

CONNECTING
COMMUNITIES
& CULTURE





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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of Arts Mid North Coast, I'm very pleased to be able to present this report on a challenging, yet innovative year in 2019. We achieved some excellent results, and made a considerable contribution to the enormous diversity of cultural experiences here on the Mid North Coast of NSW which is recognised as a culturally rich, vibrant and diverse region. Arts Mid North Coast has helped our communities to continue to grow in the areas of cultural tourism, creative ageing, community partnerships, and audience participation; all of which are detailed in this report. In 2019 we've also launched a number of exciting new projects right across the region which I am sure you will find inspiring.

During the year we said farewell to Board members, Dr. Lisa Milner and Leigh Vaughan. With her academic background, Lisa brought a special rigour to her analysis of the board's work, and also had a special passion in advocating for the organisation's involvement in screen and projects involving youth.

Leigh retired after more than a decade on the Board. At various times, she fulfilled the roles of Chair and Deputy Chair, and represented Great Lakes Council before acting as the MidCoast Council representative during the transition to an amalgamated elected Council. Leigh continued as a community representative, as her passion for the arts and the work of the RADO Network was understood and appreciated far beyond the regions boundaries.

The year therefore also gave us two new Board members. A recent Skills Audit of the Board identified governance and financial skills as desirable criteria for new board members. The two new appointees are therefore not only extremely competent in these areas, but are also important people within the cultural fabric of our region. Donna Ballard is best known for her work establishing the Wingham Akoostik Music Festival as a major event for the North Coast. Debbie Sommers is Chair of the Mid North Coast Chapter of Museums Australia and is also on the Board of the Australian body. My thanks go to all the Board members for being such a collegial and forward thinking group who have always used their own expertise and local experience for the benefit of our whole region. The Board itself has a

very supportive, inclusive, and professional culture and I appreciate and value the contribution of each individual Board member.

Thanks also need to go to our Executive Director, Kevin Williams, who works incredibly hard to maximise the contribution our organisation makes to all our communities. His team of Olivia, John and Mark also do a fantastic job.

Arts Mid North Coast appreciates the support from our major funding organisation, Create NSW and the guiding role and support from Regional Arts NSW and the RADO Network. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by our six participating councils. We know that 2020 will see local government elections and may indeed see change in some Council representation on our Board. However we are confident our member councils will continue to recognise the importance of creativity and culture here on the Mid North Coast.



Rob Turner

Chair

ARTS MID NORTH COAST

Arts Mid North Coast is the peak regional arts and cultural development organisation for the mid north coast region of New South Wales. The region comprises the six local government areas of MidCoast, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Kempsey, Nambucca, Bellingen and Coffs Harbour and embraces the area associated with the Worimi, Biripi, Dughutti and Gumbaynggirr Nations. With nearly 315,000 residents it is one of NSW's most populous regions with a remarkable diversity of creative activity and industry. It is larger than countries such as Slovenia and Israel.

Arts Mid North Coast receives triennial core funding from the NSW State Government through Create NSW supplemented with annual financial contributions from each of our Councils. One of 14 Regional Arts Boards throughout New South Wales this network plays an important advocacy role for regional issues and with strong links to Regional Arts NSW further extends the value to our Councils, artists and creative professionals.

OUR VISION FOR THE REGION

The Mid North Coast, a vibrant and diverse region embracing the creation, understanding and appreciation of the arts in fostering economic, community, cultural and environmental opportunities and benefits.

OUR MISSION

Arts Mid North Coast, the region's peak arts organisation, supports and collaborates with government, communities, organisations, business and individuals to build capacity and create opportunities for the arts and creative industries.

OUR GOALS

1. To generate increased opportunities for access, participation, training and education in the arts and creative industries.
2. To generate increased visibility and awareness of the region's creative and cultural activity and opportunities.
3. To develop and foster strategic partnerships, projects and networks that benefit the region's arts and cultural sector.

4. To encourage and support the arts, creative industries and cultural development in all strategic processes to provide leadership and ensure positive outcomes for local, community and regional initiatives.
5. To be an agile, dynamic, effective, accountable and sustainable organisation utilising relevant best practice technology and skills to promote and achieve excellence.

Our work, is shaped by a wide range of factors reflecting the particular characteristics of our region, our resources, our stakeholders and broader policies and strategies that seek to increase the capacity of the artists and creatives within our region and to showcase their work and value.

While much of our work builds and consolidates our knowledge and experience to be shared this Annual Report highlights the specific projects and initiatives undertaken in 2019.



PROJECTS

Putting the arts of the Mid North Coast on the map!

