

Access

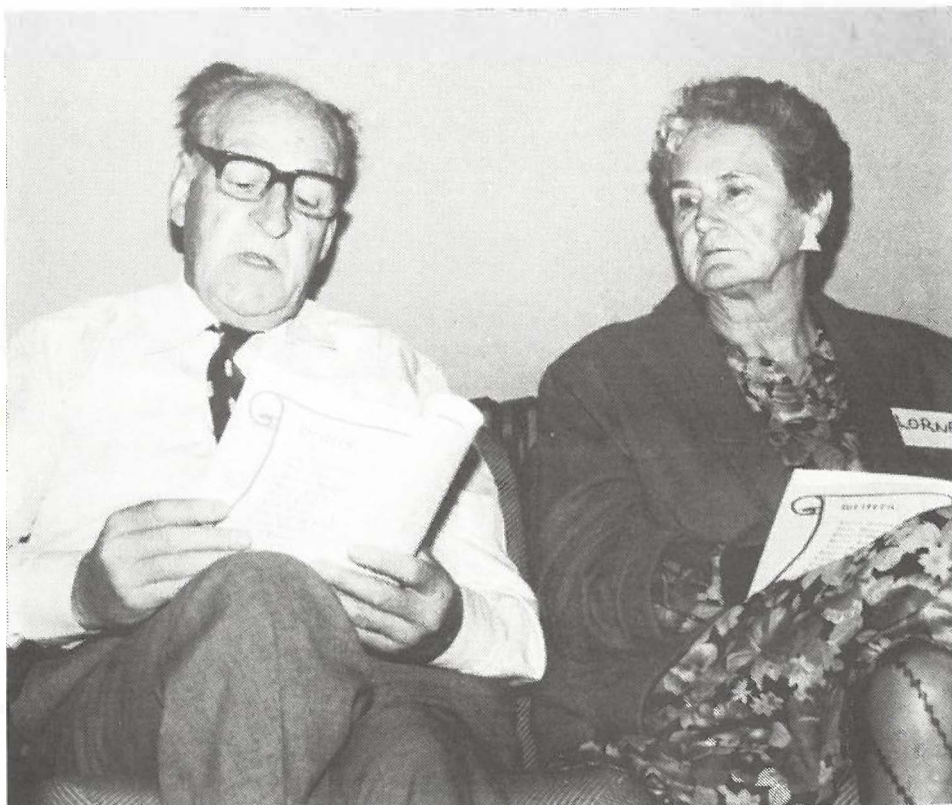


ARTS Access

Newsletter of Arts Access Society Inc

June 1987

Never too old to write



"Penpushers" tutors—the writers' art.

If ever proof was needed that you are never too old to write then there was plenty of proof provided by the Arts Access Western Region Aged Project.

The Project culminated with two seminars entitled "Prologue," which brought together members of the Footscray Over 50's Writers Group, older writers from three institutions and interested older people from the public.

Leading up to the seminars, members of the Footscray Writers Group acted as tutors for older people from three institutions—Mount Royal Hospital, Marie Mill Community Centre and Corandirrk Hostel—under the guidance of artist Kristin Henry and unearthed storytelling skills and experiences which were shared with those at each of the Prologue seminars.

The Seminars were held on Friday March 20 and Saturday March 21 at the Footscray Community Arts Centre as part of SENIOR CITIZENS WEEK.

Both days had a variety of highlights:

On the Friday tutors and their pupils shared readings from their own works—an event that was both entertaining and

inspiring. A warm note was added to the day with the celebration of the 94th birthday of one of the participants whose stories of her early life in the outback produced lots of laughter.

On the Saturday, Mrs Jean McCaughey, wife of Victoria's Governor Mr Davis McCaughey, launched a collection of writings by members of the Footscray Writers' Group entitled "Penpushers." Mrs McCaughey spoke enthusiastically about the contribution the writers had made towards "art for everyone" and enjoyed the selection of readings from the book which followed the launch.

AND on both days all those who attended had the privilege of viewing a performance entitled "Sweethearts," which was developed and performed by the Newport and Williamstown Senior Citizens' Club with the help of artists Michelle Howard and Steven Kingshott. It was the story of first loves and audiences on both days were happy to join in with many of the songs and to find something in common with the performers.

