



**Newstead
Arts Hub.**

2021 Annual Report

A community creative space

Year In Review

August 2021

Welcome to our Annual Report. During 2020–2021, Newstead Arts Hub, like all creative community spaces, was challenged by COVID. Our doors opened and closed repeatedly, our visitors signed in, masked up, sanitised and distanced. And yet we delivered a wonderful program of exhibitions, workshops and events.

Early in the pandemic, we ran an online Artist Market over ten weeks between May–July 2020, imagining that by August our monthly exhibitions would be back. That was not to be. After months of closure, we welcomed people back to the Arts Hub on 29 November 2020, showing off our new branding and website, along with a sneak preview of the John S Turner exhibition, music and refreshments.

But along with the challenges there have been some fantastic moments. During August – September 2020, the Hub Garden Group dug, planted and fenced our new garden beds, reshaping the whole look of the Hub building. Over the year we've held 8 exhibitions, 12 workshops and 4 events, with more to come before the end of 2021. Between lockdowns, bringing people together has been our priority. We kicked off Platform Pieces in early 2021 with two new initiatives: a movie night and an open mic, and then Embers took us through winter with stories and community art. As the weather warms, we'll be back on the platform and out in the garden with spring and summer events.

Our Art Auction in 2020 created a financial nest egg that has enabled us to engage a very part-time coordinator to help the Hub build our program through social media, promotion and grants. Our planned 2021 Art Auction has been repeatedly postponed – but it will happen as soon as restrictions lift.



**Newstead
Arts Hub.**

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Who We Are

The Newstead Arts Hub is a community-run arts space situated in the renovated former railway station in Newstead, Victoria. We host exhibitions, community events and workshops.

We have multiple gallery spaces, a workshop room, a garden, outdoor platform and event spaces. Our mission is to engage with the local community and visitors from the wider region.

Our vision is to shape and sustain the Hub as a creative space for our communities, artists and visitors. The Hub will be at the heart of Newstead's cultural creative precinct.

Our Arts Hub Communities

Friends & Volunteers

The Arts Hub has a fantastic group of volunteers who keep the Hub running: the Hub committee (a sub-committee of Newstead 2021 Inc) coordinates our program, supports exhibitions and workshops, assists with promotion and the website, and helps care for the building and grounds.

Our Garden Group grew many of the garden plants, created the garden beds, watering and weeding as needed. Other volunteers help on occasions with supporting the exhibitions and other tasks.

Our Friends are a special group of people: they support the Hub with an annual donation. By becoming a Friend, you can support the recovery, sustainability and development of our community arts space. Many of our Friends also volunteer in various roles to help the Hub keep running. In 2020-21, we asked our Friends for a donation of \$15 (or more), or free for Friends under 18.

Our Arts Hub Friends and volunteers are the heart of the Hub. We are grateful for the energy, ideas and action of you all

Our paid coordinator, Phoebe Snep, creates our social media posts, helps with programming, event organising and grant applications.

Our Audiences

Our eNews reaches around 430 people each month, and we are getting better at inviting visitors to sign-up, and rely on exhibitors to assist as we don't have a presence during exhibitions. We have nearly 1150 followers on Instagram, with our 'reach' varying up to 2000. It's increased around 20% over the last 6 months. On Facebook, we have around 645 followers. Our social media presence is expanding slowly.

Each exhibition attracts between 150-500 visitors from our local area – Newstead, Castlemaine and surrounds – as well as the wider region – Bendigo, Ballarat, Macedon Ranges and Maryborough, as well as from Melbourne. Multiple artist exhibitions tend to attract more visitors; COVID lockdowns and fears clearly impacted numbers.

With a program of ten monthly exhibitions, regular workshops and occasional events, the Arts Hub has at least 2500 visitors annually.

Looking Forward

Renewing our Strategic Plan and creating a business plan to support the development of the Hub is now a significant priority for the Hub Committee. Building a secure funding base is critical, as is sustaining and expanding our wonderful group of volunteers to enable the Hub to offer a creative space for our communities, artists and visitors. Into the future, we aspire for the Hub to be at the heart of Newstead's cultural creative precinct.

Exhibitions, Workshops and Events

November 2020

Workshop: *Plein Air Watercolour* with artist Mark Dober (21 Nov 2020).

Workshop: *Freeform Weaving* with weaver Cathy Tobin (22 Nov 2020).

Workshop: *Plant Embossing* with printmaker Dianne Longley (28 Nov 2020).

Relaunching the Hub: reopening of the Arts Hub following the long Victorian COVID lockdown.

December 2020

John S Turner: *Botanist & Artist exhibition* (5–27 Dec 2021), with a community picnic on the closing day.

Workshop: *Plant embossing* with printmaker Dianne Longley (12 Dec 2020).

January 2021

Lee Shelden: *Retrospective* and **Sally Roadknight:** *Lockdown Landscapes* and Baskets exhibition.

February 2021

Unfolding Breath exhibition, artists Judith Warnest, Pamela Isaacs .

Workshop: *Scraperboard*, with artist Linda Newton (25 Feb 2021).

Workshop: *Printing Plants and Textures as Cyanotypes*, with printmaker Dianne Longley (27 Feb 2021).

