



GLEN EIRA ARTISTS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER – Autumn 2020

Glen Eira Artists Society Inc

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Editorial

This newsletter revives a former GEAS platform for connecting with the members. We aim to publish it on a quarterly basis.

Nothing can be written today without reference to the current pandemic. It has changed our lives drastically. The impact of the sanctions put in place is palpable, demanding resilience for coping with the situation.

Not all is gloom and doom. One of the 'side effects' has been our enhanced ability to grasp opportunities: more time for our art and experimenting with new techniques; for reading, writing, and learning new things.

All the best, and keep the communication channels open with your family, friends and the larger community.

From the President – Claud Bennie

So far this has been a very difficult year for all of us! The biggest let-down was the cancellation of our annual Exhibition at the Glen Eira City Council Gallery, due to COVID-19 state of emergency and the closure of the Gallery. We were hugely disappointed bearing in mind all the effort invested by so many people to ensure the success of the exhibition. Some truly amazing works have been presented for display. The cancellation means that the exhibition has been postponed to next year. So please be patient!

In view of the restrictions now in force we have had to cancel all activities where people get together, including Life Drawing, Studio Art and Portraiture. Please do not allow these setbacks spoil your work.

The good news is that Cityscape should be bigger and better than last year. This is a good time for everybody to try out new techniques and those ideas that you have been brooding over for the last few months. Good luck!

GEAS would like to remind members that, in the current environment of distancing and self-isolation, all gatherings involving more than two persons are not permitted. Accordingly, the Society has suspended all its activities until further notice.

From the Secretary – Heather Welsh

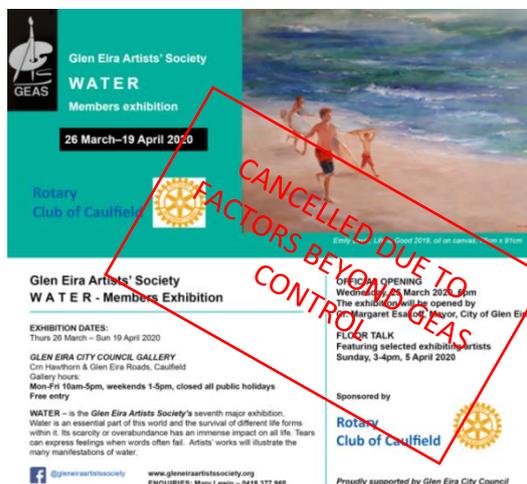
We have recently seen some changes in office positions. We take opportunity to thank the following for their active contributions dating back over some years.

- Rachel Mackay, Membership officer 2018-2020, continues to assist with Community projects and is a former very active board member and Past President.
- Richard McClelland has been a past Treasurer and is Acting Treasurer until the position is filled.
- Mary Neighbour, Gillian Schofield, Heather Welsh and Donna Sceney who acted as Newsletter editors.
- Faye Kirkwood has organised and convened Cityscape in recent years.

If we've misreported or overlooked anyone please let us know, and we will correct our mistakes in future newsletters.

Annual GEAS Exhibition 2020

Convenor – Mary Lewin



"Water" was a theme chosen to challenge the artists to create works that resonate with a wider meaning, i.e. the lack thereof and their impact. Regrettably, COVID-19 struck with a mighty punch. From the variety of images provided by participating artists – many of whom are new members – this was going to be a truly noteworthy exhibition. Despite being cancelled, all the effort and time will not go to waste. Instead, the exhibition will be delayed to next year.

Thank you to all the participating artists who rose to the challenge.

CONVENOR REPORTS

Life Drawing

Convenor **Richard McClelland**

Term 1 got away to a delayed start because of the Scout Hall renovations. The wait was worth it. The Hall looks very refreshed: new paint, floor varnish, lights, new windows and heater. Even a new clock! Initially we started with good attendance but this has fallen off over the last weeks.

Nothing can be written these days without some reference to COVID-19. It forced closure of our last session of the first term (23 March). The four classes held totalled 19 attendees.

Over the term we held two tutored classes with Michelle Zuccolo, our indefatigable tutor who keeps us active, challenged and amused. Thanks Michelle.

Studio Art

Convenor **Margaret Bellamy**

For reasons outside our control (Scout Hall refurbishments) sessions were not held since September 2019. The activities at the Scout Hall resumed on the third week of February when the renovations were completed.

In the intervening period we lost two very dear artists: Manwel Cassar (our tutor), and Kerrin Edmunds who was an enthusiastic member of Studio Art. Both are sadly missed by the group.

Attendance levels have dropped significantly. As well as the loss of Manwel and Kerrin, three artists have health issues and are not able to attend regularly.

Like with all other activities, sessions were discontinued before the end of the first term because of COVID-19.



Portraiture

Convenor **Mary Lewin,**

The first Portraiture session for 2020 was held in the evening and hosted by Mary Lewin. It was attended by seven artists, two of them members who only joined our



Image by *Qing Zhang*

Society recently.

It was the second time for GEAS to convene an evening session - the first was held last November. The success of the experiment confirms without a doubt the need for evening sessions as they particularly address the needs of artists who work and are not able to attend daytime sessions.

On Site Painting

Convenor **Rachel Mackay**

Formerly *En Plein Air*, this activity is very popular as it provides members with the opportunity to pursue their artistic interests and to meet like-minded artists in various attractive settings. Sessions are free and open members and non-members alike.