SHINE

In April 2019 we presented the inaugural SHINE Festival... shining a light on the region's museums and rich heritage. This showcased 28 special events at museums and heritage sites across the region as well as featuring over 30 other activities and stories. Many of the events had not been staged before.

We got double the numbers we expected and were bursting at the seams. Great coverage in local media before and after event - Dorrigo Museum

Just reporting that our Hippy Heritage Walk was a huge success ... and the after party was enjoyed by all with one participant report that it was the best party in a Museum that he could remember. It was a great incentive to participate in the Shine event. We even got two new volunteers for Bellingen out of the event - Bellingen Museum

We had a very successful night at Wingham Museum. We had to extend the times from four time slots to five time slots & people still wanted to come - Wingham Museum

CREATIVE COAST

Our cultural tourism brand, Mid North Coast... the Creative Coast, again saw great success in 2019 being recognised by Tourism Industry Awards for the fourth year. In 2019 three additional Cultural Trails were developed bring the total to 17, the largest in Regional Australia. The new Trails were: Inclusive Arts, Online Trails and Our Creative Waterfall Way. One of our Trails, Museums, features over 20 community run museums and to assist them we developed and published a Marketing Guide for Museums.

We also designated two further Creative Communities: South West Rocks and Woolgoolga, bringing to ten the number of smaller communities we feature where creativity is at their heart. Our annual Summer guide, More than a Beach, featured 52 creative activities for families across 16 towns and cities. This was in addition to the annual Our Top Ten Holiday Picks which highlights new or interesting cultural experiences for holiday makers.

CREATIVITY FOR ALL

Using a Building Better Regions Fund grant from the Federal Government we completed the project, Creativity for All. A Strategic Pathway for the Mid North Coast. Its goal was to ensure older people in our region are encouraged to live active and healthy lives with improved physical and mental wellbeing by way of better access to and greater participation in creative activities and events. The report contains two volumes:

Volume 1 details the process to develop the Strategic Pathway by way of examining what Arts Mid North Coast is already doing in this field, a series of case studies of what is already happening in the region by others in the sector and opportunities for the future. These are then developed into a Three Year Plan, 2020 to 2022.

Volume 2 highlights considerable reference material we examined and which provides the context of the Strategic Pathway as well as being an invaluable resource for those interested in learning or doing more in this field.

CREATIVE AGEING

With one of the most aged populations in NSW we continue to lead the way in creative ageing programs and assistance. Central to this is our Mid North Coast Creative Ageing Festival. The third festival held in February 2019 featured over 60 events for those over 60. This festival is one of only six programs in Australia showcased in the prestigious publication by the UK based, Baring Foundation, Around the World with 80 Creative Ageing Projects, published in November 2019.

Throughout the year we maintained and developed our Creative Ageing Directory featuring over 150 groups and activities, the only such directory in Regional NSW. We also initiated a new subscriber based newsletter, Creative Ageing Notebook. This provides updates of the latest research and programs from around the world.

MUSICIANS IN HOSPITAL

After several attempts to secure funding for this project it was scaled down to a Pilot Program to be delivered at Coffs Harbour Base Hospital and was successful in the 2019 My Community Project funding. All preparatory work now complete in 2020 a team of musicians

will perform and deliver music-making activities to improve the quality of patients' hospital experience and wellbeing. Staff and families will also benefit from the more relaxed, calmer environment and happier patients.

CREATIVE RECOVERY

As unprecedented bush fires ravaged our region in late 2019 the Board proved its agility by quickly amending our 2020 Work Plan to prioritise for the first time Creative Recovery as a focus, to look at training, suitable arts programs and how best to work with Emergency Services. In the shorter term our region was designated for support by Regional Arts NSW as eligible for Quick Response Grants for Creative Recovery with funds from the Federal Government. We worked with over a dozen artists and groups to develop potential proposals for this funding.



PARTNERSHIPS

Delivering programs and events with key partners.

GOT YA BACK PRODUCTIONS - BANJO

BANJO is a locally written, produced and cast show, a fascinating mash of the poetry of Banjo Paterson, the music of Cold Play and contemporary dance. Following its 2018 sell-out success (7 shows) in Port Macquarie AMNC supported in 2019 the production undertaking a tour of seven regional towns and cities in NSW and in a first for our region two shows in Sydney. Our support included marketing, funding, touring and business advice for the region's emerging professional theatre company.

