

A TOUCH OF GLASS

Newsletter of the Creative Glass Guild of Queensland September 2021 Edition

Update from the President

In this edition of 'A Touch of Glass', I am able to share with you some good news and some not-so-good news.

Firstly, the not-so-good news: we have had to once again cancel our 'Glass in the Gardens' exhibition, which we had postponed from July to October this year. More about this later.

The good news is that we are excited at the prospect of applying for some substantial funding from the Brisbane City Council to help us re-develop our Fulcher Road premises.

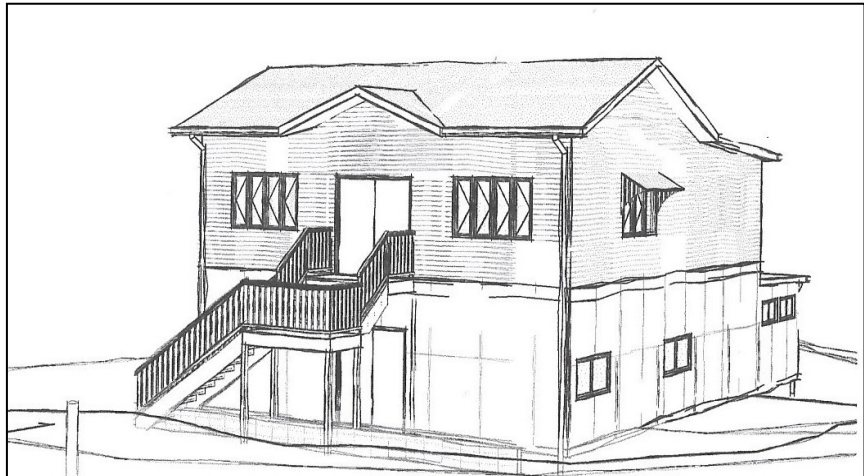
\$200,000 proposal

The Council has announced \$3 million of funding is available under the Lord Mayor's 'Better Suburbs' Grant for non-profit groups.

The 'Community Facility' category provides funding to improve, develop and maintain community facilities, with a grant maximum of \$200,000 exclusive of gst. Preference will be given to premises owned by the City Council - which applies to the Guild.

If successful, this grant could help us realise our long discussed project to raise our premises and install a flood-free concrete slab downstairs so that we might develop the space underneath on one level at a legal height.

At our general meeting on 6th September, there was a unanimous agreement to apply for the grant, and a subcommittee has



This artist's impression shows the Guild's premises raised and built in underneath. Under the proposal, the lower floor will be on a flood-free concrete slab, accessible on one level. Large roof beams will optimise work areas, and a new staircase complete with landing will connect to the front door.

been formed to prepare and submit the required documents.

Sub-committee's role

The sub-committee will ensure a comprehensive but clear and concise application will be submitted, so the Guild has the best chance of success.

There is a very tight deadline to submit the application by the 1st of November, and Council has indicated successful applicants will be advised by the end of January 2022.

No doubt they will receive many more applications than the funding pool can provide, but we are buoyed by the fact that the Guild has been a good tenant and good neighbour over many years.

If we are approved, renovations at the Guild could commence in

the second half of the 2022 year.

We were pleased to receive in July a visit by Jonty Bush, the State Member for Cooper, which takes in the Red Hill and Ashgrove areas.

Community Benefit Grant

She confirmed our successful application for \$21,500 from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for changes to downstairs work areas by removing some of the asbestos sheeting and replacing a number of rotten stumps.

If we are successful with the Brisbane City Council grant, we are hopeful that the Gambling Fund money can be put towards fitting out the downstairs area, with a specific aim to enable handi-capped access.

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President's Report

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Regrettably, it was decided to cancel this year's 'Glass in the Gardens' exhibition at Mount Coot-tha Botanical Gardens.

Government restrictions and requirements to host the event, and the continued presence of the highly contagious Delta variant of the virus presented too great a risk for the Guild to continue with our plans.

We trusted our members to adhere to Covid 19 protocols, but we were hesitant about the public doing so. If vaccination rates were higher, we certainly would have considered proceeding.

Mini Expo mooted

Discussions about a Mini Expo at the Guild for Guild members, combined with a Christmas function in December, are in the initial stages of consideration.

