

THE Artful DODGER

FEBRUARY:2010

1.n. roystering young pickpocket from Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. 2.n. printed handbill full of tidings from the W.M.I.&A.A. with a closing date for contributions of 25th of each month to Alan Cornell on 98444995 or alan@commercialventure.com.au

New Year. New foyer.

I've just come back from the Hall and it's busier than Bendigo Bank at five to twelve on a Saturday morning. And noisier than the nipper's mosh pit at last year's Panto. Bashing, banging, carting, clanging, smashing, sawing, digging, jack-hammering, plumbing and lot's of other energetic activity ending in -ing.

By Sunday's Follies Auditions we're hoping to have the Hall back. By rehearsals we should have access to the Supper room. By late February we should have a gorgeous new foyer, swish new toilets linked to our new water tank, a display space to showcase work from our different groups, a safe rear entrance via our new back deck, and an impressive new entrance for Follies audiences and other Hall users.

A wonderful return for a bit of minor inconvenience in the meantime.

It's Subs Time!

\$15! It's nothing, but it's a drag getting them in. Potters, painters and crafties have it sorted from the word go, but for the rest of us, subs tend to moulder in the 'to do' basket. Those of you who get a hard copy "Dodger" will get the red dot on your address label until you're paid up - which is not foolproof, because it may take a while before I learn that you've paid via your group co-ordinator. Anyway, the sooner you can attend to it the easier for all concerned. Thanks.

Stuff for The Dodger

I'm always hungry for things to help fill *The Dodger*. This month, Gail Macrae tells us about a book she loved, for which I thank her.

If you have any contribution during the year, on any vaguely related Arts topic, please send it to me.

We'd particularly like to see creative work from different group members.



Dates to Remember:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Sun 31 Jan - Follies Auditions | March 18-20, |
| Wed 3 Feb - Painters start | March 25-27 |
| Tues 9 Feb | April 8-10 - Follies |
| & Wed 10 Feb - Potters start | |

SUBSCRIPTIONS Cheques payable to **WMI&AA Inc.** Post to **Treasurer, WMI&AA, PO Box 150, Warrandyte 3113.**

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Warrandyte Mechanics Institute & Arts Association Inc 0009153X
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Group reports.

Painting



All the best to you all for this year and look forward to many great painting days out together. A great big welcome to Christine Wagner who has returned to the fold.

We will meet for our first day on Wednesday 3rd February down by the bridge opposite Folkart, around 10.30am. Subscriptions for 2010 will be due on that day.

Pauline Cross 9439 1775

Pottery



Happy New Year to everyone at WAA. I hope that 2010 is a very successful and rewarding year.

Continuing on after our great candle making experience I think it would be interesting to explore candle holders, their history and come up with some unusual designs. Please come

bursting with new ideas this term.

This year we had a Christmas lunch to remember. It all began with the RAIN which put a finish to any idea of drinks in the garden. Firstly Wai arrived somewhat shaken - she had experienced a minor crash at the Lewis Road turn in. We administered a strong cup of tea. Then Beryl arrived clutching the sponge cake with the news that she had slashed her tyre on the drive - it was flat and she needed to ring the RACV. Five minutes later Melissa burst into the kitchen which by this time was full of concerned potters. "I've just slashed my tyre, it's flat, I need to call the RACV!" We called the RACV again saying we had called 5 minutes before. "Oh yes," was the reply. "Our servicemen are only allowed to attend one call at a time." So out came the second van.

We finally settled down to a delicious lunch punctuated by attending to RACV servicemen. Shortly into the luncheon one of our members said she needed to collect her daughter from a music exam. She was very sorry but could all the cars behind her please move. The car owners trooped out mid meal. We that were left continued with our Christmas celebrations. The car movers seemed to be taking a long time. We talked amongst ourselves making up mad reasons why they hadn't returned - we decided they were probably sick of us and gone to the Pub.. All the more of Jan's creme caramel for us someone suggested.

