

MANLY WRITERS' FESTIVAL
MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.COM.AU

MANLY CELEBRATE THE POWER WRITERS' OF STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

'INSIDE EACH OF US

14 - 16

IS A NATURAL-BORN STORYTELLER,

MARCH

WAITING TO BE RELEASED.'

2024

The Manly Writers' Festival acknowledges and thanks the original storytellers of the lands on which our events take place, the Gamaraygal people of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge and respect their continuing connection and culture, and we pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present, as well as emerging leaders.

ROBIN MOOR, AMERICAN AUTHOR

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manlywritersfestival.com.au
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Instagram: [@manlywritersfestival](https://www.instagram.com/manlywritersfestival)



Welcome to the inaugural Manly Writers' Festival

Our two-and-a-bit day gathering of storytelling, writing, and ideas in beautiful Manly runs from Thursday 14 March to Saturday 16 March 2024.

More than 70 writers, academics, journalists, publishers, thinkers and creators will appear across more than 40 events in our venues on The Corso and North Steyne in Manly and in Brookvale.

Australians love a good yarn and to have a chat. It follows that we also love our literary events, of which there were more than 140 across the country at last count, and none more so than the biggest and most celebrated of the lot - the Sydney Writers' Festival held in May each year.

So why have another writers' festival in Manly?

As a local, independent publisher who specialises in non-fiction sport, I am acutely aware that some writers – some of whom put literally decades of research into their book – do not always have an opportunity to talk about their work. It is one of the reasons why I started a Football Writers' Festival in 2019, the only single sport literary festival in the world, other than in the United Kingdom.

But having also published some local authors with our other imprints, I am conscious that there are many writers on the Northern Beaches who similarly do not get an opportunity to talk about their work, especially those published by small publishers. They include both fiction and non-fiction writers.

In addition, while many associate Manly with – and residents love the area because of – the beach and the “best commute in the world” (aka the Manly Ferry), it's a way to show to the rest of Sydney and Australia that there is more to Manly and the Northern Beaches than the beach and the ferry.

Our hope is to make the Manly Writers' Festival an annual gathering as a beacon for literary activities for the entire community.

We want to bring writers, readers, and thinkers together from wherever they live to celebrate the power and the common humanity in storytelling.

We want to host discussions that energise, inform, and inspire; they may be issues you disagree with, but nonetheless we see informed, respectful, and vigorous interchange as key to the type of community and society we want to nurture and cherish.

Key to that, of course, is also involving children in the Manly Writers' Festival as a way to increase their interest in reading and writing. We are doing this in our first year with presentations and workshops for students from school Years 3 to 10 on a diverse range of subjects relevant to the school curriculum.

I want to give a special thank you to Cunninghams Real Estate for their support for this inaugural festival as the Founding Partner. Without them, as well as Fair Play Publishing, the festival would not be possible.

I would also like to thank the Northern Beaches Council, TGI Holdings, Gleebooks, and Your Body Physio and Pilates for their support.

Thank you also to Jeanne Ryckmans, Liz Deep-Jones, and Michele Seminara for their time, advice, and input; as well as Jill Valentine for her time, advice and work. All gave freely.

The Manly Writers' Festival is fortunate to have the support of an enthusiastic group of volunteers led by Libby Walstab, and we are grateful to the trailblazers who have signed-on as the first Friends of the Festival.

With the help of all of the above, any profit from the Manly Writers' Festival will be shared between our charity partners, the **Literacy for Life Foundation**, an Aboriginal-led adult literacy charity, and the **Northern Beaches Community Cancer Charity**, a volunteer-run community charity supporting the work of the Oncology Unit at Northern Beaches Hospital.

I trust you find the program for the inaugural Manly Writers' Festival has something of interest for you, and that you look forward to being energised, informed and inspired with the stories that are shared.

Some of the Northern Beaches' and Australia's finest thinkers, writers, and journalists are coming to Manly... and they want to have a chat.

I hope you will join them!

Bonita Mersiades
Festival Founder & Director

Useful Information

How to Book

All tickets must be booked and paid for online at www.manlywritersfestival.com.au. Please have your eTicket downloaded on your mobile phone or printed at home for scanning.

Early access ticket purchases are available for Friends of the Festival from 22nd -26th January, and go on general sale from 27th January. Tickets will be available until the allocation is exhausted or 7th March.

Please note that different arrangements apply for the Schools Program.

Refunds

A full refund will be given for cancellation by 16th February 2024, minus the ticket processing fee and merchant costs.

There are no refunds for the Schools Program.

We will refund the ticket price for any COVID-related cancellation made by the Manly Writers' Festival.

Venues

Thank you to all our venue partners.

