

Regional Arts Fund

Quick Response Grant

Case study

The Banyena Hall Committee: Impressions of the Past



Images, all by Hilary McAllister, clockwise from top : Hanging on the line, Table Marnoo, Workshop Setup

Project Summary

Impressions of the Past was a collaborative project between the Banyena Hall Committee and the Avon Plains and Banyena Landcare Group. This project was motivated by a desire to recognise the abandoned houses and farms in the area and bring value to these forgotten locations whilst reflecting on the fragility and ecology of the landscape. Guided by local artist Hilary McAllister, community members engaged in workshops to document unique local dwellings and sites.

Artist Benefits

The workshops gave the Lead Artist, Hilary McAllister, the opportunity to host her first eco-dyeing workshops after working with the medium for several years. Having experimented a lot herself, she was amazed at the different outcomes workshop participants came up with, and was inspired by their enthusiasm, praise and techniques.

Community Benefits

Having something available as a group workshop was a fantastic opportunity for like-minded people to come together and share their appreciation of the creative arts. The workshops were intended as an educational and creative outlet, however they proved to be a great social occasion for local women. The workshops were a great start in recognizing the need for creative opportunities in the local area, and providing women with a chance to provide support and friendship to one another. Eco-dyeing was also a fantastic medium to teach to primary school students, as there is no 'wrong answer'. They were encouraged to experiment, make a mess and get involved, as they created their own amazing patterns and colours.

Public Outcome

The project consisted of four one day workshops, held at the Banyena Hall. Lead Artist Hilary McAllister taught participants the process of eco-dyeing. All materials were supplied, including a range of flora collected from local gardens, road sides and from around the Hall. Participants then experimented on swatches of fabric to see the outcome the dye would have on the fabric. After a lunch break, participants put their skills to the test on larger pieces of fabric. The school students made these as a group, while the adults made their own, creating scarves and fabric hangings. At the end of the day Hilary and the participants discussed the effectiveness of the different plants and encouraged people to teach the skill to their family members. Participants were able to take their dyed fabrics home with them.

A small exhibition was put together at the Banyena Hall of some of the fabric screens created during the workshops. These were suspended in the Banyena Hall, along with a brief explanation of the process and photos from the workshops.



Australian Government

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Project Start Date	21/10/2016
Project End Date	23/12/2016
Project Location	Banyena
Federal Electorate	Mallee
No. Audience	50
No. Participants	40
Project Beneficiary	General Community
Main Art Form	Community Arts & Cultural Development
No. Artists Paid	1
No. Artists Unpaid	0
No. Arts Worker Paid	0
No. Arts Worker Unpaid	0