Both days were received so well that tutors are helping Arts Access plan for a similar day in June when the current aged project will end. The project has been funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

We reprint a sample from the Penpushers work—a poem entitled "Time" by Constance McIntyre. (The book can be purchased for \$4 from Arts Access.)

Time

Shorten your sail

*Let me bask in the enjoyment of my friends
let me savour all they say,
lest I miss some small bright star,
that passes too quick for me to comprehend.*

Time

Fold your wings

*Let me revel in those days when earth and sky
are the stage of the universe
Sun shine down, illuminate the planet,
and give me time to see the trees
and not the dark forests.*

Time

Curb your pace

*Let me ponder of the past,
those fragile moments of good and bad that
mould our lives.
Mosaic patterns of my mind.*

Time

Slow your tide

*Give me time to reach the score.
Let me discover the uncharted years ahead....
Time be my friend.
You always win in the end*



Arthur, 97 years old and memories galore.

Executive Officer's Report

Mrs Jean McCaughey, wife of the Governor Mr Davis McCaughey, has accepted our invitation to be Patron of Arts Access. We are delighted and look forward to her involvement with some of our projects.

March saw the Arts Access AGM and the election of two new board members, Iain Stewart and Rosemary Godde. Iain is the manager of Readings Records and Books and has a Diploma of Art from the VCA and is Secretary of Arts Project Australia Inc. Rosemary Godde is a Drama/Video Artist and another VCA graduate from the Animateurs course. Rosemary was an Arts Access work experience student some years ago and we are delighted she has now joined the Board.

Each year when Arts Access starts to think or plan, I wonder if we will be able to come up with new and innovative ideas and each year I am amazed at the huge variety that presents itself—a passing remark, or an overheard sentence, and suddenly we have a new direction to take. Arts Access is built on ideas and facts. The fact is there is always a need for the work we do, our decision must be as to where. The fact is we have artists on our books who are excellent and dedicated, our decision is who it is we work with and how to help juggle their valuable time with their other commitments. The fact is we always have material at our finger tips with which to work, and it's our responsibility to do the best job possible.

Dinny Downie
Dinny Downie.

PHOTOGRAPHY by:
SUSIE DICKSON.

THANKS TO GRAHAM
BERRY AND TYPOGRAPHICAL
SERVICES (699 3655)
FOR TYPESETTING
THIS NEWSLETTER.

Never too old...



Effie—an outback yarn.



"Sweethearts"—reminiscences of love.

Our current programming

The following is the list of programmes currently being undertaken by Arts Access Society Inc.

ST. VINCENT'S BOYS HOME—drama and music (percussion and guitars) conducted over four terms under the guidance of artists Ian Green, Ken Vatcher, Mark Grunden and Neil Cameron.

NARANGA/NEPEAN AND FRANKSTON SPECIAL SCHOOLS—a continuation of the 1986 movement/music programme with some changes in format. The programme is taking place over four terms for one and a half days per week with smaller groups and will run for seven weeks of each term under the guidance of artists Solange Pinget and John Wilson.

KINGSBURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME: a drama programme for the first two terms with Heidelberg Tech and Heidelberg Special Development School leading to a performance. Under the guidance of artists Suzie Dee and Gill Shaw. There will also be a drama programme for the final two terms at Preston Tech and Preston S.D.S. Artists to be confirmed.

CAMBERWELL CLINIC: A series of drama and mask-making workshops over 12 weeks with artists Maud Clark, Sally Marsden and Greg Sneddon.

DANDENONG PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL: a series of half-day drama and story-telling workshops with outpatients and inpatients of the clinic over 15 weeks with artists Helen Lenga and Jacque Robinson.

MONT PARK: a series of drama workshops over 20 weeks under the guidance of artists Noel Maloney and Brenton Seidel leading to a performance.

WESTERN REGION AGED PROJECT: a series of writing

workshops for older people in three institutions continuing on from initial programme (see story page 1.) A second series of seminars is planned for May.

MULTICULTURAL DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE: a programme specifically designed for multicultural young people who are intellectually/physically disabled. Artists to be confirmed.

MELTON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE: a programme for older people under the guidance of artist Helen Martineau.

BROADMEADOWS TEENAGE MOTHERS: remaining funds from 1986 the programme will be used on a programme planned in conjunction with Heather Rigby and the group.

