



New England Regional Art Museum Ltd Annual Report 2008-2009

NERAM 10 YEAR VISION

In 2020 the New England Regional Art Museum is known across Australia as an accessible and inspiring art centre with nationally significant collections in a memorable cultural precinct.

NERAM is admired for its commitment to sustainability known for the quality of its collections and exhibitions, valued for its dynamic educational and public programs and recognised for its engagement with the regional community.

NERAM MISSION

NERAM is a cultural gathering place and creative industry resource which makes a positive impact in its region. The Art Museum has a compelling purpose as the custodian of nationally significant and iconic collections to manage its collections for the enrichment and enjoyment of the regional community as well as for a much broader and far reaching audience. As a cultural centre, NERAM has a clear mission as a showcase for regional artists and as a destination for the entire community.

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New England Regional Art Museum

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Photographers include Simon Scott (front cover), David Doyle, Armidale High School students, NERAM staff.

Formatted and designed by Caroline Downer



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FOREWORD

2008/09 has been a unique year in the history of NERAM. On 1 July 2008 a new Company, NERAM Limited, took over control of the Museum from Armidale Dumaresq Council and commenced a new phase of its operation.

Sections 1-5 of the report provides an overview of the many governance matters that have been undertaken to provide NERAM with a sound legal and financial framework and to assure a strong future for this very important cultural facility and its collections.

Sections 6-13 of the report provides an outline of the achievements of the Museum in the delivery of its exhibitions and programs.

Financial statements for the year are presented in a separate report provided by Auditors.

The inaugural Board of NERAM Limited was appointed by Armidale Dumaresq Council following a call for Expressions of Interest from the community. Potential Directors seeking appointment were required to respond to a number of selection criteria. The Council selected Directors to maximise on a spread of skills and experience required for the successful operation of the Museum. The resulting Board brings a combination of knowledge and skills that ensure appropriate governance and management of the organisation.

The newly appointed Directors of NERAM Limited have approached the year with great commitment, accountability and enthusiasm. There has been much to learn and to implement. I wish to thank all Directors for their support and encouragement in my first year as Chair. In particular I thank Chris Serow for the massive job he has done in bringing together the legal matters outlined in the body of the report; Andrew Murray for his business and financial skills in setting up the Museum's financial framework; Bill Dangar for his work in leading the fundraising and sponsorship committee; Angus Nivison for his knowledge of the collections and commitment to the Art Management Committee; Gwenda Shannon for her extensive knowledge of, and commitment to, the Hinton Collection; June Dangar for her knowledge of the community and business; Herman Beyersdorf for his contribution of broad and valuable knowledge of the Armidale scene, and Murray Guest for his sage advice on

educational matters and his generous provision of access to expertise on the staff at TAS, and to the school's indoor painters.

The staff of NERAM has worked above and beyond their specified duties with a determination to offer a range of exhibitions and programs that connect with the community, showcase the valuable and unique collections and build NERAM's profile. The proof of their effectiveness has been evidenced in greatly increased attendance at the Museum throughout the year. My heartfelt thanks go to Caroline Downer for her dedicated leadership; to Christine Durham for her excellent office management skills and her keen interest in building the education program; to Philippa Charley Briggs for her professional approach and energy in curating some wonderful exhibitions; to Benjamin Thorn for his enthusiasm for the Museum of Printing and to the part time staff Nerolie Smith and Jonathon Larsen who keep the Museum open at weekends.

NERAM is privileged to have the support of an active group, the Friends of NERAM. This group has been busy during the year raising funds for the Museum and has contributed to two major projects, further detailed in the report. Since January 2009 the Friends have also been catering for exhibition openings. This has been of enormous benefit to the Museum. I thank President Peter Lloyd and the Friends Committee for their ongoing support and passion for NERAM.

The Packsaddle Fundraisers did not hold an annual exhibition during 2008/2009, but they did contribute significantly by installing upgraded lighting in the galleries, a project completed in July 2008. They also assisted with the costs of valuations and transport of items donated to the Museum. The Packsaddle contribution is very much appreciated.

The Friends of the Old Teachers College assisted with the cost of the upgraded lighting in the galleries. Their contribution is acknowledged with thanks.

Without the Volunteers the Museum would not be able to operate. Whether it is assisting in the shop, assisting with hanging exhibitions or provided much needed support behind the scenes in the office, the good will and friendly helpfulness of the volunteers

makes an amazing difference to the smooth running of NERAM. There are 70 volunteers, who contributed 2,900 hours of service during the year. I thank them too for their commitment and extremely important contribution.

Finally, I extend my thanks to Armidale Dumaresq Council for their support and encouragement throughout the year, in particular to Mayor Peter Ducat and General Manager, Shane Burns. Needless to say there has been much to negotiate in the transfer of NERAM out of Council's control into the care of NERAM Limited. All of the negotiations have been carried out in a helpful and professional manner that has contributed positively to a smooth transition and continuing operation of the Museum.

