncheon on the Patio on Monday 11 December commencing at 12 o'clock. Due to the weather predictions the dress code will be chic casual or is that just plain old comfortable instead of black tie, tiaras and furs.

Our last activity day will be Monday 18 December and we will resume again on 8 January 2024.

May I extend to all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Health, Happiness and Happy Painting

**Robyn Killen**



## Tai Chi

Our view as we practice, always changing, high/low tide, windy/calm and always beautiful.

We will continue to meet until Monday 18 December and have yet to decide on the length of our break into January 2024.

**Robyn Bailey**



## Plein Air

We are still at beautiful Boat Harbour but have moved to Kingsley Beach side. Wonderful views, whales, snakes, boats and planes as well as spectacular rock formations, cliffs and water.

**Robyn Bailey**



## Spinners and Weavers

### *Re-inventing the wheel*

The earliest spinning wheel was thought to have been invented in India about 500AD and has remained virtually unchanged until the present day. But recent developments have changed the spinning wheel forever. The new lightweight battery driven table top wheel is both portable and functional and does everything it's older cousin can do. It packs away in a small bag and makes spinning a very mobile option. Some of us are hoping that it will soon be available in some more exciting colours!



Merry Christmas from the Spinners & Weavers.

**Melanie Delaney**

## Monday PM Watercolour Painters

Members from our four Monday painting groups have been organising workshops this year with our funds subsidising each. Our first one was the pastel one with **Gwendolin Lewis**, well attended and enjoyed by all. This past weekend we have been very lucky to have well known Tutor **Danni Lui** for a watercolour tutorial and plans are in place for early 2024 for an Acrylic workshop.

Danni Lui, from the Central Coast, shared her vast knowledge of the watercolour medium with us. Danni started the first session showing us a very simplified method of drawing a rose. Then using mainly Chinese brushes completed a stunning vibrantly coloured painting of a beautiful pink rose. 15 of us took on the challenge of this painting with mixed results, but what an amazing learning experience it was.

Day two saw us attempt three boat paintings, it was a great experience watching Danni demonstrate again, starting the day with the method of drawing a boat, then producing a lovely sunset painting with so much knowledge of the watercolour medium being shared with us all.

We would like to thank all those involved in running the workshop and also to thank Antonia and her merry helpers in the café for providing lunch for us on both days; we were very well looked after.

Thank you and I wish every one a very enjoyable Festive season.

**Nada O'Loughlin-Yonge**



## Featured Potters

### Gill Ward

Gill was born in 1946 in England. At 11 years of age she attended the junior Art Department in Sheffield and then went on to Leicester College of Art to study Foundation and Leisurewear design. At 19 she gained a City and Guilds Diploma, which qualified her



to become a designer.

Gill worked in the UK for four years before leaving to spend a year in the USA. On her return to the UK she joined the Berlei Foundationwear Company in London. Then in 1973 was offered a position in Sydney.

After many years working and traveling the world looking for new ideas, she married in 1982 and moved to the beautiful Port Stephens area, where she was able to resume her love of painting. Gill works mainly in acrylics, influenced in the early years by the work of Patrick Carrol. Also watercolour and pen and ink. She has won over 100 prizes and commendations, including three prizes at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

In more recent years Gill has taken up making hand built pottery and sells many pieces incorporating paintings of animals, birds and flowers. Handmade cards, magnets and signed prints are also available.

### Heidi Harber



I have always loved to create, make and share arts and crafts for as long as I can remember. I studied fashion after the HSC

and 20 years later became a florist. My husband and I moved to the Bay seven years ago to retire and that is when I became reacquainted with ceramics (after dabbling in my teens). Thanks to the great facility we have here and the generous nature of others who share this passion, I have learnt much and enjoyed the way my pieces have evolved from useful to more sculptural.

In 2021 I started to do assemblage art with my collection of natural objects



and have been fortunate enough to sell some of my pieces under Flotsam & Jetsam.

I love this beautiful environment here in the Bay and can spend hours taking in the colour and beauty that surrounds us and then marvelling at the intricate beauty of a rock pool or a beautiful shell. Like minded friends have inspired me to branch out into weaving and other techniques and these are also now incorporated in my pieces. Lately I have discovered Eco Printing and am fascinated by the process. Nature truly is inspirational.

