



First Floor
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DUNEDIN

Open daily 10am to 4pm

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OAS COUNCILLORS, 2019-2020

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Peter Nicholls, Mari Gomes-Bradford,
Brenda Nyhof, Celia Duff,
Lorna Allan, Lindsay Campbell,
Allie Simpson, Danielle Munro.



Bubble Trouble

We're all in this together.

Sending out
warmest good wishes
to all our members
and your families –
stay safe, stay sane,
until we meet again.



'We're all in this together'
by Jenny Longstaff

Lockdown Limitations

With pandemic precautions leading to a nation-wide lockdown being implemented from Thursday 26th March, OAS activities have been stopped in their tracks. This year was scheduled to be a momentous one, with prestigious exhibitions filling our programme calendar and several member initiatives gathering momentum.

Much effort had been put into hosting the **PANZ Pastel Association of New Zealand** national awards exhibition, which followed hard on the heels of the Summer Squares exhibition.

Unfortunately, due to travel restrictions, the PANZ Conference and workshops had to be cancelled and the international judge was unable to be involved. There was a very small window of opportunity for people to see the exquisite pastel works on display, but those who did were in awe of the skill showcased, and the variety of effects that are possible with this medium.

Due to circumstances, the opening night on Friday 20th March was a small event. It was a pity not to be able to celebrate the pastel artists' skilful endeavours in an exhibition of longer duration. (See p. 4 for award winners.)



At short notice, our local art community stepped into the breach to judge the PANZ national art awards entries – pictured at the opening event:
Michelle Chalkin-Sinclair, Steev Peyroux,
and Lynn Taylor.

Members' Meeting

There was a small turnout for the members' meeting on Thursday 19th March, but an enjoyable and convivial evening was had by those who braved their anxiety about group gatherings. Doug's art quiz was at times challenging, informative, and much fun. Julia McNaughton's presentation on 'The Science of Colour' showed us that colour is not a real thing, it is a construct of the brain.



Why is the sky blue? Why are orangutans orange? Julia McNaughton was able to explain why in her talk on the science of colour.



President:
Doug Hart

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Back Issues of the newsletter
are available on the website.

President's Message

Doug Hart

Dangers

I distinctly remember the chilling booklet and subsequent television broadcasts of the late 70's and early 80's on 'Protect and Survive', published by the UK Thatcher government. It gave the public advice on how to live through and function after a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union. There we were enjoying life, shopping, holidaying, hearing about another British Leyland strike and watching out for IRA bombs, when all of a sudden.....Armageddon loomed large. Thankfully it all passed.

OAS Activities

Well, it's here, Covid 19, and it has affected every strand of humanity not only in New Zealand, but around the globe. The Otago Art Society has been in existence for 144 years and in that time it has witnessed many local and worldwide events, some good and some horrendous. It is, and will be, a resilient society which will weather the latest catastrophe to hit our city of culture. With the level four lockdown in place we have no choice but to look to the future to ensure the survival of this wonderful organisation.

All our sponsored exhibitions, including the National Ceramic show, have been cancelled and are now in limbo. It's possible in the future that we will be able to reschedule these, but we shall have to wait and see what advice we receive.

Financial Assistance

The society is in effect mothballed, but we still have expenses to pay out. The DCC have very kindly given us a month rent free and a government grant for our paid employees has been placed into our bank account. The estate of the late and great artist member, Audrey Bascand, has bequeathed us \$5000. I wholeheartedly thank the generosity of the Bascand family.

Some of our members have donated their Hope and Sons entry fee to boost our depleting funds. It's been a triple 'whammy' for us with no tourists, interest rates at their lowest ever, and no revenue coming in from exhibitions and their knock-on sales. As a society we rely on the goodness of others, local support, and the membership dues to maintain our galleries in the iconic Railway Station. A dramatic reduction in income could see the closure of this premiere facility. It would then mean the introduction of a couple of volunteer-led exhibitions in rented spaces. We shall do all in our power to avoid this 'Armageddon' scenario and are looking into possible online exhibitions and sales for our members' work. It's vital that we work together to ensure our future. There will be further updates as time progresses, but for the time being our lovely administrator, Ngaire, and shop staff, Ness and Sarah, cannot access the building.

