**BRIBIE ISLAND COMMUNITY ARTS SOCIETY INC.**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**3 JUNE 2018**

This is my second report to members and my first after a full term as the
Society’s Chairman. I am pleased to announce that the Society in 2017 once again achieved a financial surplus - this year it is $13,616. This is less than in previous years because of a depreciation adjustment made to comply with an auditor’s recommendation and major Board expenditure on a new computer system. It is an excellent result in the circumstances.

**PERSONNEL**

The Society’s officers and Board this year were:

Chairman Robert Hamilton

Vice Chairman Shirley Heapy

Secretary (statutory) Robert Hamilton

Secretary (actual) Diane Carr

Treasurer Karin Jaksch until resignation, then Robert Hamilton

Member Lynne Smith

Member Sarah Cave

The Society’s employees this year were:

Accounts/Administration Manager Jan Ayre until resignation, then Stacey Bennett

Venue Manager Julie Thomson

Notable positional changes this year were:

Treasurer Karin Jaksch resigned from the Board and was replaced by Robert Hamilton for the remainder of the Board’s term. Jan Ayre resigned as Accounts/Administration Manager and was replaced by Stacey Bennett. Volunteer chef Trevor Drury resigned and is yet to be replaced.

Shirley Heapy has also decided not to seek reelection. A longserving Board member through sometimes turbulent periods, Shirley will be taking a well deserved rest from Board duties and will be missed. She is not leaving us entirely, however, and the Board will continue to welcome her wisdom. Thanks from us all, Shirley, for a difficult job well done.

In matters personnel, I feel it appropriate to express concern that I presently occupy 3 of the 4 officer positions on the Board. This is highly undesirable from a managerial, organizational and financial accountability perspective, and I strongly urge members to seek Board appointments if they have the time, qualifications and interest to do so.

Serving on the Board is not easy. Presently we make significant and overdue decisions about the Centre’s day to day operations and future direction, and many of these are fundamental and involve significant expenditure. But it’s a Board’s duty to make difficult decisions, and good decisions most likely occur with a full Board. We need a full Board, and I think it a fair question of the membership why can we not get 7 people to serve from a membership of some 420.

**THE YEAR PAST**

This has been yet another year where the Board has continued to learn about the Centre’s operations and spent significant time reacting to the day to day issues involved in running what amounts to a corporation with multiple business lines. The learning is now complete, however, and we are making the changes and improvements that we believe are needed to put the Society on a strong future path.

This year’s major work has been in 8 specific areas:

1. The Board decided to replace the Society’s 3 ancient single use computers and its single point of sale system with an advanced computer system of 4 modern computers and an up to date point of sale system linked by wi fi or modern cable to a central server. The system will permit any authorized user to work on any computer at any time, will electronically link the point of sale system with the accounting system, will establish a limited wifi presence and will provide opportunity for future expansion. This has meant modernization, replacement and reduction of internal physical cabling and purchase of computers and central server. This necessary replacement and modernisation program is likely to cost some $45-50,000 over 5 years and is expected to provide minimum productivity gains of some $60-70,000.
2. A new and safe concrete floor has been poured in the exterior area of the pottery studio and future work is intended in other pottery studio areas when possible. Expenditure so far has been around $18,000, some of which was funded by grant, but most by a significant and most appreciated donation from Busy Fingers. We anticipate future work being funded by grant.
3. Market efficiency and profitability has significantly increased through better stock accounting and reduction in delivery cost, particularly with food and cleaning supplies. Work is still needed here, but the monthly markets are now a major income source, and while they are superbly run by Kelly Vass, there is potential to increase net income from associated food sales.
4. The Centre’s security system has been upgraded and simplified. While there have been some adaptability issues, the number of false alarms has dropped dramatically and security callouts have decreased significantly. The upgrade cost about $4,000.
5. The Centre seemed to deal with a significant number of outside contractors and we have taken steps to rationalize their numbers and purpose. This is continuing and will reduce infrastructure cost.
6. Applications are in for solar energy grants in an attempt to control and influence the Centre’s soaring electricity bill.
7. Council is planning to install increased off road parking facilities to cater for overflow parking on market days.
8. The main office is now air conditioned.