Main venue:

Darley Smith Building St Matthew's Church

1 Darley Road
MANLY

Enter near Anita Gelato

NB: Room allocation within the Darley Smith Building will be assigned to individual sessions via the App and signage

Special Events:

Beach Club

Hotel Steyne
75 The Corso
North Steyne
MANLY

Beachside @ the Manly Pacific

Manly Pacific Sydney MGallery
North Steyne
MANLY

Manly Spirits Distillery

Winbourne Industrial Estate
4A/9-13 Winbourne Road
BROOKVALE

Program changes

The information in this program is correct at the time of preparation but it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. Please keep up-to-date by visiting www.manlywritersfestival.com.au, downloading our App (available February), and by subscribing to our e-news.

Ticket prices

Opening Night
\$75

LOLA Breakfast
\$35

Manly Literary Salon
\$45

Closing Night
\$30

All other sessions
\$20

Schools program
\$7.50 - \$20

Gleebooks

Gleebooks is open from 10am - 5pm on Friday and Saturday.

Feel free to visit, grab a coffee, browse and buy books, and get your books signed.

Coffee

Our on-site barista is open from 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday and Saturday, with coffee, tea, and fresh juices.

Otherwise please enjoy the many cafes and eateries in, and around, The Corso.

“

As a long-term supporter of local initiatives, we're thrilled to see the addition of a writers' festival to Manly's vibrant cultural scene.

*John Cunningham,
Cunninghams Real Estate*

”

Proud Supporters

of the Manly Writers' Festival

Community matters to us at Cunninghams which is why we are proud to be supporting the inaugural Manly Writers' Festival and championing local talent.

cunninghamsre.com.au

Cunninghams | the *home* of Northern Beaches Real Estate



We Bleed the Same Exhibition

We Bleed the Same has been put together by Liz Deep-Jones, journalist, author and human rights activist.

According to Liz, the exhibition is “about you, me, and humanity” - an anti-racism exhibition, supported by the Freilich Project at the Australian National University.

The aim of the exhibition is to help combat racism and celebrate diversity.

We are honoured to bring you some of the exhibition of 36 inspiring Australians who champion human rights, and to share their extraordinary stories.

The exhibition is free to all Festival attendees and is located in the Festival Hub on Level 1 of the Darley Smith Building.

