

just
add
water

*What difference
did the program make to the
community as a whole?*



Part Two
**Perspectives on the community
impact of Just Add Water**

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Perspectives on the Community Impact of Just Add Water

Introduction

PART TWO focuses on the community level impacts of the overall program, addressing the question:

'What difference did the program make to the community as a whole?'

The Regional Centre of Culture model aims to foster an environment within which the separate activities in the program build on each other over the year to create an unfolding experience, allowing people to engage at the level that suits them. While some might simply choose to dip into selected events or activities, for others participation in one project leads on to another and then possibly to becoming part of creating a whole new initiative. Effects at the community level are a result of accumulated engagement across the spectrum by diverse individuals and groups, which are usually felt over time. Therefore assessing the impact of the whole program on the community involves more than simply the aggregation of individual responses (see Attachment B).

Addressing this question requires an 'ecological' approach which involves an understanding of context and brings together data to:

- Show **how** the program as a whole worked to achieve its main goals areas (arts and cultural development; community building; health and wellbeing)
- Represent a range of **perspectives** about effects at the program level
- Highlight the **ways** in which art and cultural experiences produce these effects.

PART TWO of this report is based on qualitative data collected during and immediately following the 2012 program and does not include discussion of subsequent developments which will be the focus of the evaluation of J.A.W. (Cultural Places) in 2015.

The sources are:

- *Community Reference Group, Council members and Community Leaders (arts)* (Focus group x 5 participants; Interviews (pairs or individual) x 10 participants)

- *Council staff* (Focus group x 9 participants)
- *Artists/arts workers/craft workers* (Interviews x 5 participants; Specialised surveys (from Wooden Boats Exchange) x 5 respondents; Various incidental (including spontaneous or unstructured comments); Local print ; Social media (email, Facebook, Council website)
- *Comments Book* (adult and child participants in *The Sponge children's program*)
- *Documentation* (Surveys from 'case study' projects examined in more detail; Conversation Cafés notes from table discussions; Reference Groups (x 2) Planning meetings.

PART TWO is organised thematically under headings which relate to the **Key Strategies** outlined on page # in Part 1 of this Report:

- 2.1 'Welcome to Art Town' – engaging community
- 2.2 'The right to learn and play' – art across the life course
- 2.3 'Coming of age artistically' – stretching the boundaries
- 2.4 'Accommodating Art' – inside and outside the square
- 2.5 Legacies – tangible and intangible effects that last
- 2.6 Creative collaboration – behind the scenes.

2.1 'Welcome to Art Town' – engaging community

Key points:

- Introducing landmark events early on helped to raise the profile of arts and culture and set the tone of J.A.W.
- Skilled arts workers stimulated local interest and involvement in community art and work in the public domain attracted attention from the wider community
- By engaging people on their own terms – starting from 'where they are and what they can do' – trust was built and the response was enthusiastic.

Welcome to Art Town: engaging community

☀ *When you live in a regional centre, I think it sometimes feels like all the big exciting cultural experiences only happen in the city and making the journey to go and enjoy them can be difficult. Just Add Water is bringing the big exciting cultural experiences to us - for a whole year! How marvellous! But it's not just entertaining us, it is bringing local people together to celebrate our own creativity and that's even more marvellous. ('Fresh & Salty' Issue #6, participant in The Democratic Set)*

☀ *I [feel like] I've been on a wonderful fun bus the whole year!' (participant/volunteer)*

☀ *It's changed my life because of the warmth and camaraderie – my partner isn't artsy, but he's been drawn into it too.' (volunteer/focus group)*

☀ *We've been here 4 years and it wasn't until this year that we've really felt it was home.' (participant)*

Bringing art to where the people are

As the first major event of the official program, 'Watersong' was conceived as an introduction to the year and an invitation to the community to become involved. It featured the State Opera of South Australia and the Adelaide Art Orchestra in partnership with the Goolwa Regatta and the Goolwa community.

The outdoor performance on the Goolwa Wharf commenced with a twilight lantern procession and welcome to Ngarrindjeri country by a local elder. The audience members seated on rugs and chairs on the lawns overlooking the stage and river backdrop were then treated to a music, light and water spectacle which drew a great deal of positive attention judging by letters to the local media:

☀ *...a wonderful evening on the river front by the State Opera of SA and the Adelaide Art Orchestra... all for free. There must have been thousands of people there on picnic rugs and folding chairs...the crowds started at the railway line in front of the station and 'spilled' up the hill to the top road.*

Watersong Welcome to Country, Major Sumner, photo Alice Bell

It was a night to remember! Even the birds enjoyed the music and seemed to hover with the rhythms... there was something to cater for all age groups and tastes, even to the small children freely dancing on the railway lines. The highlight for us was the 'magic' lantern parade with the children followed by the spectacular Murray Cod display with the Ngarrindjeri man standing proudly in the water.

☀ *...it was a wonderful community event and the wharf area looked so colourful with flags with many musical and water motifs.*

☀ *Watersong was different in that it had community involvement. Local children making the superb lanterns, the wonderful drumming, the Opera, but let's not forget the beautiful songs of the Ngarrindjeri singers. (Victor Harbor Times: 2 Feb 12)*

In bringing together professional musicians and singers from major arts organisations, local arts initiatives and stories and songs from the Ngarrindjeri community, 'Watersong' delivered a strong statement about the inclusive approach to be taken during the year to follow.

The response to the 'imported' program of high quality exhibitions, performances and events was consistently strong, with many shows sold out and unprecedented interest in the visual art exhibitions.

Over the year many people experienced these for the 'first time' while others expressed their excitement at having access to them within their own region. The importance of this kind of access was discussed in the focus groups.

☺ Sometimes you're not going to pay to go and see something because you think, 'Am I going to like it or aren't I?' So when you can get that chance to go to something free first and then find out about it, you realise: 'I've been missing out on this'. And if there's something else coming up that's similar, you go: 'Oh yes, there's a fee involved, but now I know.' (focus group)

☺ To have it so close to where they're living, they can just walk around the corner and it's there. They don't have to go to Adelaide or anywhere else to see it. It's pretty much on your doorstep, and such a wide range of activities and community events, it's just incredible. (focus group)

As word spread about the quality of programs on offer, groups and individuals were encouraged by friends and family to join in:

☺ ... when they brought the Barrio here. It was the first event in the hall, actually, and they [my friend] said, 'I've never been to a cabaret before.' I went, 'What?' And we laughed. That was a great night. (focus group)

☺ ...even if it was through a friend or a friend of a friend who said, 'Look, we're doing this on Saturday night, tickets are only \$15, how would you like to come with us?' They possibly had never been to anything like that, but because it's in the town and they don't have to travel, and it's only \$15. (focus group)



Artburst footpath carpet, photo Matthew Dowling

...people like my husband who hasn't got an artistic bone in his body, and doesn't go to those sorts of events. I took him along to the drumming, and he was not at all pleased about having to go. He thought it was just going to be 'banging on a drum' – which of course it was, but it was extraordinary banging on a drum – and he loved it. He said afterwards, 'Gosh, I never realised that drumming could be so amazing or energetic or profound.' I had shivers going down my back when that started, absolutely. It nearly drove me out of my seat. (focus group)

Letting the 'art genie' out of the bottle

Feeding off the interest generated by such public events as 'Watersong', community arts initiatives were integrated in the J.A.W. program. The seeds of creative ideas were sown by an artist-in-residence working with local groups and individuals including the mental health focused 'Create and Connect' and the 'Centre for Positive Ageing'.

The concept of 'Artburst' evolved and this became the nucleus of direct community involvement in J.A.W.:

☺ ...[Artburst] aimed to unveil surprising ideas, and draw groups and individuals out of the woodwork as well as encourage existing groups that already have an established arts practice and output, to get their work out into the public sphere. Artburst...[seeks] to develop a broader understanding of the value of community arts practice, both within the community as well as local council and to encourage more trust and acceptance. (project artist)

It has been a lot of fun and some seriously talented people have gained the confidence to come out of the woodwork! The arts genie is well and truly out of the bottle on the South Coast and I for one think it's fabulous. (artist)



From the initial motivation to transform the wharf into a venue for 'Watersong' with colourful public statements in the form of banners, lanterns and flags, participants expanded to painting 'stobie poles'¹ to mark out Goolwa as an 'art town'.

☺ What started as a "welcome to art town" with the Just Add Water cultural experience has become a "stobie art fest" - the streets are alive with painted stobie poles. ... The group behind the project is the Southern Fleurieu Health Service's (SFHS) Create and Connect program developed by SFHS co-ordinator Sharyn Brady ... "It is very much about breaking down the barriers in society," Sharyn said. "We are not art therapy, but we use art as a means of bringing people together and strengthening their skills and confidence while having fun.... "It has been a great collaboration with the community. We call ourselves Create and Connect, and we are connecting with people out there in the community. They will come and talk to us while we are painting: offer a cup of coffee and have a chat. And now we have people knocking on our door wanting the stobie pole out the front of their house painted ..." (Coast Lines 1:21: Jun-Jul2012)

Stobie pole painting in Goolwa has been so successful that it has now grown into a cottage industry with its own management structure. Local people are able to pay a fee and request that a particular pole be painted, typically adjacent to their home or business, and to specify the design. There is a process established for contacting ETSA and appropriate permissions are obtained. It was reported that the team of painters from Create and Connect are having trouble keeping up with demand.

Meanwhile groups like the 'Goolwa Purlers' became involved in 'yarnbombing' – dressing the trees and rotunda in the main street with knitted and crocheted creations. J.A.W. provided the impetus for such groups to establish themselves and form networks with neighbouring communities:

☺ [it] is a group of individual people who used to knit at home on their own, then came together as a group, raised the profile of knitting and crocheting in the community and further afield...

... [it] has gone from strength to strength, and they're continuing on again this year, getting wilder and wilder by the day..... and now are a really strong active group and looking for their next project. (focus group)

☺ There was an international textile conference in Strath, and they brought a bus over... they put this bus on especially to come and see the Rotunda and the yarn bombing. (focus group)

¹ 'Stobie poles' are a uniquely South Australian phenomenon, named after Mr Stobie who designed these steel and concrete telegraph poles as an alternative to timber. Painting designs on their flat-sided, tapering surface to reflect the local environment and community and to beautify the neighbourhood has been popular around the State.