Photography and a huge collection of photos over the years, are a great source of inspiration as is gardening.

In life, we weather many storms but they leave us with lessons to share and stories to tell. I love to create a new story from these experiences and found treasurers.

## Featured Artists - Jo Barwick & Jan Bevan

An unexpected vacancy became available in the Featured Artist slot so two of our Monday Watercolourists volunteered to fill this space. **Jo Barwick & Jan Bevan**. Both girls sharing the same initials is very unusual as is having two artists

exhibiting together. In a very short time these two girls have put together an amazing display, if you are looking for that unique gift for someone special at Christmas this is your opportunity to pick up a lovely painting at a very reasonable price. The girls have both either used Acrylic or watercolour to create these very unusual pieces.

**Nada O'Loughlin**

### Jo Barwick

I grew up in Tasmania in what today would be deemed a large family of six siblings. I moved to the mainland when I married my husband John. We settled in Canberra until we made the move to beautiful Nelson Bay as our retirement destination.

We did the grey nomad thing of buying a caravan and travelled about six months per year for a while going to beautiful destinations such as Port Douglas, Airlie Beach and anywhere else along the east coast that had excellent fishing spots, great walking trails and interesting eateries. Some of the superb scenery long the way has inspired me when painting landscapes.

I joined the Arts Centre and found absolute joy in embarking on my journey with painting. As part of this fun group of like-minded people I have learnt so much that has helped me just experience the creative aspect of painting pieces that I have felt quite proud of.

I enjoy trying different mediums and techniques and new and varied subjects. I was really excited to put this little collection of works together for this display and have enjoyed the process immensely.

### Jan Bevan

I was born in Sydney but went to Papua New Guinea as an eight month old baby with my mother to join my father who worked as a Patrol Officer after the war. We lived there for nine years and I was sent to Sydney to complete my education as a boarder at PLC Pymble.

After completing school I went to Teachers College and returned to PNG to begin my career. I married shortly after and had a family. We returned to the northern beaches of

Sydney and I completed a BA and MA at Sydney University, graduating in Social Sciences to teach high school. We lived overseas in the US and Tahiti for a few years.

Upon retiring we moved to our farm in Mudgee where I developed a love for the rural landscape and all that it involved. Here there were groups of artists who welcomed and included me in various aspects of painting and art.

We spent many of our winters in international travel and I began trying to paint the quaint towns and villages we



came across. This love of travelling inspired many of my creations.

We moved to Medowie five years ago and upon meeting a couple of lovely local artists I decided to join the Port Stephens Community Arts Centre.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to be part of this group of talented artists and as I gain more experience, to develop my individual style in water colour.



## Tuesday Patchwork Group

In November we donated a number of quilts to the John Hunter Hospital Ronald McDonald House (pictured right).

Our group has been busy making items and we have made five quilts that are currently available for sale at the gallery.

We are looking forward to our Christmas lunch which has been booked.

Wendy Harvey has been busy making a patchwork/embroidery cushion for a friend's birthday (below).

**Wendy Barwick**



## News from the Garden



### What we have been doing

Weeding, weeding, weeding.....but unfortunately it has to be done consistently to keep on top of it.



### Note to all members

The top carpark is becoming more popular as the pottery, mosaics and woodies group grow. Wayne and I are working on clearing a bit more space for parking but please no parking in the fire trail access at any time.

### Future Projects

Summertime is all about maintaining the gardens, keeping the woodchip up and the plants happy. We are working around the gardens to remove excess dry timbers and dead trees....never a dull minute!

This beauty is from my garden but was one of Von's that I am now taking care of. We have some more of these among the Kangaroo paw in the native garden that are about to bloom.

**Helen and the crew.**

## The Woodies

### Secretary

Woodies have a new secretary in Geoff McClelland, whom many of you may know, as he's been a Woody for well over 10 years. He will sit on the Executive Committee. Geoff was Workshop Manager for many years and still does duty as an Assistant Workshop Manager. This is his second stint as Secretary, so thanks for stepping up Geoff.



every quarter from now on.

