

QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

CHS 90

RITCHIES MILL ARTS CENTRE LTD COLLECTION

Art Establishments, Launceston

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INTRODUCTION

Ritchies Mill Arts Centre was established in 1977 in response to the need to provide a base for amateur arts and crafts groups and community arts activities in Launceston. The historic mill buildings, purchased by the government in 1974 and controlled by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, were leased to the Centre for a peppercorn rental.

When the buildings were handed over to an interim management committee in mid-1976 they were in an unsafe condition and badly vandalised. Government funding allowed major improvements and the Centre was officially opened on 24 September 1977, with a full-time director appointed in late 1977. In 1983 when funding for the Centre ceased, this position was terminated and Ritchies Mill Arts Centre Ltd, a non-profit organisation, was run by a voluntary board of management. Board members were elected by subscribing members at the annual general meeting.

The basic purpose of the Centre was to provide a working environment for artists and craftsmen of all disciplines. Resident arts and crafts groups and individuals who rented spaces represented a wide range of activities, including manual crafts and visual and performing arts. Rents paid by the tenants helped the Centre to be financially viable.

One of the earliest community activities was the children's vacation program which ran for some years until 1989. A program of exhibitions was instituted, workshops held and a tea room and craft shop opened in the restored Miller's Cottage in 1981. Other Board initiatives included the Launceston Arts Festival in 1983 and artist-in-the-community projects, which included the painting of murals.

Longstanding tenants were the Tasmanian Potters Society (North), an original tenant, Ripples Café (later Restaurant) in 1984 and Gallery Two in 1987. Gambit Theatre and the Launceston Art Society were among the early tenants. Arthouse was located at the Centre from 1990 to 1994.

In 1987 when the Board renewed its lease for another ten years, in order to become more viable, the fundamental aims of the Centre changed to the promotion of quality Tasmanian artwork at a professional level and the development of an arts based industry. The Mill's location on the banks of the Tamar River, opposite the Penny Royal tourist complex and in close proximity to the Cataract Gorge made it an ideal site to pursue these aims. An artist-in-residence project and an emerging artist scholarship and program were instituted.

In 1994 the Board approved a proposal from the two main tenants, Ripples and Gallery Two, to take over the head lease and that the balance of the Board's lease be cancelled.

Ritchies Mill Arts Centre Board handed back the lease of the building to the State Government in 1995 and Ritchies Mill Art Centre Ltd was deregistered in 1998.

Some items relating to Gallery Two are included in the Ritchies Mill Arts Centre collection. This successful commercial gallery continued at the Mill after the Board ceased to exist.

The collection was donated to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in February 2000.

1. Legal Records

1/1	Ritchie's Mill Arts Centre Limited, Memorandum of Association, Articles of Association	1976
1/2	Ritchie's Mill Arts Centre, agreement with National Parks and Wildlife Service to conduct a craft centre	1979
1/3	Correspondence re amendment to Articles of Association	1980-1981
1/4	Agreement with Minister for National Parks and Wildlife re lease for a craft shop	1984
1/5	Lease agreement between Ritchies Mill Arts Centre and Ripples Pty Ltd	1985, 1989
1/6	Agreement with Minister for National Parks re lease portion of Ritchies Mill Complex for purpose of conducting craft centre	1987
1/7	Licence from Director National Parks and Wildlife Service to conduct art and craft workshops exhibition gallery craft outlet and studio-auditorium	1987
1/8I	Indenture between Ritchies Mill Arts Centre and Cockatoo Workshop Inc	1990
1/9	Ritchies Mill Arts Centre Company Limited, draft deed of release	1995
1/10	Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, tenancy agreements with Julian Bamping; Jonathan Bowden; Carole Chanter; Terri Fitzpatrick; R J Foley; S R Hegedus; Michael Herbert; Graham Holton; Launceston Art Society; Beatrice Maddock; John Parish; Gwen Parsons & Denise Campbell; Gwen Parsons & Gail Greenwood; Wendy Paulucci; Mark Sladek; Elizabeth Smith; Walter Sutherland; June Svoboda (Some tenancy agreements are filed with tenants' correspondence)	1980-1993

2. Minutes of Meetings

2/1	Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, minute book of Board meetings	1976-1980
2/2	Minute book of Board meetings, January-November 1981	1981

2/3	Minute book of Board meetings, December 1981-October 1984	1981-1984
2/4	Minute book of Board meetings, November 1984-June 1987	1984-1987
2/5	Minutes of Board meetings, July 1987-December 1988	1987-1988
2/6	Minutes of Board meetings	1989-1990
2/7	Minutes of Board meetings, January-September 1991	1991
2/8	Minute book of board meetings, October 1991-December 1995	1991-1995
2/9	Minutes of annual general meetings (lacks 1984, 1991)	1979-1996

3. Correspondence

3/1	Background correspondence to establishment of Ritchies Mill Arts Centre	1974-1976
3/2	Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, correspondence	1978-1982, nd
3/3	Correspondence (includes some correspondence re Launceston Arts Festival)	1983
3/4	Correspondence	1984
3/5	Correspondence	1985
3/6	Correspondence	1986
3/7	Correspondence, January-June 1987	1987
3/8	Correspondence, July-December 1987	1987
3/9	Correspondence	1988
3/10	Correspondence	1989
3/11	Correspondence	1990
3/12	Correspondence	1991
3/13	Correspondence	1992-1994
3/14	Correspondence	1995-1998