Top right: Making papier mache dogs at Create & connect for Artburst

Engaging on their own terms

Many community members, including the singers who became involved in the 'Just Add Voices' choral workshops and performance, found new opportunities to participate in familiar art forms:

☼ *I grabbed a programme early in the piece and noticed this concert. I love singing. I love music and I wanted to be involved, just for the joy of singing and the discipline of learning something new. It's good for the brain. (Singer, Victor Harbor Times: 8 Nov 12)*

☼ *It is such a positive environment to sing in. Although individually people's voices may not be strong, together we sound great. In this atmosphere people feel safe to sing their hearts out. It's a lovely way to get to know people and it fosters co-operation and pride in our achievement. What the group can produce is greater than the sum of the individual. (Singer, Victor Harbor Times JAW liftoff: Jun 12)*

The 'Just Add Voices' experience enabled the local singing group to gather members and momentum:

☼ *The singing group are now a robust group that have actually realised there's strength in numbers, there's common interest across the area. So they've got the bit in their teeth and are running with it. They're not going to stop; they're not going to back off. (focus group)*

For those who were not already committed to a particular art form, J.A.W. offered many different options to explore at their own pace. The longer-term program has the advantage of allowing a range of entry points; because it develops organically rather than as a series of stop-start projects, people were able to engage in a more relaxed way:

☼ *And our papier-mâché dogs were a huge hit as well. We invited people from the community to come and join us for those workshops.... Then seeing their dogs out there while Kumuwuki was on, that really was great for their self-esteem to think that people from all over the place were admiring their dogs. (Coordinator, Create and Connect)*

Absolute pleasure in learning. I could do something wonderful and a new belief in myself that I can do these sorts of things. ('Papier Mache Dogs' workshop)

☼ *The kids have fun. They gain confidence in trying new things. It seemed to me that every one of them was smiling, and chatting and opening up. They went home with something to be proud of, something they had made themselves. (artist reflecting on The Sponge family workshops)*

By tapping into the strengths and interests of particular communities, the evolving program was able to draw in diverse groups:

☼ *The 'Farmgate Festival' is another good example of how you engage with a particular community, which is the farming community.... There is a group formed now to work on the festival for 2014... that's about using art to promote our farming community and what they have to offer, because they quite often get forgotten. (focus group)*

The popular one-day workshop in traditional grass weaving conducted by Ngarrindjeri women elders and their family members and hosted by the Milang Old School House (MOSH) Community



Centre was attended by twenty-eight participants. They reported that alongside learning weaving techniques, the opportunity to watch, listen and learn in a social setting was an integral part: 'making and meeting and sharing lunch'.

Comments included:

- *The meditative quality was valuable*
- *Learning about natural alternatives to plastic*
- *Having a skill to share with the grandchildren*
- *Being impressed by the patience of the women and their clear communication.*

Focus group participants observed that the cumulative effects of trying out new experiences in this way in a relaxed environment had been far-reaching:

Putting it really bluntly, they [the community] are less scared of art. It's not a thing that happens 'over there with those weirdos'; it's something that 'I'm involved with and it feels like this – it relates to the fact that I love knitting and that is now related to an art project that happens in the town'. (focus group)

☼ *People just took that [Artburst] on board in a huge way. That's where there was a huge shift, I think. (focus group)*

Part of engaging on one's own terms, however, means that not everyone is ready to embrace the new experiences, as differing feedback about 'yarnbombing' shows:

☼ *'Yarnbombing' promotes the idea that creativity is not limited to the high-brow arts nor to inside a gallery. It has the element of fun and surprise as indicated by the number of passers-by who slowed down and pointed while this sign was being bombed! (participant)*

☼ *We had our older people involved in Artburst with Barbary ['yarnbombing' artist], because we have a knitting group. So Barbary came along and said, 'What would you like to do?' They sat there and said, 'We knit jumpers for children in Africa. That's what we do.'... So she came back later to talk about it again, and no matter what we did, and no matter what we said... so she ended up with the idea: 'let's make pompoms'... She was great. She said, 'That's cool, whatever you would like!' (focus group)*

2.2 'The right to learn and play' – art across the life course

- The program catered to a wide range of ages and interest groups both in terms of participants and subject matter by partnering with arts and community organisations
- Art work presented diverse, inclusive and respectful views of the community
- Creative expression of the stories shared by local people about their lives helped to 'democratise' art and culture.

Our grandson, who is 7, has never seen an orchestra before. It was a wonderful experience. My guess is most of those children in the primary school were the same. (focus group)

Some of the cabaret shows that they came to, they would just come back next week [saying], 'I never actually knew that existed down here in Goolwa and stuff', and then they would tell their friends and family, and I would get really good feedback from that. So yes, I would get heaps of youth involved as well. (young adult participant talking about involving friends)

My 94-year-old mother... was able to go to one of the events because it was on a Sunday afternoon, and she hadn't been able to get to anything cultural like that for a very long time because she can't really walk very far. She cried, because it was so beautiful for her. So it was really lovely. I was really thrilled that she'd had that opportunity.... Something that they sang just triggered something quite beautiful for her. (focus group)

...[while] 'yarn bombing' at the Goolwa Rotunda today. Best comment was from a 3 year old who thought his mum had arranged this for his birthday. "This is A-MAZING!" sayeth he! (Just Add Water' facebook comment)

Starting young

Staging events and performances relevant to a range of age groups was just the start. Building on these, a program comprising workshops and residencies ensured that everyone, from babies to those in their 90s, could participate in creating art that reflected their ideas and their lives. One project that took many people by surprise was 'This Baby Life', a performance aimed at babies aged between 4 and 18 months and their carer, followed by a dance playgroup:

Many parents were grateful to have a show for babies, some ...had travelled from Adelaide. I have a lot of parents commenting they were so glad Just Add Water provided shows/events for children under 5. (Email communication)

"Who would have thought that such young babies could be engaged for such a long time" said Kaye Colmer, CEO of Lady Gowrie Child Centre. (Southern Argus (Strathalbyn): 22 Nov 12)

'The Sponge', a creative hub for primary school aged children, was based at Signal Point Gallery during each school term break. Drawing on themes and/or techniques represented in the exhibition showing in the Gallery at the time, free workshop activities with a range of artists, including Ngarrindjeri elders, introduced children to different methods and materials. Over the year nearly 500 children and adults participated, some making return visits each term holiday break. One Indigenous artist observed:



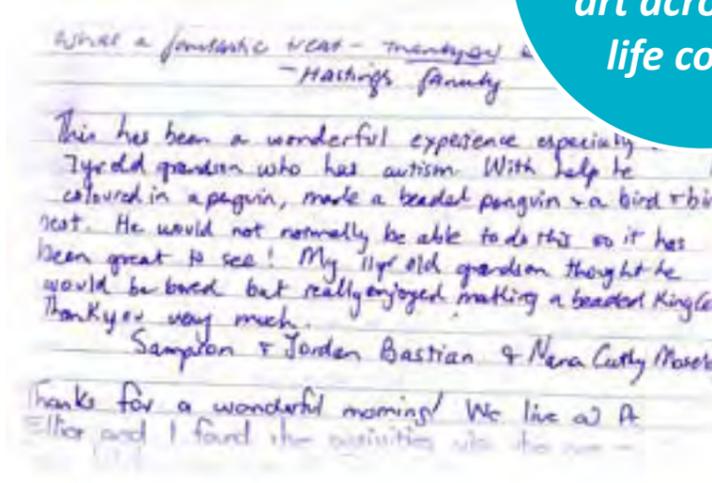
Artburst, yarnbombing at the Goolwa Rotunda/ This Baby Life performance at Strathalbyn Library, photo Richard Hodges

The kids have fun. They gain confidence in trying new things. It seemed to me that every one of them was smiling, and chatting and opening up. They went home with something to be proud of, something they had made themselves.

Participating children and adults contributed comments about their experiences in the on-site Comments Book:

First time in the gallery and love how everyone gets involved – blown away – thank you!

This has been a wonderful experience for my 7 year old



grandson who has autism. With help he coloured a penguin, made a beaded penguin and a bird in a bird's nest. He would not normally be able to do this so it has been great to see! My 11yr old grandson thought he would be bored but really enjoyed making a beaded cobra!"

The meshing and interaction of age groups has been magic – people taking their nieces, nephews and grandchildren to things."

We had good fun making animals out of plasteseen. We loved making my frill nek Lizzard."

I had fun. Thank you for your help. I will make some at home." (3 year old Tieri and Dad)

Thank you for the opportunity to work with an

Didge McHughes, artist tutor for The Sponge, kids arts hub at Signal Point

The right to learn and play': art across the life course



Indigenous elder – it was wonderful for the children to work with her and learn from her. Auntie Stephanie was very kind, patient, encouraging and funny!

Workshops for young people were based on introducing a diverse range of art forms. 'Drawing in Motion', for example, is an international award winning program run by Carclew Youth Arts which was 'resident' in Goolwa Primary School during 2012, working with classes in years 4-5.

I've got grandchildren who live in Goolwa... and one had an opportunity to hear the ASO, and The Lion in the Night, and the other one went to the arts classes of Drawing in Motion, and she was one of the children who were chosen to go to the [South Australian] Art Gallery, so she had an extraordinary experience... and the sort of things that they did down at the Arts Centre [SCRAC], so many different ways of doing art. Art is not just picking up a piece of paper and a pencil or a paintbrush; it's a whole range of things. (focus group)

well. They are gaining new artistic skills, better observational skills, becoming more confident and learning there is no one way of doing things. (Goolwa Primary School Teacher talking about 'Drawing in Motion')



Adelaide based Cirkidz introduced circus skills to the young people of Goolwa in a well-received performance, leading to a very popular workshop:

☀️ *We often notice gigs of various categories that are on in Adelaide but unfortunately are rarely able to make it to them. It [Cirkidz] was such a wonderful treat to have your stunning performance right on our doorstep. The professionalism, artistry, composure, skill, agility, and creativity were out of this world. We turned to each other at one point and both had tears in our eyes from the sheer potency of your work. (Email communication)*

☀️ *It was awesome. I really like the 'Cloud Rope', that was my favourite apparatus. It was a really great experience and I want to do it again. The workshops are fantastic. You learn lots of new things and make some new friends. (Cirkidz workshop participant)*

Carclew Youth Arts also staged 'Off the Couch' in Goolwa, a four-day 'musical symposium' for young musicians and sound enthusiasts culminating in a performance showcase on the final night. Fifteen participants aged 14-18 years attended the Masterclass series – covering 'songwriting', 'creating your sound', 'band business' and 'marketing and promotion' – and were involved in the gig night as instrumentalists, singers or stage managers. They were subsequently heard to respond: 'it was brilliant, we didn't want it to end'. According to the project Coordinator:

☀️ *'most had not known each other before but by the end they were jamming together, supporting each other and a number will continue to perform together'*



☀️ *'each received copies of the photos and recordings as well as a certificate of participation'*

☀️ *'they gained practical assistance in writing biographies, an introduction to Carclew, and choosing school subjects relevant to their future'. (Project Coordinator)*

The opening of 'Colour Me Senseless', the 15th annual youth visual art show presented by local Councils in the Southern Fleurieu communities, was also held in conjunction with the final showcase of 'Off the Couch' in Centenary Hall, Goolwa. 'Colour Me Senseless' had been run successfully in the SCRAC for a number of years and, like 'Off the Couch', it has been a very popular event. In 2012, many young people were enthusiastic and inspired by the experience, finding their arts practice had 'taken off' as a result. This was the first time that the two projects had been combined in the same venue with the aim that they would reinforce each other.

