

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## Pg 2

Adrian Rice, the new head of the WMIAA tells us why he has decided to take on the role of Chair.

## Pg 3

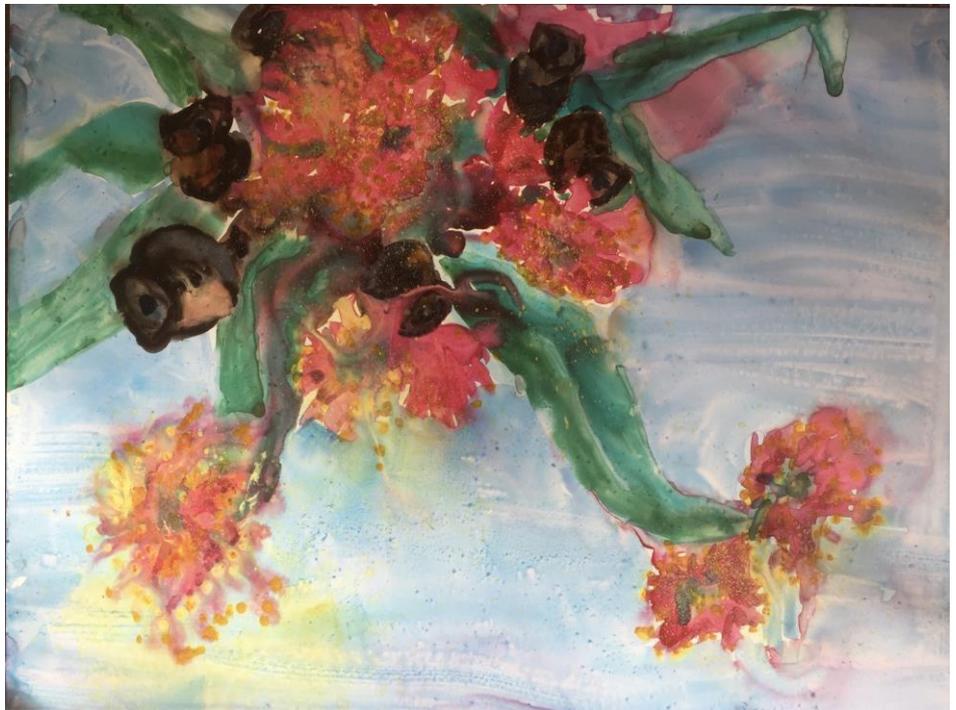
As Warrandyte emerges from lockdown Warrandyte Arts is having an Expo early next year.. find out how you can be involved.

## Pg 5

The Theatre Company are preparing to present three one act plays this weekend online.

## Pg 7

In the absence of being able to access the pottery studio the potters have turned their hand to other creative endeavours.



Painting from the Potters group by Val

## A note from the new editor

As this is the first edition of the Artful Dodger with me as the new editor, I thought I should introduce myself and say thanks for having me.

Though I don't live in Warrandyte, I certainly work and play in this beautiful space. I have been working at the *Warrandyte Diary* for almost four years now, as a sub-editor and journalist and over the past decade I have also been involved a little with the Theatre Company. My husband Ian (who you will hear from further in), and son Charlie (10) performed together in *All My Sons* in 2019.

If you have any thoughts or concerns about the *Dodger*, or articles or images you would like included in the December edition, please get in touch. We would love to have regular updates from all the groups at WMIAA.

You may feel that not much is happening during this time, but as you will see in the following pages, the artists of Warrandyte have not been idle.

The river and the township of Warrandyte have been a significant character in the story of my life and I'm looking forward to being involved in the community in this role.

You can write to me at [jofrench40@gmail.com](mailto:jofrench40@gmail.com).

I'd love to hear from you.

Jo French - Editor

“David Tynan  
steps down as  
president after 7  
years of service”



## The Annual General Meeting

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The AGM for WMIAA was held on Monday, August 3, at 8pm via Zoom. The screen was filled with members and apparently was the best attended AGM in many a year.

