



ARTEL

WINTER 2014

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

mragm
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

MEET

Gail Johnston

Vice Chairperson
Maitland Regional Art Gallery
Members Committee



COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON: Rosemary Keegan

VICE CHAIRPERSON: Gail Johnston

SECRETARY: Gena Parker

TREASURER: Jean-Paul Ruellé

NEWSLETTER SECRETARY: Catherine Kingsmill

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Elizabeth McLaughlin, Penny Lee

PATRON: Robyn Parker MP

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE: Loretta Baker

MRAG REPRESENTATIVE: Brigette Uren

NAME Gail Johnston

TITLE Vice Chairperson

Maitland Regional Art Gallery Members Committee

AGE 70 +

LIVES Woodberry

FAMILY Two cats, Bonnie and Leo

BACKGROUND

Born and raised in Melbourne, Gail won three scholarships to complete her secondary education. She gained a Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne University and a Bachelor of Education from La Trobe University. Soon after moving to Maitland in 1978, she joined the local branch of the National Trust and the Maitland Meals on Wheels Committee. She is a Foundation Member of Rotary Sunrise Committee and sits on the Friends of the Library Committee. Gail has been a volunteer since she was a teenager. She now volunteers at a local nursing home and church op shop. Her tireless dedication and organisational skills have been put to use on so many committees (some on a state and federal level). Maitland Regional Art Gallery Members are privileged to have Gail as a committee member. Needless to say, her experience as a headmistress comes in very handy at MRAGM meetings.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Gail pursued a career in secondary teaching in Victoria, mainly in the subjects of History, Geography and English. She often worked with migrant children from Italy, Greece and Turkey. She spent a year as an exchange teacher in Dorset, England before returning to Australia where she became a headmistress and finally one of two Deputy Principals at the largest high school in Victoria. After her marriage, Gail moved to Maitland and became Service Coordinator of the Hunter Valley Branch of the Home Care Service of New South Wales for 23 years.

IN HER OWN WORDS

When the new Maitland Gallery opened I was delighted that we had such a wonderful asset in Maitland and immediately became a member. Although I have no artistic talent and limited art knowledge, I do appreciate the access we have to the work of so many talented artists and craftspeople and enjoy visiting the gallery (and cafe) as often as I can and promoting the gallery to others, particularly newcomers to the district.

ARTEL ON-LINE

If you are interested in getting ARTEL on-line only please contact MRAG reception. You will also receive flyers and brochures regarding exhibition openings, art classes and excursions by email.

Art Gallery and Gallery Shop hours: Tuesday - Sunday 10am - 5pm | 230 High St Maitland NSW 2320 | 02 4934 9859 | mrag.org.au

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY JOE EISENBERG



(above) 2013 Q&A

MRAG 2020

As I embark on my 10th Anniversary as Cultural Director, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, I can be proud of so many wonderful events large and small that have contributed to MRAG's quality reputation today.

Over the past few months the staff and I have started to think of the gallery in the years to come, beginning with a plan for MRAG in 2020. Ultimately, we envision a robust art museum complementing Maitland's key services, dynamic in its diversity and rich in its reach. The Collection will play a pivotal role in shaping MRAG's future direction, specifically in its accessibility. Outreach programming will strengthen our education program, off site and through virtual technologies, and our exhibition diary will continue to inspire through narrative.

MRAG also sees great potential in activating the outdoor spaces. The art gallery is blessed to have extensive outside areas to add value to internal programs on offer. The gardens, such as the Labyrinth Project, could lend themselves to outdoor concerts, family picnic grounds, workshops and learning events, as well as a host of other activities. MRAG acknowledges the great support from many fundraising events, such as through the Members and the Rotary Q&A (to be held on 28 June this year) towards the Labyrinth and I am excited to see the gardens slowly breathe new life into MRAG this year and beyond.

To share your vision for MRAG, please email Deputy Director, Brigette Uren on email brigetteu@maitland.nsw.gov.au.



LOOK!

THE GALLERY SHOP

Looking for something interesting, unique, beautiful, quirky or locally crafted? We invite you to explore our Gallery Shop where you will find the perfect gift.