A young participant explains that this was less successful than hoped, however:

☀️ *I've been involved with that for the last three years, being part of the Youth Advisory Committee, and we... make sure that all the art works are put together properly and presented properly. So a lot of work goes into that, but for the last two years I've noticed it's sort of started to go a bit downhill... this year, at Centenary Hall, I noticed numbers were down, and the whole display of the works weren't sort of set out right and stuff... I think*

it's because we've had it for so many years in the old Police Station [SCRAC], people knew what the night consisted of.... We had a band, we had catering, we had live entertainment throughout the entire night... I think having it in an actual sort of art gallery itself made it a bit more real to the audience as well. Having 'Off the Couch' come down this year...there was almost like two separate events happening at the same time.... The art was cut off from the performances this year at Centenary Hall, and it just wasn't as well constructed as it was. (focus group)

Ironically, one of the reasons identified for the lack of successful integration of the two events was the unexpectedly large number of local musicians

keen to perform on the night. In earlier years it had been necessary to bring in bands from other areas to fill out the gig program, but in this case the sustained success of the workshops meant that all 15 participants were committed to the performance by the end of the course. This outcome, which resulted in more bands than could comfortably be accommodated in the program and a very long night, was hard to predict in advance. All agreed that combining the two projects would work best if the local focus were retained: that is, local workshop participants showcasing their sound to complement the local visual artists' exhibits. As a result, the long-running 'Colour Me Senseless' project is being restructured in 2013 with the help of funding through J.A.W. (Cultural Places) to employ a curator and set new guidelines.

'The Democratic Set'

Collaboration with Kumuwuki generated opportunities to experiment with different ways to engage communities in sharing stories and representing their lives creatively. Two residencies stood out in terms of connecting with people of diverse ages and backgrounds, both drawing on content from local people and culminating in performances presented to a national audience during the conference.

'The Democratic Set' presented by Back to Back Theatre is an interactive model for exploring themes of equality and difference by creating short performances and films with local people which are then edited together to produce a single tracking shot through a series of identical rooms. In Goolwa this very simple idea led to a diverse array of surprising, funny, thoughtful and moving ideas in the form of *moving images* including, amongst others:

- 'Ugg' the Ukulele Group of Goolwa
- a Jenga demonstration
- local reggae band "Littlefish"
- "Rainbow Triplets" stand-up comedy act
- Wetsuit clad female surfers – bopping to "WipeOut"
- Poetry readings, River Murray and Coorong commentary, environment talks
- "Star Wars" light sabre mock fight

- Pizza making demonstration
- Serpent dancer - Flavella L'amour'
- Cross-dressing roller skater - Pretty Boy B.

One participant described her motivation, showing the reflective nature of many contributions:

☀️ *I was interested in the idea of 'play', firstly because the project was being run by a theatre company, who of course put on plays, and secondly because I was including my daughter, she would enjoy it more if we could just play together. That led me to reflecting on the fact that this whole experience was something of a privilege and that perhaps for many children, 'playing' is also a privilege. My daughter is lucky enough to live and grow in a prosperous, democratic and safe place and this affords her the opportunity to play and learn in all sorts of ways. However, for children living in communities or countries blasted by serious social, political or economic turmoil, their right to learn and play is perhaps far less important than their need to survive. That's quite a lot for 15 seconds of film, but the Back to Back crew cleverly used projected images and sound effects to help shape the piece. (participant, Fresh & Salty Issue #6)*



Clockwise from top right: Cirkidz Aerial workshops, photo Richard Hodges/ Democratic set filming/ Off the Couch Carclew workshops/ Cirkidz workshop, photo Richard Hodges

According to reports, it was the first time many of the participants had stood in front of a camera and they found it a very powerful experience. The Community Liaison Co-ordinator for the project described how people who were uncertain at first tended to be won over by the process:

Some people, who were quite nervous initially, asked if they could have more time with the crew because they enjoyed it so much. This wasn't possible because of the tight film schedule, but it was very gratifying to witness the positive change in their attitudes. In the planning stages, I had anticipated that around 50 people would be accommodated in the film schedule, but am pleased to report that 77 participants were filmed. People's...comments were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences and people said that they would be part of a similar project again if it was offered. I appreciated hearing their upbeat stories about their participation and seeing their smiling faces as they left Centenary Hall. (Community Liaison Coordinator, The Democratic Set)

'I Met Goolwa'

One of the most remarked upon projects featuring older people was 'I Met Goolwa', a production by the creative team from the 'Australian Bureau of Worthiness'. During their residency the team met and chatted with many local individuals and groups, eliciting responses to the simple question: What makes your day worth it? These were then woven into a multi-media performance presented during Kumuwuki. Some of the richest material came from their visits to the Centre for Positive Ageing where they recorded reflections by older residents on their lives. Many of these older people had not managed to become very involved in J.A.W. by that stage, despite the encouragement of the Coordinator of the Centre. Her story unfolded:

Then Emma Beech [from the 'Australian Bureau of Worthiness'] came and spoke to a lot of our people at the centre... So the witnessing of their stories became really significant for them and important because...someone was actually listening to what they said, and the way she was true to what they said, she was fantastic. When they came and spoke to people, they just did it in such a great way, they just had so much respect, they were just lovely people. Then the way they portrayed it, there was crying, laughing, you know, the whole thing. I thought that that was amazing. So to be able to get people's voices heard through that I thought was absolutely brilliant.

...there were two particular people whose stories were told in 'I Met Goolwa', and unfortunately only one of them went to the performance, but it was a great thrill for him to be sitting there and hear his story being told. So that was very moving for him. He's at that point in his life where a lot of what he can do is now behind him, he's become very frail and very isolated, so that was really wonderful for him.

From a personal point of view, there was a fantastic affirmation for me personally that our people's voices were heard through the arts. It was very moving for me, because I didn't know what the content was going to be.

I'm just sitting there [in the audience] and I knew straight away who these people were in these stories. For the older people to have their stories heard through that was just fantastic. That was the highlight for me personally. So that's the other side; they were able to be involved in that way, so their voice was actually heard. (Coordinator, Centre for Positive Ageing)



Angas' 80 year old hands by James Dodd for I Met Goolwa

Coming of age artistically: stretching the boundaries

'I Met Goolwa' struck a chord in enabling stories about the lives of older residents to be told as a way of connecting with the past and understanding their different relationship to the present. The effects are reported to be ongoing for the Centre.

Then the people who are now coming and doing some activities at the Centre, so they've been proactive themselves and empowered to be involved and built on their health and wellbeing, and that wouldn't have happened if we hadn't met through Just Add Water. There's only a few stories, but it's all a beginning.

We've now got Emily Steele [writer in residence] who is coming up and talking to a lot of people up there around her project, which is ongoing from Just Add Water. So that's really good as well. (focus group)

2.3 'Coming of age artistically' – stretching the boundaries

Key points:

- Artists – both emerging and experienced – were supported by opportunities to expand and extend their practice
- A great diversity of creative practice was effectively showcased during the year
- Opportunities for the community to explore ideas about 'what art is' and what it can be were plentiful
- The program demonstrated how art contributes to community vitality.

I feel that this year has given the Arts community, and by that I refer to participants and audiences as well as artists, [the chance to] to engage more fully with the arts and to really appreciate the talent and enthusiasm that we have in our region.

I Met Goolwa performer, Emma Beech, South Coast Regional Arts Centre/

Those who are relatively new to art appreciation have been able to feel the excitement and inspiration that seeing an amazing performance can bring to the soul! I personally have loved working with local groups to help extend the scope and range of their work and to create installations that expand their audience. It's as if we have all come of age in an artistic sense and that there is no turning back. (artist)

I think it [Just Add Water]'s broken down some barriers about art and who can attend a show and who goes to exhibitions, and what is art, who can be an artist. It's not all about being a professional; it's about partaking and enjoying it. (community worker, focus group)

...[alongside] the high quality stuff is the workshops that dovetail into those... There's a classic photo of that young kid with James Morrison – that's just an example of how they really did integrate with the local community, local musicians, local performers, ukulele groups, you know. All those people came and saw the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. James Morrison, the big ticket items, but they weren't just watching, some were actually participating in those events. They were being a part of it, and hopefully that young man sees that that's his future: 'I'm going to be on the world stage like James Morrison'. (focus group)

Artists' testimonials

Didge completed Service Skills training in stage, lighting and sound in late 2011 and was paid to 'tech' in Centenary Hall through an Arts SA Indigenous work placement grant in 2012. From there he was employed during Kumuwuki as part of the Conference's production team, working closely with other team members to set up venues and bump them out at the end of the Conference. In his capacity as 'trouble shooter' he helped out when venue and site issues arose including being able to use his 'lifter ticket' to black out a performance venue. Conference staff reported that his knowledge of the local area was invaluable to the team. Didge also worked as an artist in 'The Sponge' (and continues to do so in 2013), and assisted with managing 'Kondoli the Whale' as part of the site crew on the Sharing Circle at Jekejeri Park (see section 2.4).

☼ *The experience I had as an artist at the Sponge was immense. Just seeing the interaction and the excitement of the children (some very young) was very cool. Some of the children returned day after day and seemed just as excited on the last day, as they were on the first day. It was excellent for me personally. And I'm looking forward to the next one.*

☼ *The biggest benefit for me, no matter what I'm doing, I keep bumping into the locals and the artists that I have helped or that have helped me. From yarn-bombing with Libby and the ladies, or hanging art with Leah Grace, to carting wood with Ollie Black or tending the lighting or ushering people around the theatre. This year has just been fantastic!*

☼ *Growing up in Goolwa, we were lucky to maybe have a New Year's Eve show, or a band at the pub. Just Add Water has provided us with performances and performers from all over the world and from all different cultures.*



☼ *[as a result of Just Add Water] I have been asked to work at the Adelaide Festival on an event called BARRIO which was definitely the highlight of the festival. I've been asked to work with the Sydney's' EARTH theatre company on a local Indigenous project, and also Adelaide's Fringe festival and continuing my local work in the arts...*

Michelle is an artist working across several art forms while being involved in the Arts Advisory Committee and other cultural groups.

☼ *I went through a really big transformation this year.... I think an aim of the year for artists was to raise the bar. Not that I've produced much work this year, but I feel really completely changed as an artist... much more mature.*

I'm much clearer about what I want to achieve, how I need to go about that. The work that I produce is a much higher standard, much faster, than it used to be... the support from [Just Add Water staff], professional support but with a real compassion for me, rather than indulging me, actually made me more clear and more professional in what I want to get out of it. I sensed that in the community in terms of other artists too, the artist community is a lot more professional and respond to one another differently now. So at the artists' level, I think there's been a growth in how we relate to each other, and the professionalism and the discipline....