Of primary importance a new and much larger, committee was elected, and the outgoing committee were thanked for all their hard work.

In particular, David Tynan was thanked for seven years of service as President, and as Editor of *The Artful Dodger*.

With the new structure, Adrian Rice has stepped into David's shoes, and he has penned a few words, as have other members of the committee, and representatives from some of the groups.



## Chair - Adrian Rice

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I thought I'd start with an explanation.

I have felt for a few years, that I wouldn't take this role while also presiding over the theatre company but, with the re-structure which has evolved since our Focus Forum in November, I am very happy that I have decided to do so. The new structure will make a few things possible and, on the whole, more manageable.

Not only does the Arts Association have a large committee, we also have a new structure which enables the sharing of what can be a complex role. Thus, we now have a Chair and two Vice Chairs to supplement the existing roles of the Secretary and Treasurer. I am grateful that Pat and Simone are staying on in those roles, grounding us in established procedures and that Ian and Grant are stepping into the Vice Chair roles.

Association rules say that a "President" is required and if that is what you wish to use, that's fine. But I will only respond to "Chair"!! (I read that a Chair can sack a President but not the other way round\*) I have a strong preference for Chair and personally feel that President is an outdated term and, it is only a name.

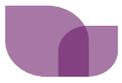
The profiles of Grant and Ian follow, and so I won't go into too much detail. I now see us in an excellent position organisationally to enable opportunities to develop. We've had a good start. An excellent first meeting, (on Zoom of course) and, ahead, our immediate thoughts will be to focus on the organising of an Arts Expo in February 2021.

Our Arts Expo will be funded with a grant from Manningham Council as part of their "Grass Roots Recovery" initiative. We plan to foreground what we do and stand for, to raise our profile, engage with the community and of course host a post-Covid event to share what is great about the Arts in Warrandyte.

On the subject of money, it's important to acknowledge two other grants this year, from Manningham and the Bendigo Bank, and money from our sponsors Ruby Tuesday and donors to the "Friends of the Hall". These contributions are helping us keep our nose above water!

Our vision in a nutshell is about growth, sustainability, and relevance to all corners of the Warrandyte community. We want our hall to be fully used and to be able to take a proactive role in development of the Arts.

I'll finish this section by also thanking David for his term of seven years as President. The itch just became too much for him - I'm ok with scratching it and, moving quickly on from that metaphor, Thanks D for your support in me taking this on and for assisting in developing the new structure. References (\*Wikipedia...)



## Grant Purdy, Vice Chair

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Ever since the age of 11, when I starred as the Second Guard in *Antigone* I've been hooked on the theatre. Moving my family to different countries twice and wasting time on pesky things like work have meant I've had to take some time off over the years, but I've always longed to get back to the 'boards'.

Somehow, I've always played, well, 'odd' characters: an ugly drunk, a belligerent policeman, a hyper genie and an obsequious butler – and so it's continued in Warrandyte where since I joined up, I've played a cannibalistic delicatessen owner and an ugly sister! I've also directed a couple of plays and produced some more.

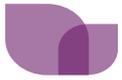
Apart from acting, I've spent much time directing, producing and, invariably, designing lighting – which all led to 'running' a sizeable theatre company for about 10 years. However, to be frank, after 40+ shows my creative juices began to dry up and I needed a break.

And so I now find myself somehow putting my hand up to be 'Vice Chair' of Warrandyte Arts, a role that somehow brings to mind an article of furniture one might find in a Dominatrix's dungeon! As I'm looking after the bricks and mortar of the place, I've set myself three broad goals:

Working with Fia, our Caretaker, to boost the use of our greatest asset, our wonderful hall, so that's invariable in use and rarely quiet. This will help ensure the hall generates sufficient revenue to cover costs and overheads, including those for maintenance and upkeep.

Working with a tech team (Callum, Adam and Drew), to develop and implement a plan for the enhancement of the technical systems in the hall, so that we provide the best possible experience for hirers and audiences.

