

2019 Annual General Meeting

Forbes Arts Society

President's Report

May I begin on a personal note since this meeting ends my nine year term as president? As you know I will not be seeking re-election as president but I will stand as an ordinary member for another term. I would like to thank all of the members of the Society who have put up with my strange ways. I have enjoyed my term and have learnt much mostly about the strange ways of Forbes and the Wiradjuri.

I believe over that period we have achieved much and have gone from a small interest group in town to significant Rural Art Body. We had few assets and still have few assets. But now we are financially stable.

One of our objectives when we began was to have a gallery and a studio which we still have not attained. However we have been able to get by learning what it means to run a gallery by renting the old vacant chemist shop on the corner of Templar and Lachlan Streets. Who would have thought we would still be here today. There is no doubt the late Ora Kennard has been a blessing to the Society allowing us to use her building for a gallery. When we left the Craft Shop there was no studio and every building we looked at had become unavailable for one reason or another. It was not until Ray Flint of Northside Chapel formerly Church in the School Yard offered us the old Guides' hall which they had just refurbished. The Chapel building has now become a pleasant Thursday venue, and close to a home. Neither of these venues are permanent unfortunately. I had hoped that I might be able to tell you that we have been awarded our grant which is now getting very overdue. If this grant is successful (as we still hope) it will give us a permanent gallery which will be much larger with storage and a permanent studio and meeting room, not to mention funds to complete our Sculpture Trail. So we just wait some more, probably until the crises of bushfires and lack of drinking water in country NSW are over.

We have been able to place many sculptures in town due to the efforts of Grazing Down the Lachlan, Forbes Shire Council, Forbes Services Club and the Combined Agents Association, the good will of "Gillie and Marc" and the kindness of Johnny Karhlbetzer who has loaned us the Andy Scott Bull for a few years. I hope that over the next few years there will be quite a few new ones installed.

The past year has been a good year for the gallery with increasing visitation, especially increased repeat visitation by people from out of town. There have been many fine exhibitions over the past year. I am especially pleased to see a combined exhibition by local members which was excellent. May there be many more. Thanks to Ro Burns, Klara, Karen and Leone and many others who have done so much to keep the gallery looking good, and functioning well.

Whilst thanking people I would like to thank Wendy Muffet, and the terrific band of workers not the least Kim, who have worked so hard over the past three years to get Grazing Down the Lachlan off the ground and into the position of being a prize winning tourism attraction. In the process they have raised substantial funds for the Society and in particular the

sculpture program. They will not operate in 2020 but they will be back in 2021. They are taking time to rethink the event, which is very hard if they were preparing for the next year. They are not stopping just recasting, rethinking and establishing a sponsor base.

The last group I would like to thank are those members who took a step into the dark and formed the Forbes Arts Society some 9-10 years ago. People who were more self-centred would have been relaxing painting rather being on committees worrying about finance and incorporation. We cannot thank enough Dos King, Elaine Imrie, Pammie Thomson, Leone Morrison, Klara Ward, Alison Baker, Marie McCallum and Rosalie White. There are many more who have been so supportive over the years. I cannot list them all but I want them to know they have not been forgotten.

In summary the Society has had a good year, we are in a sound financial position, we are active, and we have sound plans for the way ahead. We have achieved much in many areas, not just for ourselves but for the people of Forbes and now what lies ahead is up to the members.

Dr Keith Mullette

President.