Producer/Curator: Liz Deep-Jones

Photographer: Tim Bauer

Art Director: Brenda Dwyer

**Production
Manager:** Izabella Deep-Jones

Schools Program

9.30am

Arrival on-site

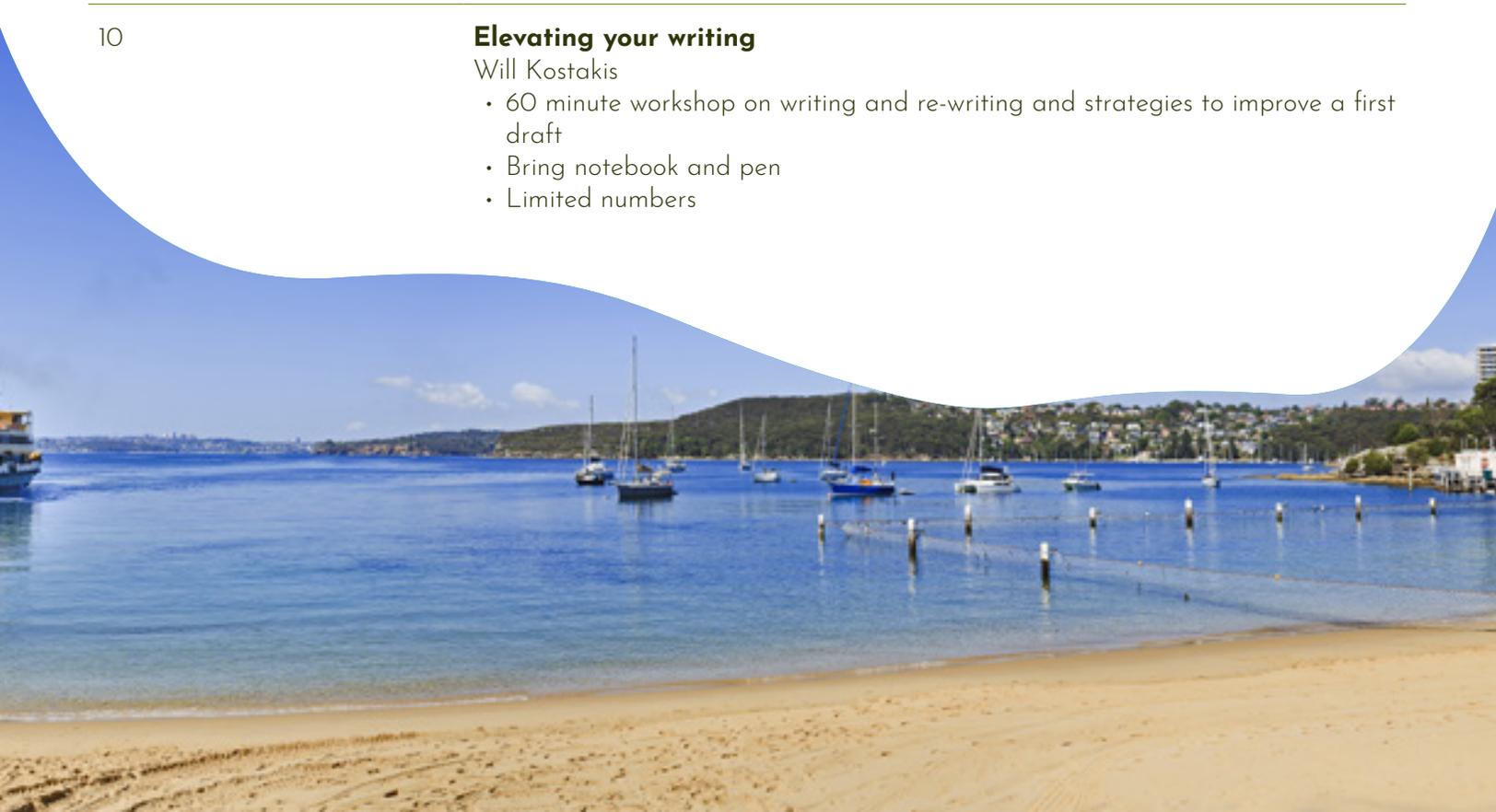
10.15am

Welcome to Country
Welcome to the Festival

Recommended School Years

Session 1: Commences 10.30am

3-6	<p>If kids ruled the world Carla Fitzgerald</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute presentation based on Carla's book <i>How to be Prime Minister and Survive Grade 5</i>
4-6	<p>August & Jones Pip Harry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute presentation on themes of friendship, disability, serious illness (cancer) and courage • Recently added as a mentor text for English curriculum
7-9	<p>Imagineering Worlds Zena Shapter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute creative writing workshop about creating story worlds. • Zena Shapter shares her creation process in this interactive workshop that will set the stage with story worlds that make sense. • Bring pen and paper and get ready to write! • Limited numbers
10	<p>Elevating your writing Will Kostakis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minute workshop on writing and re-writing and strategies to improve a first draft • Bring notebook and pen • Limited numbers



Schools Program (continued)

Recommended School Years

Session 2: Commences 11.45am

3-4	<p>Best friends in the bush Ursula Dubosarsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute presentation with Ursula talking about how she came to write Brindabella, about a boy in the bush who befriends an orphan baby kangaroo
5-6	<p>How to write a picture book Carla Fitzgerald</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute workshop about how to write a picture book based on Carla's experience with Keeping Up with the Daschunds • Limited numbers
7-8	<p>Are you there, Buddha? Pip Harry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50-minute presentation on themes of climate change, sport (swimming), growing-up, and puberty • Homage to global bestseller by Judy Blume - Are You There God, It's Me, Margaret?
7-9	<p>How to write what you know and love Liz Deep-Jones and Cocoa Deep-Amek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minute presentation based on Liz's two Young Adult novels about relationships, fashion and football (soccer) • Liz appears with her nephew Cocoa, a poet and rap artist
8-9	<p>How I got a book deal Will Kostakis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50-minute presentation with practical writing advice • Will touches on his books including The First Third, The Sidekicks and We Could Be Something

Cost

Years 3-6 presentation:	\$7.50
Years 3-6 workshop:	\$12.50
Years 7-10 presentation:	\$12.50
Years 7-10 workshop:	\$20

One teacher/supervising adult complimentary for every 15 students.

\$20 for each additional teacher/supervising adult

Bookings

Online booking form via this QR code



Literacy changes everything



"Until people can read and write we won't close any gap. Literacy is the first step."

Professor Jack Beeton



Literacy for Life Foundation
www.lflf.org.au



Official Opening



SPECIAL EVENT

An Evening with Thomas Keneally AO

Join us for the opening of the inaugural Manly Writers' Festival as we enjoy an evening with Booker Prize winner and one of Manly's most cherished residents, Tom Keneally.

In conversation with Hamish Macdonald.