This year’s successes have been significant and I would like to mention just a few:

* Increase in income by about $29,000.
* Greater control over expenditure, particularly in the kitchen/café area.
* Significant growth in the importance of the monthly market and greater income flow from increased community participation.
* Successful introduction of a major arts teaching program, thanks to Lynne Smith and Sarah Cave.
* Reduction of member’s sessional fees from $5 per session to $3 per session.
* Record number of entries for the Matthew Flinders Art Prize. With the prize money now on offer, this is a major regional event.
* Inaugural Next Generation Art Competition, a competition that gives our younger artists the opportunity to display their talents.
* Thanks to the efforts of some of our working together groups, and particularly Maree Cunningham, renovation and modernization of the Studio 3 kitchen facilities.
* Thanks to the fine efforts of staff and volunteers, the Matthew Flinders Gallery is fully booked for next year.

**SOME THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO**

* Grant applications have been submitted to completely overhaul the commercial kitchen and replace the aged infrastructure in anticipation of opening a café as a new and potential income source. How quickly we can realise this possibility depends upon the timing and outcome of the applications. It is hoped that the overhaul might also include landscaping of the internal courtyard. A café is still a concept and there is still a need for significant planning and a final decision to proceed, but Lynne Smith is actively leading the Board in discussing possibilities and ideas.
* The computer system is being installed and linked and a start made on achieving productivity gains. We may also need to purchase a new point of sale system earlier than anticipated and may decide to extend the recently installed limited wifi system to provide coverage over both the gallery and kitchen/café areas.
* There is a need to review the accounts to ensure that they provide better and more relevant internal accounting information and more simply and accurately state the Society’s overall financial position at any point in time.
* On December 11, 2018, the Society will have been in existence for 30 years. A sub-committee chaired by Barbara Gant is already planning exciting activities for the week December 8 to 16. Expect to see more information about our 30th anniversary celebrations in the coming months.

**OUR NEEDS**

We need more volunteers, and particularly people with a marketing, bookkeeping, administration and managerial background. The Centre is now a major business and we need an administrative system that reflects it. We are fortunate to have a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, but we cannot fairly continue to ask that they function at the very high level the business now demands, and we think they need assistance.

We need to carefully introduce an administrative structure that spreads responsibilities among capable people. We have the IT system that we need and the managerial staff that we need, but we need administrative volunteers to help spread the load. Again, we have 420 members: surely there must be some who can reduce the pressure on our overstretched personnel core.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations to Bev Porter for her recent success in winning the Arts and Culutre Volunteer section at the recent Longman community awards. For the last 19 years, Bev has given large amounts of her personal time to the Centre as both a Board member and a volunteer supervisor, serving on the front desk and processing new memberships and banking. Congratulations, Bev, on your success – well deserved!

**THANKS**

My thanks to everyone: the Board, the staff and the volunteers. This year has been difficult: there has been an ongoing need to deal with day to day issues that seem to never stop and merely increase; there has been the normal need to deal with shifting duties as people come and go; and there has been the sometimes difficult issue of adjusting to organizational change as the Board moves to modernize infrastructure, administration, accountability and work practices, and to introduce new income sources.

To those who have chosen to leave us, my thanks and those of the Board for the valued contributions that you each made while you were here.

To the Board, Diane, Shirley, Lynne and Sarah, all the thanks of which I am capable. To Diane for your efforts as the de facto secretary and your constant reminders that I must do certain things on time; to Shirley for keeping us in line for grants and reminding us that Council is there; and to Lynne and Sarah for constantly reminding us that we must continue to move forward despite overwhelming day to day issues. To you both, my particular thanks for your efforts with the teaching program, the Next Generation Art Prize and the planned kitchen/café.

To Julie and Stacey, our staff, thank you both for your flexibility in dealing with day to day issues, advertising the Centre and assisting and living with the disruption of new technology as we all attempt to make the best use of it that we can. It still escapes me how you do your jobs and then resolve the rest of the issues that are everyday life within the Centre.

To Kelly Vass, a special thanks for your phenomenal job in setting up and expanding the markets into a major business activity. No amount of thanks can be enough for the valued work that you do.

To Maree Cunningham and the Wednesday and Thursday quilters, thank you for providing the Studio 3 kitchen update.

To Debra Meith, thank you for arranging the Artist of the Month Exhibitions and for giving a colourful lift to our café furniture.

To the woodies, for both your timely rescues by taking on repair work of immediate importance, and for constructing the 4 superb moveable walls for use in the Gallery.

And finally, to our many volunteers, my thanks and those of the Board and staff for the fantastic work you have done to make the Centre what it is. You are the backbone of the Centre and it is fair to say that we could not operate without your skills and professionalism.

Robert M. Hamilton

Chairman

Bribie Island Community Arts Centre Inc.