INK PEOPLE
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Weaving the Arts into the fabric of our Community since 1979
There’s a story that gets repeated in the Ink People office a lot. It’s the story of some art students, and the equipment they couldn’t afford. When visitors go into the unassuming Art Deco building on 7th Street, for one reason or another, they are often surprised by how much other stuff is also going on there. Maybe they came in to meet with a teacher, and found that there was also a gallery. Maybe they are pitching a DreamMaker idea to the Board of Directors, and found out about the MARZ Project free digital media lab for youth. “Wow, I didn’t know all this was here too.” they’d say, then inevitably ask “What does ‘Ink’ have to do with all of this?”

No, the Ink People does not do tattoos.*

The story goes like this . . .

*Technically, there are a few tattoo studios like Visual Tattoos in Arcata, which have participated in the North Coast Open Studios, a DreamMaker Project, so in a way ... we do actually do tattoos.
In the late seventies, a group of printmaking students were graduating from Humboldt State University when they realized that none of them could afford the one piece of equipment none of them could work without; a printing press. Not to mention the space to keep such a beast, lights, running water ... then there was what to do with the Art once it had been wrought into existence. Art school taught them many things about color and composition, about form and texture, but it didn’t teach them how to live as artists. So, they did what lots of Artists do when they have a big task in front of them, they banded together.

The Ink People was born from that group of students including co-founders Libby Maynard and Brenda Tuxford. They pooled their resources, meeting in coffee shops and living rooms to plan, holding office hours in Tomaso’s, then a pizza parlor in Old Town, Eureka. They organized shows, including the first one in what is now Mazotti’s on the Arcata Plaza, and in the “Wacko Building,” now the C Street Galleries.

After around five years, the Ink People finally landed its first dedicated working space in an old Theater on F Street, Eureka. “There was a bar downstairs,” remembers Libby Maynard, “Willie T’s. Upstairs where we were, was an old dance club. Shag carpeting, pigeons in the rafters. We set the litho press up on the wooden dance floor because it was the only uncarpeted spot.”
Throughout the 80’s and 90’s, the Ink People grew and evolved, adding more resources and skills to their shared toolbox.

By 1988, they were settled in the familiar Municipal Auditorium Building in Eureka where collaborative projects included studio space, classrooms, and the Gallery.

Printmakers worked side by side with painters, sculptors, and photographers. Then came the looms, the musical instruments, and eventually the computers loaded with software for writing, or audio, video, and graphics.

Everyone knew where the Ink People was, and that you could go there to get involved in the Arts, or just hang out with creative types.
Youth programs at the Ink People leave their mark on the community in more ways than one.

The Rural Burl Mural Bureau was a mural painting crew of at risk teens working with Artist in Residence Duane Flatmo to beautify Old Town Eureka with murals. With major grant support and help from the community, the Mural Bureau put up over a dozen works of public art, and helped a generation of Eurekans experience a better sense of pride in their community.

The MARZ Project started when a group of artists including Donvieve and Annie Reid wanted to share their creative skills with teens. Flexible and youth driven, the MARZ Project has facilitated projects ranging from painting classes, to instrument lessons, all ages hip hop shows, documentary filmmaking, graphic novels, you name it. Teens and young adults work one on one with a professional artist mentor on their own projects, giving them not only a creative outlet, but a positive mentor relationship and media creation job skills.
THE FIRST PRESS 1981

Mark Dube, Libby Maynard and Brenda Tuxford’s Son Jim Bowes Printing on the Original Litho Press

Brenad Tuxford and Mark Dube

Libby Maynard Teaches Litho Printing to Dave Harvey and Others
Libby Maynard Printing on the Ink People’s Original Press in the Ink People’s First Studio Space “The Pigeon Palace”
City of Eureka

Proclamation

In recognition of
The Year of the Ink People
2019

Whereas, The Ink People has been "Weaving the Arts into the fabric of our Community" since 1979, bringing art and culture opportunities to individuals and groups from every walk of life; and

