



Working to promote, encourage and support the practise and appreciation of arts across the community

Presidents Report for the AGM 12 April 2022

The past year has presented ongoing problems for the various activities that operate under the BCAC Umbrella indeed an umbrella has been an essential accessory for much of the time.

Membership of the BCAC remains steady around 235 members. Some members have moved away and sadly one or two have died during the year. The Newsletter has about 530 subscribers. People can subscribe without being a BCAC member so it can be a good introduction to membership. We are most grateful to the editor Sandy Radke for the commitment she gives to the monthly edition and the management of the web site. Lou Clement also assists by photographing the exhibitions for a slide show on the Nexus Gallery site.

Denis and Sandrena Brennan have been a great help throughout the year. Denis is the Nexus Gallery bookkeeper while Sandrena assists with the membership list which needs a monthly update and renewal reminders.

John Conway remains our loyal overall treasurer with all the responsibilities that entails. The BCAC finances are sound. Successful shows at Nexus as seen a good financial return for exhibiting artists from the community. The BCAC is again sponsoring the **E.J. Mantova Art Competition** another important community event.

In October **Julie Hutchinson** announced her resignation as secretary due ongoing health problems. Julie has devoted many years to the BCAC as both president and then secretary. She was the inspiration behind The Stables also regularly designing flyers for Member's Shows, fortunately she will continue in the latter role.

Di Hood generously stepped up to fill the post of Minute secretary a vital role, however, there is still a large gap in admin support yet to be filled.

The Bellingen Fine Music Festival was finally able to launch with a new name, logo and programme on 26 November 2021. Covid forced the cancellation of earlier plans and fresh announcements are due soon for Bellingen Muse in 2022. The restoration of the Memorial Hall has required new performance spaces to be found at The Jetty Theatre and the Coffs Conservatorium with smaller venues available in Bellingen. **Bellingen Muse** has a small, dedicated committee we wish them every success as they move forward with a wide range of musical events in the future

Sunday Bites resumed on Sunday 20 March after a considerable time largely due to Covid. It has a new venue at Raleigh Hall and a full programme for the rest of the year. The first "Bite" was an opportunity to meet Steve Allan newly elected mayor of the Bellingen Shire.

The Stables has also been restricted by Covid rules but is now available again for workshops and exhibitions with ideas for both in the future. Julie Hutchinson remains the coordinator for The Stables projects.

Sadly the "**Women's Walk Project**" has had another setback. Bush fires and Covid have caused postponements for the last 2 years now the ongoing wet weather is the problem. We wish Kym Pitman and her team a much better season in 2023.

Arts Week was not repeated this year despite its previous success. Currently there is discussion about launching an Arts Trail covering Bellingen Shire watch the web site for more information

Festival Flamenco and **Waterfall Winds** are both dormant at present mostly due to the difficulties of practising and performing during Covid times.

The Nexus Gallery is not immune from similar problems. The new lease signed by John Conway after seeking legal advice from Emillie Reynolds is with the landlord's solicitor without being countersigned or activating the prescribed rent increase. The Gallery continues to operate daily but we are no longer allowed to hold openings as we have done for many years, all events now must happen within the Gallery. This has upset the social network members used to enjoy, in a move to address the problem a Garden Party was held on 12 December a rare fine afternoon attended by many.

Happily we were able to celebrate the life of our late gallery manager **Andy Livemore** in traditional style at Nexus on 18 April 2021 with a retrospective exhibition of his digital art in the Studio. Andy's input to Nexus was extraordinary especially when there is a new show every month.

Louise Rawson Harris has regrettably retired after many years of devoted service to the BCAC leaving another gap in the management of exhibitions, fortunately **John Biggart** has been able to assist with the monthly change of shows.

Lynn Tizzard's dedication as Gallery manager has kept Nexus running smoothly for more than a year. This is both a demanding and a time-consuming role which she is not prepared to continue much longer.

Like many organisations the BCAC is experiencing a shortage of volunteers. The Meet & Greet session on 22 March failed to attract interest. Covid rules deterred some volunteers and the enforced lock down did not help.

We are now suffering serious problems due to flooding which is occurring with monotonous regularity. The most recent flood has caused structural damage and necessitated the closure of the gallery yet again. There was a wonderful response to the situation and all the art works were removed undamaged, and much cleaning of the Gallery ensued.

The Nexus Gallery urgently needs new premises and volunteers who are willing to devote time and ability to preserve the longstanding goals, functions and membership of the BCAC. This is not a happy conclusion, but it is a reality that we must face.

Jenny Hicks President BCAC 2022