During the period from November 2019 to March 2020 four sessions were held, with overall attendance of 50 people, varying from nine to 23 people per session. The activities were held at the following venues:

- *Boyd Park Nature Reserve*, Murrumbena (adjacent to the Hughesdale Train Station)
- *Rippon Lea Estate Gardens*, Elsternwick
- *Hastings Jetty*, Hastings, and
- *Black Rock Wharf and Half Moon Bay*, Black Rock

GEAS April 2020 On Site Painting is providing artists with the opportunity to share their artwork that has been made from home while the Coronavirus social restrictions curtail group trips out in public places. "On Site Online" notices have been sent to the membership and regular On Site participants. Look for the photo images of artwork via email and GEAS Facebook after April 12th.

Art & About

Convenor **Louis Balis**

Due to the Coronavirus quarantine guidelines and the closure of public and private galleries, the planned program of gallery visits and exhibition guided tours has been delayed. This will remain so until the ban on activities involving more than two people has been lifted. We hope to resume the activities as soon as the social distancing sanctions have been removed.

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) recently a major Roger Kemp retrospective

www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/ .

Thank you for your support. I sincerely hope and trust that you and yours fare well under the self-quarantine.

At the Kinch Cafe

Community Exhibitions convenor **Rachel Mackay**

The Opening party to Margaret Bellamy's *Coast and Country* exhibition was held at Kinch Fine Food cafe in Caulfield, on 11 December 2019. More than 20 guests gathered for afternoon tea including some of Margaret's friends and family, GEAS members and Studio Art participants, Rotary Club of Caulfield President Mervyn Ritter, and GEAS President Claud Bennie. As part of the ongoing GEAS program, Margaret's 13 oil paintings were displayed on the Kinch cafe walls for the standard three months duration until March 2nd, 2020.



Margaret Bellamy's recent exhibition at Kinch Café

A special afternoon tea at Kinch Fine Food cafe, Caulfield was held on 6 February 2020. GEAS President Claud Bennie presented Shane, the Kinch business owner, with a Certificate of Appreciation for the years of support he has provided GEAS artists who have shown their artwork on his premises. Mervyn Ritter, Rotary Club of Caulfield supported and attended the event. Past GEAS President Yvette Wroby, who began the Kinch exhibition initiative prior to 2016, was also present.



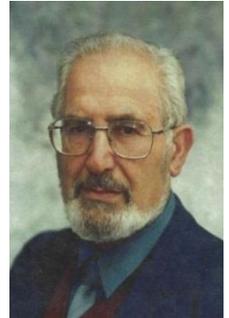
At the presentation to Shane event

VALE

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Manwel Cassar and Kerrin Edmunds, both long time and much loved members.

Manwel Cassar (3.1.1933 – 8.11.2020)

Manwel Cassar was a respected tutor of studio art until his death in November. He was a regular participant at GEAS en plein air and Cityscape art days, and a member of several art societies. He was a prolific artist who exhibited widely and whose works were highly regarded.



Manwel was born in Msida, Malta. He studied at the Lyceum and St Michael's Training College and subsequently became a teacher. After migrating to Australia in 1955 he worked as a teacher before joining the Federal public service.

He was actively immersed in the Maltese-Australian community through literature, drama, poetry and art, and started a Maltese-Australian literary group in 1959. He wrote and published poetry in Maltese as well as English, and numerous articles on Maltese-Australian literature.

He studied painting at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, gaining his Diploma in Fine Art in 1984 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1985.

Manwel was a poet, novelist, playwright and artist and will be fondly missed and all who knew him. He is survived by his wife Josephine and their five children.

Kerrin Edmunds (09.03.1944 – 12.11.2019)

Kerrin Edmunds, a long time GEAS member, passed away last November. She loved painting and was immersed in many of the Society's activities. She was a member of the GEAS Committee for a number of years; attended Studio Art, participated in, and hosted, Portraiture session; and was involved in the planning of Cityscape.



Kerrin had a very positive attitude to life and downplayed her own illness. Her smile and laughter were infectious, and those who knew her well loved being in her presence. She was devoted to her husband, was proud of her children and loved her dog Penny to the point of distraction.

She is survived by her husband Brian, four children and two grandchildren. Kerrin remains greatly cherished and sadly missed.

Members' achievements

We take great pleasure in reporting recent successes and achievements of the following.

The work titled 'Endangered V(2)' by Angeline Bartholomeusz was listed as a finalist in the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art prize 2020.



Peter Roccella's self-portrait was selected for the Rick Amor Self-Portrait Prize which was exhibited at Monsalvat, Eltham (14.11.2019 – 26.1.2020)



Michelle Zuccolo, a long time GEAS tutor, was the winner of the \$20,000 Rick Amor Self-Portrait Prize for her work Augury



Future activities and events

We recently 'resurrected' the Art Calendar which contains information about our activities, and is regularly updated. We did not circulate this as all activities have been suspended due to COVID-19. It will be published as soon as the self-isolation and distancing sanctions are lifted.

New members

We welcome the new members and wish them a long and happy association with the Society.

- Chase Blatman
- Kathleen Breslin
- Elizabeth Coyle
- Tamar Dolev
- Michaela Hill
- Andrew Inglis
- Patricia Ines
- Luke James
- Christine Lewis
- Luke James
- Gemma Louise Pap
- Melissa Parkinson
- Qing Zhang

GEAS Committee

Office holders

Claud Bennie: President
Mary Lewin: Vice-President
Heather Welsh: Secretary
Vacant: Treasurer

Other Committee Members:

Richard McClelland: Membership Officer, and Acting Treasurer
Faye Kirkwood: Cityscape Convenor
Mervyn Ritter: Liaison, Rotary Caulfield Club

Member feedback/comments

Like all GEAS activities, member involvement is important and will ensure that future newsletters are relevant and informative.

Please direct your responses and suggestions for improvement to geasartists@gmail.com.