Meg Larkin
Chair
17 November 2009





1. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NERAM LIMITED AND APPOINTMENT OF THE BOARD

NERAM Limited was established following a recommendation from the Attorney General of NSW in 2007 that an independent body be established to operate the New England Regional Art Museum. This recommendation came about as a result of an application made by Armidale Dumaresq Council, as Trustee of the Hinton Trust, to sell a half share in a painting, *Mosman's Bay* by Tom Roberts to the Art Gallery of NSW in order to raise funds for NERAM.

The Council's action had been an attempt to recover a long standing debt that had been honoured by the Council after the Museum's previous administration had experienced financial difficulties culminating in the resignation of the New England Reserve Trust Board in 2005.

The Attorney General's recommendation called for the establishment of a skills-based Board. Armidale Dumaresq Council advertised for Expressions of Interest from the community in April 2008 and subsequently appointed a nine member Board to commence operation on 1 July 2008.

The skills called for included Arts; Arts Practice; Arts Administration; Governance and Trusteeship Obligations: Financial management; Business and Strategic Planning; Community; Volunteer and Friends Organisations: Marketing; Publicity, and Fundraising.

1.1. Inaugural Board of Directors

Meg Larkin. MBA (UNE) - Chairman

Formerly Cultural and Community Services Manager, Tamworth Regional Council, for 15 years, with, among other responsibilities, management accountability for the Tamworth Regional Gallery. Currently self employed as a Cultural Planning and Community Planning Consultant.

Boards and Affiliations

Arts North West 1996- Deputy Chair 1996-2005, Chair 2005-2007. Deputy Chair 2008- Regional Arts NSW 1997- Deputy Chair 2000-2002, Chair 2002 – Regional Arts Australia Director 2004 - 2005, President 2005-2007, Director – 2007- ; Visions of Australia Committee member (Ministerial appointment) 2006- Tamworth Regional Conservatorium of Music 2003- Director
NERAM Limited – Chairman 2008-

Andrew Murray B.A. - Deputy Chairman

Former Business owner, currently self employed as an investor and advisor.

Boards and Affiliations

The Armidale School Council - Chairman – 7 years;
The Armidale School Foundation – Director;
NERAM Limited – Deputy Chairman 2008-

Christopher Serow, B.A. (UNSW), LL.B (UNE), MLLR (Syd), Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (College of Law), Certificate in Legal Practice Management (College of Law), Notary Public (NSWSC) Migration Agent (MARN 0854319 MANZCN) - Secretary

Principal /Solicitor Director of Rice More & Gibson Solicitors in Armidale, with extensive experience in the practice of civil litigation, trusts, employment and industrial law, family law, estate planning, equity and trusts, administrative and business law, education law, wine law, consumer law notarial practice and migration law matters. Regularly participates in providing legal services on a pro bono basis to assist in matters of community and public interest.

Boards and Affiliations

Displaced Peoples Organisation Limited (Director)
Stage One Creative Pty Ltd (Director)
Armidale & District Chamber of Commerce
Australia & New Zealand Education Law Association
Society of Notaries

Member Australia & New Zealand College of Notaries
 Sydney Law Graduates Association – Life Member
 Golden Key International Honour Society
 University of New England Duval College Senior Common Room
 Law Society of NSW
 Migration Institute of Australia
 The Society of Notaries of New South Wales Inc
 Displaced Peoples Organisation Limited
 Opera Australia Benevolent Fund (Life Member)
 Duval College Senior Common Room (UNE)
 NERAM Limited – Director and Company Secretary

Herman Beyersdorf. BA (Hons) and Ph. D. (UNE) - Director

Third Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, Australian Embassy, Berne, Switzerland, 1974-1976
 Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor in German at the University of New England, 1977-2008
 Head of the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics 2004-2007
 Adjunct Associate Professor in German at the University of New England, 2009-

Boards and Affiliations

Armidale Dumaresq Council – Councillor, 1991- (18 years)
 Academic Staff member of the Council of the University of New England, 1993-1996 and 2000-08
 Arts North West, 2008-
 NERAM Limited, Director 2008-

Bill Dangar - Director

Self employed - Grazier and Businessman. Formerly General Manager of the Australian Poll Hereford Society 1996 – 2004. Friends of NERAM Inc, Chairman 2005 – 2008

Boards and Affiliations

Friends of NERAM Chairman 2005-2008
 NERAM Limited – Director 2008-

June Dangar – National Council of Jewellery Valuers, Australia, Registered Valuer N582. Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Australia - Director

Business Woman. Self Employed. Owner of June's Jewellery and Gems

Boards and Affiliations

Northern Regional Tenant Resource Service – Chair;
 Jobs Australia – Board member and treasurer;
 Quota International, Armidale – Board Member;
 Quota International, District 24 – Secretary Treasurer, and Past Governor
 NERAM Limited – Director – 2008-

Murray Guest BA (Syd) Dip Ed (Syd) Master of Commerce (Hons) (UNSW) - Director

Headmaster, The Armidale School July 1998-

Boards and Affiliations

Australian College of Education, - Member
 Australian College of Educational Leaders - Member
 Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (and associated collegial support committee) – Member
 GPS Headmasters' Committee – member
 Rotary Club of Armidale Central – Member
 NERAM Limited, - Director 2008-

Angus Nivison Dip Ed. Dip Art. (National School of Art, Sydney). - Director

Artist, self employed. Awards: Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW; Sydney Art on the Rocks Prize, 2005; Muswellbrook Open Art Prize 2002; Kedumba Drawing art Award.

