

muswellbrook regional arts centre

Newsletter Vol 4 , No 6 October 2008

50 Years of the Muswellbrook Shire Collection 1958-2008



Import 2007 dop Kelly Munce winner of the 2007 Muswellbrook Photographic Award
Muswellbrook Shire Art Collection
image courtesy of the artist

The 2008 Muswellbrook Photographic Award will be staged at the Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre from 6.00pm Saturday 11th October til 23rd November. This years award will be adjudicated by Rose Peel the former Senior Conservator of Works On Paper at the Art Gallery of NSW. This year has seen a dramatic increase in prize money to \$3,000 thanks to the generous support of Coal & Allied

the prizes major sponsor since its inception in 1987. This popular award now in its 20th year has seen many photographers contributing to this prestigious award and a number of notable photographers works have come into the Muswellbrook Shire Collections as a result of winning the First or Second Prize. This years award differs in that there will only be one prize in the photographic award and the local awards have become part of the Local Art Awards with a new encouragement prize from the Muswellbrook & Districts Camera Club.

The 2008 Muswellbrook Local Art Awards will of course also be on show at the same time, with entries from local artists ceramicists photographers and of course the Esther Bellis Youth Prize for entrants between the ages of 12-18 years. This years adjudicator is Sandra McMahon, Director of Tamworth Regional Gallery. Opening Night will be sponsored by Stone Hill Vineyards of Merriwa and we thank them for their ongoing generous support as well as the generous commitment to the Local Art Awards by local business and organisations. Thank you:

The Viola Bromley Bequest,
Muswellbrook Ceramic Group
(The Pot House),
Max Watters OAM,
Muswellbrook RSL Snooker Club,
Muswellbrook & District Workers
Club,
The Estate of Isabel Esther Bellis,



Muswellbrook & Districts
Camera Club,
Berry & French Pharmacy,
Matthews Jewellers,
Muswellbrook Eyecare,
Baybrook Motor Inn &
Apartments,
Scone ADFAS Inc.

www.coalandallied.com.au

Hunter Valley Operations, Mount Pleasant Project, Mount Thorley Warkworth

Muswellbrook & Districts Camera Club

Celebrates Fifty Years - Community Room Exhibition

The Muswellbrook & Districts camera Club was formally established in June 1958 with a meeting of interested people in the Rotary Rooms Muswellbrook. Some of the towns stalwart photographers participated in the clubs activities over the years and a set of trophies were acquired for presumably a point score based around assignments. Some of those early days are lost in the mists of time and them members names G Shorter K Martyn and so on the from the original Karingal Cup Trophy For Black & White Prints trophy that dates back to 1959 are now old memories. The Club underwent various changes in membership over the years and I joined in 1977 after seeing a poster print displayed up in the hub arcade inviting interested people to join and the likes of Trevor Risby Greg Barker Grant Killen were the club stalwarts at that time.

The club in those days did not participate in the community at all in the general sensed and it wasn't until Heritage Week 1986 at the invitation of Josephine Tait from the Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery that the club began its community role in a true sense by photographing various buildings of architectural significance to the towns of Muswellbrook Denman and Singleton and Aberdeen and also the main streets of both Muswellbrook and Denman and amongst the first records in the scrapbooks that I began to keep are shots of members dressed in paper overalls spraying the backs of prints with spray adhesive to stick them down on large pieces of black plastic! Les Bannister and Noel Benghe hard at it! At this time the camera club also hosted several National Exhibitions held in conjunction with the Muswellbrook Show and offered prizes of the value of \$100 through the participation of generous sponsors. In 1988 the club were responsible via a federal government grant for the completion of the Muswellbrook Bi-Centennial Document in which the club members set out to record the lifestyle land use architecture and so on in the shire at the time, the albums produced were handed over to Muswellbrook Shire Council and are shown here for the first time since 1988.

In 1987 the cub were successful in establishing the Muswellbrook Photographic Award. This was an exciting challenge with the gallery providing the venue and the club responsible for choosing the adjudicator getting sponsorship and so on and from its very humble beginnings back in 1987 to today we have seen the prize money increase from \$400 to \$3000, and the inclusion of some of Australia's well know photographers work into the Muswellbrook Shire Collection such as Warren Breninger, Doug Spowart, Ruby Spowart all of whom are in the National Gallery collection and brought to the town various luminaries in the photographic field to adjudicate the prize such as David Moore, Helen Ennis, Kelly Gellatley and Karen Jayne Eyre.

Of course since then the club have worked directly as it were for sponsors in terms of the Day In The Life in which the club members attended the Bengalla site for 24 hours on a rotating roster working in with Bengalla employees and from the prints developed a diverse spread of activities plant and the mining landscape. Similarly another joint venture was undertaken with Mt Arthur Coal called the Past Present and Future project in which these facers of the companies operations including the old Bayswater mine were included in a perspective photographic document of the mines past present and future. Such joint ventures have seen the club grow and develop and become a true community resource.