### Goblets

One of our Latin American members made this set of goblets for his wife for their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They have opposing helical twists. Beautiful work. He's setting a very high bar for the rest of us, who have big anniversaries coming up 😊😊😊

**Roger Delaney**

### Soldiers Point School

Members visited Soldiers Point Public School in November. We did four sessions over four hours and helped the boys and girls, aged between six and nine assemble 65 kits of bird feeders, nesting boxes and BBQ caddies. The school provided a fantastic lunch and afternoon tea, that was much appreciated. Everyone seemed to enjoy the sessions, members, teachers and pupils. It's an extracurricular activity and great for kids, especially those that don't have such opportunities at home. They allowed us to take this picture, though the faces have been disguised.



### Solar Panels

Our solar feed-in has reduced gradually from 290kw to 80kw per quarter! You can see the reason from the picture. Sticks and leaves had built up and there were wood residue stains all over. We'll be cleaning them

## Bonsai Group

The year is drawing to a close and we have 2 more meetings before the Christmas break. Our Christmas lunch will be held at Saltwater Restaurant Fingal Bay at 12.30pm after our usual bonsai gathering and we hope to see all our members there. We have had some new recruits who were impressed with our Bonsai Exhibition during the September/October long weekend and came to join us so welcome to you all.

Happy Bonsaing!

**Carol**



## Thursday Patchwork

### Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre

We have donated a quilt for the Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre annual Christmas raffle. Thank you to Karin Curral for donating the fabric and Linda Brett created the design.

### Tocal Retreat

Thursday Patchwork yearly retreat to Tocal was met with fun, laughter and various projects completed during the week. A demonstration in using felt as an applique was presented by Nolda Munday. What a great week.



### Postcard Workshop

A workshop was held by Wendy Nutt of quilted postcards. Wendy demonstrated techniques including applique, texture, and painting. Who knew that making postcards could be so much fun.

### Sharon Turley



**Quilt Show 2024**  
Save the date in your diary. We will be asking for volunteers in the new year for the Nelson Bay Quilters, Quilt show 6 – 16 March 2024.  
**Watch this space.**

# Port Stephens Community Arts Centre Newsletter

## PAPERCRAFT

We are very busy making Christmas cards for sale, family and friends!

**Due To Popular Demand** - A limited number of **make your own** card kits will be on sale at the front desk in a couple of weeks in time to add to a lucky child's Christmas Stocking.



Our **Featured Cardmaker** is **Jann Wittig**

My love of craft began at four years from my Nanna. Her factory was making uniforms and parachutes for the forces during World War 2. I made pot holders using one of the

factory machines with the drive belt removed then sold them to the staff. I also started knitting, making squares for rugs. I attended Cake Decorating classes at Liverpool Technical College winning 2nd and 4th prizes in the Sydney Gas Co. 1966 Christmas Icing Competition.

While working full time as Finance Officer in the State and then the Catholic Education systems, my husband and I started a knitting business with 30 ladies home knitting Aussie designed woollen jumpers to export and sell in California.

On retiring, I joined CWA Medowie designing and making the new premmie baby cot covers and making premmie nightgowns for the John Hunter Hospital. My hand-knitted round lace 3ply woollen baby shawl was awarded CWA Hunter Knitting Champion, CWA State Knitting Champion and NSW Champion Handicraft Piece.

My love of card making started in Medowie in 1981 with my neighbour's help, who was a Kaszazz Representative. I explored and learnt many different papercraft techniques but my favourite is collage and 3D cards.

After six years at the Port Stephens Community Art Centre, I am still enjoying the challenge of new techniques and the fun and fellowship at the Centre. I believe you are never too old to learn new skills.

**Antonia**



## Fusion Group

It has been a busy couple of months for many in the Fusion group which has meant less time for stitching but more travel, family events and work at home or in the Centre. We are taking a few weeks break over the festive season from 13 December until 10 January. Meanwhile, here are some pictures from my recent trip to Japan. From left to right: Chiku Chiku with Akiko Ike, stunning piece of Shibori dyeing and Sashiko piece depicting a female warrior

Merry Christmas to all from the Fusion group!

**Carolyn**



## Embroidery Group

The Embroidery Group has been busy with individual pieces and some of us have been making Christmas craft decorations for the Christmas display. We are having our end of year lunch at Fingal Bay Cellars on 8 December.

Wishing everyone a Healthy and Happy festive season from the Embroidery Group.

**Penelope**