Working with the Chair, to attract significant extra funding to improve the hall and its facilities – for the benefit of all users and, especially, the Warrandyte Community.



## Ian Craig – The Other Vice Chair

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My first foray in the creative arts in Warrandyte was participating in the Art Classes at the Warrandyte Art Gallery in the late 90's.

I was new to Warrandyte and was looking for a way to connect and be creative.

Having dabbled in the visual arts, I decided to have a go at performing arts and auditioned for *The Follies* and was introduced to the wonderful, creative world of theatre at the Mechanics Hall.

Since then I have taken on stage roles as well as technical and backstage roles, in productions of *The Follies*, plays, pantos and special celebrations.

Last year I had the pleasure of being involved in a play with my 10-year-old son.

Sharing my creative endeavour with my son and with the others in the cast crystallised how I feel about the shared experience of creativity. Together we can make great and profound things come to life, as well as developing strong ties to our community.

So, when I was approached to take on a role with the central committee I did so with the vision to promote the arts in Warrandyte and help nurture the existing and emerging groups.

I will be heavily involved in the upcoming Warrandyte Arts Expo next year and I see this as the re-emerging of the Warrandyte creative spirit. Stay tuned, stay connected and stay safe until we meet face to face.



## Warrandyte Arts Expo

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Earlier this year, a team from WMIAA put together an application for a Grass Roots Recovery Grant from Manningham City Council that supports our community in recovery from the COVID pandemic, and we were successful!

Since March, the hall has been 'silent' and so we thought an Arts Expo would help Warrandyte celebrate the lifting of lockdown restrictions and a return to something approaching normal life.

We therefore plan to host a weekend of artistic activities, promoting local artists, groups, and bands. This will include concerts, visual arts and pottery workshops, a community choir event, and the popular Repair Cafe workshop.

The emphasis will be on the promotion of Warrandyte Arts and 'getting involved' in the free activities. Detailed planning has just begun and, subject to Government restrictions, we are aiming to run the Expo in February 2021 on the weekend of 19 to 21.

So far, we have signed up The Scrimms, Ella Thompson and Vocal Agents to provide concerts on Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday afternoon.

The potential line-up for daytime Saturday includes:

- Get your hands dirty during several sessions of an Introduction to Pottery at the Studio;
- Try your hand drawing at a Beginners Life Drawing Class;
- Exercise your vocal chords at an Instant Community Choir performance;
- Unleash your inner actor by taking part in Everyone's Welcome Play Readings and a Theatre Sports Workshop;

- Brush up your videoing skills learning how to film the Expo.

During the day on Sunday, the events will include an art exhibition, the ever popular Repair Café and finishing off with another musical performance.

As we get closer to the end of the year, we will let everyone in Warrandyte know how they can get involved in what promises to be a weekend of fun and creativity.

If you have any ideas or would like to be involved please contact Ian Craig on [ian.Craig@outlook.com.au](mailto:ian.Craig@outlook.com.au) or 0418 317 872



Creation from the Potters group by Brenda



## Group Reports

### Membership Coordinator - Noelene Cooper

Why we do what we do. There is a legal requirement for details of the WMIAA membership to be recorded annually. The fees raised contribute to our annual funds.

During the past 5 years we have moved to a digital recording of membership details via TryBooking. The majority of members have made this move, for which we are very thankful.

It has led to a more reliable record and enabled very easy access to the information. Membership fees are due annually in February.

There was a wonderful response by many members following a request through the Dodger for fees to be paid ASAP to help us through this current financial situation caused by Covid restrictions, for which we thank you, wholeheartedly.

### Technical Team - Adam Goudge

Adam has been with the Theatre Company since 2017 having joined WTC for the production *Doubt*. Adam is a computer system engineer and has been interested in theater lighting since his time in high school. He is an important part of the WTC technical team and is eagerly anticipating our next stage production so he can light up your life.