☼ *It wasn't the program itself that interested me as much as the growth as an artist that I could get, and I definitely feel that I've got that, and I've spoken to other artists that feel they've got that...*

Liam is a young trainee living in the region who also completed the Service Skills training and assisted with coordinating the events – 'setting up', 'taking down' – throughout the year.

☼ *I built these relationships and just enhanced my networking. I've met so many new people and*

so many new upcoming artists and professional artists as well, I'm just really thrilled to have been able to work with these people and get so much feedback from them, and help them out as well as observing like the shows that are on, as well as having a real appreciation of what we actually have down here, and getting really involved in the community as well.

... and [I've been] getting job offers through the conference as well, so I've been offered jobs for a few of the festivals up in Adelaide as well, it's just slowly growing...

☼ *I've had heaps of training and just observing with professionals as well, and their skills rubbing off on me as well as I'm teaching new people.... There's a few of us who did the event training last year, and we've stuck together and are slowly building on our little team from Just Add Water, so it's been really helpful.*

Art – 'as broad as you want it'

The broad creative approach informing J.A.W. has been credited with promoting an expanded view locally of what constitutes 'art and culture', opening up interest and experimentation. Two examples of this effect include the emergence of the Ukulele Group of Goolwa (UGG) and the popularity of 'Show us your funny' workshops presented by Three Stuffed Mums.

UGG began informally at an Australia Day Party in 2012 as a group of friends 'messing around' with their Ukuleles and grew organically from there. They continued to meet and a few months later a group member suggested 'why don't we do something about ukuleles as part of Just Add Water?'

☼ *Without support from Just Add Water and the use of the Hall and Promotion – so the structure*

and the framework and ongoing interest – it wouldn't have got going to that extent. We organised it but not without support. (artist)

A 'make your own ukulele' workshop was held in August 2012 attended by 20 people, followed by a one-day beginners' workshop culminating in a performance the same night.

☼ *Well, there were 75 people in the beginner's class. We had classes all day long, and then a concert at night, and we thought, 'Oh, there'll be two men and a dog there at night', and Centenary Hall was nearly filled! It was extraordinary. Probably all our relatives were there, but that's immaterial. What it did was stimulate a little community interest, and then the community actually organised that. (focus group)*

Since then UGG has gone from strength to strength, with 100 people participating in an 'open mic' session, 20 in a masterclass workshop with Chuck Morgan and Janet Seidel leading to another well-attended performance, and two 10 week beginners courses commencing in 2013.

☼ *And now as a result of 'Just Add Ukuleles', there's a whole bunch of people who want to start learning to play, so they play at Create and Connect on a Sunday afternoon, and this chap comes [to teach] and apparently he's really good. He's very patient and helpful. (focus group)*

Clockwise from top right: Aunty Stephanie Gollan at the kids arts hub, The Sponge, photo Richard Hodges/ Station to Station artist Seb Humphreys at the launch, photo Richard Hodges/ Station to Station at Goolwa Wharf for Watersong, photo Alice Bell

Asked to explain the role of Just Add Water in the evolution of UGG, a focus group participant responded:

There wasn't a narrow focus. It was as broad as you wanted to make it. So if you think of ukuleles as art, which I wouldn't have in the beginning, but clearly it is now, it's all part of the art scene. So I think if you look at 'Just Add Water', it actually gave us an opportunity to explore the whole gamut of what art is and what culture is.

We saw the opportunity and took it. I don't know that we would have done that had it not been for Just Add Water. I think it came as a direct result. I think that Just Add Water stimulated us. It made us actually think about things in maybe a different way.

We've become the ukulele capital of the Fleurieu Peninsula! (focus group)

The stand-up comedy show 'Three Stuffed Mums' was another that stretched most people's definition of 'art', according to the three performers. Based on the theme of 'motherhood', it had attracted a strong following of both women and men when presented during the Adelaide Fringe Festival, including many mothers who wanted to share their own funny stories. It was intended that the show at Centenary Hall would be a way of recruiting prospective participants for a four week workshop series to be followed by a public performance. In the event the workshops were well-subscribed a month before the show, attracting 28 participants, of whom a solid core of 15 women took to the stage for the showcase.



The approach was not to write jokes but to put on stage funny things from our lives. They didn't have to be about mothers or kids but that was a common thing we shared. It was a very diverse group: one great-grandmother, a 16 year old mother, a gay blended family... Some presented very personal experiences, it was very moving, and we made sure they knew they could always back out and decide not to perform. (artist)

I had forgotten the 'I can do anything' attitude I [once] had... I think it got buried under mountains of washing and dishes, but you fab 3 ladies (and everyone in the group too) have shown me all over again that even at nearly 50 I don't just have to dream in my own little head... I CAN DO ANYTHING! (participant)

As a result of the experience many women were inspired to branch out and be part of creating other opportunities to perform:

I had someone contact me a few weeks ago saying that they did the 3 Stuffed Mums [workshop], and now they want to start a performing arts group. I said, great, let's do it. So we've had 12 people wanting to do it...and we've got a steering committee forming next week... That's specifically from them doing that workshop with the 3 Stuffed Mums. They had a lot of influence in the community. So that's 12 people out of the community who are going to do something, and there are more probably growing from there, I'm sure. (focus group)

One of the artists reflected on the role of J.A.W. in connecting the performance to the subsequent workshop:

Just Add Water gave it a context – it would have been hard to organise without this structure. People's attention was focused already, and we could present a successful show first to give them the idea then follow-up with a workshop. So it was not such a risk. (artist)

Expanding practice through collaboration

The 'Wooden Boat Exchange' was a prime example of J.A.W. providing a collaborative framework within which creative professionals could explore new ventures. Delivered by Craftsouth in partnership with Country Arts SA:

The Wooden Boat Exchange was a multi-layered project linking wooden boat builders based in the Goolwa region and other traditional tradespeople closely associated with the boat building 'fraternity' with visual artists, craftspeople and designers. (Craftsouth)

Working partnerships between five arts practitioners (wood worker, printmaker, ceramicists, jeweller) and five tradespeople (wooden boats, surfboards) were facilitated. The creative outcomes were exhibited in the SCRAC during the Wooden Boat Festival 2013, with an essay about the project by local writer Jane Hylton featured in the catalogue.

The creative partnerships helped facilitate a greater professional understanding and respect between non-arts members of regional communities and artists and we've received very positive feedback from participants. (Coordinator)

In their feedback, participants collectively indicated a strong sense that the traditional boundaries of their practice were stretched by the chance to see and experience different approaches:

I had a peek into the workshop of someone who makes things that couldn't be further removed from those that I make and was surprised to find common ground. (tradesperson)

I enjoyed being a part of this project and feel that I learned from the experience not only a little about the techniques, tools and materials of another trade but a little about myself and the way I work with and relate to others as well. (tradesperson)



Personally it really extended my professional practice and has given me confidence to tackle more challenging projects/commissions. (tradesperson)

Having the opportunity to impart some of my knowledge and see someone else use it to create. (tradesperson)

The opportunity to 'step out' of my normal art practice and collaborate with a like-minded maker. (artist)

The project from my perspective as an emerging artist was highly beneficial in supporting my ongoing artistic development. It allowed the creation of works/networks/exposure and accessed materials and audiences I wouldn't normally have access to. (artist)

Being able to open an opportunity to work with the boat building community, learn new skills and techniques, and participate in a project that would help develop my ideas/practice. (artist)

Working with the Armfield Slip community of volunteers has been amazing! Throughout, I've gained both theoretical and technical knowledge of watercraft, but also how to utilise and extend previous skills, opening up a whole new world for my practice. (artist)

Left: Chris De Rosa, Wooden Boat Exchange artist/ Right: Following Show us your Funny, performance by participants in comedy workshops by Three Stuffed Mums

For some of the artists the project had the added advantage of providing an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the local context:

☀️ *During this project I have heard so many wonderful stories anecdotes and history from the current and past members of Armfield Slip, Oscar W. (artist)*

☀️ *It was a valuable expression of river history in an art and cultural sense. (artist)*

Participating artists recognised that there were considerable benefits for the community in terms of demonstrating the wealth of local creative potential:

The project allows people to see work by artists and tradespeople from the area that are often unseen/invisible. This must enrich a kind of cultural 'self worth' in the community. Particularly within the context of an event with the [high] exposure of the Wooden Boat Festival. (artist)

☀️ *Celebrate the makeup of a culturally rich community. (artist)*

They also noted that the project presented an expanded view of how art and craft intersect to a wider audience than is usual:

☀️ *The exhibition at the close of the project enables a wider audience from the public to find an arts interpretation as an accessible medium for cultural discussion. (artist)*

☀️ *The opportunity to see the results of artists working with artisans, tradespeople and members of their community. (artist)*

☀️ *Exposure to the role that craft plays in all*



working practices and the high quality artistic outcomes that are relevant to diverse audiences and their respective communities. (coordinator)

☀️ *I think there was a value in the arts community to see more conceptual based artists at work in the broader context of a plethora of landscape painters and amateur photographers. Hopefully it created greater confidence for them to push the envelope and try something new. (artist)*

Enthusiasm was expressed for similar projects in the future, including scope to involve more local tradespeople:

☀️ *[there are] plenty of steam engine builders, model yacht boat builders etc in the area who would be interested if they knew about it. (tradesperson)*

☀️ *Definitely [be involved again]. To be involved in such an interesting and professional project is beneficial to all participants. (tradesperson)*

☀️ *Yes. It allows for growth on a personal and professional level and the opportunity to branch out. (artist)*

☀️ *Collaborating with GW has renewed my passion for developing simply designed craft for use in the ocean. (tradesperson)*

☀️ *There is potential for further engagement with the guys at Armfield Slip on other projects. (artist)*

☀️ *Keep putting tradespeople and artists together; we can learn a lot from one another. (tradesperson)*

☀️ *To pass on/disseminate what I have learnt to other artists and people within the community. (artist)*

Overall, the constructive partnership between Craftsouth and Country Arts SA within the J.A.W. framework was perceived by the artists to be an important factor in its success:

Accommodating Art: inside and outside the square



☀️ *Working under the umbrella of Craftsouth and Country Arts... is a great opportunity; my time was free to concentrate on the actual project not the business side of mounting an exhibition. (artist)*

☀️ *Although I live in the region there are relatively few opportunities to exhibit in a really professional capacity as was the case with this project. It is important that local audiences are able to see interesting work being made by people within their community. (artist)*

☀️ *It was a fabulous project for me. Apart from all the direct benefits, being funded to experiment with my work was an absolute luxury that allowed me the time to explore the ideas and opportunities in so much greater depth. (artist)*

2.4 'Accommodating Art – inside and outside the square'

Key points:

- Capital development and refurbishment of existing venues and facilities was completed with an emphasis on adaptability
- Building community capacity to accommodate more transient works by fabricating exciting temporary structures and spaces was a striking feature
- Innovative uses of existing indoor and outdoor spaces and places were cultivated for creative purposes and as a model for future practice.

