

'Thirty Years of Ferry Park Gallery' Exhibition August 2024

Timeline for Ferry Park Gallery Jan 1993 – Dec 1994

Compiled from newspaper articles and the 'LCACA Meeting Minutes 1991 – 1994'

The Vision

- The Lower Clarence Arts and Crafts Association was formed in 1966 and is now in its 58th year. By the 1980's it had grown from a small Art Group to a diverse collective of local artists and artisans, meeting regularly at the Maclean Showground and in their own homes. A 'home' for the Association became a priority.
- In 1986, a delegation from the LCACA was received by Maclean Shire Council, to discuss assistance to establish a multi purpose arts centre for the Lower Clarence. Members of the delegation were **Mrs. Denise Sandow**, President; **Mrs Paula Braund**, Vice President; **Mrs Irene Nowell**, Vice President and **Mrs. Jenette Bjelke Peterson**. The concept presented was a 'community facility for arts and crafts' and the suggestion of including a tourist centre and office for Lower Clarence promotion was raised. No site was suggested.

The council voted to support the formation of a working party, and nominated Cr Isobel Wingfield and the Shire Clerk, Mr Paul Stevens, to be members.

The Concept and Funding

- **1991-92 LCACA President's Report. Pat Jenkins (March 1992)** 'Development Officer Phyl Austin, and your executive, have worked hard in the continuing struggle to obtain grants for our proposed Art/ Craft building. With Mr. Causley's help, we won a \$50,000 grant from the State Government in 1991 – bringing our dream a little closer' At this stage, the LCACA was looking to build on offered Council land near the SES in Maclean.
- **Sept 1992 LCACA Minutes** An application to Harry Woods MHR (Federal Member) for Assistance under Community, Cultural, Recreation and Sporting Facilities Funding Program 92/93
- **November 1992 LCACA Minutes** Approval of the submitted Development Application for conversion of the River Street cottage. It was also resolved to form an 'Exhibitor Co-operative' to run and manage the proposed gallery/tourist centre.
- **December 1992 LCACA Minutes** A letter from MSC re a steering committee for the proposed Art Gallery/Tourist Centre. MSC asked for 2 members of the LCACA to be on the Steering Committee.
- **February 1993 LCACA Minutes** Notification from the Federal Government, of the success of the funding application for \$50,000.

- **1992-93 President's Report. Pat Jenkins (March 1993)** 'Our Application for a Federal Grant in 1991, was refused, so our year commenced with much wailing, moaning and letter writing to the powers that be. This campaign was very successful. Harry Woods, our Federal Member, assures me that he just couldn't go through all that again! So we now have our money!'
- **1992-93 President's Report. Pat Jenkins (March 1993)**
 Much publicity 'about our activities...our intention to provide Tourist Information 7 days a week at our Gallery.'
 'This publicity prompted our Shire President, John Harvey, to suggest a Tourist Centre on the Highway, when a grant became available in September. We agreed that we could man the centre in return for being included in the project. It was a great idea, our Shire President is to be congratulated for coming up with a project to benefit the whole Shire, and we still benefit from being on a beautiful site with excellent marketing opportunities.'
- **1992-93 President's Report Pat Jenkins (March 1993)**
 'The Complex has to be operational by 1st December, 1993, to comply with the conditions of the grant to council, so we are going to be very busy!
 Our total contribution to the project will be \$150,000, made up from
 \$50,000 State Government Grant,
 \$50,000 Commonwealth Government Grant and
 \$50,000 Fundraising by LCACA members over the last 7 years.'
 The Maclean Shire Council Grant will complete the funding.
- **Capital Works Program Grant. Daily Examiner**
 The grant for \$411,226 came from the Federal Government to Maclean Shire Council for the combined tourist information centre and arts and craft complex.
 'Mr Harry Woods said the tourist information centre, the site of which had not yet been decided, had met the criteria of the grant by providing immediate employment and future economic growth in the Lower Clarence'
- **March 1993**
 The chosen site for the complex was the existing Ferry Park, on the southern outskirts of Maclean. It already had installed an old river ferry and cane barge.

Construction of the Complex

- **April 1993 LCACA Minutes**

Building Report : 'The Development application is in and so far, everything is coming in under budget'

- **July 1993 LCACA Minutes**

Building Report in Minutes: 'Tenders for the building will be decided by MSC next meeting'

- **August 1993 LCACA Minutes**

'Our Art Gallery/ Tourist Centre has been started. R. Hickey was awarded the building tender by MSC. It is due to open before Christmas. Maggie is a temporary roster clerk and members are to contact her re preferred day of the week for duty.'

- **September 1993 LCACA Minutes**

'The building is now at floor level and looking good. There is to be a Management (nitty gritty) committee meeting at Fenella's on Sat 18th September'

- **October 1993 LCACA Minutes**

'Lease Agreements are being discussed with MSC and things are looking good. We will have a 21 year lease. Rent is \$30 per quarter, plus rates, maintenance etc'
Mangement meetings at Fenella's continue.

- **November 1993 LCACA Minutes**

'After much discussion and debate, Maggie Parkhill moved that our new gallery be called 'Riverside Gallery'.

Joy Lang and Pat Jenkins were authorized to use the corporate seal and sign the formal lease agreement on behalf of LCACA.

Pat Jenkins was approved to become delegate on the Centre Management Committee.

There was an onsite meeting to discuss uses of all areas.

- **December 1993 LCACA Minutes**

'Gallery name has been changed to 'Ferry Park Gallery', to keep in line with the restaurant etc. We have signed our lease with MSC. A security mirror and chain for picture hanging has been purchased.

The Gallery

- **December 1993 Daily Examiner**

'Many of the Association's members have put Christmas 'on hold', to help get the exhibition area open and operating as soon as possible after the building is officially handed over mid December'.

Mr Brian Sincock, the centre coordinator, said the centre would provide a snapshot of the area, with emphasis on a visitors' centre rather than a tourist centre. Mr Sincock wants Lower Clarence businesses, as well as the area's attractions, to be promoted through the Centre.

- **February 1994 LCACA Minutes**

Shelving and stands made by John Downey and Harry Prosser. Geoff Richards is painting the gallery furniture.

Official Opening of Lower Clarence Visitors Centre and declaration of Phyllis Austin Studio 5th February, 1994

- **March 1994 LCACA Minutes**

'More hanging space required and Pat suggested that butt walls be installed in the gallery.' Moved that tenders be called.

Pat Jenkins reported, that as from 21st March, the Visitors Centre would no longer be staffed by volunteers from LCACA, but would have their own staff. There was concern that this was done in great haste.'

- **LCACA Minutes President's Report Joy Lang 1993-94**

'We opened the Gallery and Visitors Centre for business on 22 December and we are pleased to say that this is a happy and friendly place to visit. We are indeed fortunate to have such a great show case for our work and a home of our own. The Official Opening of the Centre made us proud to belong to this great group. There was a great roll up of members, who came to help us celebrate and also, present our tribute to Phyllis Austin. Because so many people have worked so hard to make this venture possible, I will not select special people to thank. But each of you have my heartfelt thanks for your considerable efforts.'