

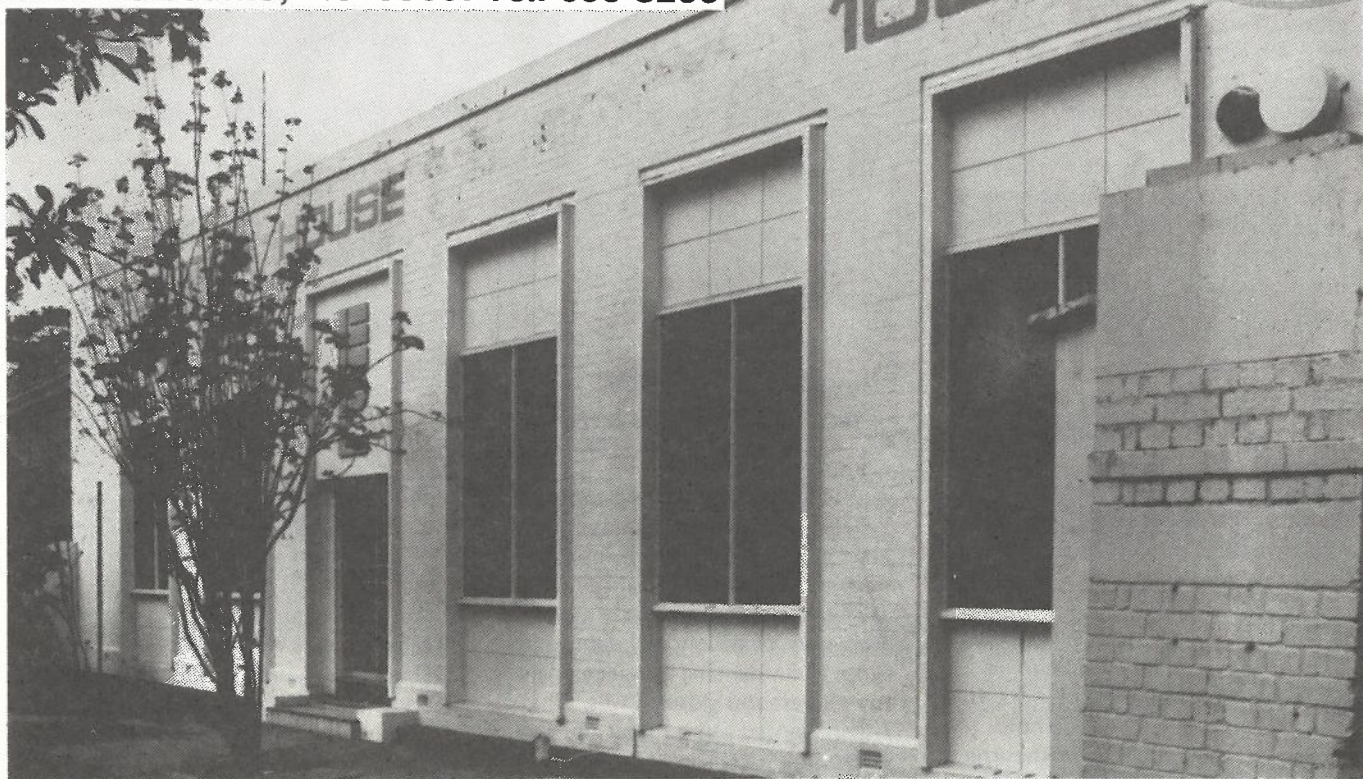
# ACCESS

Registered by  
Australia Post  
Publication No.  
VAW7218

Newsletter

Vol. 1 No. 1 1985

Arts Access Society, 109-111 Sturt St  
South Melbourne, Vic. 3505. Tel. 699 8299



## Move to South Melbourne From our Executive Officer

After five years as executive officer of Arts Access Society I am delighted to be offered a chance to contribute to our new, updated, re-vamped definitely up-market newsletter.

With the advent of new premises for Arts Access we seem to be stepping out into new directions with new vigour and excitement.

There was a few weeks when I wondered if it was possible for Arts Access to continue, with Belinda Kirkwood's resignation as project officer.