☀️ *Everybody just loves what's happened to Centenary Hall. (focus group)*

☀️ *I don't think we could have done it without those venues.*

☀️ *No, it was absolutely integral.*

☀️ *We had to have a performance space, and*



Centenary Hall

An important part of the RCC approach is to build physical infrastructure and facilities capable of accommodating a range of arts and cultural experiences within and beyond the life of the program. These facilities have a two-way effect, becoming a focus of engagement in their own right as well as facilitating the program.

Centenary Hall was privately built and funded in 1930 by the then Mayor of Goolwa, Percy Wells, when he became frustrated by the Town Council's unwillingness to develop a local cinema.

Functioning as a cinema until the 1960s, subsequently it has been owned and operated by the Alexandrina Council, and used mainly by community groups for activities such as carpet bowls, morning teas, occasional dances, local community band practice, weddings and craft fairs. The Hall comprised a small stage behind a false proscenium, a flat polished timber floor (with a noticeable slope from east to west), and a tiled foyer, kitchen and supper room. The space was very 'live' acoustically and was considered

Clockwise from top right: Wooden Boat Exchange collaborators artist Juju Haiwafi and Ben Smith (New Growth Surfboards)/ Centenary Hall photo Chris Herzfeld/ Wooden Boat Exchange collaborators Martin Corbin and Randal Cooper (Goolwa Masts & Welding) photos Grant Hancock

unsuitable for spoken word performances, making speeches difficult to hear. The stage area also had rudimentary lighting, no sound system and lacked sufficient space to accommodate much more than a single performer. With the benefit of a significant contribution from the State Government, in 2012 the Council embarked on an upgrade of the Hal to improve its suitability for live performance and musical events while allowing most existing uses to continue.

The structural upgrade retained the flat floor, though making it level to ensure flexibility of use, and improved access to the stage area by removing the raised stage and proscenium. A false wall was constructed at the rear of the auditorium to provide sound locks between the foyer and the auditorium and to support a new upper level technical gallery (from where lighting and sound is controlled). Retractable seating for 180 was installed and new lighting bars located so that performances, exhibitions and functions can occur anywhere within the auditorium, with sound absorbent panelling and curtains fitted to improve the acoustics. The former supper room now accommodates a 'green room' and dressing facilities for performers.

Feedback about the quality of the upgrade and its contribution to J.A.W. was overwhelmingly positive:

☀️ I think that was the standout, the Centenary Hall. With the diversity of the hall, what you can do within that space, even though it is a considerably small space compared to other venues. The community were just blown away by the way it's been tastefully redone and what we can do in it now. (focus group)

Centenary Hall was used for a variety of purposes during J.A.W. including theatre, cabaret, orchestra, jazz, rock bands, exhibitions, meetings, workshops and so on. Its flexibility was reported to be as a great advantage and this was put to the test, with one theatre production requiring the temporary installation of living grass on the floor of the set.



(This grass was later donated to the local primary school.) It was pointed out on several occasions that aside from its practical advantages the Hall had become an attraction in itself:

☀️ ... because the Centenary Hall was refurbished and it was so new and fresh, everybody who wanted to actually had the opportunity to see it: 'Oh well, I'll get my chance to actually sit in Centenary Hall as well.... It blew them away when they got in there... And it's created interest in our surrounding communities as well. You had the general consumer talking to you about, 'oh, it's so great, whatever is going on', but you [also] see the Letters to the Editor, 'If Goolwa can do it, why can't we?' (Council staff member)

People were going, 'Oh my God, look at the colours of the Centenary Hall. What on earth made council choose those colours?' Then you tell the story of Percy Wells, and how they're the colours that he actually chose but wasn't allowed to use by Council back in the 1920s. And suddenly we discover that he had all these wonderful colours [in mind], and now it is just how Percy Wells really liked. That story has captured people's imagination, and they love hearing that story. (focus group)

Despite the generally positive response, however, the needs of one previous user group were not compatible with the new arrangements and it was reported that members were disappointed by the outcome:

☀️ I know that senior cits were very put out by being moved out of Centenary Hall... They really had ownership of that hall, and they don't think it's a community space anymore. So it's a real shame that we weren't able to move them in a more positive way. I don't think we could have done anything else in any other way.... We know logically that it's such a benefit to the community that we now have that space for performance, but for people who had been going there every week for, I don't know, how many years – 20, maybe more years – it was a real loss for them. But it's one of those things that it would have been almost impossible, I think, to make that happen better. (focus group)

Signal Point

Originally constructed as part of the State Jubilee 150 Celebrations in 1988, Signal Point is located near the Goolwa wharf and adjacent the Hindmarsh Island Bridge. For two decades it functioned as a visitor centre housing an interpretive display about the history of Goolwa, the River Murray and the Coorong, eventually being closed down due to poor attendances. By this time the building itself had fallen into disrepair, with the 'sail' above the roof causing leaking and attracting vandalism.

Following an unsuccessful proposal to redevelop

the site for tourist accommodation the Council responded to requests from the community for the establishment of a visual arts gallery in the facility. The sail and signal tower were removed and replaced by a standard roof, display walls were installed with functional gallery lighting and disability access achieved through a new entrance and the installation of a lift between levels.

Alexandrina Council then leased Signal Point to Ballast Stone Estate, a local wine company, which has maintained free public access to the Gallery for exhibitions and other events, while establishing a cellar door sales outlet and café. The facility also houses a small theatre which was well used during J.A.W. and as a result has been retained for community use.

☀️ There's a little film group that's getting together, and they're looking at art films, and they want to use the theatre at Signal Point. That's something that's quite new. I just think it's generated a whole lot of interest in a whole lot of different ways... (Community leader)

Together with the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC) which had a minor upgrade including installation of air conditioning, Centenary Hall and Signal Point accommodated a continuous program of exhibitions, performances and other events throughout 2012 as key venues for J.A.W.

Clockwise from top Cirkidz distributing Just Add Water programs during the launch, photo Alice Bell/ the set for Lake's Angel in Signal Point for school holiday workshops/ Slingsby's production of Man Covets Bird in Centenary Hall/Patch Theatre Company's production of A Lion in the Night in Centenary Hall

Flexible venues

As well as the permanent infrastructure, a range of more mobile and informal spaces were developed as venues. Most notable of these was 'Kondoli' – the Ngarrindjeri word for whale – the name given to a flexible story telling space designed and constructed by artists Bob Daly and Kalyna Micenko with the Alexandrina community. The creation of this space over several weeks involved the artists sourcing images appropriate to the region and Ngarrindjeri culture, then working with young children to draw the designs, older children to cut and pin the fabric and young people and adults to applique and sew the final patchwork panels. Forming a lively hub of activity, over 20 adults and countless children from 5 primary schools around the region spent many hours on the project, resulting in a strong sense of ownership amongst the community:

...[the fact] that [Kondoli]encompassed the whole community was fantastic. One day when I was helping put it up at the Strathalbyn Primary School, with a couple of little blokes running around supposedly helping us, one of them took off and grabbed his mum and brought her back. As we were blowing it up, he was pointing out the part that he had actually created... and then other kids started coming too, and I didn't actually realise that Strathalbyn Primary School was involved, but obviously they were. (Council Staff member)

☼ The other interesting point is the fact that people have actually nominated or put their hand up that if we need them, they'll come and help us fix it, because they were part of actually putting the creation together. (focus group)

☼ Everybody loves KONDOLI! (Sharing Circle debrief)

Everyone involved in making Kondoli learnt the Ngarrindjeri story on which the project was based. Appropriately, its first public appearance was as part of the NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) celebrations in at the Alexandrina Council in 2012. Following a flag raising ceremony, Ngarrindjeri story telling was held inside Kondoli. It also featured as part of the Sharing Circle at Jekejere Park during Kumuwuki to showcase Ngarrindjeri people and culture. Conference delegates and community members gathered to hear stories and learn about the past and present of the Goolwa region and its original custodians whose ancestry reaches back over 50,000 years. The Sharing Circle was designed as a series of tent structures arranged in the form of a market square with a village atmosphere. As well as Kondoli it featured bush tucker preparation (and tasting) in an in-ground fire pit, multiple hands-on craft activities and demonstrations and traditional Pulgi (homes) being erected on the site. Community elders and presenters met after the event to discuss the outcomes of the Sharing Circle and it was agreed that all involved had a 'wonderful time and were proud of the Ngarrindjeri culture being showcased at Jekejere Park', citing positive aspects including: "Everybody Loved KONDOLI!"

Adaptation of various existing indoor and outdoor spaces as venues during 2012 drew attention to the opportunities for arts and cultural experiences to be embedded throughout the community. This was particularly evident during Kumuwuki, when, by sheer necessity of the numbers of events requiring to be housed, every available space was occupied including private houses, businesses and studios. One of the most successful in raising awareness of the potential for similar uses in the

future was 'Elbow Room', the Conference hub, located in the local boutique brewery:

☼ That worked so well, having the nightclub there, and it brought a whole lot of people together. I would have thought that was fairly easy to pull that off. I mean, obviously you wouldn't have to do it to the grand scale, but having a band, sitting around the fire and talking; it was brilliant, it was really good. (focus group)

More broadly, the sudden appearance of art in spaces all over Goolwa was reported to have shifted public perceptions about its status in the community:

☼ ...the Goolwa Wharf showed how much it has to offer as a premium venue. How many people can say they saw Opera with a lush Lower Lakes in the background! Very special! (letter to Council)

☼ ...[so now] they talk about the park as a nice venue for an outdoor concert and things like that... Because we have had inquiries like... 'We'd like to put something on. What are our options? Should we go to an oval? Should we go to a park? What are our options?' (Council Staff member)

I just think it's generated a whole lot of interest in a whole lot of different ways, and I'm sure if that [J.A.W.] was just a short period of time, that would not have happened. (Community leader)



While there was a high level of approval for Council's investment in art and cultural infrastructure, some concerns arose regarding the concentration on facilities in Goolwa.