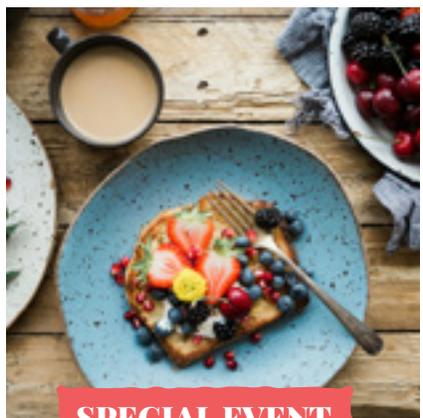
Music by West Phil

When: Thursday 14th March, 6pm for 6.30pm until 8.30pm

Where: Beach Club, Level 2, Hotel Steyne

Cost: \$75 includes complimentary drink on arrival and canapés

Friday



SPECIAL EVENT

LOLA Breakfast

Help us Love Our Local Authors (LOLA) by kicking-off the first full day of the festival with a LOLA Breakfast. Celebrate the great literary talent right here on the Northern Beaches, emerging and established, fiction and non-fiction, children's, young adult, and adult.

When: Friday 15th March, 7.30am-9am

Where: Beachside at Manly Pacific Sydney MGallery

Cost: \$35 includes continental breakfast



Amazing grace

What is grace to you? Is it compassion, a random act of kindness, generosity of spirit, choosing to be respectful and patient rather than getting stuck-in, empathy, forgiveness, following the Golden Rule to do unto others as you would have them do to you? Or all these things and more? Is it something to embrace and be embraced by? And is it most effective when least expected? Julia Baird's latest book *Bright Shining* explores what it means, and how we can find more of it in our lives, everyday.

Julia Baird

When: Friday 15th March, 10am-11am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Why do women still need to roar?

Fifty years on from Helen Reddy's polemic call-to-action *I am woman, hear me roar*, we're still talking gender equity, gender diversity, language, gender and cultural bias, and the role of women in corporate life, media, politics, sport and elsewhere. Why? And what will it take for women to have 'made it'?

Catherine Fox AM with Michael West.

When: Friday 15th March, 11.30am-12.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



A better way

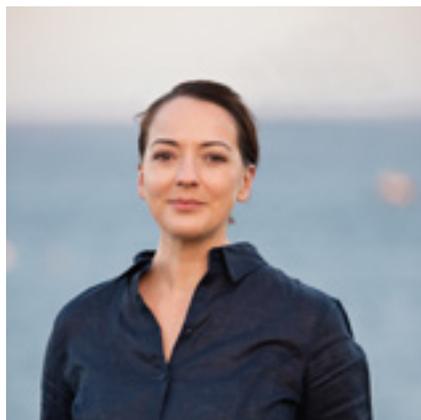
Why is it important to have women in leadership? What really matters in life, in work, in society? What can we do to make a difference? How do we shape a better world? What can we do to ensure no-one gets left behind?

Join a roundtable discussion hosted by Catherine Fox AM and also including Sara Dowse, Sally Freedman, Maggie Kirkman, Emily Eklund Power, and Jill Valentine

When: Friday 15th March, 1pm-2pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Workshop: How to be a travel writer

We all love to travel, right? So what could be better than writing about travel and getting paid for it? What does it take to be a good travel writer? How do you turn your diary notes and happy snaps into a story? How do you pitch to an editor? What comes first - the story idea or the trip?

Join Rachel Lees for this workshop with tips and advice on how to become a travel writer.

When: Friday 15th March, 1pm-2pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



All in the brain

Puberty, pregnancy, and menopause are the most significant neurological transitions in women's lives. Hear about the lessons learned about women's brain health through the lifespan from neuroscientist Dr Sarah McKay.

Dr Sarah McKay with Michaela Kalowski.

When: Friday 15th March, 2.30pm-3.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20

Presenting Partner:





The accidental historian

John Maynard happen-chanced into history when he visited the University of Newcastle to help with some family research on his grandfather, Fred, who had been a high-profile Aboriginal activist of the 1920s. Following the visit to the university, and a meeting with a Murri woman at the university who encouraged him to take his interest further, John completed his education and the rest - as they say - is history.

John's research has concentrated on the intersections of Aboriginal political and social history and made significant contributions to the research fields of Aboriginal, race relations and sports history both nationally and internationally. In 2022, John was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Australian Historical Association and in 2023, he received the Annual History Citation from the History Council of NSW.

Emeritus Professor John Maynard

When: Friday 15th March, 2.30pm-3.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Everyone has at least one book in them, don't they?

Introducing five of the emerging writers of the inaugural Manly Writers' Festival, all with debut novels, who have written on romance, young adult fantasy, the high-powered business world, and a Cold War thriller.

Ingrid Adams, Amy Hutton, Lucy Lever, Julia Levitina, and Jill Valentine with Michele Seminara.