Boards and Affiliations

NERAM – Acquisitions Committee, Member,
 Friends of NERAM, Vice President 2005-2008.
 NERAM Limited, Director – 2008-

Gwenda Shannon, OAM - Director

Order of Australia Medal awarded for services to the community. Armidale Citizen of the Year 2000
 Justice of the Peace 1974-2002 Retired. Formerly secretary to the Registrar of the University of New England and Custodian of the UNE Art collection.

Boards and Affiliations

Friends of the Old Teachers College, President 2006-;
 People's Warden at St Mary's Church, Armidale.

2. CONSTITUTION – PREPARATION AND ADOPTION

A Constitution for the new organisation, NERAM Limited, was prepared by Greg Moin of Moin and Associates, Pty Ltd under instruction from Armidale Dumaresq Council. The Constitution provides for a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital. The inaugural members of the company, signed the constitution on 22 May 2008. In the first year there were nine members of the company, being the inaugural Directors appointed by the Armidale Dumaresq Council.

Some minor variations to the constitution have been made during the year:-

1. Clauses to meet requirements for NERAM Limited to achieve Deductible Gift Recipient status (22 July 2008)
2. A clause to ensure that the Constitution cannot be varied to allow the company to be other than a not for profit entity, without written approval of the Minister for Lands, NSW (11 May 2009)

3. ESTABLISHING THE LEGAL AND FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

In order to fully establish the new company, the Board of NERAM Limited needed to accomplish a number of legal tasks, all of which were interdependent on each other. These tasks included the resolution of the Trusteeship of the Hinton Trust, clarification of the status of the Coventry Collection as a public trust, the assignment of the NERAM collection to NERAM Limited, the development of a 20 year funding agreement with Armidale Dumaresq Council, and a twenty year lease on the building. An outline of the process followed in the achievement of these requirements is provided below.

3.1. NERAM Limited – Initial Business Requirements

- NERAM Limited was registered as a Company on 27 May 2008. ACN 131 297 731
- NERAM Limited was registered as a Charitable Institution with Deductible Gift Recipient Status from 1 July 2008
- NERAM Limited was accepted for Charity Tax Concessions. Notice of Endorsement was received from the Australian Taxation Office on 8 August 2008



Collections Storeroom

3.2. Hinton Trust

The Howard Hinton collection is an important and iconic collection of Australian art covering the period from the 1880s to the 1940s. Hinton was an avid collector of art and visitor to artists' studios. He developed his collection for the purpose of encouraging artists, education of students and for the benefit and enjoyment of the public. The works in the collection were donated to the Armidale Teachers College beginning in 1929. In 1933 a declaration of trust was drawn up. Following the closure of the Teachers' College in 1979 a group of concerned citizens raised funds for the construction of the New England Regional Art Museum to house the Hinton, and other art collections. The construction of NERAM was completed in 1982, with further additions being completed in 2003.

The Hinton collection covers most schools of art in Australia during the period 1880 to 1948. The collection of 1,375 works includes paintings by William Dobell, Adrian Feint, Elioth Gruner, Hans Heysen, JJ Hilder, Gladys Owen, Margaret Preston, Thea Proctor, Tom Roberts, Ethel Spowers Arthur Streeton and the Lindsay family.

The collection was valued in June 2008 at \$36,000,000.

When NERAM Limited took office on 1 July 2008 matters relating to the Hinton Trust were before the Supreme Court of NSW. The Armidale Dumaresq Council was at that time the Trustee of the Hinton Trust. The University of New England and the Friends of the Old Teachers College had separately made application to the Court to replace the Council as the Trustee of the Hinton Trust.

On 2 July 2008, NERAM Limited filed an application to join the action in the Supreme Court with a

view to NERAM Limited becoming the Trustee of the Hinton Trust. A supporting affidavit and documentation was prepared, and submitted for the Court's consideration.

Being a new Company, the Court was concerned with NERAM Limited's recent establishment, new management structure and ability to take on the responsibilities of Trustee. Exchanges of information and negotiations through the Crown Solicitor's Office occupied a large amount of time and effort. As noted above, the success of NERAM Limited's application also depended on having the stability of tenure in the current building, which is constructed on Crown Land, and on having a stable income over a substantial period of time. Negotiations were also taking place with the Department of Lands, for a twenty year lease, and with Armidale Dumaresq Council for a twenty year service agreement.

On 24 June 2009 the Supreme Court removed the Armidale Dumaresq Council as Trustee and ruled that the Trusteeship of the Hinton Trust be transferred to NERAM Limited. Armidale Dumaresq Council was ordered to pay \$500,000 into the Hinton Trust, in amounts of \$100,000 over five years (as a result of separate proceedings in the Supreme Court).