Belinda and I had seen many changes as together we had moved from one room in St. Kilda Road to our Arts Access headquarters in St. Andrew's Place. Belinda assumed the full responsibility of the co-ordination of the programmes, became Secretary of the Community Arts Network and was part of the Community Arts Assessment Committee for the Ministry for the Arts. She also knew before I did where I was going, what time I was to be there, and what I was to take, or say. How could Arts Access possibly survive without her? We were very lucky indeed to find and

employ Carey Brickel to replace Belinda as our project officer. Now Arts Access has settled down into a new and innovative routine. Carey is responsible for the programmes, and has also taken much of the media side of our operations under her wing. The new layout of the newsletter is her idea and inspiration.

Funded to contribute to Victoria's 150th celebrations we decided to seek an artistic co-ordinator to gather all our artistic events together and create a Festival — no mean task! We were lucky indeed that Sandy Heeps was available to apply for the position, and we grabbed the opportunity to include her as part of our staff for 1985. Sandy has also helped with the layout and planning of the newsletter. We are also establishing the beginnings of an Arts Access resource centre under her eagle eye.

How does any organisation like Arts Access thank its volunteers, and Peter Lawford is no exception. The photographs, many articles and ideas have come from Peter.

To introduce the rest of the staff, we have Joss Evans who is responsible for the administrative work and Linda

Smith on the reception desk backed by yet another volunteer, Sue O'Dwyer.

Moving to Sturt Street, South Melbourne has been a liberating experience. We all have an office each and a staff room. There is still much work to be done, but being able to move without bumping into someone or something has taken some getting used to! Once the heady feeling of space has passed, we will be tackling the up-grading of our shabby surroundings. The first priority is to make the entrance accessible for disabled people — including myself. I wouldn't have believed three uneven steps and a heavy door could be such a challenge.

This newsletter will be the first of many new innovations from Arts Access Society. We certainly will have an Artists Day before the end of 1985 and now all our energies must go to the Arts Access 150th Festival to be held at the Melbourne Showgrounds from November 6th—11th at the Expo Pavillion.

I do hope we will see you all there.

Diana Downie

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## Room for More

### MEMBERSHIP

Arts Access Society is sustained primarily by various grants but like most organizations such as ours, we rely very much on the continuing added support of interested individuals and groups.

This year with the successful move to larger premises in South Melbourne, Arts Access has at last room to expand but of course like most things, expansion costs.

We are therefore very hopeful that those members who have shown such good support in the past will continue to support our activities by maintaining their membership of the Society, and at the same time show their practical interest by encouraging others to join.

Members receive regular newsletters and are welcome to become more actively involved if time permits. In the near future, we hope to hold "Open House" at South Melbourne so that staff, members and artists can get to meet each other and see the new premises.

Current members who received renewal notices may have noted the choice of fees to pay (i.e. for 6 months or for 18 months) this is due to a change in the structure of Arts Access's financial year from "financial" year to "calendar" year. Quite a few members have taken advantage of this and renewed for the 18 months which we appreciate not only as a sign of their continuing support, but from the very practical view of saving in sending another renewal notice in 6 months' time!

Thank you whole-heartedly for your support in the past, for your continuing interest, and welcome to all those new members whom we hope to meet soon.

Arts Access was given an award during the 8th Assembly of the Australian Society for Education in Brisbane earlier this year.

The award was the first ever for achievements in Arts Education in this country and was made in recognition of "Valuable Contributions to Arts Education in Australia".

## Artist Profile Lynden Nicholls



*Lynden dancing — Al Wunder on drums.*

At the age of six I wanted to be a butcher, at seven a surgeon, at eight, after a year of ballet, this intrigue for flesh and human physicality had zeroed in on my own body's inner sensations of delight as I danced. Since then, dancing has been one of my dearest and closest loves. What I then wanted to be I now am — a dancer.

Dancing has been such an important part of my life that it has exuded into my perceptions, my ways of seeing. I notice movements, shapes, dynamics and flows as if I see shadows of things through time. Ordinary people and animals are a wonderful resource for this "dance gazing". This principle works in the reverse for me too. I like to see the "person in the performer", to see a liveliness and vividness that is not let out in abstract, blank faced forms of dance where technical skill is the all important. For me, dance is an integration of personality and physicality in motion. It is a form of communication. It is in this light that I teach and perform.