Representatives from other town centres within the region were reported to have expressed disappointment that they had not received equivalent development of infrastructure. Discussion in the Council focus group addressed this issue, noting that the concept of the RCC is based on developing a cultural centre within the heart of the region, which in this case was identified as Goolwa. It was acknowledged that this rationale may not have been conveyed sufficiently clearly at the start:

☼ ...it was always going to be Goolwa-centric from that perspective. I think what a lot of people didn't get was the fact that by having it in Goolwa, it's within the Alexandrina Council area, and that is such a close community with all of the areas around us, as opposed to trekking off to Adelaide. So they sort of lost sight of that's what it was funded on, the infrastructure here. We couldn't have the Centenary Hall in seven different towns. We had to put it in one space, and we had this facility here, so I think a lot of people actually lost sight of the fact of it still creates that node of activity, and they were accessing it, and we got – Watersong was a classic. We had people from everywhere around the council area and beyond, so it wasn't exclusively a Goolwa event, even though it was held in Goolwa. I think all the other productions were exactly the same. (focus group)

Watersong, Rita Lindsay Jnr, Michael Lindsay and Audrey Lindsay, Welcome to Country, photo Alice Bell/ Storytelling inside Kondoli the Whale

2.5 Legacies – tangible and intangible effects that last

Key points:

- The impact of J.A.W. is the cumulative effect of all of the different experiences throughout the year – but more than just the sum of these
- The legacies from J.A.W. are both tangible things that can be seen and counted, as well as shifts in understanding and outlook that can be heard in the stories people tell
- One of the most profound shifts over the year was the growing awareness of the rich living culture of the Ngarrindjeri community and building respectful relationships with the elders
- Continuing conversations about art and culture will ensure that the effects of 2012 endure.

Many people define legacy in terms of tangible things that you can see or count...but they're not understanding the other effects outside of the budget... They're not understanding the ongoing increased health of people – people who are participating in these projects are not spending time in hospital. (focus group)



Just Add Water Volunteers Thankyou Party, December 2012

☼ I think one of the things that amazed me most when I first come down here to work was the amount of events that are happening here and are still happening, compared to where I've come from. I think the new experiences will encourage people who might have thought about organising a particular event or something in the past and probably thought, 'Nah, that will never work in Goolwa', I actually reckon it will give them the get up and go [to say] 'I reckon we can do it. Let's give it a go.' (Council staff member)

☼ So that's our vision, and that's quite a mighty feat, to get a rural community to actually [get a] lift out of their arts community. I think that that's definitely happened. And not just activities to get people involved in the arts; it's also the different community groups who may only have touched on the arts briefly but they've actually connected with each other in a way that never happened before because of that encounter – in that sense it's really enlivened the community. (artist)

☼ It is in a sense a nice town like that now – a 'good morning' town. (focus group)

☼ We have made a great start with Just Add Water and it is our sincerest hope that it is just the beginning of something long lasting. ('Cittaslow Goolwa')

Physical (and flexible) Infrastructure

The need for appropriate spaces to support the development of high quality creative practice is a major aim of the RCC approach as a reminder to the community about the year's significance. The refurbished facilities in Goolwa were not only highlighted as visible public signs of the creative development that occurred in 2012, but also as testament to the community's sense of ownership as part of that legacy.

Legacies: tangible and intangible effects that last



☼ We now have facilities of a standard that warrant high quality performers – and we have shown that the locals will support their performances, especially if the prices are kept reasonable – as they were during 'Just Add Water'. Locals appreciated the chance to attend an outstanding concert or performance without the hassle of having to drive to Adelaide and maybe book accommodation afterwards. Now we want people to come from Adelaide and book here instead! ('Cittaslow Goolwa')

The spin-offs from the events hosted in these venues were far-reaching. For example, as a consequence of the enthusiasm greeting their performance in Centenary Hall, it was reported that the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra was providing a bus to and from Goolwa to assist residents to travel to Adelaide for its performances. The building too was the subject of attention:

Everybody just loves what's happened to Centenary Hall. The little stories surrounding it like the soundproofing on the inside, with Waltzing Matilda [in the pattern of the sound baffles], so all those little stories, you go, 'Oh, oh really, like piano rolls.' That may sound silly, but somehow or another, it's like – I don't know how to describe it – it just creates more stories about Goolwa and connects people to the stories... and the story about Percy Wells has captured people's imagination, they love hearing that story. So there's lots of little stories about the town that people have gotten to know that were secret before or have been forgotten. (focus group)

Artburst, stobie pole painting

The facilities are already allowing the community to plan for future attractions:

☼ Yes, and now we're on a touring circuit for theatre. (focus group)

☼ They're in the process now of setting up an art film society [in the Signal Point Theatre]. That came out of letting people know we had a theatre and Council saying, 'well, it's never used'. Well, no one knew it was there! So a film society is being established now. Great stuff. (Community leader)

The flexible venues also left their mark. Kondoli, for instance, remains a moveable storytelling venue which belongs to the community; managed by Council through Library Services, it will continue to be used for festivals and special events.

Valuing the arts

Recognition of the value of the arts has come in many forms: from the realisation by local groups of the personal and social benefits, to more formal acknowledgement.

☼ ... it allowed older people to actually have a voice ... they were really listened to by those artists, and their voice was then given to the community, and that was for me just a fantastic affirmation, so keep us involved, keep us involved, keep us involved all year... that was a great affirmation for me that advocating and being a voice for people who don't have a voice is really, really important. (Coordinator, Centre for Positive Ageing)

J.A.W. received a Special Community Award 2013 by South Australian Business Association. The citation reads: "in recognition and appreciation by our local community in the outstanding contribution to the Arts, and the amazing cultural experience the efforts are congratulated by the Southern Alexandrina Business Association." Voting for this award is open to the community with ballot boxes in the Council Library and at Signal Point, and online at the SABA website. The nomination for this award stated:

It has been a fantastic, cultural year of such variety – whether it be literary, theatrical, musical, visual or aboriginal arts and the venues were magnificent. The Just Add Water team is to be commended on the overall presentation of this outstanding program. Many have commented on their new found skills and new friendships made. Schools have been able to partake in the wonderful variety of programs on offer as have the many residents and visitors to our region. In fact, due to community response, this program has been extended until 2015."

While there was no formal economic impact analysis, a good deal of anecdotal feedback was received from traders:

...anecdotal feedback from businesses particularly in the main street, about how beneficial it was for them. People who were, dare I say it... a bit of a naysayer to start with and the

Artburst, Yarnbombing



first concert at Centenary Hall [they said], 'Oh no, you're going to burn it down!' (because it was the young peoples' concert)... then it became a bit like ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching, you know. (focus group)

☀️ I think one of the legacies of Just Add Water is the level of awareness raising in Council of the economic benefit of the program – of the arts, generally. When we had the last advisory committee meeting, there were council officers clamouring to be on the agenda to speak. (community leader)

Valuing the arts also has positive repercussions for those who work in arts and culture in terms of feeling less isolated:

☀️ ... as an arts worker in a regional context, it's great in that year to see myself very strongly reflected in lots of people that I worked with. You can feel a little bit isolated, so that's changed, and certainly the profile of arts in the Council in Goolwa has been raised a lot more. (focus group)

Community confidence in arts and cultural programming

The J.A.W. experience has led to community groups and organisations feeling better equipped to embark on creative programs. This is evident from the many groups that indicated their plans to build on this growing confidence in future initiatives as encapsulated in comments such as:

- ... and now they want to start a performing arts group...
- ...the arts genie is well and truly out of the bottle...
- ...and they are going from strength to strength...
- ...they've got the bit in their teeth and are running with it...
- ...there is a group formed now to work on the festival for 2014...

The Coordinator of 'Cittaslow Goolwa' described growing confidence amongst their ambassadors:

☀️ Our Ambassador group has considerable background experience that has now been enhanced with the experience of this Conference. We would be prepared to be a "reference group" for issues to be addressed for other conferences or events... Between us, we have a lot of solutions! ('Coordinator, Cittaslow Goolwa')

Similarly, based on 'what they had learnt and experienced through JAW and especially Kumuwuki', Cittaslow itself had the confidence to bid to host the three-day International 'Cittaslow Assembly' in 2016. The group won their bid and the assembly will be hosted by an English speaking country for the first time.

Increased confidence was also clear during discussions amongst the community participants who attended the final Conversation Café:

...a lot of opportunities are only starting to reveal themselves now, because we know who's out there. Like the conversation café we had the other night compared to the one we had at the beginning of the year... That was a really surprising crowd. I hadn't met a lot of them, and they were really informed, they were really on the ball, and they really wanted to see it continue. (focus group)

The advantage of having time to develop relationships was recognised as a significant factor in the advances made during 2012.

Vicki Hartman, Ngarrindjeri Storyteller inside Kondoli the Whale



I think that having the whole year for people to get used to – it wasn't just a flash in the pan; it was something that grew as the year went on – has been very important. I think that the length of it has actually given the volunteers the opportunity to get to know the people and to consolidate friendships and get to understand that it isn't just something that's going to happen for a short period of time. (focus group)

Many people, including community leaders and Council members, expressed their determination to keep the momentum going.

☀️ That's what other people have been saying, too: 'I hope this doesn't end at the end of the year... We've had such a great year.' To know that we've actually got funding for another two years and there's a whole lot of other things that are going to continue is really important. (focus group)

☀️ At some stage or other, various bodies will drop away, like Country Arts, and it will be up to council and this advisory committee to keep the momentum going. There's definite nay-sayers on that Council, but there are also people who are...positive that it will be possible to keep that momentum going... who have just taken it up with a vengeance. They actually love it, and we've got an incredibly supportive Mayor, which is helpful. You work your way through all the vested interests, but nevertheless the outcomes from this year may be more fruitful and we're definitely able to build on the place that we're in now. (Community leader)



Community pride

A strong sense of pride in their community on the part of participants, artists, volunteers, community leaders, groups and organisations alike was apparent.

...it was a community that was struggling a bit after the drought, and the arts did find a way to bring people back together and focus on something, the positive aspects of their lives, and their community. ...people feel that there's potential here that they hadn't thought about before, and the creativity in the community is actually [a source of] pride, and not something that remains underground. (artist)

Volunteers/ambassadors described their pride associated with responses from conference delegates and other visitors to the region.

...the feedback I was getting just talking to them about it, they were just so proud to be representing Goolwa around the area, and they were just over the moon with the reception they were getting from visitors, particularly interstate visitors and intrastate visitors.... and they were just walking on clouds.... They were at the coalface, but other people were certainly getting that as well – business owners, et cetera. They were all spruiking the joy of that interaction they were getting from visitors and locals. (focus group)

People observed a change in the general demeanour within the local community as a result:



Community Conversation Café, South Coast Regional Arts Centre

I think by the time the conference came along, and having one really big thing happen all at once that involved a lot of people at different levels, my impression is that it's done wonders to connect the people that wouldn't normally have connected, and the sense of pride is present. You can feel it. You can see it when they come in, what was grumpy old people road raging, and now I don't know where they've all gone – whether they died or moved to Victor Harbor! – but there's definitely a sense of pride in the community that I can sense... (Community leader)

Relationships with the Ngarrindjeri community

The contribution by the Ngarrindjeri community to J.A.W. was extensive, participating as elders, artists, singers, musicians, presenters, dancers, volunteers, technical staff, reference group members and audiences. It was reported that about 20 young Aboriginal people have taken up traditional dancing with the added advantage of 'getting them away from the TV' (Ngarrindjeri elder).

