

**President's report to FAA Annual General Meeting
February 12, 2013
Submitted by Jean Rooney**

Welcome

Apologies: Berit Smerdon, Gerald Smerdon, Amani Waseff and Adam Conrad.

At our last Annual General meeting, Katie FitzRandolph our past president spoke of the positive U turn that our organization had taken. This trend has continued and the Fredericton Arts Alliance has proven that it is still relevant and is asserting a positive force for the arts and artists within this community. It is worth noting that our board has achieved this more stable status when there is still a loss of funding all round and a tightening of purse strings. We are operating in full volunteer mode, with our hard working board. This year has seen us move from survival mode to a more stable situation financially. We can now focus on future plans with strategic planning and long-term financial stability. Thanks again to an extremely hard working and dedicated board, whom I would like to thank for their energy, time and skill.

Charitable Status

As a registered charity, we have been able to tap into previously unavailable sources of funding, and we are grateful for the individuals and groups from whom we have received charitable donations amounting to \$635 dollars.

Membership

As of now we have 82 paid members - 3 corporations, 10 organizations, 1 student, and 68 individuals. This amounts to \$2,182 for memberships for 2012.

Arts News

Arts News is our free weekly art bulletin. It continues to provide the most comprehensive possible listing of arts news and arts events happening in the Fredericton region. This electronic listing of everything happening in Fredericton's rich cultural life is now in its 12th year. It remains our best-known project. Under the capable hands of Amani Wassef, it goes out every week to almost 1, 600 subscribers. Thank you to Amani for a wonderful job and good editing.

This project depends on the volunteer support of board member Russ Hunt, who keeps our mailing list up to date. *Arts News* lives on a grant of \$6,000 from the City of Fredericton. Thanks to the City for this funding, it is acknowledgment to the importance of and the continuation of this key link in Fredericton's cultural infrastructure. Every year we had applied to the city of Fredericton for this grant. ArtsNews is now embedded into the City's cultural budget, as of 2011, and we no longer have to apply for the funding to keep it going. This was a wonderful step achieved in no small part by Katie FitzRandolph.

www.frederictonartsalliance.ca

Our revamped website is long over due. We now have a volunteer Designer, Troy Moore, instructor of Design Studies who has agreed to take on the new website. Together with his students at CAT, Centre

for Arts and Technology, he will be redesigning the website and the branding for the FAA. This will give some polish and a fresh look and feel to our web presence that is looking tired and out of date.

Social Media

In late 2011, Jean Rooney set up a facebook page for the FAA. We now have 310 facebook members and growing. This is a wonderful tool for helping to spread awareness about our events. We are now able to invite approx 900 people to our events through facebook alone. It has helped to spread awareness among the 18 - 25 year old group in particular of our events and activities. We now need to think of how we can translate that number into memberships.

Artists in Residence Program

We returned to the Officers' Barracks last summer 2012, for the Artist in Residence. We received no City Grant this year for our program. We did however again receive the use of the space and electricity. Time and time again the feedback from the artists and visitors and all involved has been outstandingly positive. We felt strongly that these residencies should run despite no city grant. We did so, operating on a shorter timetable. We ran the placements for 10 weeks as opposed to the full 16 weeks that the "casemates" were open in 2011. This provided a sensible balance between supporting and giving a platform to the local artists while ensuring we did not overstretch ourselves financially and jeopardize other programs. We had a total of 16 artists in 10 weeklong residencies. Each artist received a \$400 honorarium. Something like 6,500 visitors dropped in on our artists for conversations about their work, their inspiration, the technical details of their media and so on. Over the summer, we showcased painters in oils, acrylics, watercolor, graffiti artist, animator, filmmaker, silversmiths, fiber artists, potters, sculptors, a writer and musician. Feedback from visitors and artists alike was positive and encouraging. The honoraria in total for artists came to \$7,200 dollars. The residencies culminated in a group exhibition in the City Hall Gallery on October 17, 2012.

There was no commission taken from artists and all monies made went directly to the individual artist. This Casemates Exhibition was scheduled to close November 30th. However, at the request of City Hall the works remained in place on display until February 1st. This gave much exposure to the artists and allowed their work to be available during that crucial Christmas selling season.

The Artists in Residence program received support this year from RBC, of \$2,500 (this was the final part of a three year grant totally 10,000 dollars) and a provincial Partnership Grant (\$3,000).

High on the Arts

Our fourth annual fund-raising gala, on Sept. 27 2012 took place at Charlotte Street Arts Centre. Our committee began meeting regularly in March. Special thanks to Cynthia Ryder, Renée Davis, Katie FitzRandolph, Bill Johnson, Allen Bentley and Sabine Campbell. This committee worked hard and faithfully and made the event a success. We were able to offer attendees a chance to bid on some outstanding art works as well as an interesting range of smaller silent auction items. There was entertainment and a bar. Artists were offered 50 per cent of the selling price of their works, so we we're not another organization calling on artists to subsidize our efforts through donations. This event raised a total of \$7,288.

