



Annual Report

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

It's my pleasure to present, on behalf of the Committee, the Annual Report of Mangawhai Artists Incorporated for the year ended 31/3/23.

It's been a busy and successful year, but also one tinged with sadness.

In memoriam

We were deeply saddened in January to learn of the death of long-standing member Wendy Clifford. Wendy was well-known for her generosity of spirit and willingness to share her knowledge and passion for painting and print making. It was therefore no surprise when the Mangawhai Library Hall overflowed with friends and family to celebrate her life one fine day in summer.

We extend our sympathy and love to all members who have lost family and friends in the last year.

A year of consolidation and doing the basics well

2022/23 was a year of consolidation and doing the basics well.

Immediately following last year's AGM the committee met for a strategic planning session. There we set the priorities for the things we wanted to focus on:

- Exhibitions and events
- Understand what members and the wider community want
- Develop and provide learning opportunities
- Financial sustainability
- Purpose-built building – Community Art Centre

These priorities are underpinned by our vision: Nurturing and celebrating creativity through art. Understood within this is community well-being.

Membership

One of the highlights of the year has been a significant increase in membership, from a healthy base of 183 to 210. We are also attracting members from outside the immediate Mangawhai area, with a growing cohort of members from Whangarei, Warkworth, Kaiwaka and Langs/Waipu, as well as, from as far away as Thames. The Friends of Mangawhai Artists group grew slightly from 37 to 40.

Exhibitions and Events

Our primary focus for the year has been Exhibitions and Events – and doing them well

The Gallery hosted a wide range of 23 exhibitions in the financial year starting with the Easter exhibition in April 2022 and finishing with Earth Songs in March 2023. This compared to 22 in the previous year. Visitor attendance grew from 8,288 in 2022 to 9,780 with numbers recovering after the COVID disruptions of the previous two years.

In addition to individual, duo and group artists exhibitions we also hosted **The Small Print**, traveling exhibition from the **Print Council of Aotearoa New Zealand** and the **Kaipara Art Awards**.

Early in the year Howard coordinated, at very short notice, a very successful **Spontaneous 3D** exhibition which has resulted in a dedicated 3D exhibition becoming a permanent feature of the exhibition calendar.

Fundamental to the success of the exhibition season was ensuring our artists were well supported.

While individual artists are responsible for running their exhibitions MAI offers a range of support to exhibiting artists. This is much appreciated by the artists and we receive many expressions of appreciation, especially from artists exhibiting for the first time, at the level of support and mentoring provided.

This starts with **administration support** and follows through to **practical support** in the gallery with curation (if requested), lighting, back up help with the roster and media coverage. This work is led by the committee with support from other members outside the committee. It is a team effort.

Wendy Leach has led the administration support communicating with the exhibiting artists to ensure they are ready and well prepared for the exhibition.

We have an experienced team of curators who curate not only our member exhibitions but also offer their support to exhibitors and to the Kaipara Art Awards. **Nicola Everett, Elena Nikolaeva, Grainne Whittley-Pegg, Rebecca Barclay-Clist**. Similarly, we have a small but skilled group of member artists who assist with the hanging of member exhibitions and the Kaipara Art Awards.

The **lighting team** led by committee member Howard Esler includes Pauline Mann, Steve Marsh and Bidy Mintoft. Lighting is an essential component of a successful exhibition. Howard and his team apply both artistic and technical skills to the lighting challenge, as well as ensuring the expensive and sensitive lights are treated with due care.

While exhibiting members are responsible for manning their own exhibitions, a team of members help out with the roster when required. Thank you! This year **Kay Airey** took responsibility for organising the rosters of members exhibitions, the Small Print and for topping up when exhibiting artists needed to fill in gaps.

Communications and Media

Communication to members and the wider community is an important way of keeping MAI connected and engaged with the community. In the last year we have increased our presence in both the local print media and social media. The Mangawhai Focus and The Weekend Lifestyler regularly print our media releases and we also appear in the Junction, Mahurangi Matters and the Kaiwaka Bugle.

Social media, with its immediacy and reach, is a particularly important part of our communication strategy. **Wendy Leach** ensures MAI has a strong social media presence.

The website is also an essential communication tool kept up to date by **Clare Wells**, with back up from Wendy.

Our periodic mailchimp/e-newsletter which I write is also an important way of communicating with members.

Events

Art Trail

The **Art Trail** was held over the last weekend in February, led by **Howard Esler** for the second time. An innovation introduced for 2023 was the creation of a Kaiwaka Art Hub hosting 8 artists. There was a tremendous sense of energy and enthusiasm as a dedicated space was located and the artists worked hard to present an amazing art space. Unfortunately, however, the Art Trail coincided with the Mangawhai Weather event which resulted in the slip on the Mangawhai/Kaiwaka Road, and also followed reasonably soon after the Auckland floods, and slips in the Dome Valley and Brynderwyns. Visitor numbers were affected accordingly. Although alternative routes to and from Kaiwaka were possible the travel issues severely inhibited visitor numbers generally and, particularly, to Kaiwaka. However, the artists were enthusiastic and we hope to build on the experience for next year.

Locations	18	19
Artists	33	39

Art on display at KDC offices

Committee Member **Pip Murray Aynsley** was responsible for coordinating the mini exhibition hosted on a periodic basis at the Mangawhai service centre of the KDC. Pip has built up a strong relationship with the KDC office – and this is now an established hosting.