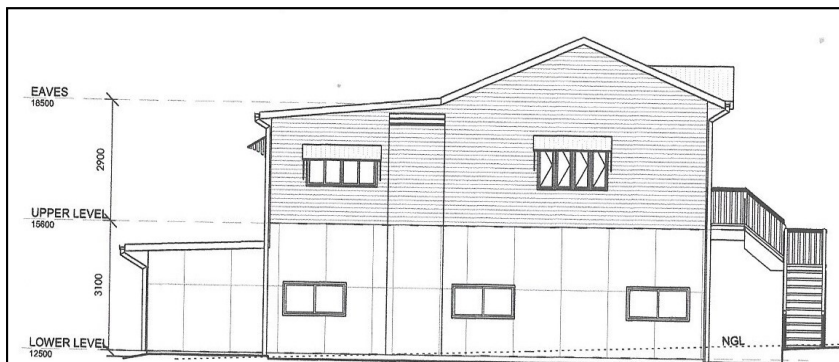
In encouraging news, some courses at the Guild are fully booked out to the end of the year, and planning for new courses for 2022 are underway.

A user-friendly website is being created to assist members and the public to navigate our website and to provide vital information about the Guild's unique activities.

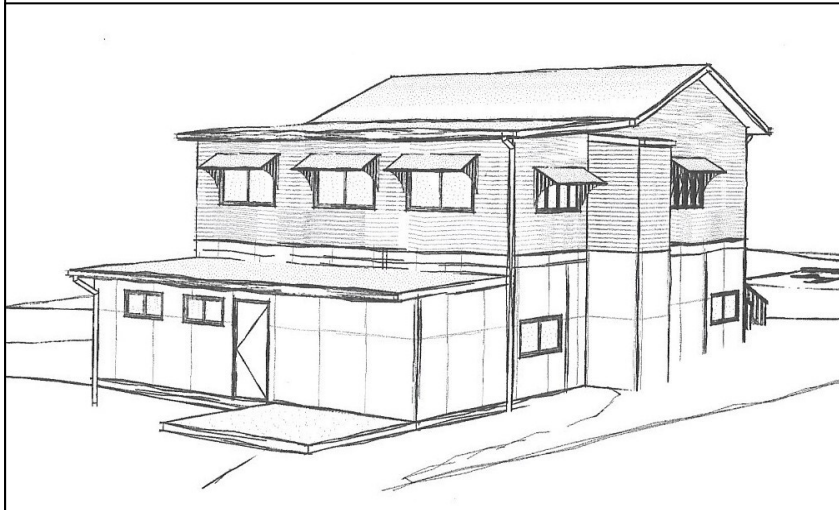
Tenders were called, and a local website designer has been engaged. This has been an ongoing saga for a few years now and I'm glad that finally, we will have an enhanced website. Thanks to Ian and Lyndall for their efforts in the selection and development process.

Financial strength

Deb Pym's treasurer's report at the last general meeting indicated we continue to be in a strong financial position. No exhibition for two years in a row does have an impact on our income, as the exhibition is a major contributor to the Guild's revenue.



These drawings show the proposed north and east elevations of the raised building, which incorporates a 3 metre wide annex at the rear to accommodate more work space and disabled bathroom facilities. Stage 2 will include a lift for disabled access upstairs. More drawings, page 9.



On a positive note, ten new members have joined the Guild in the past two months, mostly from people attending classes. Unfortunately, a number of members chose not to renew their membership after the 3-month extension in March, citing concerns over Covid and Guild access.

Front windows shine

The Guild's front window project has been completed, with all eight windows now installed. They look fantastic from inside the Guild and amazing from outside when the Guild is open, and the lights are on at night.

Some members have suggested we leave the blinds up at night and install some LED lights on a timer to highlight the windows to the public along Fulcher Road. Worth considering, especially with our low cost power!

The latest energy bill has arrived, totalling \$6.94. Over the past 12 months, our energy costs have totalled \$111.51, and we have reduced our greenhouse emissions to practically zero!

Over the same period in 2019, our bill was over \$2,100. Thanks to our solar panels working from sunrise to sunset, by May of next year we will have saved enough in energy usage to have recouped our initial outlay, which was subsidised by the Brisbane City Council.

Lastly, a reminder to continue to follow the COVID 19 requirements when accessing the Guild. Using the QR Code is the preferred method for signing in, and remember social distancing is essential.