BAIRNSDALE TRAINING PROGRAMME: a programme working with staff in institutions catering for older people in Bairnsdale and Sale. It is hoped the programme will bring ongoing results for staff, members of the community and the institutions. Artists Liz Sadler and David Lander. The programme will take place over one week in May.

COBURG HELPING HAND: A ten-week Threads and Textiles programme with intellectually handicapped young people under the guidance of artist Anne Marie Power.

We will also be conducting a number of one-off one day workshops in regional and metropolitan areas hopefully for staff working with intellectually disabled, to encourage creativity and understanding of our work. We will also be conducting drama, movement and music workshops for residents from Community Residential Units and any other young intellectually disabled people in the local community.

Staff Changes

Kate Brennan's first contact with Arts Access Society Inc. came several years ago and was brief.

Her involvement in the development of arts and education programmes in both schools and the community brought her in contact with the Theorem project—for which she helped with some of the workshops.

Her second contact with Arts Access Society Inc. came earlier this year and threatens (we all hope) not to be brief.

She has replaced Jo Caust as Programme Director and comes to Arts Access as an experienced drama teacher with a strong background in administration. Before taking up her position with us she had been working with an

overseas aid agency developing curriculum and innovative community education programmes.

"She is the best thing to happen to Arts Access since the new ramp, the automatic door, the new kettle and the paint job," said Arts Access Executive Officer, Dinny Downie.

And unlike Jo, she shares an abiding interest in Australian Rules Football which goes down very well with the one male on staff.

Jo has taken up a position with the Drama Department at the Victorian College of the Arts.

Arts Access also welcomes Susie Dickson who is our receptionist/office assistant. Susie has joined Arts Access

following the resignation of office administrator Sue Malings. Michelle Stone has been promoted to office administrator.

Susie hails from Deniliquin (Downie country) and is a keen photographer and tennis player.

"She is the best thing to happen to Arts Access since the new ramp, automatic door, the new kettle, the paint job and Kate Brennan," said Executive Officer, Dinny Downie.

Carey Brickel has reluctantly been allowed to vacate her Project Officer's position on the proviso that she does not stay away from Arts Access for too long. Her duties are being shared by Kate and Dinny.

New Limits

Official openings can be mundane affairs. The unveiling of the plaque on the wall can be as exciting as finding you have plaque on your teeth.

Why is this so—to borrow a famous question from the late Professor Julius Sumner Miller.

We won't bore you with the answer to that one, except to say that at Larundel Psychiatric Hospital it is no longer so—official openings have taken on new limits—Outer Limits.

Instead of boring speeches and dutiful clapping Arts Access' artists-in-residence Libby O'Neill and Richard Bengé organised an unforgettable day to celebrate the opening of the Bundoora hospital's new gymnasium—Outer Limits.

Patients gathered in brilliant sunshine and were each given a bright balloon to release simultaneously into the air. The Larundel Little Theatre Band played while patients tied sweatbands around their foreheads for an aerobics session on the grass.

A large tree decorated with health messages, a Health Quiz and a healthy afternoon tea of wholesome sandwiches and fresh fruit soon had everyone's faces glowing with new color and vitality.

Then it was time to try out the new \$50,000 gym equipment...as good as any seen in a commercial gymnasium. (Re-written from an article which appeared in *Health Victoria*.)

New and automated

Since our last newsletter, Arts Access has seen further alterations to its building.

While the office was closed for the Christmas break, Oppy and Associates were busy at work. A wall was knocked down to accommodate a brighter and roomier reception area. The administrator's office was then moved to the office behind the reception area, and files and equipment used by the receptionist and administrator are now housed in a central area.

Once these alterations were completed, Arts Access set about getting automatic doors for the front of the building. This was completed in February, and has made the building more accessible.

COMING UP

The Australian Association for Dance Education in conjunction with the Melbourne College of Advanced Education-Institute of Early Childhood Development are presenting a Dance Therapy conference/workshops from July 9-12 with guest lecturer Dr Marcia Leventhal, Associate Professor and Director of the Dance Therapy Graduate Program at the New York University. If you would like more details call (03) 614 2283. Applications close on June 5.