In his judgement (SC4911/07) awarding the Hinton Trust to NERAM Limited Slattery J noted, among other things, his satisfaction with the qualifications and skills of the NERAM Board; the appointment of a professionally qualified and experienced Museum Director and the specific arrangements that NERAM Limited had proposed for the management of the Hinton Trust, namely that NERAM Limited would:

- (a) Create a separate bank account for Hinton Trust Funds that will be received from the Council pursuant to the Deed of Settlement executed on 15 May 2009 in relation to Supreme Court Proceedings 5553/2006. The Trust Account will be with a different financial institution to that with which NERAM Limited's other accounts are held, currently NECU.*
- (b) Prepare a set of annual audited financial statements for the Hinton Trust*
- (c) Establish a specific advisory body, composed of appropriate persons with appropriate visual arts expertise to specifically focus upon and consider Hinton Trust and collection issues. That committee would then make recommendations to the NERAM Limited Board in its capacity as Trustee*

- (d) Develop a Conservation Plan setting out the Hinton Collection's needs and proposed remedial actions based on the report and recommendations prepared by David Stein in January 2009 to ensure that all the artworks within it are appropriately and properly cared for. NERAM Limited will also prepare an annual report tracking the progress of the Conservation Plan.*

3.3. Coventry Trust

The Chandler Coventry Collection is a collection of 149 art works that strongly reflect the art movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The focus is on expressionist and abstractionist painters with some figurative artists. It includes paintings by Ralph Balson, Peter Booth, Gunter Christmann, Janet Dawson, Elaine Huxton, Michael Taylor, Dick Watkins and Brett Whiteley.

The Coventry Collection was valued in June 2008 at \$2,800,000.

The Coventry collection was donated to the New England Regional Art Museum Association (NERAMA) in 1979 during the fundraising campaign to establish and build the Art Museum. It was assumed that the collection was subject to a Trust, however, when NERAM Limited took office no trust deed could be located.

A Trust Deed which will ensure that the collection remains intact and held at NERAM was developed and registered with the Attorney General of NSW in June 2009. The Trust Deed makes provision for a Gift fund, with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Status. The purpose of the fund is "for caring for, insuring, preserving, conserving maintaining, presenting and improving the collection vested in the trust and in the care and control of the Trustee." (Trust Deed. Item 4.1)

3.4. Assignment of the NERAM collection

The NERAM Collection is a collection of art works that has been acquired by the Museum since its inception in 1983. This collection now contains approximately 2,760 art works. The majority of the works have been donated under the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program. The program has benefited the donors with tax deductions through the Australian Taxation Office Deductible Gift Recipient Scheme.

Some works in this collection have been purchased directly by the Museum and a number have been donated to the Museum as a result of fundraising by the Packsaddle Fundraising Group.

In June 2008 the NERAM Collection was valued at \$2,100,000.

When NERAM Limited took office there was some uncertainty about the legal ownership of this collection. The works had been donated to "NERAM" but "NERAM" as an entity did not exist (at the time of most of the donations the legal entity was the NERAM Reserve Trust). After extensive consultation with the Department of Lands (NERAM is constructed on Crown Land) and Armidale Dumaresq Council (as managers of former NERAM Reserve Trust, now renamed the Armidale Community Cultural Reserve Trust) a Deed of Assignment was drawn up, and executed by all parties in June 2009. This deed declares that NERAM Limited is the owner of the NERAM Collection absolutely.

3.5. Twenty year lease from the Department of Lands

NERAM is built on Crown Land currently administered by Armidale Dumaresq Council as Manager of the Armidale Community Cultural Reserve Trust. NERAM Limited required a 20 year lease on the property in order to have security of tenure for its operations.

Following negotiation, a 20 year lease was granted to NERAM Limited in June 2009

3.6. Twenty Year Funding Agreement with Armidale Dumaresq Council

At the commencement of its operations the Board of NERAM Limited approached Armidale Dumaresq Council seeking a secure, substantial and indexed recurrent fund to assist with the operation of the Museum.

A twenty year Service Agreement was drawn up, however, as the Service Agreement was subject to NERAM Limited becoming the Trustee of the Hinton Trust, the Council was unable to execute the agreement while the Hinton matters remained in the Supreme Court. Following the decision of the Supreme Court of NSW to make NERAM Limited the Trustee of the Hinton Trust, on 24 June 2009

Armidale Dumaresq Council executed the twenty year Service Agreement.

The Service Agreement commenced with an annual amount of \$265,000 (plus GST) per annum and is indexed to Local Government rate pegging.

As conditions of the Service Agreement NERAM Limited will:

- (1) On or before each of the first ten consecutive anniversaries of this Agreement pay to ADC the sum of \$42,000 (GST Inclusive) in repayment of the contributions [made by Armidale Dumaresq Council between 2005 and 1 July 2008]*
- (2) During the term of this agreement keep the Museum open during such times that are not less than current operating hours*
- (3) Operate the Museum in accordance with mandatory industry standards ; and*
- (4) Provide audited accounts in relation to the manner in which the funding amount is spent by NERAM within 90 days of a written request by ADC, such requests not to be made more than once in any 12 month period.*

In relation to the first condition of the Service Agreement NERAM Limited intends to raise funds through sale of items that are superfluous to the NERAM Collection, and that have been selected and recommended to the Board by the Art Management Committee.