Teaching has always played a crucial role in the on-going process of exploring and developing my own personal style. It clarifies my points of interest which at present are a physically based improvisational form on the floor and in the air with a particular flavour of easeful motion.

The two programmes I teach for Arts Access bring out particular aspects of my work. At the zoo I center on physically challenging the children (tree climbing, trapeze, balancing) and exploring bodily feelings through movement. With deaf

children I focus more directly on the communicative and social qualities of movement through doing and watching each other. The children appreciate animals, themselves and each other as well as their dancing. One of my greatest rewards is to hear a squeal of delight as a kid is so totally engrossed in her/his own dancing.

Both programmes are extremely rewarding and enjoyable for me. They are:

Special Dance at the Zoo ... 10 weekly sessions of dance and animal contact and observation with disabled children. In its fourth term of operation. Present co-teacher is Rinske Ginsberg.

Victorian School for Deaf Children ... weekly dance classes. Physical warm-up, creative play and performing. First year of operation. Co-teacher is Al Wunder.

What I do — dance, teach, perform — I do around and with different types of people: young and adults, able and disabled, experienced and inexperienced dancers. Having such a broad base keeps me stimulated and grounded and able to relate my work to society at large.

### LYNDEN NICHOLLS

\*\* I am presently working with Al Wunder and Theatre of the Ordinary. Also, Simone Forti, an internationally acclaimed dancer from New York, has asked me to dance with her in her Melbourne performances.\*\*

## Around the Programmes . . .

### THE KINGSBURY PROJECT

The Kingsbury Project brings together a diverse group of young people whose lives and attitudes have been formed by vastly contrasting abilities and experiences.

The project involves 25 students from four schools — Heidelberg Tech., Preston East Tech., Heidelberg Special Developmental School and Preston Special Developmental School. The students from the special developmental schools are from 'Taurus Unit' in Kingsbury — a residential centre for the intellectually disabled.

Conceived by the staff at Kingsbury in 1983 the programme is one of many being run by Arts Access, and is typical of the activities initiated by the Society to encourage cultural interaction between disadvantaged groups and the community at large.

The aim of the project is integration through arts enrichment.

Four professional artists work with the Heidelberg and Preston groups using drama, music and storytelling as a means of bringing the groups together in an atmosphere of fun.

Such activities provide the possibility of real self-fulfillment by giving participants a means of demonstrating their potential amongst their peers.

The weekly workshops also provide the artists — Susie Dee, Jo Barrkman, Liz Saddler and Tony Hargreaves with an opportunity to dispel many misconceptions about disability as able work with disabled and friendships develop.

Whether the outcome be a performance or not no-one doubts the value of these children's shared experiences.



*Artist Susie Dee and friend.*

## Baltara goes West



*The "Kenno Kids" in action. Photo: Carolyn Lewens.*

One of our more colourful programmes this year has been out at Baltara where John Bolton and John Lane have been conducting drama workshops with a group of young offenders.

When West is in control anything can happen and this programme has been no exception.

In less than a week the group was introduced to juggling, tumbling, stilt walking and uni-cycle riding. Within 2 weeks they were putting on a performance for their friends — and even the most cynical member of the audience was completely won-over by the time the fire-eating finished.

This group then joined forces with children from Kensington Community School and a group of elderly citizens who after 2 weeks rehearsal were all incorporated into West Theatre's contribution to the Next Wave Festival "The Dream Cafe". A cast

of 60 in all!

"The Dream Cafe" was played for 4 nights in Kensington Community Hall to packed and enthusiastic audiences.

Set in a theatre restaurant the West members played a motley crew of waiters, waitresses and cook — all intent on bumping off the boss (Neil Cameron) to get his millions.

The various other groups were introduced as entertainment within the Dream Cafe context with the 'oldies' doing sketches on the History of Love; Baltara and the "Kenno Kids" doing their full range of Circus skills and the school-putting on a short play on pollution.

It was a great evening's entertainment and an experience that will have given all participants a sense of pride and achievement.

## Integration at Hoppers Crossing

Artists Silvia Stahl and Helen Martineau are currently working at the Hoppers Crossing Special Development School (HCSDS), near Werribee.

A group of children from both Heathdale College, a local primary school, and intellectually disabled children from HCSDS come together one morning per week.