Our first coach of the trip of the year was a wonderful event shared by members and guests keen to sample the art, food and wine on offer from the Hunter Valley. Our generous sponsors Tyrrell's provided us with some of their finest wine and our host Scott Richardson provided a great tour of the vineyard and winery. We feasted among the barrels on Antonio Giner's spectacular paella and gourmet cheeses. A special thanks must go to John Barnes, Director of Cessnock Regional Art Gallery for his insightful floor talk and hospitality. We are lucky to have such a range of cultural institutions in our area and the opportunity to share our appreciation of the arts and local histories. Our Sydney guests were impressed with the exhibitions in our own Maitland Regional Art Gallery after a hearty breakfast in Seraphine the next day and all plan to return next year for another art and food visit to Tyrrell's.

The next coach trip planned is to the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes at the Art Gallery of NSW on 9 August. We arrive at the AGNSW for a private viewing and guided tour of the three competitions, with time spare to visit the art of New Guinea highlands in Plumes and Pearlshells, Max Dupain's photographs taken with Harry Seidler on a trip to Paris and contemporary artist Tom Nicholson's haunting response to a colonial maritime visitation. After lunch in Crown Street, Surry Hills we plan to pay The Hughes Gallery a visit to see the latest landscapes of Julie Harris and the cutting edge figurative work of new artist Nick Collison. Next is a trip to Brett Whiteley's Studio for a look at some of his greatest portraits, including *Self-portrait in the studio 1976* and *Art, life and the other thing 1978*, both winning entries in the Archibald Prize.

Remember that we are visiting Sculpture by the Sea on Wednesday 5 November this year. This way we'll avoid the weekend crowds.

Starting at Tamarama, we'll work our way back to the indoor sculpture tent at Bondi Beach and dine along Campbell Parade or beachside with some fish and chips before heading home.

Sculpture in the Vineyards (SINV) has been growing in popularity each year and provides a great opportunity for families to enjoy a day together surrounded by some inspiring art. First stop will be Cessnock Regional Art Gallery where prize-winning sculptors will present an exhibition of indoor works. After that it's to the wineries of Wollombi where we'll be guided by the SINV curator with artist talks, a barbecue lunch and a fun filled activity program for children. We encourage families to come along on our coach trips, just ring MRAG reception for children's rates.

We have heard from last year's wonderful trip volunteer Megan Dewsnap that she and Tibor have settled in to life in Dubai. Without her great help, and with the irrepressible Jean-Paul travelling to Europe to visit family for four months this year, there is a vacancy in the volunteer trip team. If you have some spare time during the week and would like to come along for the ride, please let MRAG know on 4934 9859.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday 9 August

The Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes

Wednesday 5 November

Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi

Saturday 22 November

Sculpture in the Vineyards, Wollombi

ARCHIBALD

WYNNE AND SULMAN PRIZES

ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

SATURDAY 9 AUGUST 2014

COACH TRIP
TO SYDNEY
ORGANISED
BY:

mragm
MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY MEMBERS

COST:

\$75
members

\$85
non members /guests

YOUR DAY*

* Some changes may occur due to unforeseen circumstances

- Depart MRAG 6.00am, 6.15am from Cameron Park and 7.00am from Lake Macquarie Gallery
- Deluxe coach and morning tea
- Private tour of the Archibald Prize at 9.30am
- Lunch in Surry Hills (own expense)
- Visit The Hughes Gallery
- Visit Brett Whiteley Studio
- Depart Sydney 4.00pm
- Onboard art film
- Return Lake Macquarie 6.15pm, Cameron Park 6.30pm
- Return MRAG 7.00pm approx.

ALL PICK UP/DROP OFF DETAILS IN SYDNEY WILL BE PROVIDED ONCE ON BOARD THE COACH.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL:

Call 02 4934 9859, email artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au, or drop into the art gallery.

MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY





(left) John Ogburn, *Red still life, (detail)* 2002, oil on canvas, 42 x 120cm, Private Collection, © John Ogburn Estate (top right) Desiderius Orban, *Still life*, 1911, oil on canvas, 94 x 128.5cm, Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Purchased 1977, © Desiderius Orban Estate (lower right) John Olsen, *Kitchen by the sea*, 1971, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, 183 x 228.5cm, Collection: Macquarie University Art Collection

To kick off the Winter Season of exhibitions, MRAG will be presenting the Orange Regional Gallery Touring Exhibition, *The Three O's*. Curated by Emma Collerton, this touring exhibition explores the legacy of Desiderius Orban and that of two of his students, John Ogburn and John Olsen. Both later taught at Orban's studio before blazing their own trails in Australian art.

With over ninety works drawn from major institutions and public collections, *The Three O's: Orban, Olsen & Ogburn*, reassesses the creative paths of three unique artists.

As art writer Hugh Speirs observed, "*The 'Three Os', as Orban called them... exercised considerable influence towards the acceptance of more radical approaches to art in the fifties and early sixties in Sydney, and thus in Australia.*"

The arrival of European refugees such as Orban (from Hungary) assisted in changing perceptions of modern art within Australia. In 1940 he established a studio at Sydney's Circular Quay that became a haven where creativity was championed.

Orban's mantra was "art equals creativity". He celebrated the idea of the artist as innovator. His views on creativity spread through his teaching as well as through his highly influential publications *Layman's Guide to Art*, *Understanding Art* and *What Is Art All About?* These ideas were influential in the development of his many students, most notably Olsen and Ogburn.

While Olsen nurtured a high profile career with commissions and appointments to art gallery boards, Ogburn by contrast retreated from the Sydney art scene and was pivotal in the establishment of Harrington Street Artists' Co-operative Gallery, which became a platform to showcase his work and that of his students. It remains a hive of artistic activity.

This Orange Regional Gallery Touring Exhibition was made possible by the generosity of a private benefactor and, the Harrington Street Artists' Cooperative Gallery. Thanks to the Gordon Darling Foundation, the exhibition is accompanied by a sixty page illustrated catalogue which includes an historical essay which places the artists and their works in context.

MRAG is proud to receive this exhibition as an opportunity to bring to Maitland three significant and influential proponents of mid to late 20th century Australian art. The Three O's exhibition brings together over eighty artworks from many private and public collections and is an exhibition not to be missed.

Entry to the exhibition and all MRAG exhibitions are free and everyone is welcome.

WINTER EXHIBITIONS



(left) Desiderius Orban, *Tower of Babel*, 1951, pastel on paper, 99.5 x 63.7cm, Private Collection. © Desiderius Orban Estate
(right) Kiera O'Toole, *Line as Recall 1*, 2013, acrylic and graphite on masonite 91 x 61 cm



(above) Lily Johnson, *When I grow up* (detail), 2013, ARTEXPRESS, Maitland Grossman High School



THE THREE O'S: ORBAN, OLSEN AND OGBURN

2 May - 29 June 2014

SIMONE PATERSON

108: EVERYTHING, NOTHING, INFINITY

30 May - 17 August 2014

ARTEXPRESS

23 May - 6 July 2014

DICK WATKINS: LIFE CLASS

Agapitos Wilson Annual Event

9 May - 13 July 2014

NOLA JONES: SELECTED WORK

9 May - 13 July 2014

JUDY HENRY:

REFLECTIONS OF LIFE AND LANDSCAPE

4 July - 14 September 2014

GRETA MIGRANT CAMP:

DISPLACED /ASSIMILATION AND STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS: VIVIENNE DADOUR AND GAIL BURROWS

4 July - 21 September 2014

ABOUT FACE: AN EXHIBITION OF ARTWORKS BY K-10 STUDENTS FROM HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST SCHOOLS

22 August - 2 November 2014

A TRIO OF TRESSPASSERS: A SCOTSMAN, AN ENGLISHMAN AND AN IRISHMAN: ANNEMARIE MURLAND, ANDY DEVINE, KIERA O'TOOLE

11 July - 14 September 2014

ARTHUR WICKS:

