



Basketry
South Australia Inc

NATIONAL BASKETRY GATHERING: A REFLECTION

Aldinga, South Australia, 3-8 April 2019



Experimenting with Open Hexagonal Plaiting
UK visual artist, Stella Harding
2019 Gathering Workshop, Aldinga

Photograph posted by Therese Flynn-Clarke
<https://www.facebook.com/BasketryGatheringAustralia/>

A Note from The Basketry SA President



Hi fellow Basketmakers,
Welcome to our *National Basketry Gathering: A Reflection* newsletter supplement.

We hope that it will bring back great

memories to those who went and inspire others to attend a national gathering themselves in the future.

I think that these events are unique 'conferences' in many ways because of their camaraderie, affordability and the many opportunities to stimulate our creativity.

Running a conference like this required enormous energy, enthusiasm and goodwill from the organising committee of more than ten, over forty volunteer tutors and more than 150 participants.

I'd like to thank our committee for their hard work, reliability, diplomacy and cheerful tolerance of all those meetings, minutes, phone calls, spreadsheets, newsletters, fibre collecting and allocating, transporting, banking, bill paying, sewing, and decorating.

Apart from the Gathering Committee I would also like to thank all the other BSA members who 'held the fort' when we were preoccupied, helped us out with last minute jobs and just generally kept us going.

Heartfelt thanks also go to all the volunteer tutors who gave their time and shared their skills and knowledge so generously.

Finally, on behalf of the Gathering Committee, I'd like to thank everyone who attended our Gathering and embraced it with enthusiasm, laughter and friendship. Your responses made it all worthwhile.

Best wishes

PAM WHITE
President
Basketry SA



The countdown begins – 2021 National Gathering, Katoomba NSW



The Gathering – Memorable Moments

The 2019 Gathering at Aldinga will be remembered by me for lots of small and personal moments.

Members from the Victoria group brought a photo album of historic photos from Joan Stone's collection which was enjoyed by many at the Gathering.

It is always important to acknowledge the history of basketry in our communities. Adrienne Nicholson from ACT delivered a wonderful collection of embellishments donated by Margaret Pyke who sadly is not able to work with them anymore. Margaret was able to contribute to the Gathering in that very practical way and we thank her for that.

Stella Harding's description of her work as 'Functional Mathematics' would have to be the quote of the Gathering.

Our wonderful Life Member Nancy Duggan has a new and rather individual way of judging competitions. When called upon to judge the winner of the Wine Glass decoration competition, she chose the design that, while incorporating recently learnt cobbling techniques, simply made her laugh (and I think it made us all laugh to see the emu foot cobbled to the bottom of the glass).

The amazing decorations around the Gathering site created by many BasketrySA members including Sylvia Piddington, Chris Banks and the Southern Vales Basket Team, and Pam White; speaking with those who had just presented their first workshop at a national gathering; the green initiatives implemented to hold a major event without undue waste were all acknowledged. I especially appreciated the Southern Vales Basket Team collecting the food scraps for composting and separating the recyclable items and ensuring they did not end up in landfill; the moving account by Toni Rogers of the power of art; referencing Jacinda Ardern wearing a Kakahu cloak at the National Remembrance Service in Christchurch; and the sunsets over the ocean. Auntie Ellen's inspirational evening talk – full of positivity, understanding and hope for the future. These are some of my memories of the 2019 Gathering – I wonder what are yours?

MELANIE LITTLE



Fantastic Fibres

After nearly 2 years of organisation and preparation the National Basketry Gathering held at Aldinga is now only a wonderful memory.

Along the way I met and got to know some great, like-minded people from all over our magnificent country – what a treat! I also had the chance to catch up with many old friends.

My personal thanks goes out to everyone who helped us gather, store, prepare and transport our fantastic fibres. Without them we wouldn't have been able to run such a successful Gathering. Thank you, to you all.

I was also lucky enough to work every day of the Gathering alongside the nicest, hardest working person at the Gathering, Hilary Benson. A special thanks Hilary, I think you saved my sanity many times.

Although I was too busy to do any great amount of workshops I did complete a Bee Hotel with Terry's help and start a Marvellous Mariposa stitched item with Liz Yates, around a beautiful piece of her pottery. Thanks to both of you and all the tutors who shared their skills so willingly, with so many. That's what it's all about. Sharing our skills. Would have loved to have partaken in the wine tour that Julie Spry organised so well. I can understand why it was booked out. Thanks Julie for all your good work.

I was also lucky enough to have my husband Rob on site and he was invaluable to myself and to others at the Gathering.

On signing off I wish NSW all the best with the organising of the 2021 Gathering to be held at Katoomba.

JUNE FAULKNER

Adelaide Ukulele Appreciation Society

All great gatherings take a lot of serious organising, and so it was over a year ago that an on-site

working [and relaxing] party wrote the special lyrics for the 2019 National Basketry Gathering, which of course focussed on basketry at Aldinga and not the boardwalk...

