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President's Report 11 November 2023

The 2023 committee comprised Leanne, Cath, Dana, Mark, Di, Donna and Sarah. This year Leanne continued in the President's role, Mark was our Treasurer, Cath filled our VP role, Donna coordinated the Creek Sessions event for 2022, Di continued to organize the successful program for our Keppel Coast Flix, Sarah supported the development of our WastEd station at the Fig Tree Creek markets events, and Dana remained in the KCA secretary role.

We continued to engage a paid bookkeeper, Robyn, who's assistance helps us to minimise the time commitment required of the Treasurer as well as providing an increased level of visibility to our various areas of funding which is necessary as we offer support to our subcommittees.

During 2023 our website has continued to be a key promotional resource, however it has become a little bit tired and will likely be due for an upgrade and a facelift in the near future. The KCA Facebook page has grown from 2,100 likes and 2,400 followers in Nov 2022 to 2,300 likes and 2,600 followers. This is a modest increase when compared to the Fig Tree Creek Markets Facebook page which has now grown from 3000 likes and 3200 followers in 2022 to 3700 likes and 4200 followers in Nov 2023. The increase in traction is a credit to one of the stallholders, Sue Norris, who agreed to take on the content management of the page early in 2023 and has done a wonderful job of engaging with the stallholders to help promote the event. This is a time-consuming task which was beyond the capacity of our Markets Coordinator to deliver on a voluntary basis. The KCA monthly e newsletter reaches 372 inboxes and has increased its average open rate from 50.2 % to 51.8% (according to mailchimp our peer average is 43%)

The monthly Fig Tree Creek Markets and Keppel Coast Flix remained the core activities organized by the KCA committee for 2023, with the continued delivery of 3 Artisan Markets events which were held in Beaman Park. While Stall holder feedback has been very positive for the artisan events, we have recently been made aware that another Artisan event will be operating at the Yeppoon Beachfront monthly on the evening before our preferred dates in 2024, so we are not planning to present the Beaman Park events in 2024.

Fig Tree Creek markets has continued to grow in popularity and has become one of the premier markets in our region. The Artisan tables have proved to be popular with smaller stallholders as they begin their business, with many upgrading to full sites once they finetune their products and learn the ropes. In 2023 we introduced two tiers of stall fee (earlybird and full price) to encourage earlier bookings and ease the workload for the coordinator. This has been moderately successful, with some stallholders still finding it easier to pay the higher price and leave it till the last minute to book. November 2023 was our biggest event to date with a total of 105 stalls. The December event has fully booked out already.

Our thanks to Di and her Flix team for organising the selection of films and the volunteers for each event. During 2023 there were some technical issues with the projector failing and several screenings had to be cancelled. However, repairs have been completed and the projector is functional again.

We thank LSC for support in providing the Town Hall, Merv Anderson Park and Beaman Park venues FOC for these events. We must also thank Paul Bambrick for organizing the music entertainment at the FTC markets.

Events & Subcommittees- KCA was successful in receiving RADF funding to present another successful Creek sessions event in September with Donna taking the lead as the event coordinator. There are plenty of great photos up on the website. The KCBMC monthly Jam Sessions continued, and The Sandy Krak Reef Festival committee have begun planning and preparations for their 2024 event. The Capricorn Coast Writers Festival 2023 event was successfully delivered.

I must draw your attention to this comment from the 2022 report “In 2022, KCA did not initiate any visual art-based activities or exhibitions, preferring to help promote the 2022 art workshops program at the Emu Park Gallery rather than compete with it.”

Well things changed a little bit there in 2023! In March 2023 KCA entered an agreement with Council and took on the license to operate the Fig Tree Gallery & Workshop space for one year. It had been acknowledged that the existing operational model and resourcing had not leveraged these excellent arts precinct venues and facilities. Our goal was increased and optimised access to and engagement with the Fig Tree Gallery and Workshop space for artists and our community. Within the 12 month license we agreed to develop and recommend to Council a long-term operational model for the Fig Tree Gallery and Workshop space. A new interim subcommittee was established to work on this task, and I'd like to extend thanks to artists Carmel Knowles & Emilie Metcalfe, community leaders Nigel Hutton & Margie Turner, Council reps Cr Rhodes Watson & Molly Saunders who gave their time and expertise to work with Dana and myself from KCA, to develop the proposal which was presented to Council in a deputation last month. I am so pleased to advise that Council has accepted our recommendation and agreed to fund the proposed model for 3 years. I must also extend thanks to our Fig Tree Gallery curator Helen Kavanagh for her enthusiasm, talents, and impressive retail skills. As the Gallery report will show, we have exciting times ahead.

The subcommittee reports will provide more details on the diverse activities of our members. My thanks go to all the 2023 committee, such an enthusiastic and committed team. Thank you for your energy, your passion, your inspiration and your hard work. Cath Stubenrauch will be stepping back to take a little time out and focus on other projects- her creative skills and energy will be missed by all of us and we wish her well for the future.

Sub Committee Reports will be tabled separately:

Yeppoon Ukulele Movement (YUM),
Keppel Coast Camera Club,
Keppel Coast Blues and Music Club,
Capricorn Coast Writers Festival,
The Capricorn Gospel Choir
Sandy Krak Festival
Fig Tree Gallery & Workshop space.

Leanne Smith
KCA President