Our 2019 tour was ambitious. For us, it was essential we engaged the region's Arts community to make the tour viable. We discovered over this process that Arts Mid North Coast truly is at the centre of the arts web for our region. Their assistance in connecting us with suitable venues, marketing providers, arts groups, arts supporters and influential community members across the length

of the region was exemplary. - Tim Maddren

SCREENWAVE

For the fourth year we partnered with Screenwave, the leading screen industry business on the Mid North Coast responsible for SWIFF, Australia's major regional Film Festival, NextWave, delivering film making workshops to young people across Regional Australia and its latest venture, Film Outreach Australia, collaborating and providing film festivals to regional Australia.

All three of our programs have been directly and indirectly supported by Arts Mid North Coast. AMNC has supported countless grant applications, provided region-specific information to help us acquire new funding partnerships, connected our team with other regional artists forming new collaborations, provided funding for arts programs where other funding pathways had closed, and have sought to include our feedback in strategic decisions...
- David Horsley

FORUMS

In 2019 in partnership with SWIFF for the third year we presented Industry Connect which provides an opportunity for regional and travelling filmmakers to connect, to foster collaboration, and to build pathways to new productions for the region. Later in the year we partnered with Monica Davidson of Creative Plus Business to deliver two workshops: Top Ten Tips for Creatives and Marketing for Creatives.

Arts Mid North Coast also sponsored and showcased our work at two important conferences held in the region. In March the second RED Dementia Conference was held in Port Macquarie while in October the inaugural Festivals Australia Conference was held in Coffs Harbour. Both brought international and national speakers to the region to present innovative and ground breaking ideas to the region.

Thank you for your support of our 2019 Omnicare Alliance regional dementia conference-the RED Conference, A Regional Experience in Practical Dementia Care. The conference held from March 28-29 at Sails Port Macquarie was an overwhelming success with delegates coming from across NSW, QLD, Victoria,

SA, and the NT. Thank you again for supporting our conference, but more importantly, supporting people to live well with dementia in our communities. - Raymond Gluck. CEO

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

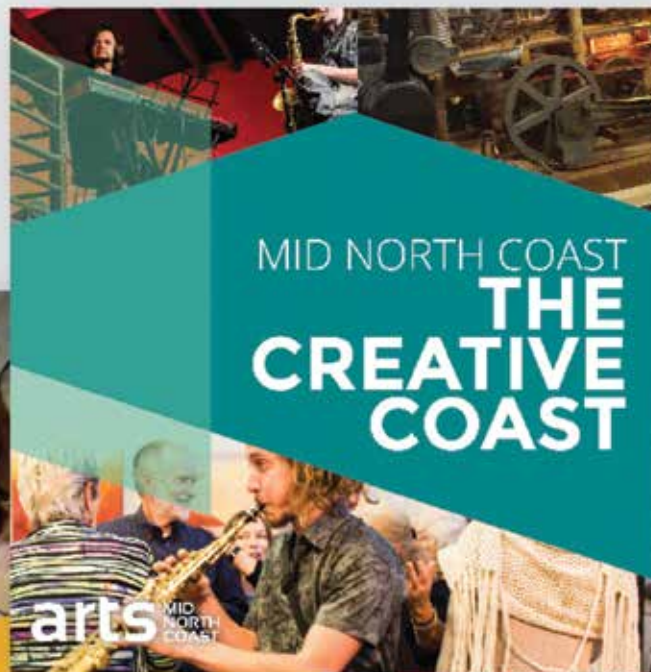
Worked with TAFE NSW and Dance for Wellbeing to achieve the development and delivery of a new training course on Dance & Movement for the Aged Care sector.

To continue our role exploring digital technology and online experiences we worked with Port Macquarie Museum on its new online Tourists Paradise exhibition.

Mentored Bellingen Museum on implementation of Strategic Plan for the Bellingen Museum developed in conjunction with them in 2018.

CONFERENCES

Ensuring we stay up to date with all the latest information and trends staff attended a variety of conferences including: ArtState Tamworth, REMIX 2019, Creative Arts and Dementia: Developing Best Practice and the RADO Network with its numerous presentations by stakeholders and policy makers.