When: Friday 15th March, 2.30pm-3.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



The pandemic generation

Who are the pandemic generation? What does the future hold for the millions of young Australians whose formative years were so disrupted by school and childcare closures during the COVID-19 pandemic? What help should we provide to this generation of children?

Professor Kim Cornish with Michaela Kalowski.

When: Friday 15th March, 4pm-5pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Writing as a form of activism

Activism isn't just about marches, protests and demonstrations. Writing is a powerful form in the toolbox of activism with the ability to share a voice, inform and educate an audience, advocate a cause, and inspire change.

Craig Foster, Antony Loewenstein, and Sara M. Saleh

When: Friday 15th March, 4pm-5pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Call My Agent

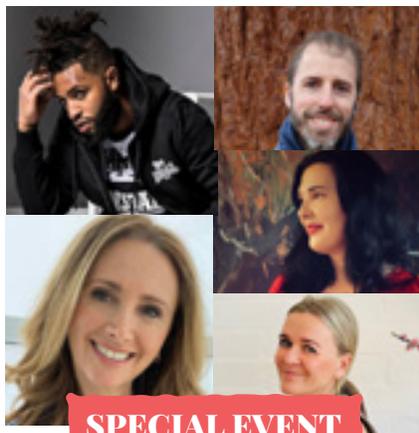
We catch a glimpse into the world of a literary agent and the publishing industry with a veteran of the industry, Lou Johnson. What does a literary agent do? What are the pros and cons of having one? What does an agent look for in a book? What are the options for publishing today? How do you actually get a publishing deal? What should authors do to help market their book? All this and more!

Lou Johnson with Tim Ayliffe.

When: Friday 15th March, 4pm-5pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Manly Literary Salon

Join us at the Manly Spirits Distillery for the Manly Literary Salon incorporating the launch of the novel every finance high-flyer has to read, *High Heels and Low Blows*, along with a Northern Beaches poetry reading curated by Michele Seminara.

Poetry Salon - curated by Michele Seminara

- Cocoa Deep-Amek
- Luke Fischer
- Zeina Issa
- Michele Seminara

Book launch

- *High Heels and Low Blows*
by Jill Valentine

MC: Michael Cain

Music by Jazz with Kate

When: Friday 15th March, 6.30pm - 9pm

Where: Manly Spirits Distillery, Brookvale

Cost: \$45 includes complimentary themed cocktail and antipasto share plates

Saturday



'Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness'

... So wrote Mark Twain. We speak to two travel writers about how their experiences trotting around the globe has helped make them better people and better writers, as well as how to be a good traveller, their hot spots for 2024, their travel mishaps and wonder moments, and how the travel landscape is changing.

Ben Groundwater and Rachel Lees with Amanda Austen.

When: Saturday 16th March, 9am-10am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Memoir as truth-telling

"No-one is boring if they tell the truth," wrote Quentin Crisp. A memoir might be a cathartic experience with the need to heal and 'set the story straight' or it may be a way of having a record of your life for family and friends. But finding the best way to tell your story can be the hardest part of writing it, and the truth of your life is often challenging and elusive. We talk to three authors of very different memoirs - on professional sport, sexism in the workplace, and grief - about why it was important to tell their story in their own words, and how they balanced being both the narrator and main character in their books.

Andy Bernal, Sally Freedman and Lisa Gallate with Bonita Mersiades.

When: Saturday 16th March, 9am-10am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20





This life

Mothers. Children. Partners. Parents. Work. Family. Community. Relationships. We've all got so many balls in the air, and every family has its drama. Why do we like writing and reading about it so much? And in the process of writing a story that is so close to real life, are the authors plotters or pansters?

Miranda Darling and Genevieve Gannon with Tracey Kirkland.

When: Saturday 16th March, 9am-10am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



How did it come to this?

You meet a man. He is charming. He has a good job. Things seem to be going well for the two of you. But then things change. How and why does this happen? And what do we do when it does? A compelling discussion with two strong, talented women who fell victim to (different) conmen.

Tracy Hall, Summer Land and Jeanne Ryckmans with Lia Harris

When: Saturday 16th March, 10.30am-11.30am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20





Australia's Matildas: Their 50-year 'overnight success' and what it means for the Australian sporting landscape

In 2023, Australia's love affair with the Matildas, the women's national football (soccer) team reached the stratosphere with their performances at the World Cup held in Australia and New Zealand. For many fans, it was their first taste of the skill and authenticity of the team, but the Matildas have been around for almost 50 years, women have been playing the game for one hundred years, and today's Matildas are emblematic of the battles fought, lost, and now increasingly won, by women's sporting teams.