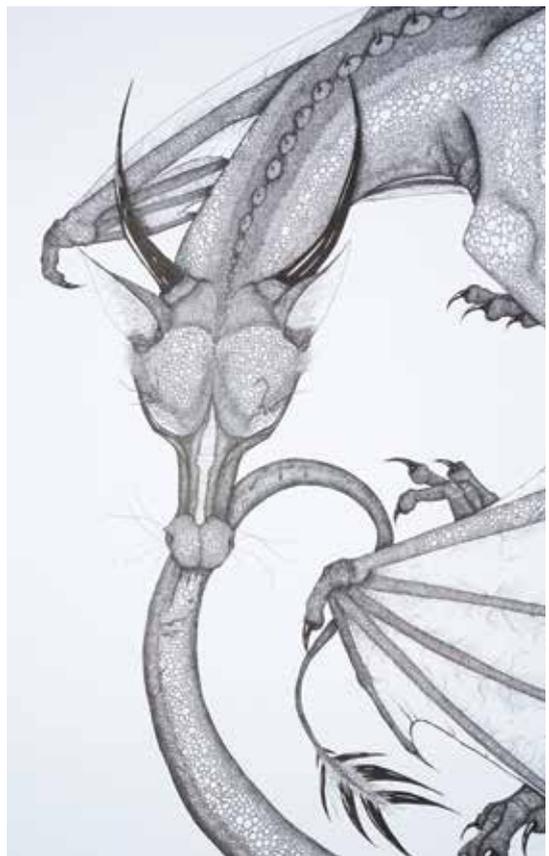
EARTH EXPLORATION ROVER MISSION

18 July - 14 September 2014

ARTEXPRESS

AT MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY

BY ANNE MCLAUGHLIN



(top left and top centre) Rebecca Naomi Wilson, Lambton High School, *Take only photographs, leave only footprints*, painting.
(lower left) Miranda Clare Hardy Singleton High School, *Evolution in a technological world: the lone wolf*, sculpture.
(right) Tahryn Winette Whately, All Saints College (St Mary's Campus), *Arabesque*, drawing.

ARTEXPRESS: 23 MAY – 6 JULY 2014 OPENING EVENT: 3 - 5PM SATURDAY 31 MAY 2014

For the second consecutive year MRAG is proud to host ARTEXPRESS, one of eleven ARTEXPRESS exhibitions during 2014 of exemplary artworks created by New South Wales visual arts students for the 2013 Higher School Certificate examination.

ARTEXPRESS at MRAG comprises forty artworks by forty Year 12 students from across NSW. To be selected for possible inclusion in ARTEXPRESS students must achieve results in the top band for their submitted Bodies of Work. This makes for a fantastic range of dynamic artworks from painting to graphic design, ceramics to time-based forms and drawing to collection of works to name just six of the possible forms.

Twenty two of the artists in the Maitland ARTEXPRESS were students of Hunter and Central Coast schools which gives a particular resonance to this exhibition showcasing as it does the thoughts, ideas and creative exploration of young regional artists. Some of these artists will be speaking about their artworks at our Artist Forums in June which gives everyone an opportunity to hear directly about their individual creative journey.

To accompany ARTEXPRESS there are a number of public programs organised by MRAG; for bookings and more information please contact the art gallery.

- **EXPLORING ART THROUGH PAINTING**
9am – 3pm Friday 6 June, Friday 13 June for Year 7-11 students
- **ARTEXPRESS ARTIST FORUMS**
11am Sunday 15 June, Sunday 29 June **everyone welcome**
- **YEAR 11 VISUAL ARTS STUDY DAY**
10am-2pm Friday 4 July for Year 11 students

The Arts Unit, Dept of Education and Communities, is hosting at MRAG:

- **ARTEXPRESS VISUAL ARTS STUDENT WORKSHOP**
Thursday 19 June: www.artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au
- **ARTEXPRESS TEACHERS' STUDY DAY**
Friday 20 June: www.artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au

For more information about ARTEXPRESS including images of the Maitland ARTEXPRESS artworks go to www.artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au

We hope that you enjoy the Maitland ARTEXPRESS exhibition!

