

A memorable celebration

By Angela Norval

Showcasing the importance of the scouting movement in regional areas, the Gin Gin Scout Group is set to celebrate a milestone event on Saturday 4 November.

The Gin Gin Youth Activity Centre in Walker Street Gin Gin will be the location where the community comes together to mark 100 years since Gin Gin Scout Group was established.

Gin Gin Scout Group group leader Tammy 'Croc' Bradfield said their records show the group commenced on 22 October 1923 with the scoutmaster being Rev. F Reynal Barrat.

"We have found newspaper articles that shared how they planned to use a splendid swimming hole about two miles from Gin Gin, and were preparing a permanent camp within half a mile of the town on a hill covered with thick scrub," she said.

"As well as other facilities, benches and camp fires were also being prepared so that the scouts of the Fox and Kangaroo patrols would be well provided for and should have great opportunities for outdoor training.

"It is wonderful to see that the Gin Gin Scouts Group have received great support from the community the whole time it has been around and we are proud to have generations of families that have stayed with us including the Reinke and Manderson families.

"It seems only three times in the past Gin



Gin Gin Scout Group have continued to provide a variety of fun and educational opportunities such as Cuboree 23 at Maryborough. Picture: FACEBOOK

Gin Scouts has closed down for a short period of time with much support from the community when it was able to reopen.

"Once was during and after World War II and although the dates are not confirmed, it looks like maybe between 1941 and 1947 according to Qld Scouting magazines.

"The group again closed for a while until November 1955, then again between 1977 and 1981."

Unfortunately, since Covid, numbers have dwindled in both Youth and Adult Membership, meaning Gin Gin Scout Group have struggled for the last few years to keep open

and provide the Scouting opportunity for their interested Youth.

"We have done our best to keep going and provide the adventure, learning and experiences possible through Scouts, but unfortunately are again closing our doors at the end of this year, hopefully only for a short period of time.

"Our current members have the opportunity to join one of the other Scout Groups in the Bundaberg area so they can continue their Scouting journey without interruption."

Scouting continues to be an activity that allows people to remain a part of it for many

years, running from age five to 26 in the Youth program, and until you retire as an adult, you can come along, enjoy the adventure, comradeship, feeling of belonging.

"We combine learning leadership, self-sufficiency, independence, problem solving, trying new things, and earning tertiary qualifications.

"Youth led is promoted, so we ask the youth for their ideas and what they want to do, learn achieve, and combine it with our Scout fundamentals to provide what we hope is a fun, adventurous, educational program for these young people, while still earning badges, achieve set milestones and the highest award in each section - Joeys, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers and Rovers."

The 100-year celebration will run from mid-day to 4pm and include history displays, an art piece made by one of the Gin Gin Women's Woodworking Guild members with food and drink for sale.

There will also be an opening flag breaking activity by Gin Gin Scout members, welcome to country by our Elder Aunty Marina, and hopefully reunions and stories told by past members and their families and friends.

For those interested in scouting, visit the website scoutsqld.com.au as there are also groups in the Bundaberg region including Childers, Moore Park Beach, Kepnock and Millbank.

Colleen showcases talent as award finalist

By Angela Norval

Although recognised earlier this year as part of the Australian Watercolour Muster Australian Watercolour Delegation as a 2023 exhibition artist at Fabrianoin Acquarello 2023 Fabriano in Watercolour in Italy, Colleen Hellmore always strives to improve her artwork and always look for new learning opportunities.

Colleen's work water on paper Plastik, has now been recognised as a finalist in the Flying Arts Alliance signature event, the Queensland Regional Arts Awards.

The Flying Arts Alliance, founded as an 'art school' in the air, has maintained an unparalleled legacy of championing regional arts and uplifting the health and vitality of rural and regional communities throughout Queensland for over 50 years.

In 1971, dedicated artist and educator, Mervyn Moriarty OAM used his prize money from an art award in an audacious initiative to learn to fly so he could teach art in the Outback. Since then, FAA has transformed into a highly regarded arts organisation, diminishing cultural isolation, and providing arts development and training to communities across our vast state.

The Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAAs) has been increased by a record breaking \$100,000 to \$140,000 making it the largest regional arts awards in Australia, even richer than the Archibald.

The awards feature nine judged art categories and the ever-popular People's Choice Award.

This year's selected theme, "Perspective," sought compelling entries that evoked diverse individual and collective viewpoints, memories, and experiences integral to contemporary society.

Colleen said she had entered the QRAA numerous times and had a painting selected for the touring exhibition back in 2017, so was excited to be chosen as a finalist this year.

"Plastix, the painting that was selected is a full-page contemporary watercolour inspired by photographs I took on a recent visit to Fabrianoin Acquarello in Italy that was jointly funded by QAF (Flying Arts) and RADE," she said.

"Walking through the towns I was greatly taken by how amazing the shop window displays were and the contrast between the colours and brightness of the displays and the ancient stone and patina of the old buildings they were housed in.

"I was very happy with the way Plastik looked when I completed it and thought I could fit it nicely with the QRAA theme Perspective, but I was extremely impressed when I found out that I was selected as one of four



Colleen Hellmore is celebrating being a Queensland Regional Art Awards finalist. Picture: LEXA HARDWICK.

finalists for the Remote Artist Award as it is a very large field with a very diverse range of genres."

Colleen said she believed her work appeals to people because it was representational but with a contemporary feel, telling a story or capturing a moment in time that they can relate to.

"It takes a long time and a lot of work and perseverance to get good at something but when that thing is a passion that keeps inspiring and challenging you to accomplish the next goal, it's not hard at all.

"At the recent art exhibitions held around Bundaberg it is so apparent that we have lots of very accomplished artists doing a great variety of different art and when it is good art no

matter what style it is very inspiring."

For Flying Arts Alliance chair, the Hon Anthe Philippides, the award champions the amazingly talented established and emerging Queensland artists living outside the Brisbane City Council area and their importance to the art community.

First-round judge artist, curator, and director of the Rockhampton Museum of Art, Jonathan McBurnie, marvelled at the 350 plus entries received, reflecting that they were pieces that best represent the diversity in artistic talent we have in regional Queensland.

With the finalists selected and judging well underway, Flying Arts Alliance is excited to reveal the winners at the QRAA Gala on Friday 24 November, at the Judith Wright Arts Centre.

RFDS ride

By Angela Norval

Members of the Childers State School mountain biking program have shown that while their group may be small, they are definitely mighty when it comes to covering kilometres for the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

The group have completed their month of riding for the RFDS Oceans to Outback fundraiser which saw 35 of their students and some of their family members pedal more than 1000 kilometres to raise awareness of the important work of the RFDS.

Now in their second year, it was a particularly proud moment for teacher Kerri Willis who saw the students and community come together to raise money to ensure rural communities get access to the finest healthcare.

Year three student Henry Thomas said it was really important to help the Royal Flying Doctor Service because they had helped so many people.

"I hope lots of people support us to raise money for them because their work saves lives," Henry said.

The annual Oceans to Outback fitness challenge in support of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) campaign this year has exceeded all targets - proof that the love and support of the iconic Flying Doctor remains strong around Australia. There were 16,389 participants signed, that's double that of last year and 1,026,430km has been covered by this year's participants by foot, bike, wheelchairs and more and donations gathered to fund life-saving healthcare delivered to rural and remote communities across Australia. There is still time to donate to Oceans to Outback on behalf of Childers State School, to make a contribution to their cause, visit oceanstooutback.org.au/fundraisers/ChildersStateSchool



The Childers State School mountain biking program members celebrate pedalling more than 1000 kilometres to raise awareness of the important work of the RFDS.