3/15	Correspondence etc re Tasmanian Potters' Society (North) Inc (includes lease agreements, Society's constitution, incomplete run of Society's newsletters from no.27, 1978- no.55, 1983; <i>The Tasmanian Potters' Society (North) Inc</i> , two brochures, nd)	1975-1994
3/16	Correspondence, plans etc re Miller's Cottage	1977-1980
3/17	Correspondence etc re Launceston Art Society (includes list of 1980 Society members)	1978-1987
3/18	Correspondence etc concerning tea room and craft shop	1980-1983
3/19	Correspondence etc, lease agreement re Gambit Theatre	1980-1986
3/20	Correspondence re applications for leasing workshop space and use thereof	1981-1993
3/21	Correspondence, report re converting mill silos and plan of silos	1982-1983
3/22	Correspondence etc re Chantale Delrue's mural on Robert Stewart Pty Ltd Esplanade wall	1982-1984, 1987
3/23	Correspondence etc re artist-in-the-community project	1984-1987
3/24	Correspondence etc re artist in residence, Ann Holtum	1987-1988
3/25	Correspondence re Architects Workshop (includes level 2 floor plan and report on heating and ventilation)	1987-1990
3/26	Correspondence etc re emerging artists scholarship	1988-1995
3/27	Correspondence etc re international artist in residency	1988-1992
3/28	Correspondence etc re proposed floating restaurant	1989
3/29	Correspondence re Mrs M Wilkinson's injury claim	1990-1994
3/30	Correspondence re artist in residence, John Wolseley (includes grant application, newspaper cuttings etc)	1991-1993
3/31	Correspondence re Poster Pole and West End projects	1992

4.Financial Records

4/1	Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, financial records	1977-1995
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5. Newsletters

- 5/1 Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, newsletters, no.1, May 1987; 1987-1993
no.2, June 1987 (includes list of company members on verso);
January, July 1988; November 1988; October 1989; July
1990; June 1991; no.1, April 1992; July/August 1993

6. Miscellaneous Records

- 6/1 Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, various papers: 'Aims – as 1976-1990,
adopted at public meeting 14 May 1976'; 'Report by curator nd
to Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board and Australia Council,
June 1979'; 'Aims and objectives'; 'Basic facts';
'Charges to exhibitors and users'; 'Discussion paper';
'Provision of studio space for artists and crafts persons';
'Information guide'; 'Short position paper May 1983';
'Report on programmes...1983'; 'Policy statement and
management plan, September 1984'; 'General policy ...
1984'; 'Policy statement and management plan, April
1986'; 'Submission to local government councils of the
Launceston region on the raising of support funding';
'Application to Ritchies Mill Arts Centre by Cockatoo Inc
for the leasing of space'
- 6/2 Eric Ratcliff and J R Jellyman, *A brief history of Ritchies Mill,* c1978
Launceston, c1978
- 6/3 Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, newspaper cuttings scrapbook 1976-1981
- 6/4 Applications for grants to various bodies 1978-1993
(Some applications are filed with related correspondence)
- 6/5.1 Applications etc for financial assistance for children's 1981-1989
vacation programs
- 6/5.2 Children's vacation programs posters *Oversized item* 1981-1989
- 6/6 Poster for Community Arts Weekend, 30, 31 March 1985; 1985
poster for Access Week-end, 7, 8 December 1985
Oversized items
- 6/7 Newspaper cuttings, media releases, 1983, 1986-1987, 1983-1993
1991, 1993, nd
- 6/8 Membership lists (includes list of Board members, 1989, 1987/88-
1990/91, 1992/93, 1993) 1993
- 6/9 Proposals etc for redevelopment 1987, 1993
- 6/10 Various plans of the building *Oversized items* 1986,1989,

nd

7. Photographs

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| 7/1 | Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, photographs of exterior of mill; Centre activities | nd |
| 7/2 | Slides of building and studios | 1986 |

8. Ephemera

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| 8/1 | Ritchies Mill Arts Centre, brochure for community arts weekend, March 1985; brochure for access week-end, December 1985; <i>Ritchies Mill Arts Centre</i> , promotional brochure, nd | 1985 |
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9. Miscellaneous Items

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| 9/1 | Proposed artist's co-op Launceston, minutes of meeting | 1989 |
| 9/2 | Information sheets re requirements for Craft Association of Tasmania; Lapidary Club of Northern Tasmania; Northern Branch Handweavers Spinners & Dyers Guild of Tasmania; Northern Branch Tasmanian Art Teachers Association | nd |

10. Gallery Two Records

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|------|---|-----------|
| 10/1 | Gwen Parsons and Denise Campbell, memorandum to Ritchies Mill Art Centre re leasing space and associated correspondence | 1986-1988 |
| 10/2 | Ritchies Mill Art Centre Co. Ltd, agreement for lease with G Parsons | 1987 |
| 10/3 | Ritchies Mill Arts Centre Co. Ltd, deed re right of termination of lease with Mrs Parsons | 1991 |
| 10/4 | Gallery Two, correspondence | 1987-1995 |
| 10/5 | Gwen Parsons, letter to V McGrath re another Art Centre | 1987 |
| 10/6 | Gwen Parsons and Gail Greenwood, memo to Board re Gallery Two rent on additional space | 1988 |
| 10/7 | 'Newsletter from Gallery Two' | 1992 |
| 10/8 | Gwen Parsons, 'A brief summary aims and objectives for Ritchies Mill Arts Centre'; promotional sheet, nd | 1993 |

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|-------|---|------|
| 10/9 | 'Gallery Two development needs' | 1993 |
| 10/11 | Gwen Parsons, certificate re providing work experience for participants in Commonwealth Jobskills program | nd |

OTHER SOURCES

QVMAG, Community History, CHS 89