

**President's Report: Beth Rankin**

**Dear Members,**

This past year has been a rich and rewarding experience, and I am honoured to be part of such an active and aware arts community. It is the dedication of the Committee that must be acknowledged and the spirit of teamwork and collaboration that has made Arts Rutherglen an association of which I am proud to be part.

**Overview of the Year**

Over the past year each of our interest groups have continued to meet and provide a diverse range of activities that meet the needs of so many in our community as both participants and audience.

Some of our notable achievements include:

- **Tastes of Art Prize:**
  - Diverse range of media from photography, sculpture, mixed media and all styles of painting. There were a record number of submissions, and the standard of the works was considered to be very high, making this one of the most successful art exhibitions in the region under the leadership of Irena Webster and Joy Schmidt.
  - The Camera House Albury video, viewable on our website, showcases not only the artists' work but the very careful consideration of the works by our committee and friends in curating the exhibition.
- **Music:**
  - Scott Landells has established a program of music events including:
  - An entertaining concert featuring the Weeping Willows and Mieke Bosland as the supporting act was held on the afternoon of the 8<sup>th</sup> October at Wahgunyah Hall.
  - Another successful and fun afternoon was held on Feb 17<sup>th</sup> featuring Four at the Hall.
  - The much-anticipated Rocks Rutherglen was cancelled due to low booking numbers.
- **Literary:**
  - Two poetry events organised by Maree Castle and led by Beechworth poet, Frank Prem included a poetry reading afternoon followed some months later by a practical writing workshop.

- **Sculpture Trail and Portals into Rutherglen:**
  - Gail Steed and Toni Harris organised and conducted an audit of our sculptures and portals and a maintenance program established to ensure the ongoing upkeep of the works.
  - The Tommy McRae installation will soon be finalised, with a future official ‘opening’ event planned.
- **Film Nights:**
  - Deidre Kelly and Robyn Sullivan have continued to organise our film evenings and have provided us with films that are interesting, challenging and sometimes frivolous. We have viewed European films from Spain, Belgium, Italy and France, with attendees varying from ten to fifty. Brooke Henderson and students from the High School are always welcoming and gracious in hosting us and providing a diverse range of good food.
- **International Women’s Day Brunch:**
  - Helen McKinlay organised another successful brunch with Liz Phillips, a proud Yankunytjatjara woman who now lives in Rutherglen, as our guest speaker.
- **Online Presence and Media Promotion**
  - Scott Landell’s has kept Arts Rutherglen in the public awareness through radio and online presence.
  - Our Website and Facebook profile has been ably kept up to date thank you to Carly and Irena Webster and others.
- **Collaborations include**
  - Destination Rutherglen, local businesses and Indigo Shire community initiatives and others.

## **Financial Summary**

Our financial position remains strong and a special thank you goes to our Treasurer, Irena Webster and Vice Treasurer, Deidre Kelly for their dedication to keeping our association viable.

Our membership has remained steady with 68 paid up members. Our membership secretary Leonie Featonby has sent out reminders to 15 people who have not renewed. There have only been a few new members registered this year.

Event raffles have contributed to Arts Rutherglen being able to offer affordable events and our thanks goes to Marie Shelley for making these possible and to Francis Walsh for helping in securing suitable prizes.

## **Challenges Faced**

The Annual Art Show continues to grow in both attendees and in artists wishing to exhibit, requiring us to evaluate our venue and terms and conditions for the 2025 and future events.

While we achieved much, we also faced challenges, including a music event that did not attract sufficient patrons to make it viable. We acknowledge the hard work of Scott Landell, Simone Pfeiffer, and the music subcommittee in organising this event and feel sorry that their dream was not realised.

Recruiting new members especially younger members who will be able to lead the association in years to come.

## **Goals Achieved**

This year, we accomplished several key goals:

- Audit of Sculpture trail and Portals and checking the condition of art works including maintenance at Lake King.
- Literary events including poetry reading and writing.
- Music events.
- Annual art show in conjunction with Tastes of Rutherglen wine festival.
- Supporting Rutherglen High School, Rutherglen Primary School and St Mary's School with scholarships and opportunities for students to participate in the annual art show and other events.

## **Future Plans**

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities on the horizon. Our key objectives for the upcoming year include:

- Sustainable events
  - encouraging community to book early for events
- Ongoing long-term
  - art installations, sculptures and arts events

## **Committee Meetings:**

Our meetings throughout the year have been well attended with always a quorum present. The goodwill of all is very much appreciated.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated committee members for their unwavering dedication and hard work. Maree Castles, Leonie Featonby, Sue Griffiths, Toni Harris, Deidre Kelly, Scott Landells, Helen Mackinlay, Margaret Meehan, Anita Saleeba, Lin Sargent, Marie Shelley, Gail Steed, Robyn Sullivan, Frances Walsh, Irena Webster.

Our Secretary, Christine Scott, needs special acknowledgement as she has been a solid support and has filled this role in the most efficient and positive way. Thank you Christine.

A special thank you to local Rutherglen businesses and Wineries and the Information Centre, whose support has been invaluable.

## **Closing Remarks**

As we look forward to the 2024/2025 year, I encourage each of you to remain on the committee and continue contributing to the diverse and rich arts life of the community. Together, we can continue to provide quality arts events in the coming year.

Thank you for your support.

**Sincerely,  
Beth Rankin**

**President,  
Arts Rutherglen  
0418 127 555**

## **Acknowledgement of Country Arts**

Rutherglen acknowledges and pays respect to the Indigenous people of this region and their Elders past and present. We recognise that for Indigenous people, art is an expression of identity, culture, spirituality and relationship to the land. As members of Arts Rutherglen, we share these values and work towards reconciliation and harmony through the Arts.