Despite this success we feel that we can be more ambitious regarding this event. We will be concentrating on more aggressive ticket sales and marketing next year. And up-scaling the event.

Arts and Cultural Forum for Municipal Election

The Fredericton Municipal election prompted us to once again organize another in our series of election forums on arts issues. The nature of this forum was to be a debate between the two mayoral candidates. This municipal forum sadly did not take place due to the illness and subsequent withdrawal of Mayor Brad Woodside from the forum. With only one candidate able to attend this would make a debate impossible.

I would still like to acknowledge and thanks Marie Maltais for her hard work and effort with organizing this forum and providing Mem Hall for the venue. Also Barbara Roberts for preparing to host. On a positive note, this was successful as a reminder to keep the arts on the agenda and in communicating to the Mayor the importance of the arts and culture.

City of Fredericton Cultural Advisory Committee

On the invitation of Angela Watson the City's Arts Officer we were asked to provide feedback on the City's arts and Cultural policy as one of the stakeholders.

One of the city's objectives was to have a board of advisors on the arts and culture. This had long been over due and was part of the City's cultural policy.

The FAA took part through feedback sessions and meetings with Angela Watson in this process. A list of suggested candidates for an advisory board was passed to council. Jean Rooney the FAA president was nominated.

This was passed by council and the FAA will have representation on the New City Arts and Cultural Advisory board. There were only 15 people chosen in all. This is a very positive move for the alliance and affirmation to us of our continued relevance.

FAA attend the City's Economic Summit

The City of Fredericton is embarking on a journey to develop a new economic development strategy/model –called Vision 2020. David Campbell of Jupia Consultants was chosen to lead this exercise. David conducted various preliminary discussions with community stakeholders and subject matter experts prior to the official summit. He held a discussion group at City Hall and met with those in the city involved in tourism/culture. The president of the FAA Jean Rooney was invited by Mayor Woodside to attend this 'Creative Class 'discussion at City Hall on January 7th 2013.

Following this discussion we were represented by Jean Rooney at the City's Economic Summit Vision 2020 also by invitation of Mayor Woodside. This took place on January 9th and 10th at the Fredericton Convention Centre.

This gave us an opportunity to join the culture and tourism debate and provide feedback. The FAA were able to put the question back on the table that the City should have a percent for art scheme and we argued that Fredericton is lagging behind on this, Sackville has it, St. John etc. Bruce Mc Cormack (Downtown Fredericton) was very supportive of this and with our help we would like him to bring it to council. At the very end of the summit in the summary from Culture and Tourism group Bruce spoke regarding the percent for art- so it was heard.

The FAA argued that it is the artists and designers that bring the flavor and funkiness to Fredericton and it is very important to retain these people living in the City. It is my understanding that this is done

through practical support of grants (cash) and space given to organizations like ours that provide a supportive community to artists. After all they are the creators of the product, that both the galleries and institutes and the performing centers market. While it is an obvious thing that support should be given to a new performing art space and the expansion of the Beaverbrook, we should not forget the artists living in our community, the individual creators. It is the presence of this creative group that contribute to the economic success and retention of people in our city.

Pro bono Law Project

The purpose of the Pro bono Law Project is to create a useful legal resource for artist and arts organizations. We have shared this resource with other organizations including CARFAC Canada. Thanks to Kitty Maurey the supervising lawyer and the Pro- bono Students of Canada and the UNB law students. Also I would like to thank Katie FitzRandolph who has taken over supervision of this project. The current legal document is a revision of Copyright Law for artists. While a past project was completed on Copyright Law for the Artist, it was considered a timely update with a lot of change in the past while regarding copyright and digital media.

Staffing

We had the support of a terrific summer student paid through a federal grant from HRDC. Rachel Watters took over most of running the Artists in Residence and did a wonderful job. With the addition of her administration skills we have a strong set of documentation photos of the residencies.

The board

Executive Members

Jean Rooney - President
Allen Bentley - Vice president
Cynthia Ryder- Treasurer
Russ Hunt – Secretary
Katie FitzRandolph – Past President

Board Members

Renee Davis
Bill Johnson
Marie Maltais
Penny Pacey
Barbara Roberts
George Fry – Emeritus

Conclusion

Thank you for your commitment to the arts in Fredericton. I believe the move forward now for our organization should be to work out how best to communicate, to market our organization and what people want and need from us. I'd like to thank our board members for all their hard work throughout 2012 and for being so effective. They have been a good team and it has been a pleasure working with them all. On a final note please help spread the word and talk us up. Let others know you are a member and tell them about the work that we do.