



THE abstract creations of Georgie Carrigan, right, were admired by Virginia Clift, left, and Mary Browne.

# Turning scrap pieces into masterpieces

THERE is a surefire spark about Gunnedah women's welder group, according to Julia Anderson, wife of former Member for Gwydir, John Anderson.

Mrs Anderson, who officially opened the Metal Madness exhibition at The Civic on Friday, said she was amazed by the technical skills and creativity exhibited by students from Gunnedah TAFE's decorative welding course.

She said the course "empowered" women by allowing them to maintain the farm or household without being reliant on their male partners.

Mrs Anderson said with depression on the increase in country towns, the group helped to overcome this problem by giving women a creative outlet.

"Dr Arch Hart, an expert on depression, talks about the 10 habits of happiness and lists creativity as one area of reducing depression.

"It is important for people to have the freedom to create to stimulate happiness.

"The class gives women not just technical welding skills but also the ability to bounce ideas off each other. It's also very much a social outlet."

Head of Engineering at Gunnedah TAFE, Steve Wicks, says the women's welding course, which has been running for the past three years, is the only one of its kind in the New England area.

"Course participants should be congratulated for achieving so highly in a non-traditional trade area for women. The girls have grown in stature and now are continuously pushing their creative boundaries," Mr Wicks said.

He extended his thanks to the engineering businesses and the Gunnedah Shire Waste Management Facility which supplied scrap metal to the students.

"Gunnedah engineering businesses let the girls rummage through their rubbish bins to find scrap metal. But with mild steel now being sold at \$220 a tonne, it's no longer rubbish and we are extremely grateful for their continued support," he said.

Mr Wicks said the course had been extremely successful with some of the participants having gone on to start their own decorative welding businesses.

Welding students Vera Banks and Roz Warden took out the Metaland women's welding competition for their decorative pieces.

Metaland's Chris Dowdle had donated 20 sheets of metal to each student to challenge them to come up with a creative masterpiece.

"The women took up the challenge and the pieces are so good that I had to award two winners," Mr Dowdle said.



OFFICIALLY opening the welding exhibition was Julia Anderson, left, with women's welding teacher Roz Warden.



## Carinya Christian School KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

Members of the community with Kindergarten aged children are invited to attend the Carinya Christian School Kindergarten 2008 Orientation days

Day 1 - Wednesday, November 21  
11.25am for an 11.30am start. Parents will remain with their children for the morning and the time will conclude by sharing your lunch together

Day 2 - Wednesday, November 28  
Children will be in school for a total time together in the class room, followed by a talk from the Principal and a light lunch will be provided for parents

For more information, or to register your attendance, please contact the school on 6742 2766

Carinya Christian School  
46 Elgin Street, Gunnedah Phone 6742 2766  
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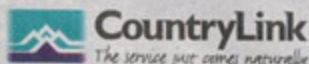
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MIRROR, mirror on the wall who's the fairest on them all. Linda Kolokotas with one of her practical but beautiful creations.



WOW, what a cow! Nikki Pegg shows off her creation at the Women's Welding exhibition.



VERA Banks, pictured, was a joint winner of the Metaland Women's Welding Award for her warrior mask.



MICKEY'S number one, according to Julie Donnelly, who crafted her 1950s style Mickey Mouse out of metal.



SPORTING a set of metal angel wings was women's welder Debbie Payne.