Plague Art

Naturally, my newsletter could not pass without reference to some aspect of art. In keeping with the times, I have been studying how artists in the past have viewed epidemics, notably the 'Black Death' that swept across Europe in medieval times. It is estimated that a third of the population was wiped out in the sporadic outbreaks that occurred over hundreds of years.

The beginning of the Renaissance, for the likes of Holbein, Tintoretto and Titian who were working through this turbulent time, must have been incredibly uncertain times for receiving and completing their commissions. Indeed, Holbein and Titian died from contracting bubonic plague.

And yet, throughout this devastating period of history, some of the greatest artworks were accomplished, such as the grisly 'Garden of Earthly Delights' painting by Hieronymus Bosch, and the sculpture of 'David' by Michelangelo. Paintings and manuscripts depicted the terrible affliction of the plague. Artists flourished despite these waves of illness. It was as if they were rising above the despair to glorify the achievements of man.

We all have the power to achieve wonderful works of art throughout this lockdown time. There's time to try something different – maybe a different technique, different material, or a different approach to your art. Some people are engaged in a sustained project, like Gabby McKenzie's birds, and for myself, I'm researching more artists for future U3A and OAS presentations.

The future is brighter than you think.
Keep safe, keep calm and keep creating.

Doug Hart



Detail from 'Garden of Earthly Delights' by Hieronymus Bosch, and the sculpture of 'David' by Michelangelo. These outstanding works of Western culture were created during turbulent times of plague and uncertainty.



Guests at the opening of the **PANZ Pastel Association of New Zealand** national awards exhibition on Friday 20th March. Unfortunately, the exhibition was a lockdown victim.

Contributions please!

I will need some help with news and pictures for the next issue of the newsletter. What have you been working on? What have you been reading? What have you taken photos of?

Please email Jenny at:
j.a.longstaff@gmail.com

Obituary:
Murray Ayson
Life Member, acclaimed artist,
and friend of OAS.

Written by David Corballis

Murray passed away in the morning of Friday 28th of February. To Joan and all her family and friends we offer our deep sympathies.

Murray faced his condition with the same qualities he gave to life, the qualities he brought to the society. Without him the OAS would now look significantly different. The years he was on council were fruitful, sometimes overwhelming, times where things changed at a rapidly increasing rate for us all. The most hectic was when we moved into our present location at the Railway Station.

We had to convince our members that we had made a viable alternative to the place we had just vacated (now the H D Skinner Annex of the Otago Museum). Murray and Joan were a vital force in this venture, confronted as we were with an empty set of rooms which we had to turn into a working, attractive art centre.

He took a major role in so much of the action, including the clean-up of the old place, as well as so many operational ideas for our new home.

The Cleveland Living Art Group had warned us about the sheer height of the walls and the daunting task of hanging pictures. Murray rose to the challenge and came up with the brilliant system we have today: nylon lines, clips and 'magic wands'. [The wands are long poles with a magnet at one end to enable repositioning of the picture hooks.] Hanging for us almost became a game. The magic wands are now taken for granted, though they have never lost their magic. Members helping in the hanging process accept them without question, hanging the pictures with the special spring hooks he procured, and from the lines he sourced, I think, from the Hunting & Fishing shop.

In the early days when we first moved into the Station, Murray arranged counters in the shop, bought second hand from places including hotels, also acquiring display cases and shelves. Overall, he gave us a base on which to build.

Typically, Murray carried all this out in a calm, down-to-earth manner, with no indications of pressure, despite the enormous amount of work involved. So many things he found from other items and brought them together to shape the resulting article. With Joan, he made settees from bed heads



One of Murray Ayson's paintings: Lake Duncan, Fiordland National Park – so typical of his skill in capturing the atmospheric appeal of his favourite landscape area.



Murray Ayson, painter of evocative NZ landscapes.



Murray was the OAS 'go-to guy' for many years, with practical problem-solving skills and a diligent work ethic.

stylishly covered in fabrics. People sat on them without a thought of where they might have come from. Murray soon became the go-to man for so many of the functional aspects to the Station, organising fire exits, storage, lighting, including spotlights, furniture and display systems. His ideas were always practical and eminently do-able. He did his research, chased down the materials required, and took responsibility for their implementation.