Tai appeared, more shaken than ever. Could we please come and help. A car was bogged across the drive. We all trooped out amidst the rain; the car was not bogged it was stuck into a clay bank. We stood behind - Val gave a mighty roar of the engine. We pushed, out she popped, splattering the pushers with genuine Warrandyte clay. Off into the pushers she went. Wai climbed into her car. We, i.e. the clay encrusted pushers, formed a guard of honour waving and singing "Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye." I doubt Wai will ever wish to visit Landfall again.

The remaining mud covered revellers struggled back up the drive exhausted but elated. We had released a captive. We resumed our eating, drinking and gift exchanging somewhat over stimulated agreeing that Christmas Luncheon 2009 was going to be one to remember.

We were sad that Rene was unable to be with us as her son Roger was very ill. We are even sadder now for Rene that Roger died on Dec 29. We send her our love and deepest sympathy to the Fagan family.

We start back at Pottery on Tuesday Feb 9th and Wed Feb 10th. Please remember that fees are due on those days.

Marj Beecham 9844 3206

Rosemary Climas 9844 2154

Craft



Theatre



1. Follies 2010

By the time you read this, the Wardrobe (Whatever We've Got in the) Follies will be in full swing. Alan and David (well Alan mainly) has honed the scripts into shape, and we are raring to go. Stay tuned.

2. WTC Program 2010

Your hardworking WTC Committee has worked very hard to finalise our 2010 program. We have even got dates for each production! These can be found at our website

<http://warrandytehallarts.asn.au/>

We might even have a program launch night - stay tuned for more details soon.

3. Hall Renovations

The renovation of the foyer, toilets and the new rear deck area has begun, under John Chapman's leadership. January-February seemed the best time to get the work done. We hope to have access to a builder's toilet in the short term! Its very exciting!

4. WTC Office Bearers on tour!

Well you might be interested - if so, here are some photos from the recent NZ holiday that the WTC prez, sec and trez ...

<http://picasaweb.google.com.au/davidtyn/NewZealandTrip2010>

David Tynan 9844 5727





Christmas Party.



Book Review.

The Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif

by Najaf Mazari and Robert Hillman

I've just finished this book and thought – how can I tell lots of people how beautiful it is, and EVERYONE should read it. Hence this review.

Najaf was born in a small village in Northern Afghanistan and now runs a carpet shop in High St, Prahran. The book is the story of his physical and emotional journey from a happy boyhood tending sheep and occasionally attending school, via countless horrors, hardships and moments of joy, to Melbourne. The book is Najaf's story crafted by Robert Hillman – and what an extraordinarily sensitive job he has done – just the right touch of lightness and compassion.

There are many lessons for us citizens of The Lucky Country to learn, not that there is a hint of preaching. Najaf grew up in a country perpetually at war and he is a minority Hazara to boot. For his whole life the Communists, tribal warlords or mujahedeen of many persuasions have been dropping bombs and firing Kalashnikovs with much of the population killed or wounded as innocent bystanders. I think it's called collateral damage. We don't have much of it in Australia. His family were hard working and not rich, just quiet and diligent people who lived in peace according to their faith and customs. His eldest brother and head of the family was killed by a stray bullet (probably Communist) while collecting honey from the family beehives. His younger brother and other family members were killed when a stray bomb (probably mujahedeen) landed on their house. Najaf was seriously wounded in this "accident". It was not until the rise of the Taliban that this constant state of "normal" warfare became unbearable and Najaf, literally bloodied and beaten, was forced to flee before he vanished in the Taliban's ethnic cleansing of Hazara people. His awful journey, via Indonesia and a terrifying leaky boat ended in Woomera, another prison, and another giant mental and emotional hurdle to be endured.

Najaf is granted a TPV and opens a carpet shop, able at last to use his talents and experience as a rugmaker. Eventually he receives notification of the granting of Permanent Residency Status – the longed for document that will permit him to start applying for his wife and daughter to join him after 6 years. He has seen notices on shop doors saying "back in 5 mins" or "closed due to illness". He would like to put up a notice saying "closed due to the happiness of Najaf Mazari".

Najaf's tale is told with humour, is never self-pitying and avoids a political stance. He is a gentle and thoughtful soul. You'll shed many tears, most of them tears of joy.

by Gail