The club has also been involved in the Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centres exhibition with the first exhibition Chiaroscuro The Dramatic Study Of Light and since then going on to the Artists Camp, The Road, and of course Faces In The Street to celebrate the clubs fortieth anniversary in 1998 ten years ago. The club is still going strong today as is demonstrated by their work currently in the Centre Court Gallery.



Pinhole Polaroid of a club meeting in December 1996 by Queensland based photographer Doug Spowart during a workshop on Pinhole photography conducted by Doug



The Muswellbrook & Districts Camera Club meets on the 4th Wednesday of every month in Room J4 at Muswellbrook High School. For further information contact Roger on 02 6543 1832 or e-mail rojpix@gobushmail.com.au

Muswellbrook Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Art Prize and the Collection

The Hunter turned out in force on the 22 August for the opening of **50 Years of the Muswellbrook Shire Collection 1958–2008** and the launch of the book on the Collection by Katrina Rumley, *Fifty Plus* sponsored by Mt Arthur Coal. Katrina was the guest speaker and enthused over the quality of the Collection as well as regaling the audience to build on the past fifty years and maintain the quality of works entering the Collection. The crowd was thrilled by the selection of works in the exhibition which featured every work selected by Katrina for inclusion in the book *Fifty Plus*. The magnificent show was put together by the Arts Centre Curator Peter Gill.

Book sales were brisk on the night which saw Katrina busy signing copies. The reaction to *Fifty Plus* has been tremendous with praise for the book coming from all quarters including artists and other art galleries. The book has prompted well known abstract artist Alun Leach-Jones to donate two works on paper from the same period as his painting to the Collection.

The opening was the last for outgoing Muswellbrook Mayor, Cr John Colvin. John has retired from Council and the patrons, volunteers and staff wish him and his family all the best for the future.

The exhibition continues until 5.00pm Sunday 5 October 2008.

The full colour book, commemorating 50 years of the Muswellbrook Open Art Prize and the Collection, and sponsored by Mt Arthur Coal **Fifty Plus: Half a century of collecting at Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre** by Katrina Rumley is available at the Arts Centre for \$25.00.



Guest Speaker & Curator Katrina Rumley, Director of Moree Plains Gallery and author of *Fifty Plus*, regales the crowd at the opening



Jennifer Robinson of Newcastle Colour Printing enjoys the exhibition



Nicola Xavier and Jaemi Pritchard of Newcastle design company Headjam



The Arts Centre team enjoys the night: Muswellbrook Councillor Cindy Terrace, Arts Centre Assistant Kellie Tym and Singleton High School Work Experience Student Lacey Andrews



Sarah and Jacques Abraham with a glorious James Clifford painting from the Collection



Katrina and Cr John Colvin, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire cut the 50+ cake as part of the celebrations, watched on by Peter Gill, Arts Centre Curator



Art in Murrurundi

From the left Arts Centre Curator Peter Gill, Fran Wachtel, Haydon Hall's Peter Carlin, Arts Centre Manager Brad Franks and Charlotte Drake-Brockman at The Chicken in the Window



Charlotte's exhibition in the wonderful Haydon Hall

At the beginning of September the Arts Centre visited Murrurundi to catch up with the local scene including artists Charlotte Drake-Brockman and Fran Wachtel. Charlotte's survey exhibition at the Haydon Hall Gallery "Making Stuff" was a delight and beautifully presented by Jane Sullivan and Peter Carlin. The trip included a visit to Charlotte and Fran's gallery The Chicken in the Window to see their latest joint venture - a large scale beach scene in recycled tin for exhibition in Sydney later this year.

Charlotte Drake-Brockman and Fran Wachtel with one of the bathing beauties from their upcoming Sydney exhibition.



STOP PRESS

ART AUCTION


**TO AID MUSWELLBROOK PCYC & CHALLENGE DISABILITY SERVICES
SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2008
6.30PM MUSWELLBROOK PCYC
CORNER CARL STREET & MARKET LANE
ENTRY FEE \$10.00 ADULTS \$5.00 CHILDREN
TO COVER CATERING COSTS
PLEASE COME ALONG AND SUPPORT THESE
WORTHWHILE CHARITIES**

A special thank you to our opening night sponsors for the **2008 Muswellbrook Photographic Award**, the **2008 Muswellbrook Local Art Awards**, *The Fantastic Voyage* and **Muswellbrook & Districts Camera Club Celebrates Fifty Years**. Stone Hill Vineyard at Merriwa have been supporting the Arts Centre openings for over two years now by supplying their fabulous wines for the enjoyment of patrons on the opening night. So when you come along to the next opening at 6.00pm on Saturday 11th October 2008 be sure to avail yourself of the wonderful wines of the Stone Hill Vineyard of Merriwa (especially the Barbera variety a firm favourite at previous openings).

For further information on Stone Hill contact Len and Joe Coluccio on 02 6548 2417.

