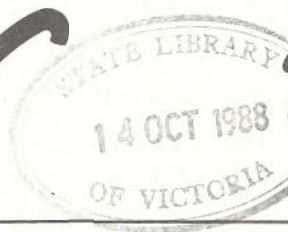


Access



Season's Greetings

Newsletter of Arts Access Society Inc

December 1986.

What a ramp romp!



Minister of the Arts, Mr Race Mathews, gets into the spirit of the occasion. On the right is Dinny Downie and the left, Chinka Steel.

While Arts Access has been busy providing access to the arts, a building firm has been providing better access to Arts Access.

And on Thursday November 27, 1986, the Minister for the Arts, Mr Race Mathews, officially opened the access ramp at a special function to mark the occasion. The theme was the "Madhatters Tea Party".

The function also gave Arts Access members and guests the chance to examine plans for the renovation of the building — some of which have already been completed — and to discuss the work of the Society.

Mr Mathews said that the work of Arts Access enriched the life of Melbourne and that it was good that the Society had found a home in the

area the Government would like to see become Arts City — South Melbourne.

He said it was the Government's aim to provide access to the arts to those who wanted to appreciate art as part of an audience or as a participant and praised Arts Access for providing access to people who would otherwise find it difficult.

Arts Access President, Chinka Steel, welcomed Mr Mathews to the opening and thanked him for his Ministry's and the Government's support of the Society. Executive Officer, Dinny Downie said Arts Access was thrilled "to become residents of South Melbourne." A permanent home was important for the continued success of Arts Access, she said.

The ramp was built by Oppy and

Associates, who were also responsible for the internal renovations. Our thanks go to Glen Oppy and Tim Brickel who donated extra time and services to the renovations and to painter Brett McQuade who worked against the clock to get the building ready for the opening.

The Mahatter's Tea Party was a great success and Arts Access would like to thank all those who came on the day and participated in the spirit of the function and:

Mr Race Mathews, Twinings Tea (Socomin International), Safeway, Neil's Butchers, Muffie Gove, the Limerick Arms Hotel and all those who contributed to the day and the hamper.

More photos — back page.

Executive Officers Report

Once again another year has gone and it is time for us to look back at the year's achievements and forward to what we hope lies ahead.

For Arts Access one of the highlights has been working with older citizens. Funded by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, we ran movement, drama and dance workshops for the elderly, culminating in an exciting day of performance and workshops for staff and participants from all over Melbourne.

We decided early in the year to smarten up the building and thanks to a minor capital grant from the Ministry for the Arts we have at last put in an access ramp, painted the front of the building and four offices and created a resource centre for general use by artists and clients. Next year will see a large workshop space evolve, which will open onto a central courtyard which seems to capture sunlight all day.

Many new and exciting programmes have been initiated by the Society — Artists-in-residence at Larundel hospital; working with a group of young unmarried mums at Broadmeadows which produced a play and performance of no mean merit, written and performed by the cast, being among the best.

None of this would have been possible without Jo Caust, Trish Collinson and Carey Brickel organising the programmes, Joss Evans, Sue Malings and Michelle Stone running an amazingly smooth administrative section and Mark Madden organising our publicity, new brochures and letterhead, the many artists who conducted the programmes and the Arts Access Committee — to them all I say thank you, Merry Christmas and a happy, exciting and innovative New Year.

Diana Downie

Dinny Downie
Executive Officer

Cinderella...



Larundel Hospital staff said they had never seen anything like it before in their lives. Hours and hours and hours of preparation went into it. Costumes had to be made, routines rehearsed; then there was the music, the hats, the extras and the catering.

Cecille B. DeMille would have approved of the grandness of the production and the occasion, for, October 15, 1986, saw Cinderella and the Silver Slipper — The Movie come to Larundel Psychiatric Hospital at Bundoora. Produced and directed by Richard Bengel and Libby O'Neill — Larundel's artists-in-residence

CreateAbility

After the first CreateAbility workshop in June, Arts Access was swamped with requests for more.

Consequently artists Bronwen Barton and Cath Cherry van Wilgenburg agreed to run a second workshop to include the many people who had not been able to attend the first.

The day's workshop was held in November at the Footscray Community Arts Centre, which proved to be a perfect venue.

Some 36 people attended, coming from a variety of institutions and community groups working with the intellectually disabled.

The workshop was designed to explore the creativity in each of us as a means of extending our own experience and passing it on to others that we work with.

Feedback from the group was positive, with a number of requests for a CreateAbility workshop that included intellectually disabled participants, to enable staff to actually work in conjunction with their clients.

"Cinderella" was the culmination of many weeks work in the various wards of the centre with staff, patients and families, nurses and psychiatrists.

All the roles were played by patients and staff and the "filming" provided a spectacular, colorful and dramatic intrusion to the routine of the hospital.

The artist-in-residence programme has been well received and well supported by all at the centre. It will now run until July 1987, with additional funds from the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council being sought after that.

Arts Access Society is a non-profit organisation which is committed to providing access to those who are disabled and disadvantaged.

Please contact us if you would like to become a member of the Society or know more about our activities.

Executive Officer: Diana Downie
Programme Director: Jo Caust
Project Officer: Carey Brickel
Office Administrator: Sue Malings
Office Assistant: Michelle Stone
Public Relations Officer: Mark Madden
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Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Mummy wears pigtails...

How does it feel to be a teenage mother in Broadmeadows?