4. ESTABLISHING THE NERAM FOUNDATION

In order to build a secure financial base for NERAM and to provide for future growth and stability, the Board of NERAM resolved to establish the NERAM Foundation. The Trust Deed was lodged on 18 September 2008.

The purposes of the NERAM Foundation are summarised as:

- (a) caring for, insuring preserving, conserving, maintaining, restoring, presenting and improving artwork collections vested in the Trust and other collections in the care and control of the Trustee*
- (b) promoting and enriching cultural awareness, education, events and matters incidental to and associated with the visual*

and other cultural and artistic fields and to raise further funds for such purposes by the Trustee

- (c) *receiving complete collections to be vested in the Trust under the care, control and management of the Trustee*
- (d) *supporting visual and other cultural and artistic fields with matters incidental including but not limited to: the propagation and increased knowledge of art within the New England Region and wider communities; the development and provision of professional expertise, advice and services to the public or to any person or body with respect to and matter concerning art or works of art and their maintenance, conservation, preservation and restoration; cultural awareness; education; scholarship; research; promote and provide exhibitions, lectures, films, publications and other educational or cultural instructions or materials in support of such purposes*
- (e) *Entering into contracts with artists and entertainers, lecturers, performers and artist to appear in the New England Regional Art Museum premises or any other branch locations or in connection with any service proved by the Trustee in pursuance of the objects of the Trustee's constitution.*

NERAM Foundation is a Charitable Trust which has endorsed deductible gift recipient status (DGR) under the Income and Tax Assessment Act 1997 and the Taxation Administration Act 1953. DGR status confers tax deductibility on all donations.

The Trust Deed provides for an Advisory Committee to be established to advise the Board on matters pertaining to investment and use of funds in the NERAM Foundation. It is the Board's intention to establish an Advisory Committee in 2009/2010.

The NERAM Foundation was launched by Hon Virginia Judge, Minister for Fair Trading, Minister for Citizenship and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts on 30 May 2009, at a dinner in the Creative Arts Centre at The Armidale School.

The launch of the NERAM Foundation included an auction of artworks generously donated by well-known artists in the region. NERAM extends its appreciation to these artists: Stuart Boggs, Isabelle Devos, Kerry Gulliver, Lucy McCann, David Mackay, Barbara McKay and Angus Nivison.



Mayor Peter Ducat, The Hon Richard Torbay, The Hon Virginia Judge, MP, Board Member Angus Nivison, Mrs Colleen Ducat, Art Museum Director Caroline Downer, Mrs Rosie Torbay, Mrs Caroline Nivison at the launch of the NERAM Foundation Dinner

NERAM acknowledges with gratitude the following donors who contributed to the NERAM Foundation in the 2008-2009 financial year:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Lou & Philip Abrahams | Thelma McCarthy |
| Margie & Peter Aggs | John & Ann Maurer |
| Kay & Derek Alden | Chris Meares |
| Anonymous | Jennifer Miller |
| Armidale Apex Club | Peter & Frany Morse |
| June Atherton | Andrew & Alex Murray |
| Richard Bird & Lynne Walker | Angus & Caroline Nivison |
| Bill & Helen Dangar | Doug & Eileen Price |
| Dangar Group | Mary Quinn |
| Ian & Anthea Duncan | Roy & Nan Robertson |
| Rob & Mareah Rhodes-White | Brian & Jeanne Seppelt |
| Anne Sutherland | Emeritus Professor RH Stokes |
| Dick Franklin | Elaine & Malcolm Treadgold |
| Barbara Giblin | Edward & Sally Wright |
| Murray & Joanne Guest | |

5. ESTABLISHING A STRATEGIC AND BUSINESS PLAN

To guide its operations and assist NERAM with its planning and management, the Board engaged the services of the Australia Street Company. Sue Bowden, a highly respected and very experienced strategic planner worked with the Board and Museum Director to create a comprehensive Strategic and Business Plan that was adopted by the Board on 20 May 2009.

The Strategies and Actions of the Plan are addressed under six broad Objectives:

Objective 1: A model of Good Governance
– Ensuring that all governance, legal and financial requirements for NERAM Limited are fulfilled in a professional and timely manner.

Objective 2: Harnessing Resources – Mobilising financial and human resources through advocacy, fundraising, income generation, sponsorship and formal and informal partnerships.

Objective 3: Managing for Sustainability – Ensuring that policies, plans, procedures and systems are in place to provide an efficient and effective foundation for current and future operations.

Objective 4: Fostering Best Practice in Collections Management – Developing models of practice that ensure collection conservation, foster professional skills, increase community understanding, enhance audience access and enrich visitor cultural experience through innovative exhibition and program development.