We hear from four experts about the history and impact of the Matildas on re-shaping women's sport, and the all-important battle for hearts and minds, as well as for government, corporate and media support.

Fiona Crawford, Greg Downes, Hunter Fujak and Andrew Howe with Amanda Shalala

When: Saturday 16th March, 10.30am-11.30am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



The lure of the past: historical fiction

Authors Mirandi Riwoe and James Vella-Bardon have set their historical novels in vastly different times, empires, and nations. But nonetheless we are drawn back ceaselessly into the past not only as a means of rich storytelling, but also as a pointer to the future.

Mirandi Riwoe and James Vella-Bardon with Victoria Haskins

When: Saturday 16th March, 10.30am-11.30am

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20





An unimaginable nightmare

Shirley Singh and her husband were in Fiji attending a family wedding when a 'phone call in the early hours from Queensland Police informed her that three of her four children had been found dead - murdered - in the family home.

In *Shirley's Story*, journalist and author Emily Eklund Power tells the story of every parents' worst nightmare and what Shirley Singh had to endure to bring the perpetrator to justice. Strong, sassy, passionate, and loving, Shirley depended on her love for her children, her faith in God, and her decision to keep a 'clean state of mind' to overcome alcohol and substance abuse while battling mental illness to help catch the killer. When her only surviving child died of a brain aneurysm in February 2020, Shirley was once again forced to dig deep, finding strength in memories captured over 43 years.

Emily Eklund Power and Shirley Singh with Lia Harris.

When: Saturday 16th March, 12 noon-1pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Sport as a microcosm of society

Other than autobiographies, sport non-fiction is traditionally a slow-selling genre in Australia. Yet just as sport is said to reflect society, so does much of Australia's sporting history provide a glimpse into Australian history. We talk to four authors about their sports non-fiction and what motivates them to record these nuggets of sporting history.

Lucas Gillard, Jason Goldsmith, John Maynard and Patrick Skene with Michael Cain.

When: Saturday 16th March, 12 noon-1pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20





The accidental farmer

From avocado-smashing inner city writer to his father's once-a-hobby-but-now-an-actual farm in the Yass Valley, Sam Vincent found himself on the family farm deputising for his father after an accident. It was a farming apprenticeship of "grit and shit". But it is also a tale of affection, belonging, learning, humility, inter-generational differences, and legacy - and the winner of the 2023 Prime Minister's prize for Literary Non-Fiction.

Sam Vincent with Summer Land

When: Saturday 16th March, 12 noon-1pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



A fine romance

Everyone loves a good love story, and these authors are helping to give the romance novel a revival and a different twist. The stories are relatable and human, and with a local focus - ingredients that make you fall in love!

Ingrid J. Adams, Amy Hutton, Lucy Lever with Liz Deep-Jones

When: Saturday 16th March, 12 noon-1pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Olympic boycotts, death threats, doping, and a Cold War

Against the backdrop of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the 1980 Moscow Olympics was always going to be political. Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser wanted Australia's Olympic athletes to boycott the Games, in line with the USA, but many of the athletes had a different view and competed under the Olympic flag. Whatever flag they competed under at Moscow, athletes were the victims - and most of them female. As Paris prepares to host the 2024 Olympics, 100 years after the Modern Olympics founding father Pierre de Coubertin declared that "Women have one task, that of the role of crowning the winner with garlands", an indifference to female athletes lives on.

In *Turning the Tide*, 800 metres Swimming Gold Medal winner, Michelle Ford, charts the highs and lows from the beaches of Sydney to the dizzy heights of Olympic swimming gold in the middle of the Cold War. Along with the politics, death threats, wilful blindness and sexism, the world also witnessed the most ferocious, systematic, state-sponsored doping ever.

Michelle Ford-Eriksson MBE and Craig Lord with Julian Linden.

When: Saturday 16th March, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Jewish Life

Born in a displaced persons' camp in 1947, Michael Gawenda spent his childhood and teenage years in a left-wing non-Zionist Jewish youth group in Melbourne. This shaped the person he became – a secular Jew who loved the Yiddish language and Yiddish culture. Gawenda went on to become a public figure during his 40 years as a journalist and editor-in-chief of *The Age*. Throughout this time, and since, he became dismayed and pained by the growing hostility of the left to Israel and to Jews like him who were not prepared to declare themselves as anti-Zionists. This has also forced him to examine his own Jewish identity and his relationships with his Jewish friends, and to forensically examine the basis of the critiques of Israel.

Michael Gawenda with Michael Brissenden.

