

# From the President's Desk:

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Hello to all BDAS members,

This is the first newsletter in the term of the new committee and my election as president. I would like to say to all of our members that I and all the committee thank you for the opportunity to take a guiding hand in the future of BDAS – the Bowral & District Art Society. For over 65 years BDAS has supported and enriched the artistic life of our community here in the Southern Highlands. Many talented and hardworking people have guided it from year to year, until we have the wonderful institution that exists today. Taking the reins from those previous leaders is no mean feat, and I have thought very hard about where my own skills might be of benefit to BDAS.



Anyone who knows my painting prowess will say that I am no Picasso, but what I do love about BDAS is that it has given me, and so many others, the opportunity to come to classes and enjoy the development of my abilities, amongst a group of people who are enjoying the practice of their art and being instructed by a body of tutors of the highest calibre. This asset in our community must be preserved.

In the terms of the last few presidents we have seen the artistic integrity of BDAS enhanced and the physical development of our workshops and gallery develop. I feel it is now time to build on these achievements and not only take BDAS to the next generation, but more importantly ensure that it continues as a financially strong and enduring entity.

My focus during this new term will be on GROWTH - Growth in the membership numbers; growth in the activities we offer to our members; growth in our revenue and growth in our public awareness in the broader community. These are the things that will keep BDAS alive and vital in the years to come. Since our election your committee has been working hard to establish the agenda for this year. What is very apparent though is that there is a lot of work for a few hands. We are a volunteer organization and I do hope that when we put out a call for some help from time to time during the year, anyone who can assist will do so. It can be as little as making a cake or plate of sandwiches for an event; taking a load of something to the tip; weeding the sculpture garden, or as happened recently, painting the plinths for the Indoor Sculpture Exhibition. None of these jobs are arduous and they all involve a little fun and laughter with the other “helpers”. So anyone who can, please heed our call when it comes.

I have spent the last few weeks getting to understand the day to day running of BDAS and seeing where it can be streamlined in order to take some of the workload of our wonderful Fiona. I would like to take this opportunity to remind every member of BDAS just what a treasure we have in Fiona Fudge.

I was aware of it before I was president, but now I experience it on a daily basis. It is my aim that we modify some aspects of the administration so as to make her job a little less frantic. Fiona has that wonderful ability of dealing with every interruption and every personal request with charm and grace whilst trying to get the paperwork done as well. We have already installed WiFi in the gallery, had the computer serviced and installed a VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephone system. These small changes will assist Fiona and other people working in the office, and reduce our month outgoings.

Now, Dear Member, what can you do in this coming era of BDAS? I think the future is all in your hands. BDAS can only be a vital organization if you, our members join in and support the activities and endeavours of the organization. Our charter - the one you accepted when becoming a member – is to promote the practice and appreciation of art in the Highlands. So take a look at our website and our calendar of events, and make a date to come to the openings and bring some friends along with you. Encourage a friend to join as a member. Whether you enjoy making art yourself, or you enjoy the art that other people make, get active in your society and be a vital member of BDAS.

*Maureen Varnawsky,*

President