We will keep you posted about news and events as they unravel. Stay safe.

Best wishes, Kevin

Amy's shutdown was no letdown

For my two weeks of quarantine on my return from the US, I was in the Stamford Plaza Sydney Airport, right across from the entrance to the domestic airport (so close, and yet so very far...from home in Brisbane!).

It was interesting that the busiest airport in Australia had only about six commercial flights arriving or departing each day. It was noticeably quiet, except for a few freight planes and some small-medium private planes coming and going.

My quarantine studio

In my single quarantine hotel room, it was 'good planning meets improvisation'.

I had three big suitcases, but packed so that I only had to open one. Of course it contained a selection of fusible glass purchased in the US, and all of my tools that I had taken with me to the US.

My work table was one of the side tables from beside the bed.

Luckily, it had a glass top so I did not really have to worry about hurting it (I had also brought a mat with me).

Unlike most of us, Guild member Amy Siebold has been doing some international travel recently – unfortunately not for fun, but for family reasons.

She is now back in the US, but here's Amy's account of her experiences following her most recent arrival back in Australia...

I had to be extremely careful not to get glass on the carpet because there was no cleaning done during the quarantine period.

Assembly can wait

Although I had the glue needed to fully assemble, and cardboard backing inside baggies for transporting, I had no way to clean my glass, so I opted to bring them 'deconstructed' to be assembled when I got back to my home studio.

A plastic bag of food was dropped outside your door three times a day and if you needed anything, like extra loo paper or towels, you called reception and they sent it

up in another plastic bag, with no personal contact whatsoever.

I had three Covid tests during my stay, which was the only time I saw a real person.

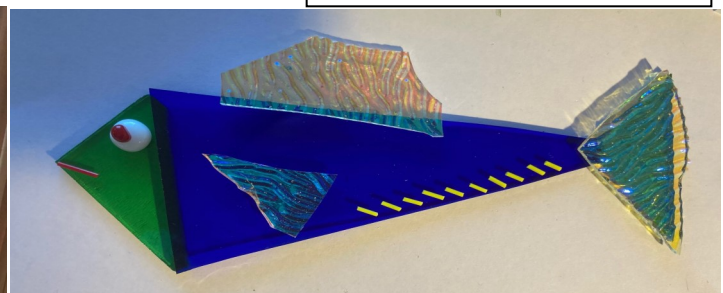
My biggest challenge

"Look Ma, no sharpie!" The one thing I forgot to pack was a Sharpie! So I had nothing with which to mark my glass. It was good practice for me to have to guesstimate. And of course, I had no grinder, so everything you see was done with cutting and nipping only.

My quarantine efforts have resulted in a selection of garden ornaments. These will be fused and put on stakes as ornaments for the garden or in pots!

Cheers, Amy

Pictured: A view of Sydney airport from Amy's quarantine hotel window, and her cosy bedside table/work space where she produced a range of exotic animals—no mean feat when you consider she lacked some of the basics—cleaning materials, grinder and sharpies!



Barry leaves a legacy in glass

He may have hung up his teaching boots, but Guild veteran Barry Richters is still very much involved in the glass arts.

Barry taught his final glass sandblasting course in July, and has passed on many of his skills to his successor and new tutor, Glenn Kutzer.

As the Guild's longest serving member, Barry has clocked up a remarkable 38 years as a member and tutor at the Guild.

In 2020, he was nominated as a Guild Master, in recognition of his many years of sharing his intimate knowledge of leadlighting, copperfoiling, lamp-making and sand engraving with other Guild members and course participants.

Barry was also given the honour of cutting the Guild's 40th anniversary cake in 2019.

It was a visiting English artist who in 1979 inspired a small group of enthusiasts to start what is now known as the Creative Glass Guild of Qld, based on the traditions of the English and European craft guilds.

Barry joined the group at its original home in the Presbyterian church hall in Oleander Drive, Ashgrove, and later helped with the move to our current Red Hill premises.



While he no longer teaches, he is always ready to share some useful tips when he visits the Guild, usually to pick up more supplies for a window repair or commission.

Congratulations and well done, Barry!

European Festival of Glass beckons

If we weren't weighed down by travel restrictions and vaccination tick requirements, and we could travel internationally, we might have made it to this year's 9th International Festival of Glass in Luxembourg.