When: Saturday 16th March, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Just Gladys

Born in Manly to Armenian parents from Palestine and Syria, Gladys Berejiklian was one of Australia's most popular premiers. She forged a path for NSW during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and seemed unstoppable. But it all came crashing down when she found herself in the middle of a corruption inquiry into a man with whom she had a secret relationship. Slowly, that inquiry extended to Berejiklian also. Journalist Paul Farrell makes the case for why anti-corruption bodies are important, and asks tough questions about the state of our democracy and how Berejiklian maintained her popularity - at one stage even considered as the possible Liberal candidate for the seat of Warringah - despite the negative attention.

Paul Farrell with Darren Mara.

When: Saturday 16th March, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



What could possibly go wrong?

A junior Minister. A sardonic mother. A fundamentalist mother-in-law. And a state premier who is about to promote him due to the scandal of another Minister. Oh, and did we mention his nude portrait - soon to be entered in the Archibald Prize? All great ingredients for this hilarious political novel.

Robert Gott with Tracey Kirkland

When: Saturday 16th March, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20





The state of our media

If journalism is the first draft of history, what will it say about the state of the media? Disinformation, propaganda, social media (the peoples' soapbox), and artificial intelligence pose mounting threats to journalism and genuine, accurate, quality news. The Australian media landscape is in a state of perpetual transformation, driven by technology, changing audience behaviours, and global influences and influencers. We talk with four people who know more than most.

- Tracey Kirkland and Gavin Fang, both journalists with the ABC, take us behind the scenes of Australia's media organisations to give a first-hand perspective on the operations of the fourth estate, especially as it applied in reporting on the COVID pandemic.
- Michael Gawenda has had a 40-year career in journalism and, amongst other things, is a former editor-in-chief of The Age.
- Walter Marsh is a freelance journalist who writes and reports for a wide range of media with a unique insight into the making of the Murdoch empire.

Gavin Fang, Michael Gawenda, Tracey Kirkland, and Walter Marsh with Michael West

When: Saturday 16th March, 3pm-4pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Cognitive dissonance in the American Biblebelt

Interpretations of the word of 'God' is used to frame much of the political discourse in the USA today. But just as the fictional US President Jed Bartlett used the Bible to dismiss the discriminatory views of ultra-conservative Christians in an episode of West Wing, Constantine Campbell uses the Bible as the basis for calling out the cognitive dissonance amongst those who call themselves 'evangelicals' and for whom moral credibility has been lost in the pursuit of political power.

Constantine Campbell with Summer Land.

When: Saturday 16th March, 3pm-4pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Myth or Legend?

Lachlan Strahan grew up with the family tale that his great-great-grandfather, Senior Constable Anthony Strahan, was a villainous cop who threatened Ned Kelly, while Kelly was a likeable Irish egalitarian rebel who was just a little wild. Yet when Lachlan started to look into Anthony's life and the Kelly Gang legend that was borne from it, he found a more complex and nuanced version of history.

Lachlan Strahan with Victoria Haskins.

When: Saturday 16th March, 3pm-4pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Life as literature

Life can be precarious, unrelenting, and tough - whether it be living as refugees in the middle of war, patriarchal violence and exile, or growing up in a housing commission development surrounded by domestic violence, addiction, and poverty. Despite the brutally confronting situations, both Kirsty Jagger's *Roseghetto* and Sara M. Saleh's *The Flirtation of Girls and Songs for the Dead and the Living* are coming-of-age stories that are, ultimately, hopeful and spirited tales of survival.

Kirsty Jagger and Sara M. Saleh with Amanda Austen.

When: Saturday 16th March, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



From Hero to Zero

In mid-2017, whispers of executions and cover-ups within Australia's most secretive and elite military unit, the SAS, reached Walkley Award-winning journalist Nick McKenzie. He and Chris Masters began an investigation that would not only reveal shocking truths about Ben Roberts-Smith VC but plunge the reporters into the defamation trial of the century.

For five years, Nick McKenzie led the investigation, waging an epic battle for the truth to be acknowledged. Hear his story.

Nick McKenzie with Sarah Dingle.

When: Saturday 16th March, 4.30pm-5.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Women through the ages

We speak with three scientists whose expertise and professional background encompasses child health, puberty, conception, pregnancy, motherhood, menopause, and beyond to the 'silent generation'. What are the leading mental, physical and emotional health challenges facing women and girls today?

Kim Cornish, Maggie Kirkman and Sarah McKay with Michaela Kalowski

When: Saturday 16th March, 4.30pm-5.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20

Presenting Partner:



You couldn't make it up, could you?

A CIA handler, a Russian millionaire living in Sydney, and a journalist, in this action-packed spy thriller full of suspense, intrigue, and corruption. If you enjoy a good spy story, along with complex, exciting, and compelling narratives, you'll also want to know just how close to fact the John Bailey series of novels really are from one of Australia's most prolific writers of the genre, Tim Ayliffe.