As well as benefits for these participants, a broader legacy has been increased recognition of the Ngarrindjeri elders who reported that they are now being consulted regularly by local government, for example regarding permission to give Ngarrindjeri names to streets and for their local knowledge.

They are looking differently at us as 'an opportunity' now – before they pretended to listen, now they do so. It seems like we are in greater demand and that must mean recognition. (Ngarrindjeri elder)

With support from Country Arts SA staff the elders have formed their own community organisation based in Victor Harbor – the Miwi-inyeri pelepi-

ambi Aboriginal Corporation (MIPAAC) – and will apply for 'Close the Gap' funding for projects.

Non-Aboriginal community leaders also reported having a better understanding of how to work together with the Ngarrindjeri community:

The other thing that has been great... is the engagement with the Ngarrindjeri. We struggled in the past, and I'd have to say it was at that conference I realised what we were doing wrong, in that we were saying, you know, organise representation on the [our] advisory committee. It's not about that. Now...what we're asking them is if they would like to set up a reference group to the advisory group – so their own group. We've managed to steer \$20,000 that Council has allocated for public art this financial year to them. We couldn't have achieved that before. (Community leader)

Meanwhile there is a far stronger awareness within the wider non-Aboriginal community of the significance of cultural knowledge.

Probably the [most] significant change was [regarding] the Aboriginal heritage in the area. Certainly the European stuff is meaningful to Goolwa. It's well known, it's well recognised, it's well accepted by the whole community, both new and old, visitors, and that's very much a given. But...people had this impression that there is no Aboriginal presence, there's no Aboriginal past, and definitely no future. I think coming out of both the conference and the year, that is clearly not the case and clearly not true. I think if there was any shift there, it was certainly to embrace the history, the current and the future of Aboriginal culture. (focus group)

Rita Lindsay Jnr, Kumuwuki/Big Wave Ngarrindjeri Sharing Circle



Continuing conversations

It is fitting that community engagement in J.A.W. began with Conversation cafés and that one of its legacies is the conversations about art and culture that are continuing well beyond the end of the year. These conversations – heard when artists are talking with each other about their projects, in the animated letters to the editor about the value of art in public places and in the stories people tell about their town – are signs that J.A.W. has engaged the minds of the local community.

One artist observed that working together with artists has given people a vocabulary to talk about what they are making that they didn't have previously:

I reckon those who make something, create something, learn something new like the dogs and things like that, one of the nice things that came out of that to me is there's a language now. There's an artistic language that's more commonplace when people are talking. So, if somebody had done the papier-mâché dog project, there's a language of aesthetics now that really wasn't present before... Now there's more a sense of the aesthetics of the piece of work and the language that is around what you're trying to achieve. So that for me, being a person who's into writing, hearing people – I am able to have a conversation with people now about the aesthetics of the works that they're doing. (artist)

Light hearted debates about the aesthetic value of wrapping trees in yarn appearing in the Victor Harbor Times letters to the editor suggest a community which is observant, critically engaged, and thinking about their environment.

☀️ *'Open your eyes and mind to art'. Re: MH's letter ('Anger over arty activities in Goolwa', The Times, Thursday November 8). I love the recent 'arty' goings on in Goolwa! Who says that trees don't need to be wrapped in colour and texture? What's wrong with looking outside the square? Each time I drive past the 'arty' stobie poles, I smile as they add charm and brighten up the town. Art is a way to show people what they may not normally see. You need to open your eyes a little and lighten up! A closed mind is a dull mind.*

☀️ *'Goolwa art wonderful'. Having just read MH's letter to the editor ('Anger over arty activities in Goolwa', The Times, Thursday November 8) I feel such empathy for her; she is quite correct, Goolwa has been taken over by the 'Arty Mob' and I suspect that the organisers of Just Add Water would be delighted! I was just sorry she didn't mention the stobie poles had been painted, personally I think they look absolutely fabulous. I only wish they would come down my street and paint them. I know I could have one, but I can't make up my mind what to have painted on it, I love nearly all of them. The 'yarn bombing' is something else, unfortunately the hanging items under the Centennial Hall verandah terrified my dog and we had to walk well around them, but I think it was the knitted umbrella that did it. (I heard that the umbrella sold at auction for several hundred dollars in aid of cancer research, so it was not all bad.) I don't think Goolwa will ever be the same after this wonderful year; so many locals have really thrown themselves into making Goolwa a colourful place and I'm pleased I chose to move here. PS If you are wondering what sort of dog I have, she is a 42kg 'Lurcher'.*

Stories people tell about themselves and their community can convey a great deal about what is important and what they value. The stories

Phyllis Williams, Narrindjeri Weaving Workshop



about Percy Wells and the refurbishment of Centenary Hall, drawing out the humour to remind each other of its lively history, are a sign that people care about its place in their community. Another often repeated story related to an 'accommodation hiccup' that occurred at the start of Kumuwuki when some delegates were without beds because their bookings had fallen through, and a number of 'ambassadors' opened their homes to billet them.

☀️ *The lovely thing was how Goolwa-ites embraced those people and looked after them. They weren't long without a place to stay... it's been said to me a number of times, 'Isn't it great: people have said what a friendly town this is and how people really embraced the whole idea of having the conference here'. (focus group)*

Referring to this event in the notes from the Ambassadors' Debrief Meeting, it was remarked that 'Goolwa has a strong reputation for billeting with our relationship with the Australian Navy over the years'. And reassuringly:

☀️ *On a lighter note, it was reported that the 'rumour' that the Centre for Positive Aging had been used for emergency accommodation proved inaccurate when the mattresses found on the floor one morning [turned out to be] from an [installation] on the lawns and not for delegates! (Ambassadors' Debrief Notes)*

On a different occasion the same story was told by a volunteer, referring to how Goolwa residents not only 'welcome strangers into their homes', but they would 'go the extra yard' to help others to solve problems.

This community is like that now – people will get involved. Oh yes we are an arty lot now! (Volunteer)

Creative collaboration: behind the scenes



2.6 Creative collaboration – behind the scenes

Key points:

- Partnerships between funding bodies, government and non-government agencies, community groups, private organisations and the community itself have all underpinned the successes of J.A.W. in 2012
- Fostering community conversations throughout has informed program development as well as future planning for sustainability
- Volunteers were the backbone of J.A.W., emerging as a powerful community movement drawing on an extensive network to support the arts and cultural program
- Partnering with 'Kumuwuki Big Wave' represented a strategic alliance built on solid foundations
- Each community is different and the RCC program model responds to these differences – lessons learnt will help the community to continue to build on the momentum from 2012.

☀️ *... I didn't know people at first. Now I feel a big part of the town – we belong to each other! Last year I gave my time and now I am reaping the benefits. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else now. This is heaven! (volunteer)*

☀️ *I think with the conference coming towards the end of the Just Add Water year, it provided a little bit of a finale. They [the community] were primed up already, so that kind of slotted in very nicely. (artist)*

☀️ *Arts and Culture can now be listed as "icons" of Goolwa along with its heritage, river environment, 'Cittaslow' status and family-friendly location to encourage people to come to Goolwa more frequently. ('Cittaslow Goolwa')*

Opening of Barbary O'Brien's exhibition, Braveheart at Signal Point Gallery

A balancing Act

As a Key Strategy of the RCC approach outlined in Part 1 of this Report, J.A.W. was built on a network of partnerships with a diverse range of partners. While some of these relationships were more complex than others, overall it involved a fine balance in the leadership role played by Country Arts SA taking into account the local context. As the third RCC program, J.A.W. was based on the experience of working in very different kinds of local communities. Although the RCC model is definitively collaborative and consultative, Country Arts SA is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the program is delivered within the time frame and budget and all state wide arts and cultural institutions are engaged. At the same time it is required to develop relationships at the regional/local level in order to build capacity within the community to assume control and leadership down the track. Not surprisingly, there were different views about the extent to which the balance was achieved in 2012 however there was general agreement about a number of significant outcomes:

- There are some remarkable examples of cooperation and collaboration at every level built over the year which will stand the community in good stead into the future;
- Securing a further two years funding from the Australia Council for the Arts is a major achievement which will allow time for the community to grow in confidence and to consolidate the gains of 2012;
- There is enormous goodwill and determination within the community to work with Country Arts SA and Alexandrina Council to build on the momentum created in 2012.

Collective Visions

Strategies to engage the local community in developing a vision for the centre of culture were in place during the preceding year. The appointment of a cultural development officer in June 2011, jointly funded by Country Arts SA and Alexandrina Council and based in the Council offices, laid the foundations. This enabled a high level of trust to be built and the formation of strong relationships with existing groups and organisations, establishing reference groups with representation from arts and other sectors together with local cultural leaders and Ngarrindjeri elders.

The first of a series of 'Conversation Café' gatherings was held to explore possibilities for the program through guided discussions fuelled by shared food and a congenial social environment. Around 70 community members brainstormed ideas about what the centre of culture might look like in Alexandrina and how it could be achieved, considering ways to ensure a positive legacy for future generations. Not only did these sessions identify potential program elements but they served to galvanise community members as supporters, volunteers and creative contributors to the RCC concept.

One of the points highlighted was the rich Aboriginal culture of the region and the importance of placing it at the centre of the year:

...[from] consultation at the beginning of RCC where we had those conversation cafes, it was quite evident that people wanted to learn more about Ngarrindjeri culture. They didn't know how to do it... but by the end of Kumuwuki, there was a huge shift. It was there very loud and proud, interactive. There was something very satisfying that happened there for the Aboriginal community and people who came to participate. (Community leader)



Consultation with the Ramindjeri/Ngarrindjeri community was conducted in collaboration with the National Regional Arts Conference, beginning with an informal gathering of artists from the local area and from key organisations in other regions. This led to further gatherings with elders and a more structured facilitated session mid-2011 to plan how the community preferred to be involved in the year.

A further 3 'Conversation Cafés' concentrating on relevant themes were staged at strategic points throughout the program, culminating in a final session focusing on evaluating the achievements of the year in December 2012. Participants in this event identified a kaleidoscope of arts experiences they had enjoyed as well as stressing the value of a year-long program to enable the arts to become entrenched.

They highlighted significant outcomes including:

- 'New opportunities', 'new friendships', 'excitement and energy', 'so much to do', 'community pride', 'optimism', 'seeing the town through new eyes'
- Access to first class venues with the upgrade of Centenary Hall and Signal Point Gallery
- A powerful volunteer (work)force that underpins the ongoing program
- Stronger connections with the Ngarrindjeri community and awareness of their culture
- A sense that J.A.W. had put Goolwa and regions on the (arts) map.
- Suggestions for the future included:
 - Scope for better publicity for the program
 - The need to maintain momentum and reach out to other parts of the region
 - The importance of funding and support to ensure the benefits are sustained.

