

## FROM THE COAST

### Arts in Esperance

The arts are an important part of regional communities, helping us make sense of our world, broaden our experiences and even spur economic activity. They have helped communities heal and transform after disasters and have proven to improve literacy and the performance in maths and languages of students. The arts have the ability to connect us to the past, the present, and the future. Just think of how watching a great film or reading a book can transport you to a different place, culture or time.

The arts encompass visual arts as well as writing, theatre, dance, design, music and digital media. One of the biggest challenges facing artists in regional areas include limited access to professional development programs, fewer networking opportunities and reduced market access. The challenges facing arts lovers in the regions are accessibility to exhibitions and performances, and the potential cost to access them. This is where regional arts funding can make the world of difference, and the Shire is proud to offer funding from the Community Grants Program to help boost arts in our region.

Esperance is fortunate to have a thriving Arts community which is largely due to the enthusiasm and active participation of local residents. Three of our biggest arts groups had their Annual General Meetings over the past week, providing an opportunity for locals to volunteer and be involved in a whole range of exciting activities planned for 2016.

One look at our markets or even social media demonstrates just how wide and varied the options are for those looking to further a hobby or undertake a new endeavour. The Esperance Photographers Group provides an opportunity for amateur photographers to build skills and participate in a monthly photography competition. The Cannery Arts Centre holds a variety of workshops throughout the year for all ages including the upcoming Coolarts Clay Workshops, and the Consuming Eden In the Esperance Bioregion Exhibition.

The Esperance Community Arts Space supports many arts groups. Their current window display is helping to promote the Esperance Theatre Guild's upcoming performance of Cabaret – the Musical. Community Craft Nights encourage participants to bring a project, learn skills and pass on skills such as crocheting, knitting, sewing, quilting, paper making and felt ball making. They are always on the lookout for people to run demos. Knit for Art is an informal knitting and crocheting group that meet regularly to share their hobby.

Esperance also has groups for drumming, several different styles of dance, patchwork, Brass Band, ukulele, firetwirling, writing, singing, pottery, embroidery, painting, lace making, quilting and scrapbooking. If you'd like to be a part of the Esperance Arts scene you can contact Esperance Community Arts on 9072 1158 or if you're more an appreciator than a participant, you can find out what's on at the Visitor Centre section on the Shire website [www.esperance.wa.gov.au](http://www.esperance.wa.gov.au).