

" It's a small world'

7 October - 20 October 2009



Not so long ago a small idea started forming in the minds of a group of ladies who go by the name of the 'Knitting Grannies'. They had always been a bunch of actively charitable women who met regularly to knit items for the children of Auckland which passed through Middlemore Hospital and reached out to the wider community.

A group with passion and dedication like that always need a bit of a challenge and that came in the form of The New Zealand Steel Gallery approaching them to participate in creating a piece of artwork for the community in a similar vein to projects held in Auckland by the 'Knitterati' who knitted blankets and then donated them to the City Mission after they had innovatively been displayed in an Auckland Gallery.

We believed that we could achieve something similarly fun and worthy, so set about developing a concept. Joan Loader the leader of the knit pack suggested an installation of knitted booties which is to be presented in a manner that would comment on the way our society deal with children. This involved careful thinking of suggestive placement,

music, lighting and of course a large volume of booties to create the desired effect and so the ambitious figure of 2000 was decided on.

Initially a few shook in their boots at the prospect of that many booties, but with gusto they started to spread the word and it wasn't long before many people in Franklin started rallying around and contributed in the way of donations of wool or getting started themselves.

Joan has been known to come home from a day out to find an anonymous bag of booties in a bag on the doorstep and so the big figured was soon being reduced stitch by stitch. Now there is the wildest array of shoes, suitable for every little soul.

This event is very dear to The New Zealand Steel Gallery and the Knitting Grannies, not only because it is a celebration in achieving something big which will just keep getting bigger once these little shoes reach their owners but also because the art concept is contemporary, moving and thought provoking and created by arguably an unlikely source!

We would like to invite all of the secret stitch birds who dropped their booties off and those who kindly donated wool to make an appearance on Saturday and put their name on the 'contribution list'. A warm welcome is also extended to the public to come and see what these inspiring women have achieved.