Volunteering networks – 'Just Add You'

The process leading to Alexandrina Council hosting the RCC in 2012 included a visit by the selection committee to the South Coast Regional Art Centre (SCRAC) at the Old Police Station in Goolwa. A small group of gallery supporters gathered to represent local interest in the arts, and the now legendary volunteer workforce that is the backbone of delivering local arts events and exhibitions was born. Volunteers to staff SCRAC were recruited through word of mouth and local networks over the ensuing months. The refurbishment of Signal Point with its new Gallery, and Centenary Hall as a venue for performances, exhibitions and events, inspired more and more people to enlist.

☀ When we have meetings, they bring along people who are new to the district who want to join things, want to meet people, people call them in and say, 'You'll love this group of people, come and work in the galleries and meet these people. It's pretty sociable.' (Volunteer)

Supporters were attracted through the Conversation Cafés and a publicity campaign titled 'Just Add You', spreading the message in flyers around the town and features on the local radio. Over the year the list of volunteers grew to 80 strong, with about 40 core members staffing the venues on a regular basis.

☀ As a volunteer I am gallery sitting, serving drinks at event launches, openings and workshops, chatting with artists and the public and getting to be part of so many exciting things. ...Because we are gallery sitting there is a lot more time to view the exhibitions, which is great for art lovers and we are given additional education directly by the artists. The social aspect is great: you get to meet new people, broaden your outlook and expand your skills. I have even done some artwork that I would never have had the chance to do otherwise. (Victor Harbor Times: 29 Mar 12)

Members of the volunteer squad reported a range of benefits including satisfaction from helping to bring art and artists to the community, social connections and support, and being part of a local movement to retain and develop arts and cultural facilities in the area.

Collaborators Gerry Wedd and Nick Brauer for CraftSouth's Wooden Boat Exchange, photo Grant Hancock/Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts the Hon. John Hill with Alexandrina Council Mayor Kym McHugh at the launch of Just Add Water



I think that one example [of positive outcomes] would be the volunteers for the galleries. That is now a network of people; a lot of them didn't even know one another before. Even from a personal point of view, there are people in that group I didn't know, and they're the ones who are knocking on my door with the casseroles and doing all wonderful, wonderful things. As a consequence, that group started to feel a bit empowered, and it saved the theatrette. WE saved the theatrette. WE saved Signal point, and that was because we had a network. We had a network so that we could get information out there. Then they had information to be able to put in submissions in response. Council had never had a response like that before in the history of consultation.... (Community leader)

Kumuwuki/Big Wave volunteer, photo Chris Herzfeld

'Kumuwuki, Big Wave' – strategic alliance

While the central relationship in J.A.W. was between State and Local governments to deliver a program as the impetus for embedding arts and culture within the regional priorities, there were also many other crucial partnerships. The decision by Regional Arts Australia to hold the biennial National Conference and associated 'festival' program in Goolwa was especially fortuitous. Building on the ground work laid by several months of J.A.W., 'Kumuwuki, Big Wave' took community awareness of arts and culture to the next level, with the two programs reinforcing each other in people's minds. This was evident throughout the evaluation data collection when many people commented that they found the distinction between the two had become blurred. It was also notable that three-quarters of respondents to the evaluation survey of conference delegates indicated they were aware that Alexandrina Council was also hosting the Regional Centre of Culture during 2012.

The relationship was regarded as mutually beneficial. On the one hand, many people commented that the community was geared up for the conference in October as a result of J.A.W. On the other hand, there was a sense in which Kumuwuki helped to consolidate the emerging interest in art and culture:

☀️ *If you hadn't had Just Add Water it would be very hard to have a successful conference like they did have... It meant that people had been tooled up in a sense more about arts and cultural stuff, so the conference wasn't such an alien thing. (artist)*

☀️ *The people who are outside the art community, who are just members of the community, it [Kumuwuki] brought them out of the woodwork for some of the free events that were happening around town.... (artist)*

☀️ *I think Kumuwuki was timed beautifully to be two-thirds of the way into Just Add Water. It was completely different to the 'Just Add Water' program which was wonderful, but it was consistent with it at the same time. (artist)*

☀️ *And then the main street traders, you tell them about events all the time and it goes in one ear and out the other, but with the Kumuwuki conference, there was a buzz in the main street for months leading up to it. You told them about it, you handed them information, and it stuck. They were all gearing up for it. (focus group)*

For many artists and arts workers it was a rare opportunity for professional development and networking, learning and exploring ideas about art in communities.

☀️ *I think with the conference from a staff point of view, it was fantastic to be able to go to some of the seminars. The knowledge that I got from that personally, from a professional development point of view, was just fantastic. That was a great opportunity for the staff on council. (focus group)*

☀️ *So the conference, for people who really do love their art and really need that stimulation but they live in a regional – they live outside the metro areas – that was just food for them, you know. (focus group)*

☀️ *What I loved personally – my highlight for the whole year was Kumuwuki because it was about ideas. (artist)*

One of the strengths of the partnership between J.A.W. and 'Kumuwuki' was the opportunity it offered to introduce residencies that drew inspiration from the local community in developing productions that were then presented as part of the Conference/Festival program. One artist described how the chance to observe these was a very different experience from viewing the 'imported' shows and major events. For her, the latter represented 'big ideas that had already been developed somewhere else' and were 'received' by the community; by comparison the more interactive projects forced her to think about the ideas behind them:

... it's a funny thing, because when it [the 'imported show'] turns up, you just go, well, that's the way it is – but it's not. Someone's had to really think this through, about what sort of program. So what I really loved personally about Kumuwuki was that it was about the ideas. So something like 'I Met Goolwa' was an opportunity to see how you share an idea and it becomes a piece of art. So in some ways it made sense of the whole year. (artist)

'Cittaslow Goolwa' – building on networks

The organisation 'Cittaslow Goolwa', accredited in 2007 as the first 'slow town' in Australia, was an active local partner of J.A.W., participating in the Conversation Cafés, making flags and banners and commissioning a stobie pole painting, for instance. Significantly, it hosted an Ambassadors Training Program in readiness for Kumuwuki and in this respect it reinforced the links between J.A.W. volunteers and the conference. The training covered a broad range of subjects to enable the ambassadors to provide information and support to the delegates, as the coordinator explained:

☀️ *"Each session generated a new understanding and appreciation for our region and all participants have gained confidence to share their knowledge with others. We are now ready to welcome the hundreds of delegates expected in Goolwa later this month for the exciting Kumuwuki Big Wave Conference. We have been impressed with the huge program that ... has [been] prepared.... It is especially exciting to see so many of the displays, performances and exhibitions are open to the Goolwa and Alexandrina community. Our Ambassadors have been studying the program with nearly 130 activities and twenty four locations so that we can assist everyone who needs to get to the next event," Lyn reported. (Southern Argus, Strathalbyn: 11 Oct 12)*

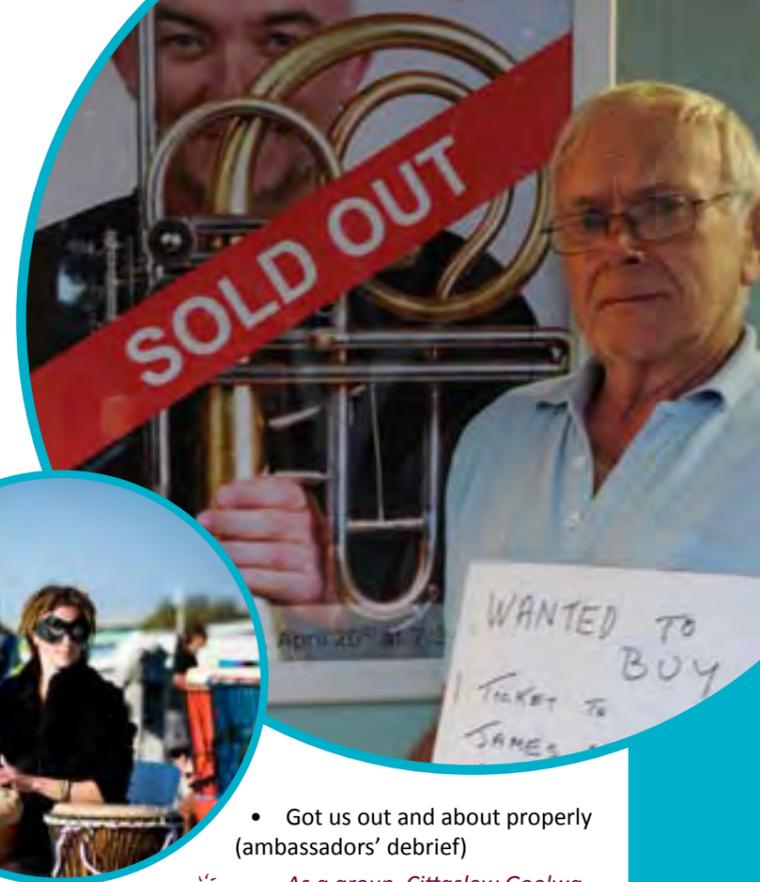
An important component of the training was historical information about Goolwa.

☀️ *...one of the reasons that they did that [training] was because we value the history and the culture that we have here in Goolwa. We've got a lot of firsts in Goolwa, the first railway... So the volunteers had a sense of what the history was, and when visitors asked them, they could give a little potted history of some of the special things that happened in Goolwa in the past. If you talk to people who live in Goolwa, a lot of people are here because it is a town that has kept its history and its culture. (focus group)*

Individual ambassadors reported a range of benefits gained from their contribution including:

- The town presented well
- Being able to participate/attend sessions was a great bonus
- Met new people – made new friends – with fellow Ambassadors and with visiting delegates
- Talking to people from interstate – and also from Goolwa!

Top to bottom: Posterboard at Centenary Hall just prior to James Morrison concert/ Fleurieu Rhythm Makers at Watersong



- Got us out and about properly (ambassadors' debrief)

☀️ *As a group, Cittaslow Goolwa supports every effort to help local people (especially the young – and I guess the not-so-young) achieve their potential and to experience all that life has to offer. Some of our older community members found that they were not too old to learn something different or experience something different. (Coordinator 'Cittaslow Goolwa')*

There were also perceived benefits in the partnership between Cittaslow and both J.A.W. and Kumuwuki:

☀️ *It opened up new ideas and provided access to skills that were not so readily available or known before Just Add Water. Cittaslow is about improving "quality of life" for all involved in the Community and Just Add Water complemented that ideal very well. We believe that a new confidence has been shown by the talented artists and performing arts members in the community and a new respect shown by others. Promoting confidence and respect are goals central to Cittaslow around the world and it was achieved well, here in Goolwa. (Coordinator, 'Cittaslow Goolwa')*

☀️ *...the Cittaslow group... has always been seen as being about food and almost like a catering company, which they're certainly not.... I did see more of a maturation of their group. I think they gained a better understanding themselves of what Cittaslow could be, rather than what we all think. (focus group)*