ARTEXPRESS is a joint venture of the Board of Studies Teaching & Education Standards NSW and Department of Education & Communities hosted by Maitland Regional Art Gallery



BOSTES BOARD OF STUDIES TEACHING & EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS NSW

MEET OUR MEMBER ARTIST: DAVID UNICOMB

BY CATHERINE KINGSMILL



(left) David Unicomb (right) David Unicomb, *Nobbys Headland*, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 65 x 100cm

Maitland Regional Art Gallery is proud of its connection with the community through its education program. Many may be unaware that the current MRAG building has a long history in Maitland providing art classes. A chance conversation with member artist David Unicomb has revealed a wonderful story.

David Unicomb has always had an intense interest in art. As a child he poured over the images of the masters in his home encyclopaedias and later the art books in Maitland Library. When Mavis Cribb facilitated children's art classes in the "tech" building on Saturday mornings in the late 1960s, David's mother enrolled him immediately. David looked forward to these classes as did the other students, many of whom are now, not surprisingly, also members of MRAG. Another noted classmate, Michael Bell, has had a long association with Maitland Regional Art Gallery as an exhibiting artist as well as guest tutor. David developed his drawing and painting skills under the guidance of Anne Edmonds and was presented first prize in painting and a week's tuition at East Sydney Tech (now National Art School). Later, in 1973, his oil portrait of a Greek woman won a trip for David and his mother Patricia to the opening of the Sydney Opera House.

David's primary career has been as a registered nurse in the field of haematology and oncology. Through this work he has managed to travel extensively and actually visit many of the paintings which inspired him in art books all those years ago. During a five year stay in London he visited many European galleries, churches and museums as well as major galleries in the U.S. In 2008 David had returned to Morpeth and decided to study fine art again. These studies were on a part time basis due to the constraints of shiftwork and it was not until 2013 that David graduated with flying colours with a Diploma in Fine Arts from Newcastle Art School, Hunter Street. During his time of study he was a finalist in the Carol Duval Art Prize and the Manning Art Prize and revisited the National Art School for workshops with Lucy Culliton.

David's style has developed considerably over the years along with his love of art and music. He is now a most accomplished landscape and still life painter. Over the last twenty years he has also accumulated a small but considered collection of some of Australia's finest contemporary landscape artists, including some of our local artists. David says he is lucky to have such a great gallery as MRAG, which he visits regularly and loves showing to visiting friends. We think we're lucky to have David as a member too.

Free ART SUNDAYS

EVERY SUNDAY 11 AM - 1 PM
For kids* ALL AGES and their families



*Adult supervision
is required.

It has been noted that many of our members, like David, are keen art collectors. However not all collectors are familiar with cataloguing procedures, and there are many reasons for recording our precious artworks. The MRAG Members are considering an informal fundraising night including a lecture on cataloguing from our Collection Management Curator, Cheryl Farrell. If you think you could benefit with some handy hints in the field of basic conservation and cataloguing, please call MRAG reception to register your interest on 4934 9859.

DAYS OF SUMMER FROM THE COLLECTION

BY CHERYL FARRELL



Salvatore Zofrea, (left) *Days of Summer*, 2007-2008, (left) *Devil Grevillea with Parrot Peas and Murdannia*, (detail) 2007-2008, hand coloured woodcut prints on Japanese Hitachi paper, Donated under the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Salvatore Zofrea, 2014.

As Collection Management Curator I manage all aspects of the MRAG Collection which includes managing donations received through the Cultural Gifts Program (CGP). Another area of my role at MRAG is to coordinate MRAG's touring exhibitions.

This year those two separate responsibilities merged when the well-loved MRAG touring exhibition, *Salvatore Zofrea-Days of Summer* finished its four year tour across the country and was offered as a CGP donation to the MRAG Collection by the artist Salvatore Zofrea.

Salvatore Zofrea is one of Australia's most accomplished artists, with masterful and sophisticated expertise in the medium of woodcut prints. MRAG has a strong focus on works on paper for its collection and exhibition program and in 2008, after seeing the *Days of Summer* suite of prints displayed at Mosman Art Gallery, Joe Eisenberg knew that these prints would make a very beautiful exhibition that would be appreciated by the audiences of MRAG and beyond. So early in 2009 while MRAG was closed to the public undergoing our redevelopment and transformation we prepared *Days of Summer*, as a touring exhibition.