Objective 5: Programming a Dynamic Regional Cultural Hub – Planning and delivering a memorable experience within, as well as around, NERAM in the Armidale cultural precinct.

Objective 6: Marketing and Building Audiences – Extending NERAM's audience through innovative and effective marketing.

NERAM Limited "hastened slowly" to implement these objectives throughout 2008/2009, in order to ensure that all governance responsibilities were met and that operations were maintained well within budget. An outline of the achievements is provided in the following section of the report.

6. OPERATIONS

6.1. Staff appointments

In July 2008, there were 4 staff employed at NERAM.

Narelle Jarry - Registrar and Collections Manager (resigned August 2008)

Tracy Harris-Jones – Administration and Office Manager (resigned December 2008)

Benjamin Thorn – Museum of Printing Curator

Helen Thomas – Casual Financial Book-keeper (to September 2008)

Caroline Downer was appointed as Director in August 2008. Following a staff review and restructure, the following appointments were made:

Christine Durham

– Operations Manager/
Education Officer (from
January 2009)

Philippa Charley-Briggs

– Curator (from September
2008)

Benjamin Thorn – Museum
Officer – Museum of
Printing (continuing)

Cherene Spendelove –

Projects Officer (September
2008 to May 2009)



*Meg Larkin, Chair of
NERAM Ltd Board and
Art Museum Director,
Caroline Downer*

In November 2008 Nerolie
Smith and Jonathon Larsen

were given casual appointments as weekend
custodians. A number of casual positions were
made from March 2009 – Isabelle Devos, as
Marketing and Promotion and Hayley Clark as
Financial Book-keeper.



6.2. Volunteers

In the past year, there have been over 2900
volunteer hours worked in the organisation. There
are over 70 volunteers who are the life-blood of
the art museum, and work in all areas of the gallery
– from exhibition installation, administration and
filing to front desk reception and the Museum
shop.

7. EXHIBITIONS

NERAM's annual exhibition program features
curated exhibitions from the Permanent Collections,
as well as Regional Artist, Guest and Community
Exhibitions.

7.1. Permanent Collections

Selections from the Hinton Coventry and NERAM Collections were shown year around. Guest curators from the Art Gallery of NSW curated specific permanent collection exhibitions.



Exhibition: *Ten Iconic Masters*

Barry Pearce, Head Curator of Australian Art at AGNSW curated 2 exhibitions - *Ten Iconic Masters from the Howard Hinton Collection* and *Juxtapositions: Two Aspects of Australian Painting from the Permanent Collections*. Denise Mimmocchi, Assistant Curator of Australian Art, Art Gallery of NSW, curated 2 exhibitions from the Coventry Collection: *From subject to object - Abstraction in Australian Painting 1959 to 1977* and *Pop Art*.

In house permanent collection exhibitions included:

- *Print and Process*, an exhibition on printmaking from the collections curated by Benjamin Thorn and Narelle Jarry
- *Bark and Wood*, indigenous works from the NERAM Collection
- *Tipografia: From the Museum of Printing*, curated by Benjamin Thorn
- *Lionel Lindsay: A delight in detail*, curated by Philippa Charley-Briggs, Curator NERAM
- *Shapes and Sizes: From the Chandler Coventry Collection*, curated by Caroline Downer, Director NERAM
- *Wave and Line: From the Chandler Coventry Collection*, curated by Caroline Downer, Director NERAM
- One of the most successful exhibitions was a special community project where members of the public were invited to choose their favourite work from the Hinton Collection for an exhibition entitled, *New England's Hinton*.

7.2. Guest Exhibitions

2008/2009 saw major exhibitions originating from the Art Gallery of NSW and the Australian War Memorial, as well as community focussed and participatory exhibitions.

- *9 Shades of Whiteley: Art Gallery of NSW*
- *Focus: Photography and War 1945 – 2006: Australian War Memorial*

Solo and group artists included:

- *Abstract Earth: A View from Above. Photographs by Richard Woldendorp*
- *Winch⁴*: A celebration of a prolific family of artists: John, Madeleine, Martina and Jessica Winch.
- *The Old Woman Who Loved to Read: John Winch Book Illustrations*

A partnership with the University of New England, saw an exhibition comprised of objects from the university collections entitled: *Penguin Gizzards and More! UNE Collections*.



Exhibition: *Penguin Gizzards and More! UNE Collections*

Two community participatory events included *My Places, Cities and Towns*, a community collaborative installation which created a sustainable city from cardboard boxes and *The Artist Studio* where the gallery came alive with regional artists working in the gallery space giving the visiting public a unique insight into the practice of working artists.



Exhibition: *My Places, Cities and Towns*

7.3. Featured Artists

The Featured Artist program showcases emerging and established artists from the region and to provide an opportunity for visual artists to promote, market and exhibit their work. Exhibitions included:

- Sally Hook: *Ceramic objects in black and white*
- Isabelle Devos: *On a Clear Day*
- Michelle Hungerford: *Crow Country*
- Michael Jarachowicz and Gabrielle McGrath: *BioMorphic*
- *The Moving Image: Video Art from Armidale TAFE*
- Lin Quaife: *Upon Reflection*
- *New England Viewpoint: A Selection of Regional Artists*

7.4. Travelling Exhibitions

The exhibition *Print and Process* travelled to Moree Regional Art Gallery and to Coffs Regional Art Gallery this year.