The lyrics of 'We're at Aldinga' were published for all participants, uke players practised diligently for the big night, and musicians hidden amongst the crowd were co-opted for a performance that raised the roof... and many phone videos. Alas, no call back phone calls, yet!

VICTORIA WILKINS



Grapevines, Ukulele's and Fibre

A welcoming installation comprising a large ball of dragon tree leaves woven onto a grapevine framework and several smaller balls made by Chris Banks and the Southern Vales Group greeted participants at the entrance to the Aldinga Holiday Park and set the scene for the next 3 days of basket weaving.

Fittingly for one of Adelaide's prime wine regions, grapevines were also used for a community project resulting in one very big grapevine basket which could be used for displays; perhaps filled with apples, pumpkins, flowers, fresh air or almost anything as long as you can lift it!

The Ukulele performance on the last night of the gathering was great fun. In hindsight this event could have been expanded if we had more ukes as we discovered several players amongst the crowd. The words to the song had been composed to a well known tune so everyone sang along.

You may wonder what happened to all the left-over fibre at the end of the Gathering. Participants were encouraged to take fibre home with them and we were pleased to hear that much of the fibre was saved from the compost heap and found a new home with my son declaring "I'll use them to decorate my sapling fence to fill the holes." In fact it looks quite good and if it only lasts 2 years he can do it again!

CHRIS BANKS

Second Time Around

My first basketry gathering was Queensland 2017 and what a raw beginner I was! Every experience was challenging, nervously exciting and fresh. I came home buzzed out and feeling I had achieved heaps. I proudly displayed my coiled baskets and banana leaf pot plant holder. Wow! I was so pleased with my efforts.

Second time around, Aldinga 2019, was much more comfortable (as the song goes!). People were familiar... "Oh! You were in the Snorer's hut in Queens... You managed to show me how to start coiling." An amazing mesh of familiar faces and smiles, "Just like a friendly home the second time you call."

This time I wanted to pocket as many hints, skills and knowledge as I could retain, though the memories are the best gift I take home from this gathering: Sitting among gum trees with a bunch of twitching fingers, shared laughter with team rope making and the astounding generosity of so many talented tutors. But the main treasure will be the inspiration and energy gleaned from such a gifted and generous group of natural fibre weavers.

BSA you were brilliant!

MARGARET BIGGS

National Gathering 2019







The Charms of McLaren Vale

The wine pavilion attached to the back of the dining hall proved to be a popular place at the end of each day, providing a great place for new and old friends to meet socially, as well as give people a chance to sample a variety of wines from the McLaren Vale region. Many thanks must go to our opening-night sponsor *Coriole* and to *Gemtree Wines*, *Beresford Wines* and *Pannell Wines* for conducting their wine tastings and sales for the remainder of the event. Their participation in our event was very much appreciated.



Thanks also go to the BSA volunteers who helped the Happy Hours run smoothly each night. But for many of the overseas and interstate attendees, the bus tour to the wineries was certainly one of the highlights. Four quite different wineries were visited including *Cradle of Hills* for a personalised 'walk and talk' through their small private vineyard, tasting certified hand-crafted organic wines at *J&J Wines*, then it was on to *Graham Stevens Wines* to enjoy Graham's wines and his entertaining Aussie-style bush personality. What would we do without such characters to charm our visitors?

Finally, the tour was rounded off by a fortified port tasting at the picturesque *Kay Bros Winery*, a fitting end to a gorgeous sun and fun-filled day. Many thanks to Peter at *Roadrunners Bus Hire* for his inexhaustible patience with making the tour so successful.

JULIE SPRY



The Wine Glass Challenge

It is a tradition at each gathering to have a special 'challenge' and this year was no different. Drawing on the fashion of wine glass name tags, it was decided to put the skills learnt over the 3 days plus the creativity of our members to the test.

It is amazing how different each and every approach to this challenge was, and how individuals adapted their skills. We had some terrific glass decorations, a symbol of our basket makers ingenuity, but the very best, as announced with some trepidation by our basketry elder, Nancy Duggan was (drumroll)... Caroline Hawkins, who drew inspiration from Laima's Cobbling workshop and produced an emu foot! Now how good is that!

VICTORIA WILKINS

Swap Baskets, Sunday Bazaar and Coffee Van

Another Gathering tradition is the Swap Baskets, where participants elect to bring along a basket to be put into a 'secret' draw. Donated baskets are given a number and the doner's name recorded; baskets are then put on display adding to the anticipation of the draw on the last day of the gathering. This is always a popular event and is a wonderful way to share our love of everything basketry.

The Sunday Bazaar drew large crowds of excited shoppers ready to pick up a bargain, to purchase supplies, souvenirs and gifts or just to browse. The Coffee Van was a very welcome attraction, after all, who doesn't love the smell of freshly brewed coffee in the morning.