Workshop: *Pen to Paper: Getting Started*, with author Hannah Collins, a three-week creative writing workshop for women (10, 17 & 24 Feb. 2021).

March 2021

Cut N'Paste exhibition: artists Callan Skimin, Fiona Orr, Jan Davis, Jan Palethorpe, Leslie Thornton, Marte Newcombe, Melissa Scott, Miranda Watts, Penny Peckham, Prue Venables.

Workshop: *Creating gel plate prints* with printmaker Penny Peckham (14 March 2021).

Movie Night: *On the Platform*, part of Platform Pieces (12 March 2021).

Newstead Open Studios art trail @ the Hub, Prue McAdam, Richard Sullivan and Andy Kimpton (20–21 & 27–28 March 2021).

April 2021

Particles exhibition, with artists Vincent Casey, Kaori Fujimoto, Greg Hatton, Katie Marx, Jessie Stanley.

Workshop: *Pen to Paper: Getting Started*, with author Hannah Collins, a second three-week creative writing workshop for women (30 April, 7 & 14 May 2021).

Open Mic Night, part of Platform Pieces (16 April 2021).

May 2021

Art Most Fowl exhibition, printmakers Rhyll Plant & Bridget Farmer.

Exhibitions, Workshops and Events

June – July 2021

Embers: Light up winter @ the Hub. During June and July, we ran a series of community workshops and other activities designed to bring people together in the dark cold days of a Central Victorian winter, working around lockdowns.

- **Winter Solstice: Stories around the Fire**, community gathering and story-telling event, 19 June 2021.
- **Kids Spark Stories**: workshop and event with author Hannah Collins (26, 27 June & 11 July 2021).
- **Community Drawing Table**, with artist Tony Day (3–4 July 2021).
- **Wild Weaving** with artist Jodie Goldring (31 July – 1 August).
- **Out Loud: Words & stories** had to be postponed – twice!

August 2021

- **Sticks & Stone exhibition**, artists John Smith and Angie Izard.

Impact of COVID

COVID has hit everyone hard, artists and performers especially. And for those who enjoy the experience of others creativity, it's been bleak. The Arts Hub has pivoted, twisted and turned. How many times have our doors opened and closed! But, that said, we've delivered a remarkable range of activities and events for our community and visitors.

The Arts Hub is funded through our activities – exhibitions, workshops, events – combined with donations and grants that we are lucky enough to secure. Having to close for extended periods has meant that our income has been severely impacted. We know that this is true for many unfunded community facilities and enterprises.

Luckily, we have been successful many of our grant applications (see below), and these are helping us develop the garden, improve the building, add much needed equipment and offer some new types of events.

Financial Report

Income: \$43,310.58

Grant Income:	\$28,646.00
Exhibitions, workshops, events:	\$13,242.68
Donations & Friends:	\$1,421.90

Expenditure: \$22,556.44

Grant Expenditure:	\$6,080.41
Coordinator:	\$4,070.00
Running costs:	\$5,431.03
Exhibitions, workshops, events:	\$5,425.00
Website: <i>(inc annual hosting)</i>	\$1,550.00

Overall, our income from exhibitions and workshops is down, our running costs are stable and a significant amount of funds in the bank are yet to be expended grant funds.

Grants

- **MASC** – Event grant for ‘Platform Pieces’ **(\$1000).**
- **MASC** – Community Grant for improvements to the Workshop Room **(\$2947).**
- **MASC** – Three small quick response grants for our reopening and two of our Embers events **(\$1500).**
- **Creative Victoria Infrastructure Grant** for ‘Unlocking Our Spaces’ **(\$21,090).**
- **RTC grant** – New signage **(\$1000).**
- **Maldon & District Community Bank grant:** ‘Hub Connect’ for audio visual equipment **(\$4339.50).**

We have applied for and missed out on a Regional Arts Fund Quick Response grant, a Creative Victoria Building Audiences grant, and a Maldon & District Community Bank grant with Gretchen Hillhouse for ‘Ties that Bind’.

The Hub has just applied for two new grants: MASC Community Grant for business planning (\$3000), and a partnership grant with Castlemaine Clay and Carinya Childcare (TBC).

Our Committee

Our Committee is made up of local people who have a diversity of skills in the arts, business and community development, financial management, marketing and promotion, and sustainability. Our Committee members have a passion for the Hub and a commitment to seeing it thrive and grow.

Our 2021 Committee is:



Chris
Johnston



Geoff
Park



Hannah
Collins



Milton
Moss



Prue
McAdam

Acknowledgements

The Hub is grateful to all those who have contributed to our work during 2020–2021: to our artists, visitors, volunteers, donors; to Vincent Casey for the Hubs new branding; and to Mount Alexander Shire Council, Maldon & District District Bank, Newstead Rural Transaction Centre, and Creative Victoria for funding support through their grants’ programs.

Newstead Arts Hub.



Newstead Arts Hub



ARTIST MARKET

Enjoy some beautiful ceramics from Sarah Koschak's studio, unique prints from Richard Sullivan, joyful florals and teacups from Selina Wilson, and recollections from a Quambatook childhood in Libby Noblet's hand screen prints.

There's more to discover at www.newsteadartshub.org

PLEASE SHARE You'll be helping support our local artists.