8. COLLECTIONS

8.1. Acquisitions



Marea Gazzard, *Janus IV*

The New England Regional Art Museum acquired 46 works of art in the year through the Cultural Gifts Program and individual donors. All met the requirements of the Art Museum's Collections Policy.

- Ken Done, *Searching for black opal II*, donated by the artist through the Cultural Gifts Program
- Ken Done, *Tuesday Reef*, donated by the artist through the Cultural Gifts Program
- George Foxhill, *Dwelling in a land of dreams*, donated by Lindsay Cleary through the Cultural Gifts Program
- Marea Gazzard, *Janus IV*, donated by Packsaddle in memory of their inaugural patron, Beverley Wright
- 46 Merivale Edition Prints, donated by Bill Thorn

8.2. Loans

The following works were loaned to other institutions in 2008/2009

Albury Regional Art Gallery -

Robert Dickerson, *Blue Clown*

Robert Dickerson, *The circus in Borgia*

Salvatore Zofrea, 2 works from the

Appassionata Series

Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery -

James Gleeson, *Newfoundland*

James Gleeson, 8 drawings

Art Gallery of South Australia -

Hans Heysen, *Murray river cliffs*

Carrick Hill - Nora Heysen, *Still Life*

A number of works were also rented to various institutions and businesses in Armidale including the Armidale Dumaresq Council and the University of New England:

- Christopher Hodges, *Big Blue Bull*
- Neil Evans, *Pinch Gut*
- Helen Geier, *Plotting from the fragment 3, 4 and 5*
- Jeff Makin, *Dights Falls No.2*
- Leo Robba, *Tower Gold Coast, Fades away*
- Michelle Collocott, *Metamorphosis* (5 panels)
- Michelle Collocott, *Purple nocturne*
- Genevieve De Couver, *The void*
- Wendy Stavrianos, *Intercessor*

9. PUBLIC PROGRAMS/EDUCATION

With its associated public and educational programs, NERAM aims to engage the general public, to develop audiences and to provide an opportunity to build strategic partnerships with the broader community. There has been a pleasing increase in attendance, particularly since November, following the appointment of the new director and expanded staff. Visitors reached 23,029 in this financial year.



School visit to Brett Whiteley exhibition

Over 3700 visitors attended NERAM's educational and public programs during 2008-2009. 17 different schools from around the region attended educational tours as well as TAFE New England and the University of New England. Teacher Information Nights were held each school term, and an educational newsletter, ImpART was distributed to all schools in the region.

Public Programs included concerts and operas, exhibition openings, launches, fundraiser dinners, ARTnexus (local artist networking event), artist and curator talks, and school holiday workshops.



The Hon Richard Torbay opening the exhibition New England's Hinton

Art Classes were held in the Packsaddle Art Studio underneath NERAM and included Adventures in Art (After school classes with Del Bennett), and a number of different art classes, run by the New England Art Society.

10. GRANT PROJECTS

Three grants funded educational and public programs for the art museum during the year. NERAM's new educational program "Art Alive New England", aims to engage the community – attracting new audiences, and re-invigorating and

recreating NERAM's reputation as a vibrant and innovative cultural institution.

10.1. Newcastle Permanent Charitable Trust was the major sponsor of NERAM's Educational Program, "Art Alive New England". This multi-dimensional project incorporated new education kits for the collections, a new quarterly educational newsletter ImpART, a program of workshops and art classes for children as well as materials and support for a community participatory installation:



Meg Larkin, Chair NERAM Ltd, Christine Maunder, Armidale Branch Manager Newcastle Permanent and Andrew Murray, Deputy Chair, NERAM Ltd

10.2. GALLERY FocusED partially funded a new on-line resource which created a database of images from the collection organised under categories which are linked to key learning areas in the K-6 school curriculum. The resource will encourage teachers to be self reliant in the use of NERAM's collections in the preparation of lessons, excursions to NERAM and practical workshop ideas that can be carried out either on-site or back in the classroom. The project has allowed NERAM to strengthen partnerships with the University of New England and the NSW Department of Education to develop and provide meaningful arts education opportunities for schools. This will lead to schools recognising NERAM as a vital educational resource resulting in increased participation and visitation for education programmes and workshops.

10.3. Incoming Touring Exhibition Grant (ITEG) Program from Museums of Galleries NSW funded the implementation of an education program for school groups and TAFE photography students addressing issues of photography and social commentary, in conjunction with the Leica/CCP Documentary Photography Award Exhibition. A documentary photography workshop was undertaken by Tamara Voninki, a Sydney-based photographer, and a founding member of Oculi, an Australian collective of photographers dedicated to capturing the beauty, wonder and struggle of daily life. 15 students from local Armidale high schools attended.