Over the past several months members of the Broadmeadows Teenage Women's Group have been examining that question and the result is the play "Mummy Wears Pigtails", which was successfully staged recently at the Youth Projects Theatre in Glenroy.

The play, which was staged with the assistance of Arts Access and the Broadmeadows Women's Community House, was funded by the Myer Foundation and was directed by Bronwen Barton. Mandy Riley, 19, who has four young children talked about the inspiration for the play:

"At one time or another, we have been put down by people who know nothing of us. It has not been easy raising our children and knowing people feel this way about us. So we



The play's handbill.

have put our experiences from our everyday lives of children, families and boyfriends into a play... We aim to let people see how caring and loving we are towards our children and show people their judgements are not true."

Building alterations

During recent months Arts Access has seen some alterations to its offices, both inside and out.

The first step was to improve the front of the building so that we could be easily recognised from the street. Gone is the old "Elevator House" sign and the cracking paint. Now the building has an all-over colour of "high-tech" grey, with our bright red logo, both on the front and the exposed side of the building.

The next important progression was to make the entrance to the building more accessible to people who find the use of steps difficult. A concrete ramp has been erected complete with bright red balustrade. This has made the front of the building more practical, accessible, and, of course, colour co-

ordinated.

Inside the building, walls have been knocked down and new ones erected to extend our Resources Centre into an area that is large enough to hold all the necessary materials and equipment.

It has created enough room to include a "Board room", complete with a large table. Old frosted windows have been replaced by floor-to-ceiling clear glass doors leading out to a courtyard. This creates a light and airy room, making it more comfortable for those using this area.

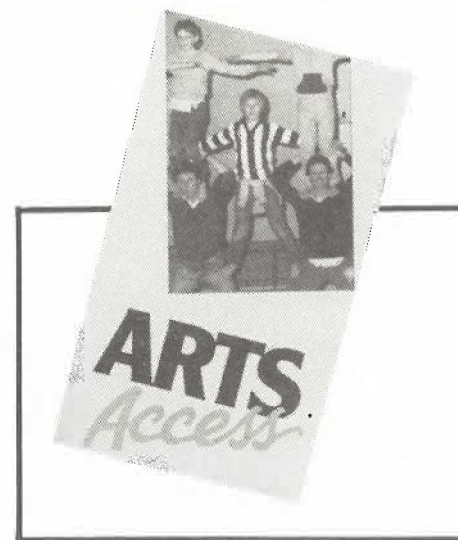
All the front offices have been repainted and/or wallpapered, creating a much brighter working environment. All the renovations, so far, are just steps along to a more vibrant Arts Access.

Our new brochure

As well as new office, a new look and a new access ramp, Arts Access has a new brochure.

The new brochure was made possible by the generous donation of time and materials by Robin Goodall and Karyn Smith (Inkwell Studios); Graham Berry (Typographical Services); and Brian Longmore (Tomasetti Paper Pty. Ltd.). Our thanks to them.

Thanks also to Kiplings Business Communications who assisted with the production of this newsletter.



the brochure.

Early in the play the symbolic judge of society called from behind the stage, "Are you not ashamed? How can you mother a child when you are still a child yourself?", and each woman defied his judgement.

At the end of the play all the children of the women joined them on stage, bringing tears to many in the audience.

The play was performed at a midday matinee, which was packed, and again at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26. The players were Mandy and Tracey Riley, Donna Vallance, Bernie Nugara, Heather Rigby and Barbara Semler.

The play has aroused enormous interest from other women's groups. C.Y.S.S. groups and other educational institutions. We are hoping a video of the production will be available next year, in the resource centre.

Elderly

Following a great deal of activity in the Western Suburbs in the area of writing workshops we have discovered a group of elderly people working with artist Kristin Henery.

This group have agreed to work with other "not so fortunate" older people in institutions, gathering stories, and in cases where writing is not possible, taping their stories. We anticipate running a 15-week workshop, leading up to a full day seminars during Senior Citizens Week.

Our aims are to: target older people who are less active and do not have much access to existing activities; work with a member of the "Footscray Writing Group" to run writing workshops with other older people; recognise some older people are too old or frail to write and use other methods for story-telling/memories/reflections; work with a group at the Mount Royal Geriatric Centre, Sunshine Day Hospital and Corindirk Centre, who are very enthusiastic to join into the workshop and the final day; involve a range of elderly citizens both as tutors and students in an art form which is exciting and productive.

We will gather together a collection of works written by the group from the Western Suburbs, print them and put them into book form. We anticipate the launching of the book at the seminars, tentatively scheduled for March 21 and 22.

The programme is being funded by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

A sewing success

A craft programme at the Albert Park Community Mental Health Centre has proved to be a success for everyone involved.

The initial programme, established with the help of Arts Access, ran for 20 weeks and involved 14 women who used their sewing skills to produce a spectacular alphabet applique which was later presented to the Park Towers Pre-School Activities Centre in South Melbourne.

The children love the applique and it has become the envy of other pre-school centres!

The programme was such a success that a second programme has been initiated by Occupational Therapist, Kerry Webster and Anne Ball from the centre.

Kerry said the new programme will see the group concentrate on individual projects until Christmas and then undertake a group project. The group meets once a week and the programme will continue indefinitely.

"The response we received from the women and from all those involved far exceeded what we expected. This group project awakened old skills, gave the women a new sense of competence and confidence and allowed them to offer something worthwhile to their local community," Kerry said.

Easier access



The cake is cut!



Some more 'madhatters'.

ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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