

*Closing the gap*

Dear Supporters,

**I have strict instructions from Des, Rowan's manager, to keep my contribution short to this, our latest newsletter. And for the very best of reasons: we have so much happening at Rowan to tell you about. I am delighted, therefore, to do as I am told.**

There are, however, two items of news I must mention. First, we are pleased to welcome Judith Jones to Rowan as a member of the permanent staff. Judith has been involved on a project basis with Rowan for the past four years; now she is the person responsible for making Rowan better known to grant-giving bodies and to the Cambridge community. With her strong arts background and her rapport with Rowan, Judith's contribution to our plans for the future is pivotal.

Which leads me to the second item: funding for our students. Des keeps the trustees well informed on this crucial matter, so we are aware as a board that changes to our funding are on the way, as the County Council puts in place the personal budget scheme, which will allow students with learning disabilities



Sam

the freedom to choose where to purchase services directly for themselves. This is a difficult task for those at Shire Hall to undertake, as implementing new measures always is. Des and the board are agreed that Rowan will help the officers faced with this challenge, if help is required.

I could continue happily to write to you about the garden plans, the new woodworking machinery, the Donarbon commission and so much more, but I promised not to. I do hope you enjoy reading about all these projects and more as the newsletter gives you a glimpse into our busy days at Rowan.

With warmest regards,

**Margaret Phillips, Chairman**

*Ushka's Interview*



I am 18 years old and I have been coming to Rowan since the summer. I've got lots of friends. My special friend is Laura.

At Rowan I like ceramics and quite like woodwork. My tutors are Jeni and Anna. I like smoothing the clay and I like the textures.

On my first day at Rowan it was a bit different to school because I hadn't met anyone before. I felt good and relaxed. My best piece of work is the house I am making in ceramics. At home I get out my art box and do drawings and my most favourite thing is my computer. At Rowan it is nice to meet new people and I like keeping in touch with people. I really love it.

**Ushka was interviewed by David.**

*Training*

**Congratulations** to all our students on our training programme for all they have achieved over the last academic year – Janet reports that everyone is working well towards their training targets for this year

*What Rowan means to me*

Bryn Williams is one of our tutors. He has worked at Rowan since December 2008 on our wood project and writes:

Over a number of years spent designing and making bespoke furniture, I became all too aware of how the pressures of self-employment eroded the original purpose I opted for the life of a craftsman.

Rowan appears to be the antidote. Working with the people who use the facilities and the atmosphere of creative diversity, constantly refreshes my enthusiasm and excitement for working in my chosen material, wood.

It is also great to go home after a day at work, knowing that I have made a difference to people's lives.



Ashley

*Annual General Meeting*

**You are warmly invited to our AGM, at Rowan.**

**20th January 2010**

**2pm to 3.30pm**

**A chance to meet us all and look round our studios**

You have a chance to see our work at

**Anglian Potters Christmas Exhibition**  
14th November to 13th December  
All Saints' Church  
Jesus Lane, Cambridge  
10am to 4pm

**Winter Open Studios**  
Saturday 28th November  
And Sunday 29th November  
10am to 5pm at Rowan

## Commissioned Work



### Thumbs Up from Donarbon!

Neil, Bryn and the Wood Project team are enjoying the creative challenge of designing a public sculpture for Donarbon. The final piece of work will be positioned at Donarbon's new education facility. This piece of work has been commissioned following a schools' competition run by Donarbon, where the entrants were asked to design a piece of public art representative of recycling and the need to look after our planet. The winning entry is being used as the design brief and features a hand holding the world. More news later.....



Luke

## The Role of Art?

### Des Trollip writes:

You may have come across the term 'social audit' or 'social accounting'. This is a process which enables us to assess our non-financial value, demonstrate our social impact and measure the extent to which we, as a charity, live up to our mandate. In other words, do we do what we say we do and is there social value in what we do? As part of this process we recently discussed the role ART plays in our students' lives and the contribution it makes to enhancing their lives, particularly with reference to learning disability. There is an unspoken association of art, intrinsic to working in the arts, with creativity and imagination, personal growth, self expression, expressive activities, intuition and imagination.

**So what is the role of ART in our students' lives?** Listed below are just some of the benefits we have identified.

- Encouraging practical problem solving - developing lateral thinking, inventiveness and risk taking, making decisions and judgments.
- Personal and psychological wellbeing by providing purpose and meaningful occupation.
- Development of fine motor skills through manipulation of materials and tools.
- Encouraging personal growth - Self esteem, self confidence, sense of identity and explicit connection between self and society.
- Understanding personal uniqueness and developing self reliance
- Perceptual training and understanding the visual world
- Understanding one's inner world - of feelings, imagination, importance of self expression and personal feelings in a world shared with others.

The social value of all these benefits include physical, personal and psychological wellbeing by providing purpose, meaningful occupation and opportunities for social contact, the corner stone of Rowan's work. In today's target and financially driven society these personal benefits to our students ironically have positive financial implication, through reduced burden and costs to front line services and local government which is not always recognised in real terms, but this is the subject of another discussion....

## Rowan News

Emma, Luke and Chris won prizes in the Mencap Snap competition this year. Emma attended the awards ceremony in London – where she danced with Nick Cotton of Eastenders fame!

Our summer Open Studios Exhibition was a great success. We welcomed many friends, old and new.

Our ceramicists are going through a period of experimentation with new glazes, wax relief and combining fired glass in their work. Watch this space.

Anna, Nicky and Judith have recently

joined us as new members of our staff team. Anna and Nicky support Amy's Changing Images Project. Judith has taken on Marketing and Fundraising.

Abi soon returns after a period of maternity leave – we are looking forward to welcoming her back

Student numbers have doubled over the last 5 years so we continue to develop our workshop and studio space to maximise its use.

Our garden is underway - progress update in our next issue.

## Venue & Studio Hire

Rowan regularly hires out its gallery and studios for workshops, courses, exhibitions and events. If you are interested, please do contact us for information on prices and availability.

If you would be happy to receive information about Rowan by email, including future newsletters, please let Judith know by sending an email to [judith@rowanhumberstone.co.uk](mailto:judith@rowanhumberstone.co.uk), or use our Contact Form on our website.

Layout and Print by Burwell Community Print

## Contacts

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Distribution by Rowan's Student Workskills Team