STONE HILL VINEYARD

Merriwa



PHONE 02 6548 2417

The Fantastic Voyage

Drawn from the Max Watters Collection, this selection of multi media artworks represents one of the most fascinating and topical aspects of the art making process which has intrigued, bewildered and, in some cases, upset or shocked the viewing public. It is within the realms of the subconscious, or in the states of sleep and dreaming, that the mind produces imagery which can only be described as total fantasy. The ordinary world becomes somewhat extraordinary with completely unrelated objects and situations morphing into a new and very different type of "reality". The whole of the history of Art is heavily punctuated with examples of this alternate state. William Blake's *The Flea* and John Henry Fuseli's *The Nightmare* (1785-90) not to mention the famous panel image of Hell by Hieronymus Bosch from the complete work entitled *The Garden of Delights* (c.1500) immediately springs to mind.

The suite of paintings by Suzie Marston, the works in this show concern themselves with imagery involving groupings of disparate objects, sometimes with sinister undertones which reflect the artist's state of mind both conscious and unconscious. *The Subversion and its Audience* presents the viewer with phantom figure shapes floating in an artificial interior environment with inclusions of sets of staring eyes, masked faces and a shark coming through a wall. Despite its decorative elements, the overriding impression is one of anxiety and unease. Likewise, *The Cat* with its attendant veiled female ghostly figures, and *A Cold View in a Little Country* which features a masked figure set against a sinister nocturnal background has parallels in images associated with the occult. This is further developed in the *Portrait of the Watters Persona* with its half man/half bird figure and *A Member of the Thunderbirds Team in 1991* with the figure being reduced to areas of jarring patchwork shapes.



Jenny Cousins
Head
undated
polychrome terracotta
Max Watters Collection

Various support works by other artists have also been included to reinforce this general feeling of unease and fantasy. Lorraine Jenyns' *Bird Bath* with birds sharing the same water bowl as wild jungle cats and her *Ostracised Ostrich* bottle where the bird, which appears to be somewhat aloof and indignant is actually hiding a deep secret – that of being a receptacle for the demon drink. The Janus-like double faced clay sculpture of the attractive woman on the one side and a demon face on the other entitled *Head* by Jenny Cousins epitomises the theme of the exhibition.

The Fantastic Voyage will be on display in the Max Watters Gallery from 6.00pm Saturday 11 October 2008 until 5.00pm Sunday 23 November 2008.

at the arts centre:

12 October – 23 November

- * 2008 Muswellbrook Photo-graphic Award
- * 2008 Muswellbrook Local Art Awards

**Opening 6.00pm Saturday 11
October 2008**

29 November – 24 December

- * Susana Enriquez
- * Christmas 2008 Local Artists
Selling Show

**Opening 6.00pm Friday 28
November 2008**

Regional Art Happenings

Norville Artists Retreat
Scotts Creek, Murrurundi
Labour Day Long Weekend
4th/5th/6th October
Contact Peter Norvill:
peternorvill@bigpond.com

Sculpture Weekends at Ellamara Homestead
Giants Leap, Sandy Hollow
11th/12th October 2008
1st/2nd November 2008

Contact Steve Bottomley:
roseglenestate@bigpond.com

Gosford Regional Gallery
Artists open studio weekend
25th & 26th October 2008
Contact: 02 4325 0056

Upper Hunter Collectors Fair
Denman Memorial Hall, Denman
25th October 2008
Contact: 02 6547 1161
www.cookbookcollector.com.au

ART CLASSES WITH MAX WATTERS

Monday

- 12.30 - 2pm Challenge, Muswellbrook
2.30 - 5pm Hunter Park Family Centre
Contact Janelle: 02 6543 3566
6 - 8pm Wybong Community Hall

Tuesday

- 4 - 6pm Muswellbrook PCYC : 6541 1434

Thursday

- 2 - 5pm McCully's Gap Art Group
held at The Pot House
6 - 8.15pm The Pot House, Muswellbrook
Contact Max: 02 6543 2875

Friday

- 2.30 - 6pm Scone Youth Art Group

Saturday

- 1.30 - 4pm Aberdeen Art Group

SCONE ADFAS COMING EVENTS

October 21st 2008

The Life Enhancing Garden

presented by
Dr Laura De Beded Dip LA MLI NADFAS
For info phone: 02 6545 1156

6PM START

Visitors are welcome at \$20 (includes
supper)
Scone RSL Club
Guernsey Street, Scone

muswellbrook regional arts centre

Corner of Bridge & William Streets
PO Box 122 Muswellbrook NSW 2333
Tel: 02-6549 3880 Fax: 02-6549 3886
e-mail: artscentre@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au web: www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au
Opening hours: 10am - 5pm Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 1pm Saturday,
2pm - 5pm Sunday (closed Mondays and public holidays)
Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre is a non-profit facility and resource servicing the Upper Hunter
Region, owned and operated by Muswellbrook Shire Council