### Repair Café - David Tynan

My role is to coordinate the Warrandyte Repair Cafe, which was a stunning success when it began in 2019.

The community embraced this initiative of the WMIAA, harking back to a traditional role of Mechanics' Institutes in community education. I am loving my new role on the committee, and the fact that so many new faces are stepping up to be involved!



## Life Drawing - Marion

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After a couple of false starts, we settled back to wait and be patient.

Although not seeing all the other members, I know most are quietly maintaining their creativity.

Working on your own can be testing normally, the Friday sessions provided a lovely escape and good as a discipline activity.

To give a reminder of our Friday 3-hour sessions, we generally set a single pose for 1 or more weeks by experienced models.

On return, short poses may be on the agenda to begin with. (This is all up for discussion as usual).

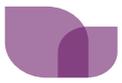
It is an untutored group that provides artists to follow their path (sic)

I have missed the encouragement, friendship, and routine. So, roll on by Covid so we can roll on back and bend our minds around creating and questioning the activity, that is art.

On return, don't worry procedures will be in place re Covid style.



Image by Lavi Perchik Unsplash



## Theatre News - Adrian

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WTC has been pretty busy. Most of us are involved in online play readings, with other companies as well as Warrantdyte. We held a successful online play *Providence of Neighbouring Bodies* in August and two more plays are due before the end of the year. We are hoping they will bring in some much-needed revenue. **On Friday 9 and Saturday 10 October** we will present three short plays that Adrian and Susan are currently rehearsing.

***Real World 101*** by Emma Wood - directed by Adrian

With: Tony Clayton, Lochie Laffin-Vines, Brie Snare and Renata Levin-Buckland

***Three Hours Between Planes*** by Michael Fiddian - directed by Susan

With Simone Keifer, Katie McAfee, Emma Wood and Francesca Carl

***Plus or Minus 40 Weeks*** by Suzi Wildes - directed by Susan

With: Bruce Hardie and Gabby Llwellyn

**Follow this link to book your tickets** <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing?eid=664346>

Welcome to Katie for whom this is her first outing in WTC colours and a welcome back to Bruce who was last seen in Warrantdyte in *Cosi* in 1996.

We are especially grateful to the three authors who have granted us permission to perform free of rights.

By the time you read this, Susan and Adrian will be in rehearsal for Emma Wood's play ***2020 Vision*** - a unique piece of theatre based on public responses to questions about experiences of the pandemic, posed by Emma online. This project will be an important vehicle to explore and record peoples' experiences and feelings of lockdown, with all the hopes and fears that have surfaced over the last six months.

In addition, Adrian is in rehearsal for **Love Letters** with two casts who will perform in different weeks. Reg Ellery and Rosey Cullinan and Jeannie Snider and George Benca are the four actors.

We had planned to perform these at the end of the year, but the feeling is that this will be too early to go live indoors.

Consequently, we are now looking at bringing this play to the stage in late January or early February when we hope audiences will be more comfortable with again venturing indoors for their entertainment.

In 2021. We aim to present 3 seasons in the first half of the year with our bigger ticket items - **Calendar Girls** and **The Follies** in September and November



Images from **Providence of Neighbouring Bodies**

Directed by Grant Purdy

The cast: (clockwise from left) - Jane (the beaver) - Francesca Carl; Dora - Gloria Rono; Ronnie - Erin Brass



## Potters

While the Marjorie Beecham Pottery Studio remains out of bounds, the Tuesday potters have kept up our messaging, gardening and creativity.

During the break before stage 4 restrictions we managed some small get togethers following the rules du jour.

While we are all making the most of our time in lockdown mark 2, we are keen to get back to potting as a whole group in the studio and seeing our favourite wattle outside the window.

Those of us who are non-Warrandyte residents, can only guess that our tree is in bloom and hope we can return in time to see the beautiful yellow blossoms in full glory.



Amanda hosted a lovely session of silk scarf painting in her home studio. Getting together and being able to chat while we worked certainly made us happy.