Then there was the painter – more than that, the artist. He painted quickly and decisively. The process was efficient, the product dramatic. He became an artist with a considerable reputation far further afield than the society, and indeed New Zealand, for his depictions of mountains, lakes and rivers, and the ethereal effects of cloud and sun.

When talking about Murray, it's hard to separate Murray and Joan. They worked so well as a team. She was thoroughly involved in establishing us in the Station, cleaning, helping to establish the shop, and, of course,

their Demo Day efforts when he and Joan spoiled the contributing artists – and the visitors – with pikelets and jam and cream, and of course his coffee. He was a master coffee maker.

Murray retired from the council at the end of 2018. During his time, he had become a vital, indispensable member of the OAS.

Above all he was a valuable and loyal friend. And now he is gone.

But his work hasn't. The last commission that he began just as he fell ill, was never finished, and I like to think it remains complete as a creative moment in time – and a witness to his determination to do what he could during the most difficult challenge he faced.

A reminder of a man we will all miss greatly.

David Corballis



Murray and his wife, Joan, the Demo Day pikelet-making team.

(Information has been sourced from PANZ Pastel Artists of New Zealand Facebook page.)

PANZ Pastel Association of New Zealand National Awards

These are the top picks from the judges:
Lynn Taylor, Michelle Chalklin-Sinclair and Steev Peyroux.

Stunning display of Pastel Artists of New Zealand (PANZ) annual exhibition was opened last night (20th March) at Otago Art Society. Congratulations to all 66 works accepted to be shown.

Lyn Henry: "The PANZ National Exhibition and Art Awards opened last night in the Otago Art Society's gallery, in the historic Railway Station, Dunedin. Despite a small crowd, it was a warm and happy occasion with some stunning pastel artworks on show. The Otago Art Society could not have been more welcoming and helpful – what a team! Huge thanks to our judges Lynn Taylor, Michelle Chalklin-Sinclair, and Steev Peyroux.

Julie Greig: "I was delighted to receive the award for the Master Circle last night at our opening in Dunedin, with my painting 'Opportunity'. These are gates from about 1890 on our property, in the late rays of autumn light. Through those gates is the vast Maniototo plain between the Rock and Pillar range and the Rough Ridge. The painting has sold and is off to rural Whanganui after the exhibition. Framed with a narrow Larson Juhl profile, gold fillet inside, True Vu UV70 anti-reflective glass. Painted on pastel primed 100% cotton Matt board, pastel wash underpainting, too many pastel varieties to note! All sorts, whatever worked. Hard to soft."

Michael Freeman: "A special THANK YOU Raimo Kuparinen for enabling all of our PANZ members to get to view the awards ceremony – it was special to hear all of the judges and to witness the joys of those recipients who were lucky enough to be able to attend – you have brightened a lot of PANZ members day."

(Raimo took a video recording of the awards announcements and posted it on Facebook.)

OAS volunteers Anneloes Douglas and Annie Pepers admire the skill evident as they check in Karen Rankin Neal's artwork. The work (pictured at far right) was awarded Highly Commended (OAS volunteers work in hosting the exhibition was highly commended also).



'Purely Pastel' WINNER
Michael Freeman
"Granny's Box"



'Purely Pastel'
Merit Award
Isla Ferrer
"Wake Me Up
For Meals"



'Purely Pastel' Merit Award
Lyn Henry
"This Is The Colour of Six
The Sea, The Sky"



'Purely Pastel' WINNER – MASTER'S CIRCLE
Julie Greig, "Opportunity"



'Purely Pastel' Merit Award
Gail Barth
"Summer Storm Over Farewell Spit"



'Purely Pastel' Merit Award
Glenys Forbes, "The Challenge"



'Purely Pastel' Highly Commended Award
Karen Rankin Neal, "Boss... Incoming"

PANZ Pastel Association Awards – Highly Commended



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Raimo Kuparinen
"Stream Through Bushland"



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Rosemarie Murphy, "Charlotte's Party"



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Nicola Reif, "Winter Symphony"



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Anne Berry
"Red Footed Booby"



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Bill Burke, "Pied Oystercatchers"



'Purely Pastel' Honourable Mention
Rose Rudd, "Tiki"



Lyn Henry and Maxine Thompson discussing works in the exhibition. Lyn is the current PANZ Southern Area rep as well as committee Vice President. Maxine, an acclaimed pastel artist, was a pre-selector for the exhibition.