From 19-22 August, glass artists and students from Europe and farther afield came together to give demonstrations in their own glass art specialties.

The Luxembourg Glass Symposium and Exhibition provided artists and students working with glass with the opportunity to meet and

exchange their experiences with other glass artists.

Presentations by a range of international students represented the many house styles and cultural differences from the various glass schools and academies, creating opportunities to learn about glass art and design from a global point of view.

The festival included working with recycled glass and installing a glass blowing furnace made of clay and heated with wood, as in the Middle Ages.

Highlights of the Festival included demonstrations by Vladimir Klein from the Czech Republic, one of the world masters of glass carving, and the Yellow Submarine mobile furnace operated by Dutch glass artist Ed van Dijk.

Maybe next time?



All roads lead to InStudio Art Trail

Over four weekends in August, Guild members Sylvia Free and Margaret Shaw were part of the InStudio Art Trail, which showcased the creations of 35 artists located throughout the picturesque high-country region north of Toowoomba.

Both Sylvia and Margaret opened their home studios to warmly welcome visiting Guild members, family and friends to share their creative spaces.

Sylvia's display featured her kiln



formed glass and artisan soap, while Margaret exhibited her multi-media mosaics and sculptures.

Both artists were on hand to explain processes, tell some ripping yarns and guide visitors through their remarkable artworks.

The InStudio Art Trail celebrated its 10th year in 2021 with four weekends of open studios, exhibitions and workshops.

The event provides an opportunity to visit over 35 local artists in their studio or exhibition space, to participate in a workshop or two, and to meet these creative people to view their work, learn their stories and gain an insight into their inspiring techniques.



Pictured are a selection of the beautiful artworks created by Guild members Sylvia Free (left): kiln-formed 'Octopus's Garden' and Margaret Shaw (below left): bovine welcome to her studio and (below right) multi-media mosaic vest.



A Touch of Glass is published by the Creative Glass Guild of Queensland

64 Fulcher Road, Red Hill Qld
PO Box 14, Ashgrove Qld 4060

General enquiries:
info@creativeglassguild.com.au

Course enquiries:
courses@creativeglassguild.com.au

T: (07) 3369 7322
(phone not always manned)

Website:
www.creativeglassguild.com.au

Workshop/Sales:
Saturdays, 9.00am-12.00pm

General meetings: Bi-monthly on first Monday of the month at 7.00 pm (Notice will be emailed to members).

Management Meetings: Alternate months or earlier if required

Tone that flows: the art of *pate de verre*

The French kiln glass technique known as *pate de verre* is a popular art form developed from the Art Nouveau movement of the late 19th century.

Meaning 'glass paste', *pate de verre* is a highly valued and revered category of art glass with its distinctive malleable aesthetic and soft colouring, often radiating a subtle luminous glow.

Artists have incorporated *pate de verre* into everything from simple platter-like forms, to vessels, windows, mosaics, chandeliers, lamps, sculpture and jewellery.

Challenging technique

The technique is renowned not only because of its arduous, time consuming processes, but also for the expertise and artistry required to master it. Throughout history it has been associated with the elite, as a symbol of wealth, taste, and luxury.



Pate de verre incorporates the technique 'cire perdue' or lost wax method.

The technique uses a mould taken from a wax model.

The completed wax model is firstly cast in a non-flammable material such as plaster to create a negative mould before being destroyed and melted away.

Ground glass, or frit, is mixed with gum Arabic and water - and often pigments and enamels - to form a paste.

Sections of the mould that eventually stand out in relief are filled in first, then the background of different colours is added to a thickness of several millimetres.

Prevents slumping

The centre of the mould is filled to prevent the paste from slumping. Kiln firing then fuses the glass together under a very high temperature (approx. 800 C).



Pictured: These examples of *pate de verre* demonstrate the subtle luminous glow which features in many creations. The technique demands a high level of competence, artistry and patience. The vase shown on the left, 'Tragi-Comique' by French artist Gabriel Argy-Rosseau (1885-1953) sold recently for US\$12,000.

The piece takes numerous days to cool before it can be removed from the mould.

It is then carefully cleaned and polished, or further work can be done such as engraving or etching.

To this day, original Art Nouveau *pate de verre* remains highly distinctive and coveted for its quality and artistry.