Enthusiastic teachers, children and the two artists participate in the movement and dance workshop. "Over the duration of the project Helen and I have observed the

Heathdale children's growing understanding of the disabled children's specific problems. The Heathdale children have acquired an ability to emphasize and to take responsibility of assisting the HCSDS children," said Silvia Stahl.

After recess, the Heathdale children return to school and the artists work solely with the HCSDS children and teachers.

"We welcome the participation of the teachers from HCSDS as they will be the ones to continue the important long term effects of the program," said Helen Martineau.



# Sharing the 150th

## by Sandy Heeps

The idea of a 150th Festival was developed by Dinny, Belinda Kirkwood and last year's committee. My task has been to 'dream up' a theme and structure for such an event.

The theme and format are in keeping with the aims of Arts Access.

Participation, empowerment and access are fundamental to our organization and are therefore the principles which underlie the festival.

Like all Arts Access programmes the success of the festival will largely be determined by capable and committed artists, volunteers, committee members, participants of all our programmes and people such as yourself.

The festival theme is sharing. Chosen because Arts Access recognises that regardless of our differences we all share the potential for expression and creativity.

We are pursuing this theme by inviting community groups and schools to contribute a flag, banner or ceiling piece to decorate the festival space. The venue will then become a work of art in which we will house three static exhibitions and where we will hold our workshops.

Arts Access is establishing a pilot programme to improve access to a broad range of community facilities — arts, recreation, entertainment and sporting events — to people with disabilities and to people otherwise disadvantaged.

We are looking for a Project Officer to research client needs and barriers in the operation of existing ticketing programmes for people with disabilities, and to develop recommendations for improving access.

It is envisaged the project would be completed within 3–6 months.

Salary/fee negotiable.

For further details contact:

Mrs. Diana Downie  
Executive Officer  
Arts Access Society  
109/111 Sturt Street  
South Melbourne, Vic. 3205

Tel: 699-8299

The first and last day of the five day festival will not be open to the public because in order to create a sense of ownership and participation we shall ask the various groups to decorate the space and mount the exhibitions and dismantel the pieces on the last day. In this way they will be part of the beginning and the end.

The exhibitions comprise of a children's art exhibition, a craft exhibition and a photographic exhibition of this year's Arts Access programmes by photographer Carolyn Lewens.

The participatory workshops will explore the theme of sharing through movement and dance, music, drama and the visual arts.

The central focus of the festival will be the creation of a large community sculpture in which each person attending will be asked to participate; a shared artistic experience.

If you would like to be a part of our festival or would like to bring a group along all enquiries or bookings should be directed through Carey Brickel or myself on 699 8299.

### ARTS ACCESS 150TH FESTIVAL

**VENUE:** "Expo Pavillion, Royal Agricultural Showgrounds"

**DATES:** Wednesday, November 6th — November 11th inclusive  
Public Days: 7th — 10th November

#### FORMAT OF DAYS EVENTS:

**DAY 1** Wednesday 6th 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

Decoration of the space by invited groups

**DAY 2** Thursday 7th 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

**DAY 3** Friday 8th 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

**DAY 4** Saturday 9th 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

These three days will have a similar format except that on Thursday 7th at 11.30 a.m. the Hon. Race Mathews will open our festival.

9.30 — 11.30 a.m. Individual workshops in a variety of media

11.30 — 12.00 p.m. 'Lets see what we do share' — a demonstration of the morning workshops

12.00 — 1.00 p.m. LUNCH AND PERFORMANCE PIECES

1.30 — 3.30 p.m. Individual workshops

3.30 — 4.00 p.m. Shared workshops

4.00 — 5.00 p.m. Sewing together of fabric pieces to add to the community sculpture

\* Two visual arts open workshops aimed at the construction of the sculptural piece will run all day from 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

**DAY 5** Sunday 10th 9.30 — 5.00 p.m.

9.30 — 12.30 p.m. All workshops will be geared to the creation of our giant sculptural piece

2.30 Launching of the art work — the sculpture

2.30 — 5.00 p.m. Performance celebration pieces

**DAY 6** Monday 11th

As mentioned previously this will be the packing up; winding down; thank you day. Not open to the public.