Whereas, Co-founders Libby Maynard and the late Brenda Tuxford dedicated their lives to nurturing fertile ground where creativity can thrive; and

Whereas, The Ink People changes lives by connecting our communities with resources for cultural development, encouraging people to exercise their humanity, build civic discourse and engage their creative potential; and

Whereas, The Arts in Humboldt represent a large section of the economy, and Humboldt County has the highest number of Artists per capita, making arts access an important economic resource to protect and grow; and

Whereas, The Ink People has created countless collaborative connections giving voice to those who would otherwise be left silent through dozens of core programs and hundreds of DreamMaker projects through the years; and

Whereas, The DreamMaker Projects make up over 100 different self-directed arts & culture groups, representing a truly diverse cross section of our community; and

Whereas, Creative expression, and cultural engagement improve communication, advance education, open dialogs, and shine a light on the human condition to better understand who we truly are; and

Whereas, 2019 marks the 40th year of the Ink People’s service to our community under the leadership of Cofounder Libby Maynard.

Now, therefore, I, Mayor Susan Seaman, on behalf of the Eureka City Council, hereby proclaim hereby proclaims 2019 as the year of the Ink People, and encourages all community members to join in the celebration of grassroots community arts, and their invaluable contribution to our quality of life.

Susan Seaman
Mayor
January 15, 2019
On top of the shared resources for creation now all under one Ink People roof, Maynard and Tuxford found that their skills in administration, bookkeeping, grantwriting, and nonprofit incorporation were also valuable resources to share. They started the DreamMaker Program then, to share what they had, learned and help other community projects get off the ground. When Brenda Tuxford passed away in 2004, she left a thriving community Arts space including dozens of active programs serving artists of all ages and abilities.

In January of 2010, a 6.5 earthquake shook the foundations of the Muni, and the now iconic Ink People space was shuttered. Big red tags warned people away at the door. At first the evacuation was temporary, then it became clear that the City would not be able to continue donating space to this valued community resource.

Though the building was damaged, the foundations of the Ink People proved more robust. The offices, Gallery, and youth programs bounced around from 2010 to 2017, landing temporarily in the pre-renovation Carson Block Building as
guests of NCIDC, on 5th Street next to Bless My Soul Cafe, and finally where we are today on 7th Street. “We’ve formed an Arts trifecta here with RAA and the Arts Council,” says Maynard, but the reach of the Ink People stretches well beyond our art covered walls.

As of today, there are over 100 active DreamMaker Projects around Humboldt and other places in California. They are performers, teachers, culture bearers, creators, makers, and mentors. Everywhere you look there are DreamMaker Projects weaving the arts into the fabric of our community.

Add to that, the Ink People’s staff supported core programs like the Brenda Tuxford Gallery, Eureka’s Utility Box Art, the Waterfront Trail Art Benches and Eureka Live Art Wall.

As the Ink People celebrates our 40th year, we look forward to the new ideas that pour through our doors on a regular basis, to seeing the impressed faces of guests as they realize how vibrant and connected our Arts community is, and to answering the question . . .

“What does ‘Ink’ have to do with all of this?”
WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR GENUEROS SUPPORTERS

INK PEOPLE PATRON
HUMBOLDT AREA FOUNDATION

ARTS BENEFACCTOR
BILL NICHOLS

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ANNE KING
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MCLEAN FOUNDATION

FRIEND OF THE ARTS
THE BOOTH
HUMBOLDT CIDER COMPANY
HUNTER, HUNTER & HUNT
LACO ASSOCIATES
LOST COAST BREWERY
MYRTLETOWN LIQUORS
SIX RIVERS BREWERY
TAROT OF BECOMING
ALL UNDER HEAVEN

The Ink People Center for the Arts is made possible by our members, our scores of volunteers, and our funders:

ART WORKS.
National Endowment for the Arts
City of Eureka
California Arts Council
Humboldt Area Foundation
McLean Foundation

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