EDITOR



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Workshop and Session Program

As you can see from the program below we had more than 40 tutors offering over 50 different workshops over 3 days, not to mention the many impromptu sessions, at this year's Gathering. The workshop program was adapted daily to accommodate last minute changes and participants were encouraged to check the daily notice board. Basketry SA members had been collecting, preparing and storing fibres and materials over the last couple of years and Hillary and Rob helped June to deliver these by wheelbarrow to the various workshop sites and little groups gathered under trees in spaces all around the site.

It won't be long before we are booking our places at the 2021 Gathering in Katoomba – watch out for details.

THURSDAY 9am–12noon	FRIDAY 9am–12noon	SUNDAY 11am–12noon & 2–4pm
Jed Gillian TAS Tension Trays	Nancy Duggan SA Coiling with Flax (limit of 15 participants)	Lee Cole TAS Conversations Unravelled Working with telephone wire
Aukje Boonstra TAS Stitching a Vessel or Pod Mixed media	Cindy Wood QLD Julia Rata-Te Raki QLD Maori Techniques in Harakeke/ Flax	Jilly Spencer TAS Beach Rope Baskets Recycled beach rope, twigs & shells
Brooke Munro NSW Sculptural Coiling Stitched hidden coiling of random shapes	Nolda Beynon SA Ghost Rope Baskets	Anne Jillet QLD Cordage and String Learn how to Thigh Spin
Terry Langham SA Native Bee Hotels Make and decorate a small functional and creative Bee Hotel for native bees	Sylvia Piddington SA Easy Neolithic Weave with Dracaena Draco Sylvia's interpretation of an ancient plaiting technique	Chris Rowley SA Small Flax Basket
Anna Lizotte TAS Coiling on an Abalone Shell	Sue Dilley VIC Working with Monofilament	Sonya Rankin SA Lakun Mara Weaving
Gem Congdon SA Wearable Woven Cuffs	Victoria Wilkins SA Judy Grey-Gardner SA Random Beginnings	Anne Newton VIC Wrapped Rocks Using flat cane
Bev Manthey SA String with a Twist	Therese Flynn-Clarke QLD Woven Flowers Using a number of Basketry techniques	Lyn Barton QLD Banana Leaf Rope Basket
Hilary Bedson SA Small Ribbed Baskets	Maree Brown VIC Twill Base Platter Woven Twill Platter inspired by Jean Stone	Marion Gaemers QLD Random Weave with Lomandra
Stella Harding UK Basketry for Sculptural Jewellery Explore techniques of plaiting, knotting and looping to create wearable or decorative adornments	Stella Harding UK Experimenting with Open Hexagonal Plaiting Create a basic three-dimensional structure and add various interlacing techniques	Pam White SA Seaweed Baskets
Jaqui Banks TAS Adding Some Wire	Jasmine Clark NZ Wire Feather Weaving (limit of 12 participants)	Ndina Fromm SA African Baskets

Ellen Trevorrow Jelina Haines Ngarrindjeri Weaving Morning and afternoon workshop	SA SA	Nicole Robins Date with a Date Palm Twining or open weaving using soft and hard fibres	NSW	Liz Yates Melding with Mariposa Experiment with traditional stitching of Mariposa around a pottery base	SA
Margaret Balfe Landscape Basket, Coiled and Stitched	VIC	June Faulkner Margie Davies & Julie Spry Stitch on a Stone	SA SA	11am – 12noon Lyn Coombe Artist's tags 'Fimo' How to sign your art	SA
Sally Blackwell Coiling with Recycled Material	NSW	Laima Guscia Let's Cobble Cobbling with grass or meadow hay	SA		
Cherree Densley Fragrant Teapot Stand With wrapped core	VIC	9am – 10am Toni Rodgers Mark Makers Wrapping Sticks	QLD		

WORKSHOP SESSIONS/DEMONSTRATIONS 1 HOUR

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1:00 – 4:00 Ellen Trevorrow Jelina Haines Ngarrindjeri weaving	2:00pm Bev Manthey Rope twisting demonstration
2:30pm Bev Manthey Rope twisting demonstration	2:30pm Floss Wainwright Banana – Demonstration

LARGE GROUP INSTALLATION

THURSDAY ANY TIME	FRIDAY ANY TIME	SATURDAY
Chris Banks Large Group Installation	Chris Banks Large Group Installation	To the beach in the afternoon
Chris Banks Large Group Installation	Chris Banks Large Group Installation To go to the beach on Saturday	



This was my first Gathering and I was absolutely blown away. Everything about it was great, there was so much to look at and so many workshops. I'm very excited and it's given me a new lease of life in my basketry career. Susanna De Santis, Regional Victoria

2019 National Gathering Group Photo



2019 Basketry SA National Gathering Group Photo



BIG thanks to ALL the South Australian team who put SO much work and effort into coordinating and facilitating the 2019 Gathering. I for one very much appreciated and enjoyed the fruits of your labour! Therese Flynn-Clarke, Queensland