It serves as a testament to how Art Nouveau reignited the world's adoration for the forgotten practice of kiln glass.

The beauty of *pate de verre* fuses the ancient with modernity, and reminds us of the creative potential and versatility of glass.

Glass Artists Gallery a must-see

If and when we get to travel to NSW again, put The Glass Artists' Gallery on your bucket list.

Located in the inner Sydney suburb of Glebe, the venue hosts Australia's foremost contemporary glass gallery, and is the collectors' choice for accessing exceptional works by emerging and established Australian and New Zealand artists working in glass.

Contemporary movement

The Gallery was initially established in Paddington in 1982 by artist/educator Maureen Cahill, a seminal figure in the Australian contemporary glass movement, whose prime focus has been working to promote glass as an art form to the broadest of audiences, both on a national and international level.

Maureen Cahill is an established glass artist with her best-known work, 'Shoreline', World Congress Centre, Melbourne and 'Willy Willy', the suspended glass permanent installation over three levels in Parliament House, Canberra.

In 1978, she established the country's first full time university glass course and was Founding Head of

the Glass Studio at the Sydney College of the Arts.

The Glass Studio

'The Glass Studio' has been part of the professional development of some of Australia's most successful contemporary artists working in glass today and Maureen was instrumental in the Studio's development, where she remained a lecturer until 2003.

Maureen Cahill also instigated *Ausglass*, the national membership association for glass artists, and co-founded the prestigious *Ranamok Glass Prize*, an award which has gained international recognition as a major contemporary glass prize.

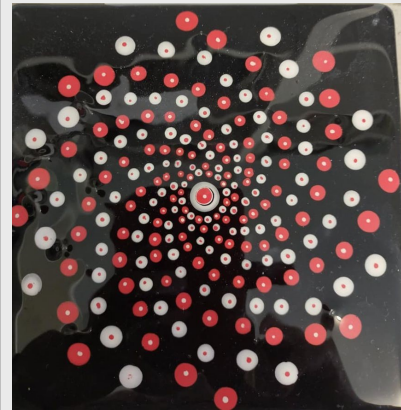
The Glass Artists' Gallery has a program of changing exhibitions that promote and focus on diverse and unique works by Australian and New Zealand artists.

Look it up when you're next visiting Sydney – in 2022?

Pictured: Maureen Cahill is one of Australia's foremost glass artists, mentors and educationalists. These examples of her work are typical of the huge volume of contemporary glasswork she has produced over many years.

Are you going dotty?

Our Glass Painting and Decorating tutor, Deb Gallon, is holding a workshop to explore the beauty of spiral mandalas.



Deb can show you many techniques you can use to enhance your fused glass artworks, and in this workshop, you will learn how to make a fused 20cm x 20cm kitchen trivet using glass enamels and mandala dotting tools.

While completion of the *faux murrine* workshop would be an advantage, time will be allocated for developing basic enamelling skills (mixing of enamels, brush use and care), or to refresh techniques already learnt.

The course runs from 9.30am – 3.30pm on Sunday 24 October. Check out the Guild website for details.





Around the Guild

Despite Covid restrictions, many members have been active with their glass projects, both at the Guild and at home.

Pictured clockwise from above:

Numerous members have been weaving their fusing and mosaic magic to finish a big section of the kitchen splashback project. Ocean elements are now complete, so it's on to the beach scene!

Our library is bulging with the addition of 550 pattern books donated by Neil Aitkinson. Many thanks, Neil, and also to Sue, Chris, Denise, Anne, Grahame and Solvej for help with sorting and cataloguing.

Anne has created a very attractive Australia leadlight panel for home.

Katrina consulted drawings of Australian flora to create this mosaic of the red and green kangaroo paw, the floral emblem of Western Australia.



Our plans for the future

The Guild is making an application for Council funding to raise and build under our Red Hill premises.

The upper floor plan remains essentially the same with the addition of new storage along with new front stairs and a lift for the disabled in Stage 2.

The lower floor plan features a single level concrete slab, large beams to optimise work space, as well as a disabled bathroom facility, and a flexible work room arrangement to cater for myriad courses and workshops.

The site plan proposes that the building be moved 5.9 metres back into the allotment to cater for building a new rear annex and parking spaces at the front.

