

12th February 2014
For immediate release

Get Creative In Neerim District This Autumn

It's time to get your creative juices flowing in a series of art workshops to be held in Neerim District this autumn.

There will be workshops held in mosaic making, ceramics, junkyard scrap, environmental art and linocut. Accomplished tutors and practicing artists who live locally will run all workshops.

Project team member Mary Hughes hopes the workshops will develop a sense of community cohesion through a common purpose.

"Social connections will be strengthened, happy energy will be generated and put to positive use, the sport and farming sides of our community will be balanced by a developing artistic and creative side, and a sense of unity in shared purpose will be evident", she said.

The junkyard scrap workshop will be held by Laurie Collins and will take place at Laurie's studio in Jindivick. He will teach budding artists welding skills and help them create metal bird sculptural pieces.

"I like to be involved in my wider community and it's exciting to help people realize that they too can create all sorts of things", said Mr Collins.

Ceramic artist Sue Acheson will teach the environmental art workshop from her pottery studio in Rokeby. Using found materials, participants will create sculptural pieces in a natural setting by weaving, building and hanging whilst being sensitive to their surrounding.

Workshops are open to all members of the community who wish to learn a new art form and explore their creativity and range in cost between \$30 and \$120.

More workshops will be held in winter and spring on the subjects of writing, painting, photography, jewellery and calligraphy.

These workshops are brought to you by the Neerim Bower Small Town Transformation project and will culminate in a mini arts festival to be held on the 26 October, 2014.

The festival is designed to become a lasting legacy for the town enabling Neerim South to become an important tourism destination in Gippsland and Victoria.

##ENDS##



**ARTS
VICTORIA**



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Information for the editor:

Following an intensive application and shortlisting process, Neerim South is one of five towns to receive \$350,000 *Small Town Transformations* funding from the Victorian Government for a significant artistic project with lasting legacy. Regional Arts Victoria presents Small Town Transformations on behalf of the Victorian Government.

The funding will enable people of all ages within the community to take part in a broad range of arts projects based around the concept of the bower bird. These include Artist in Residence School Projects, Community Workshops, a major Acquisitive Art Prize, and Community Art Prizes. Some of the art acquired through all these projects will be used to enhance the town and district and attract visitors.

These initiatives strive to stimulate economic growth within the town and surrounding areas.

Workshops will be held in March, April and May at venues in Neerim District. Workshops cost between \$30 and \$120 and participants must enrol and pay at least 7 days prior to workshop date. For more information email workshops@neerimbower.com.au

"Mating rituals of the Satin Bower Bird were inspiration for designing the Neerim Bower and the "Inspired by Birds" concept, developed by artists Phil Henshall, Christine Cochran and Keith Graham, with the Neerim District Progress Association. The Neerim Bower, located at the southern end of Neerim South, West Gippsland, will be an entrance to the Neerim District."

For more information visit: <http://neerimbower.com.au/> and <https://www.facebook.com/neerimbower?ref=hl>

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