The exhibition consisted of forty four woodcut prints, including a large 180cm x 294cm triptych, which all featured native flowers and birdlife, presenting the life, colour and movement found in the bushland close to Zofrea's studio in Kurrajong in the Lower Blue Mountains. These works were created with a Japanese influenced technique, hand carved kauri pine, jelutong and magnolia

woodblocks, hand printed onto Japanese paper. Some prints were left black and white, highlighting the adept line of Zofrea's drawing skills and surety of his cutting technique through the woodblock. Others were hand coloured with pigment, applied from the reverse of the paper, soaking through but not beyond the black lines in fluid pools of colour found in the Australian bush.

MRAG received an overwhelming response from regional galleries wanting to host the exhibition and in April 2009 the exhibition left MRAG to tour to ten venues across NSW, ACT and Queensland. Feedback from the galleries and their visitors included these comments:

"Our audience was fascinated by the technique and process of the woodcuts. The beautiful imagery was engaging."

"Days of Summer – Superb!"

Many of you who saw the exhibition and met Salvatore when *Days of Summer* returned to MRAG during the tour, in December 2009 through to February 2010, would agree.

It was fitting that the tour ended at Hawkesbury Regional Gallery in Windsor last year – close to Zofrea's Kurrajong studio and the bushland environment that inspired much of the work. It is now also fitting that the MRAG Collection will be home to the works that made up a most successful MRAG touring exhibition.

THE GALLERY SHOP

BY ANNA BUXTON SOLDAL



(top and lower left and lower right) *Let's Make Some Great Art* book available at the Gallery Shop.
(top right) *The Great Big Tie Dye Kit* available at the Gallery Shop.

With winter fast approaching and the family spending more time indoors why not take the opportunity to keep the whole family busy with the creative and beautifully designed activities available in our Gallery Shop.

Kids can try their hand at tie dyeing, using the fabulous and convenient kits made by Hunter Valley based company Magic Starfish. The ethical and environmental focus of the company provides an opportunity to create unique, one-off t-shirts, using non-toxic dyes. The kits are also a great way to demonstrate how the technique of tie dyeing gives great freedom in colour and pattern design.

Marion Deuchars is an internationally acclaimed illustrator, and her award winning activity book *Let's Make Some Great Art*, encourages children to use their imagination and think outside the box. This stimulating, jam-packed book covers an extensive range of step by step instructions, developing basic techniques in truly innovative ways.

The Gallery Shop also stocks a variety of puzzles, vintage sewing kits, unique wind-up toys, a diverse selection of books and catalogues (for both children and adults) and much, much more. Come in for a hot chocolate and a wander through the gallery to see the full selection for yourself!

Maitland Regional Art Gallery is proudly supported by:





Presented by The Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise, Maitland Regional Art Gallery and Friends of Palliative Care. This joint community initiative will raise funds for Friends of Palliative Care and Maitland Regional Art Gallery projects.

HOSTED BY:

Paul Bevan

1233 ABC Newcastle

PANELISTS:

Jenny Aitchison

Foundation President, Women's Network Hunter NSW

Candace Barron

Deputy Commissioner, Retail Tenancy Unit

Hilton Grugeon

Leading Hunter Businessman

Rosemarie Milsom

Senior Journalist, Newcastle Herald

Matthew Tranter

Principal Partner, Tranter Lawyers

JOIN US FOR MAITLAND'S VERY OWN VERSION OF THE POPULAR ABC PROGRAM Q&A, FOOD, WINE, MUSIC AND SPIRITED DEBATING ON THE TOPIC OF THE EQUALITY OF THE SEXES IN THE 21ST CENTURY, PRIZES, AUCTIONS AND MORE.

Saturday 28 June 2014

6.00 pm: Champagne and Canapés at Maitland Regional Art Gallery

7.00 pm: Dinner at Maitland Town Hall

Tickets \$95 RSVP 20 June

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: : Maitland Regional Art Gallery: 49 349 859
or Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise: 0447834601 mrag.org.au for more info.