11. SPONSORSHIP AND DONATIONS

11.1. Friends of NERAM have been particularly supportive of the Art Museum. Since January 2009, they have been catering at all exhibition openings. They also sponsored two major projects this year:



Friends of NERAM Committee

- *My Places: Cities and Towns*, a highly successful community collaborative installation project, co-ordinated by local sculptor, Tony Sevil. Visitors to the gallery built a sustainable city of the future with cardboard and other recycled materials.
- *ARTPlay* a new dedicated area for children under 8 and their carers opened on 24 May. This space has proved very popular; it is a place to draw and create with activity sheets for children based on the current exhibitions.



ArtPLAY space



Packsaddle Fundraisers

11.2. The Packsaddle Fundraisers did not hold their annual selling exhibition this year, but contributed to the upgrade of exhibition lighting in the galleries plus funds for the valuations and transport of artwork which were donated into the NERAM Collection.

11.3. The Friends of the Old Teachers College also contributed to the upgrade of exhibition lighting for the galleries.

11.4. Corporate sponsors:

A number of corporate businesses made donations to operational funds. These included Killens Smash Repairs, PC Ducats, Tony Hoskins Plumbing, Knights Store and Kelly's Transport.

Qantas Link provided flights to bring guest speakers and curators to Armidale which enhance NERAM's activities and exhibitions as well as assisting staff with travel to undertake professional development, liaise, and keep up-to-date with what is happening in larger galleries and museums in major centres.

The Armidale School (TAS) provided assistance with necessary maintenance to ensure our gallery spaces are looking their best.

UNE Printery provided the Museum with a discount on the printing of invitations for all exhibitions.

12. MUSEUM OF PRINTING

The Museum of Printing continued its operations throughout 2009. This included maintaining and expanding the permanent display of large equipment and also presenting several temporary exhibitions. The oral history project continued to produce fascinating material. MoP continues to be open on Thursdays and Fridays from 10:30am to 3:30pm or by appointment.



Benjamin Thorn with TAFE students at the Museum of Printing

12.1. Oral History Project

The Royal Australian Historical Society continued to fund this project in 2008/2009 with fifteen interviews conducted and transcribed.

12.2. Temporary Exhibitions

Several temporary exhibitions were installed at MoP:

Selling it with animals

In Hot and Cold Water.

Cabinet of Typographical Monstrosities

Ken Apolony: Etchings and Linoprints

12.3. Outreach Exhibitions

Underwear in the Express in the foyer of the Armidale Express offices in Armidale

Uniform Education in the Dixon Library

12.4. New acquisitions

Several small items were acquired including a couple of laser printers from UNE, and some early typing medals, books and other materials from Harry Wallace, a letter press from Brian Woolley, a number of books and other small items from Allan Wetherell, a number of books from Bill Thorn, a number of books and manuals from Laurie Henwood.

12.5. Visitors

There were over 500 visitors in the year at the Museum of Printing. This included groups from TAFE (3), Kentucky School, Armidale High, UNE arts education (x2), and TAS, Kentucky School.

12.6. Research

Curator Benjamin Thorn had an article on "F.T. Wimble, ink manufacturer, supplier to the printing trade, and Australian nationalist" published in the Journal of the Printing Historical Society.

13. SHOP

The Museum's management team has spent some time this year reviewing the Museum Shop and its stock. More focus has been placed on handmade arts and crafts by regional artists. New consignment stock was ordered, and the shop merchandise (particular the books) was linked and integrated to the exhibitions currently on the wall. More emphasis has also been placed on children's illustrated books and art supplies.



14. CONCLUSION

2008/2009 has been a definitive and successful year for NERAM. The work of establishing a new structure for the organisation and consolidating the legal and financial framework for its future operations will enable NERAM to progress strategically in the future.

In 2009 /2010 the initial membership of NERAM Limited, of nine inaugural directors appointed by Armidale Dumaresq Council, will be opened up to encourage supporters of Museum to join the company and have a voice in its future operations.

The number of the Board's advisory committees will be expanded in 2009/2010. Currently the Board has a Finance Committee, an Art Management Committee and a Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee. It is intended to increase the number of committees to include an Advisory Committee for the NERAM Foundation and an Advisory Committee for the Hinton Trust, as is required under the terms of NERAM's trusteeship.

In terms of its operations, the community's response to the Museum's expanded program of exhibitions and activities has been strong and positive in 2008/2009. This is evidenced by a significant increase in the number of visitors to NERAM.

A number of exhibitions and public programs are being planned for 2009/2010 to engage different sections of the community and expand access to the wealth of NERAM's iconic collections and the expertise of the region's visual artists.

The lessons learned from the first year of operation under the new NERAM structure have demonstrated the need for the organisation to move forward with

care, diligence and a regard for the necessity to continue to build its financial resources through the NERAM Foundation. Recurrent finding is adequate to maintain operations at their present level, however growth and development of the Museum depend on an increase of capital and investment of funds in the NERAM Foundation to provide interest income to support NERAM's activities.

There are challenges ahead, but NERAM can move forward in the knowledge that it has a firm operational base to work from, and with the support of the New England community, it will continue to grow and flourish.