Jenny Sutherland, an ex OAS council member, was in Dunedin for the Pastel Awards. She is pictured here with her entry. Jenny now resides in Lake Hawea township, where she runs the Central Art Space.



Owaka Exhibition
Raimo Kuparinen and Mari Gomes-Bradford load Jenny Longstaff's car with artworks by 12 OAS artists for an exhibition in Owaka, which was to be on show throughout April.



Mike McPhee, director of the Owaka Museum, with John and Pauline Bellamy, preparing the exhibition featuring a dozen OAS artists. Jenny Longstaff made a quick dash to Owaka to uplift the artworks the day before lockdown. The works are now safely at her place and will be reunited with their owners when it is possible. Dates for 2021 are unavailable, so a booking has been made for Jan-Feb of 2022.



Will scenes like this be a thing of the past? Our OAS shop and galleries crowded with international visitors will not be a possibility for quite some time.

Events Calendar

Dash for Cash

We are lucky to have such dedicated staff! Thanks to Ngaire, our efficient administrator, artists' payments for March sales were able to be paid out under lockdown. It was much appreciated by our artists that Ngaire was able to grab what was necessary to take from the office in order to action the payments from her home. At this stage, we do not know how long it will be before it is possible to earn income from art sales in our shop and galleries.



Above: A promising start was made on 12th March in a new initiative: a **members' critique session**. Pictured above are Hayley Rata-Heyes, Lorna Allan (facilitator), Irina Schrieber, and Mari Gomes-Bradford.



Looking smart in the new OAS t-shirts

President Doug Hart, Annie Pepers, Charlotte Morris, and Jenny Longstaff were quick off the mark for the new OAS t-shirts, seen here modelling them at last month's members' meeting. We have Ngaire to thank for taking the initiative to design and print up these snazzy looking t-shirts. They are printed in a choice of two different neckline styles and, like Henry Ford's options for the model-T car, you can have any colour you like as long as it's black. Ngaire will print them as they are ordered: \$30 each.

Impact on Exhibitions: What will be our 'new normal'?

The much-awaited **Hope and Sons Art Awards** was one of the Covid casualties. Our exhibition programme and ability to host gatherings will need a different approach in future. Once out of lockdown, we must pool our skills and knowledge to come up with ideas and a course of action to benefit the society in member fellowship and generating income. Creative thinking will be required.

Volunteering will be the mainstay of the society. How will you be able to help?



Anne Baldock and her daughter, Gemma, were supposed to exhibit their work during a time of busy tourist attendance, but unfortunately the lockdown situation meant that the works were on display for a very limited time before they were taken down again.



DOSE – An exhibition by Sophie Smith and Nicola Jones – was scheduled to be displayed from 22nd March to 12th April. Sophie is pictured above, with some of the visual art in her exhibition. As part of her 4th-year Batchelor of Pharmacy Programme, Sophie chose to create a body of artworks to investigate the role of a pharmacist with the goal of educating people about her profession.

Support Local

We artists may well dispute what is an 'essential service' when there is art to be done and we have run out of something – in my case it is Crystal Clear gloss lacquer spray, which I always get from Andrew and Rosemary at Art Zone in Hanover St.

Their art supply and picture framing business has been a loyal supporter of OAS, with naming rights to one of our gallery spaces and ongoing advertising in this newsletter for many years. Lockdown has had a major impact on businesses in the art sector. When we are free to go shopping again, spare a thought for how you can best support those who have supported us. Buy Local!



Editorial comment: Unless otherwise attributed, all items in the OAS monthly newsletters are compiled by the editor, Jenny Longstaff (past President 2013–16). The newsletter is approved by OAS Council before printing and distribution. **Contributions are welcome:** stories, photos, news, exhibitions, tuition etc. Please email Jenny to discuss: j.a.longstaff@gmail.com or phone her on 021 1326 053. **Deadline:** information must arrive a week before end of month to appear in following month's issue. *The OAS Newsletter is printed by Hope and Sons.*