TO ARTISTS AND MEMBERS:

If you would like details of projects in which you are involved mentioned in the Access newsletter, please send details to Arts Access.



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: **Kate Brennan**
Office Administrator: **Michelle Stone**
Office Assistant: **Susie Dickson**
Public Relations Officer: **Mark Madden**
Volunteer Office Assistant: **Suzanne**

O'Dwyer

Arts Access Society Inc., 109/111 Sturt Street, South Melbourne, 3205. Telephone: (03) 699 8299

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.

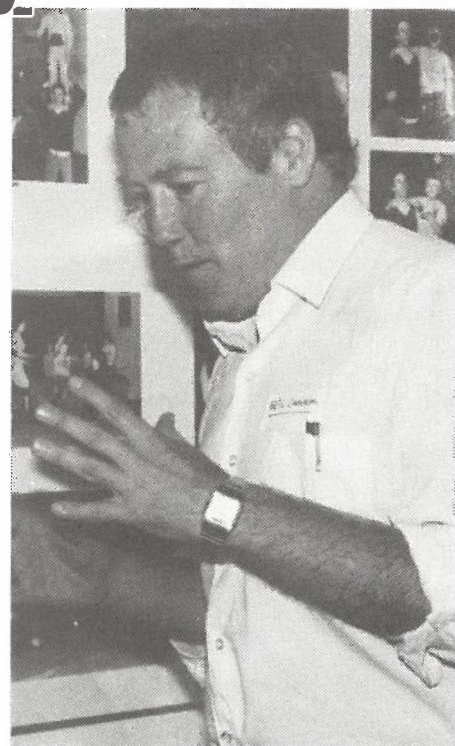
Artists' Day

Saturday May 9 saw Arts Access' first Artists Day for 1987. The meeting was in the Arts Access building for the first time. The format of the day was different from any other as we needed to discuss business and not work with the artists.

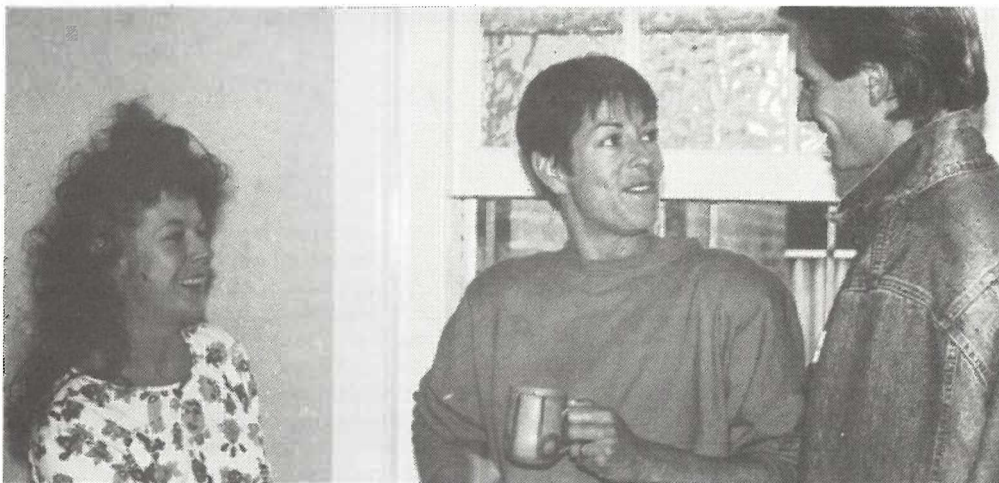
Most artists were keen to support an artists' trainee scheme. This scheme is to pay trained artists to work with one of our artists to learn the skills of working with the communities with which we work.

Another direction we are taking involves Arts Access artists taking workshops with members of staff, wherever we are running programmes. This will lift the awareness of our work and as well, the staff will have follow up material at their fingertips.

Salaries and conditions provided some spirited discussion and we finally ended with artists preferences being noted as to the area in which they would like to work. 1987 is proving to be an exciting year and Arts Access looks forward very much to artists and friends using the new artists' common room as often as they would like.



Neil Cameron.



Suzie Dee, Rinske Ginsberg and Paul Upchurch.

ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAW7218

Postage
Paid
Australia

If undelivered return to:

Arts Access Society Inc.
109-111 Sturt Street, South Melbourne, 3205. Australia.