The **Kaipara Art Awards** was hosted by Mangawhai Artists, opening on Friday 28th October. It launched with a successful awards ceremony in the courtyard of Bennetts before the exhibition moved a fortnight later to Dargaville. Judges Jean Allen and Megan Corbett assessed 55 entries across three categories plus an emerging artist award and judges' award. Mangawhai Artists took out 9 of the 11 prizes awarded. [Geoff Ruthe, Peter Bradburn, Nina Gastreich, Rachel Moore, Kim Logue, Juliette Robb, Clovis Viscoe and Mark Graham]

Understanding what our artists and the community wants was a focus area for the year. Committee member Shann Whitaker organised a survey which was widely circulated through the community. This resulted in 127 responses and has formed the basis for the **MAI Creative Workshops Action Plan** to be picked up in the coming year.

Develop and Provide Learning Opportunities

Learning opportunities have revolved around classes organised by artists tutors plus MAI organised classes, under the **Give it A Go** label, and children's workshops.

In May and June learning opportunities kicked off with **Give it A Go** classes, organised by the previous year's committee, (Card making, Abstract Art, Beginners Drawing and Collagraphic Printmaking) and a second tranche of classes, led by the new committee, took place in October (Children's Workshop – Self Portraits, Acrylics, Oil Pastels and Sand Cement). The **Give it A Go** classes were funded by the **Creative Communities Scheme**.

A series of Christmas workshops for children were organised in December (Drawing, Sand cement, Printmaking). These were funded by fees paid by those attending.

A tutors evening was held in March to seek feedback on the use of the Workspace and how we could improve the Workspace and increase its usage. A number of useful suggestions were made.

Workspace

The Workspace is used as a teaching space by a relatively small group of artist tutors. While use of the Workspace increased slightly in the last year it has untapped potential. We are looking forward to seeing an increase in usage in the coming year.

One Moonlit Night

In February we were pleased to celebrate with Rosina Kamphuis and Wayne George the launch of their movie ***One Moonlit Night – Magical Mangawhai Goes Bush***, a film of behind the scenes of the community project at the gallery in 2018.

Financial Sustainability

The Committee has worked hard to ensure that MAI's income covers its operating expenses excluding depreciation. As a result, although it was foreshadowed at last year's meeting, we see no need to increase membership fees in the coming year.

Community Art Centre

Soon after last year's AGM we were approached by the Museum and the Daring Trust asking if we would be prepared to relinquish the space designated to MAI for a Community Art Centre in the Mangawhai Community Park to enable the Daring to be located there, rather than the site opposite. There was some urgency to the request as once the initial remediation work on the Daring has been completed it needs to be housed in a purpose-built temperature-controlled building.

After consulting with members through a survey and face to face meeting and weighing up the issues, noting that we were not in a position to start the CAC ourselves within a two-year timeframe, we agreed to relinquish the designated site, while reserving the right to consider alternate space offered in the Mangawhai Community Park for an arts facility.

We continue to be an active member in the Friends of Mangawhai Community Park and a space for an arts facility is located on the latest iteration of the Mangawhai Community Park Implementation Plan. A purpose-built building remains part of MAI's long term plan.

Administration and Committee work

The Committee met monthly through the year – with a break in January. The Committee is a team effort with everyone playing a part – and I want to acknowledge each and everyone of the committee – and to thank them on behalf of the members.

Clare Wells as secretary has ensured the committee runs smoothly and efficiently with agendas and minutes promptly circulated. As the de facto Deputy Chair I have relied on her for support and guidance.

Raewyn Vague as treasurer ensures that users of the gallery and workspace are invoiced efficiently, the expenses are scrutinised and artists payments are processed promptly. She produces comprehensive reports to the committee ensuring the finances are well understood.

Ann Connew* has been responsible for managing the Workspace – from taking the bookings to ensuring it is well maintained. She coordinates with those using the workspace and ensures they understand how it works.

Wendy Leach* has been responsible for both the administrative support provided to exhibitors and also the social media role. She ensures MAI has a high profile in the social media space.

Nicola Everett* has had multiple roles in both the Gallery and Learning opportunities areas. She has led the curation team as well as securing funding for Give it a Go classes and for untutored space to be available for artists to use.

Howard Esler has led the lighting team and the Art Trail coordination. He is also a Mr Fixit.

Pip Murray-Aynsley* has led the KDC art space project as well as supporting all committee and gallery activities.

Kay Airey has managed the roster for members exhibitions and topping up artists exhibitions.

Lena Nelson has been responsible for the coach tours that visit Mangawhai liaising with the Museum and exhibiting artists.

Shann Whitaker led the survey on identifying what our community is looking for in terms of learning opportunities – and pulling together the action plan for the coming year.

Together the committee has worked hard to ensure the organisation runs like a well-oiled machine – thank you all.

Four members are retiring at this AGM: Ann Connew, Wendy Leach, Nicola Everett and Pip Murray Aynsley. Thank you for your hard work and contribution over the last year – especially in your particular areas of responsibility and for setting them up so well for the future.

Reviewer

I also acknowledge and thank Sandra Hollis who has stepped in to provide an independent review of our financial statements, following the retirement of our previous reviewer. Independent review is an important process to give confidence that the accounts give true and fair view of the organisation's financial position.

Conclusion

And so another financial year comes to an end. With a strong membership, a vibrant Gallery programme and plans for increased learning opportunities and Workspace activity the outgoing committee hands over an organisation in good heart, keen for the challenges ahead.

Belinda Vernon

Chair, 2022-2023

On behalf of the Committee 2022/2023:

Belinda Vernon, Clare Wells, Raewyn Vague, Ann Connew, Philippa Murray-Aynsley, Howard Esler, Shann Whitaker, Wendy Leach, Nicola Everett, Kay Airey, Lena Nelson