

The Annual Report of South Taranaki Art Gallery and Exhibitions Incorporated (STAGE Inc.)

1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

The Lysaght Watt Gallery is administered by the STAGE Inc. committee and as Chair, I am pleased to present this Annual Report to the Annual General Meeting on the 26 June 2019.

Committee and Patron

Our Patron Jan Dunlop has lent an encouraging ear as required and supported our events and funding applications, thank you Jan. The 2018-19 STAGE Inc. Committee consisted of seven members Lynne Walker (Chair), Jennie Purdon (Minute Secretary), Helen Cook (Treasurer), Gail Thompson (Exhibitions Curator), Joanna De Vegt (Newsletter), Joan Robinson (Roster), and Katie Russell (Website and Social Media). Katie Russell resigned part way through the year due to Health complications. In December 2018 Lynne Walker moved to Whanganui but continued as Chair using online methods to keep in touch and taking over the Facebook page in March. Helen Cook has been the Deputy Chair in Lynne's absence at meetings and functions and deserves a big round of thanks from our members.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions Curator, Gail Thompson, took on this role at the 2018 AGM and has worked hard to get up to speed and ensure that the Gallery still had quality exhibitions to attract local and passing visitors. She has continued to ensure that there has also been a wide variety of artists represented from The Hawera High School Students' NCEA folios to Stamps and postcards; from paintings to pottery, all styles and media have been exhibited in the gallery. There is a new exhibition presented every 4 weeks (13 per annum) for our community to enjoy, be challenged and explore art in all its forms.

The Lysaght Watt Trust Art Awards 2018: "RISING"

The aim of the Lysaght Watt Trust Art Award is to recognise and acknowledge artistic talent. These awards are able to be held due to the generous sponsorship of local businesses and individuals. The Awards attracted 87 entries from around New Zealand; the judge for 2017 was Bill Milbank from Whanganui. The Winner was Nour Hassan with "*BEAT*"

The Taranaki Garden Festival exhibitions from 2 October to 4 November, were very popular both at the Gallery which featured the Biennial exhibition "*World of Stitches*" by the South Taranaki Stitchcraft Guild, whose members were in the gallery to discuss their work and "*Art at the Woolshed*" featured botanical works by Dora

Baker an artist from Patea and garden sculptures by Dimphy de Vaan from Inglewood. All gate entries are donated to the gallery by Ross and Jan Dunlop owners of the Gardens and Woolshed, which is gratefully received by the committee.

Visitors

During 2018, 5115 visitors came through our door, from local, regional, national and international destinations (including UK, Europe, USA, China, Australia, and the Pacific Islands). We hosted 14 in-house and offsite exhibitions. The Facebook page has 431 followers and has had 10,160 page hits.

Promotion

Each exhibition has been advertised in the local newspaper. The Webpage continues to provide a source of information however we find our Facebook page works best. Following the departure of our IT guru Katie Russell, we have not yet been able to replace her so presently the website is simply managed. It is my hope that the new executive will be able to get the website up and running efficiently again.

Friends of the Lysaght Watt Gallery (Membership)

We presently have over 80 friends who support the gallery financially and also in a volunteer capacity. Paper Plus has continued to offer a discount to friends for the purchase of art goods and we thank them for their continued generosity.

Volunteers

Our volunteers are a very valued part of our organisation and without whom we would not be able to open the door to showcase our wonderful exhibitions. We have a core group of volunteers who assist the running of the gallery and Joan Robinson has been a fantastic rounder upper of the troops each month to fill the roster (sometimes not without headaches).

Joan has decided not to stand for election this year so I'd like to say a very big thank you to you for all the work you have done.

Funding and Sponsorship

Following a successful submission to the South Taranaki District Council's Long Term Plan, Council agreed to increase our yearly grant from \$7,500 to \$15000 plus GST. This now fully covers our rent. Our other commitments such as rates and insurance, power and phone are covered by other hard earned funds and COGS grant (last year was \$2000) and TSB Community Trust.

We are effectively running a business therefore finding funds to cover our bills is a continual activity for us and we are grateful to the artists and volunteers who contribute to our coffers by way of commission and effort respectively.

Lysaght Watt Art Awards Sponsors donated \$7000 for the 2018 Art Awards – thank you for your generosity – Lysaght Watt Trust, Tandem Group, Beccard Motors, Ohangai-Meremere Rural Women, Normanby Fibreglass, Greaves and Neil and Helen Walker.

Property maintenance

This year we undertook a small facelift of the gallery (at little cost) to spruce up our surroundings. Now fitted out with new shelving unit and desk, we present a more upmarket look which has been well received by volunteers and visitors alike. Your executive are conscious that we need to remain well presented and welcoming to our visitors and this was a good way to start.

Thanks

At this point I wish to say how much I have learnt about running an art gallery, setting up exhibition schedules and artists while being a committee member and then Chair of STAGE Inc. It was a steep learning curve but with Margaret Springett to guide my first steps plus Jenny Purdon and Joan Robinson who had both been long term volunteers and committee members and not forgetting Jan Dunlop who was a great sounding board and support both when she was on the committee and then as Patron. Helen Cook came on board and helped move us forward on governance issues. The last four and a half years have flown by. Due to my move to Whanganui it is time for someone else to take the Chair and oversee the next exciting years including the move to “Te Ramanui”.

Finally I want to take this opportunity to thank all my fellow committee members Helen Cook who stepped up to be my deputy when I moved to Whanganui last December; Jennie Purdon, Joan Robinson, Gail Thompson and Joanna De Vegt for their work over the past year. It takes a TEAM to make the Magic happen.

That concludes the Annual Report of STAGE Inc. for the 2018-2019 year.

Lynne Walker

Chairperson STAGE Inc.

26 June 2019