



## President's Report- 2020

This past Gallery year has been a challenge for one and all with bush fires starting in November after drought conditions, challenging to local farmers and all the community. Then COVID-19 restrictions came into place.

A past member lost his house to the fires and we wish him all the best for the future recovery and current Secretary -Tracey was heavily impacted. I don't think there would be anyone not affected by these events in some way. We recognize the role of the Gallery supporting each other and the community and I feel very lucky to be part of this.

As a consequence of these events the Gallery has had no income for most of the financial year.

## Highlights

The Summer Exhibition commenced 15 November 2019 and was to run until February but unfortunately the gallery was closed for most of this time.

One very positive thing is that the Gallery was approached by DEWLP to open late for the visiting firefighters, showing I think the important role of the Gallery in the Swifts Creek community. It became an informal hub of sorts.

21 November Crystal Stubbs and volunteers including us in their annual EGAG volunteers lunch by visiting to meet our volunteers- 27 of us all in total! It was great to put faces to known artists and socialize in this way. It was also funny to see one of our long term members who has contributed so much to the gallery- Deirdre Jack here as an EGAG volunteer now that she lives in Bairnsdale. Sadly missed by us all!

Late Night Fridays X 3 saw a small attendance.

EGSC interviewed myself as President on the impacts of the fires which were part of a series posted on the Shire website. This was a way to lift the profile of the Gallery.

COVID-19 then kicked in after the fires which meant continued closure but we managed to have a couple of great things before this. Woolly Wednesdays began which attracted new people and a range of knitting, crochet and spinning skills were shared and enjoyed by all. Rachel and Raphael- French

visitors started very popular French classes which were lots of fun! These all came to a halt with COVID-19 restrictions which have been in place until very recently.

Phillip Island Community Art and Craft Gallery approached us to provide free workshops due to the impact of fires such a lovely and generous offer. They are on hold but will be wonderful when we can have them.

Pottery has interest with a small number of members meeting over Zoom regularly, exchanging ideas and waiting to do a firing in the gallery kiln.

Grant applications in place are:

- FRRR Strengthening Rural Communities Small and Vital Grants Program- Digital Story Telling & Film Making Project- successful application which is currently being run via Zoom sessions and will culminate in some bidding video makers and a future showing next year.
- Volunteering Victoria- TV, stand, fuel, 2 gatherings- outcome Dec to use by 28 Feb 2021 \$2222
- RAV Creative Victoria- Keeping the Gallery Afloat -rental assistance, project admin, presentation touring costs, PD- start date 1/10/20 end date 31/12.21 \$5000- unsuccessful
- Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) Bushfire Recovery Vic Grants for Community Facilities Community Facilities Program-Improving Energy Efficiency and External Revamp- insulation and painting of external windows and doors at front \$2319- successful and happening now!

## Poets Walk

Drought and fires at the end of last year and this summer made keeping plants alive a challenge then Feb minor floods were actually a relief.

March saw a new police fence which cleaned the track area up and April DEWLP clean up made great progress in the general clean up

May 2 new plant beds prepared- Rainforest and echo dye resource garden for artists and basket weavers followed by over 150 plants planted in June.

August- Mal Smith from DEWLP did a species list and will write this up for our information.

September- corner area smoothed off with machinery and planted with native grasses as a trial, FrogID showed Common Eastern Froglets in abundance! Another working bee. First Platypus samples taken at the Poets Walk for the Platypus DNA project. Further working bee in October. Landcare Magazine September features Poets Walk.

November-Bushfire & Drought Employment Program EGCMA and Working for Victoria and Agriculture Workforce NECMA did a big clean up.

Awaiting the commencement of the walking track so picnic tables, CWA seats and signage can be put up. Looks like this will be next year.

## Special Thanks

**Tracey Johnson** for her secretary skills presenting the Gallery in a professional way, coordinating everything and being such a vital part of the Gallery.

**Ann Bingham** for coordinating the volunteers and roster, a big job, as well as doing artists payments, regularly changing the displays and being on call at the Gallery.

**Carole Pepper** for her input to decision making and offers of help when needed.

**Sally Doyle** for her great bookkeeping skills keeping the finances in order.

**Helenka King** for her enthusiasm in her role as marketing officer which has taken the Gallery profile to another level.

**John O'Neill** for his continued support updating the Gallery website

**Steve Richardson** for doing all the things I cannot do such as cleaning out gutters, helping with quotes for grants and just being there.

Signature



Anne Richardson

President

Date 10/11/2020

Images Joan Marshall volunteering, EGAG visit,