CULTURAL TRAILS

PLACES

Dotted throughout the rolling green hills and river side locations of the Mid North Coast are perfect villages just waiting to be discovered. Each town and township has a timeless serenity and character that provides their sense of place, but it is a very obvious creative soul. So why not just a short pleasant drive from the Pacific Coast to find both a wide range of experiences.

www.artsmnc.com.au/creative-coast

PROMOTION

Showcasing our artists and events with greater reach and success

NEW WEBSITE

In 2019 we launched a new website with a bold new look and a strong distinction between our Creative Coast Cultural Tourism features for the public and our industry information for and about our artists. It also highlights our key projects. New additions include: enhanced and simpler navigation, in built mapping functions for key activities, stunning new images for every entry and feature, a live Twitter feed to give everyone the absolutely latest arts news, grants and opportunities from around the world and a friendlier backend, so much easier for anyone submitting news or events. In association our 32 page Creative Coast booklet was produced and widely distributed to drive traffic to the new associated website.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The appointment of our new Manager Programs & Projects has reinvigorated our social media and promotions undertaken during the year. A reactivated Instagram account and stronger liaison with local media has seen new audiences and opportunities while our Facebook and Twitter have extended their number of posts, reach and followers.

NEWSLETTERS

As we transitioned to our new website we moved from our E-newsletter, Arts Blast, being produced fortnightly to monthly. It will in 2020 be a more curated publication with news and stories. Our subscription based increased 17 percent to nearly 2000. In 2020 we will also have an automated emailed Weekly Bulletin that will focus on all the latest events from our ever growing number of entries on our What's On. During 2019 we trialled a Creative Ageing Notebook with all the latest news from around the world on this ever important topic. In 2020 this will expand to a quarterly publication.





SERVICES

Doing more of what we have always done

OUR SERVICES

In 2019 these included:

- Updated with all the latest in news and techniques, SmartART our six online tool boxes and adoption of recommendation to add Creative Ageing in 2020
- Notified more than 330 opportunities for artists in terms of grants, residencies, calls for work and calls for action
- Provided twenty eight Letters of Support for grants for local artists, events and infrastructure
- Delivered a talk on “what we do” at the monthly Sunday Bites in Bellingen
- Responded to over 230 miscellaneous enquiries from where to find a framer, source creative NDIS providers, advise on the regeneration of a towns mainstreet or the judging panel for a major sculpture competition or the establishment of a Surf Museum.

- Achieved six successful 2019 local projects under the Country Arts Support Program.
- Secured funds for regional partners to the value of \$160,000+
- Maintained and expanded our features on Creative Ageing, Creative Pathways and the Film Industry

STRATEGIC PLANNING & ADVICE

A key role of Arts Mid North Coast is to provide a strategic overview of the region ensuring the arts and creative industries are best positioned in important local and regional strategic plans and policies. In 2019 this included submissions on the Port Macquarie Hastings and Macleay Valley Destination Management Plans and being appointed to the Mid Coast Cultural Plan 2036 Reference Group. We also made submissions in support of the proposed Gallery, Library Museum in Coffs Harbour, the operation of the Glasshouse in Port Macquarie and the Community Plan for Kendall, one of our Creative Communities. Finally in view of the new State requirements for local Councils to prepare 20 year Strategic Plans we also prepared a position paper on the Arts and Local Strategic Planning Statements.

THE FUTURE

In any one year we are also always looking forward and planning for the next. This may vary from crystallising ideas into proposals, seeking funding or partners and incorporating into future Work Plans. 2019 was no different. Grant proposals were made for funds to develop a Screen Industry Plan for the region and a youth orientated multi-arts story telling project involving film, writing and dance.

We also identified with more certainty projects that we plan to deliver in 2020 including the development of a Venues Guide for the region to make it easier to attract and work with touring performers and a Guide on Street Art. We will also complete a similar guide started in 2019 for Public Art.

GOVERNANCE

VIABILITY

Maintaining our funding to deliver our programs and services is a challenge but successes in 2019 included:

- Securing Create NSW annual funding of \$140,000,
- Gaining support from our six Local Government Partners totalling \$71,879,
- Successful funding for our modified Musicians in Hospital program,
- Completing and acquitting the Building Better Regions Fund grant for the Creative Ageing for All Report.

To secure such funding also means acquitting what we do with providers.

Part of that process is our forward planning and although in 2019 Create NSW rolled over the requirement for a 3 Year Plan while major changes occurred in their organisation the flow on was the need to secure a similar roll over for a year of our Memorandum of Understanding with each of our Councils that had been due in June 2019.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

Arts Mid North Coast has a strong record of a fiscal control again being within budget. Although no longer a legal requirement to do so but to show good faith with our partners and stakeholders a full set of accounts for the 2019 financial year will be audited and available for our AGM in May 2020.



OUR BOARD

Cr. Robert Turner
Chair

Cr. Susan Jenvey
Deputy Chair & Treasurer

Debbie Sommers
Secretary

Cr. John Arkan

Donna Ballard

Cr. Mark Baxter

Cr. Steve Klipin

Lorrae O'Brien

Shelley O'Keefe

Cr. Claire Pontin

Stephanie Sims

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