Tim Ayliffe with Michael Brissenden.

When: Saturday 16th March, 4.30pm-5.30pm

Where: Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$20



Closing Event



Geopolitical Dynamics

Ukraine. The Gaza Strip. The Solomons. China. Israel. The USA. Five Eyes. The Quad. AUKUS. Russia. Taiwan. The South China Sea. Syria. BRICS. NATO. The Global South. The G-20. North Korea.

Where do we start when it comes to international issues and foreign policy? Why is it important for Australia - at the "arse end of the earth" - to have such a strong interest and presence in geopolitical issues and forums? What are the most pressing foreign policy issues for Australia, and the world? What will geopolitical dynamics hold for 2024 and beyond?

Join us for the final event of the Manly Writers' Festival with a stellar panel of foreign policy experts in a Q&A-style session.

Allan Behm, Edward Cavanough, Mark Edele, Antony Loewenstein, Lachlan Strahan with MC: Michael Brissenden

When: Saturday 16th March, 6pm-7.30pm

Where: The Auditorium, Level 2, Darley Smith Building

Cost: \$30



**Help us help people living with
cancer on the Northern Beaches
and being treated at
Northern Beaches Hospital**

**Major cancer
presentations at
Northern Beaches
Hospital:**

Bowel
Breast
Lung
Prostate

Just the Facts:

1 in every 2 Australians will
get cancer by the age of 85

There are 275,000 people
living on the Northern
Beaches (2021 Census) with
a median age of 40

NORTHERN
BEACHES
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Opening Event

6pm-
8.30pm

An evening with Thomas Keneally AO

Tom Keneally with Hamish Macdonald
• Beach Club, Hotel Steyne

Friday at a Glance

7.30am
- 9am

LOLA Breakfast

• Beachside @
Manly Pacific

10am-
11am

Amazing grace

Julia Baird

10.15am

Welcome to Country for School Visitors

10.30am

**If kids ruled the
world**
Carla Fitzgerald

August & Jones
Pip Harry

**Workshop:
Imagineering
Worlds**
Zena Shapter

**Workshop:
Elevating your
writing**
Will Kostakis

11.30am-
12.30pm

Why do women still need to roar?

Catherine Fox AM with Michael West

11.45am

**Workshop: How
to write a picture
book**
Carla Fitzgerald

**Are you there,
Buddha?**
Pip Harry

**Best friends in the
bush**
Ursula Dubosarsky

**How I got a book
deal**
Will Kostakis

**How to write what
you know & love**
Liz Deep-Jones and
Cocoa Deep-Amek

1pm-
2pm

A better way

Sara Dowse, Sally Freedman, Maggie
Kirkman, Emily Eklund Power, Jill Valentine
with Catherine Fox AM

Workshop: How to be a travel writer

Rachel Lees

2.30pm-
3.30pm

All in the Brain
Sarah McKay with
Michaela Kalowski

**The accidental
historian**
John Maynard

Everyone has at least one book in them, don't they?

Ingrid Adams, Amy Hutton, Lucy Lever, Julia
Levitina, Jill Valentine with Michele Seminara

4pm-
5pm

The pandemic generation

Kim Cornish with
Michaela Kalowski

Writing as a form of activism

Craig Foster, Antony
Loewenstein, Sara M.
Saleh

Call My Agent

Lou Johnson with Tim
Ayliffe

6.30pm-
9pm

Manly Literary Salon

Jill Valentine (author). Poets Cocoa Deep-
Amek, Luke Fischer, Zeina Issa, Michele
Seminara.

MC: Michael Cain

• Manly Spirits Distillery, Brookvale

Saturday at a Glance

9am-10am	'Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness' Ben Groundwater, Rachel Lees with Amanda Austen	Memoir as truth-telling Andy Bernal, Sally Freedman, Lisa Gallate with Bonita Mersiades	This Life Miranda Darling, Genevieve Gannon with Tracey Kirkland	
10.30am-11.30am	How did it come to this? Tracy Hall, Summer Land, Jeanne Ryckmans with Lia Harris	Australia's Matildas: their 50-year 'overnight success' Fiona Crawford, Greg Downes, Hunter Fajak, Andrew Howe with Amanda Shalala	The lure of the past: historical fiction Mirandi Riwoe, James Vella-Bardon with Victoria Haskins	
12 noon-1pm	An unimaginable nightmare Emily Eklund Power, Shirley Singh with Lia Harris	Sport as a microcosm of society Lucas Gillard, Jason Goldsmith, John Maynard, Patrick Skene with Michael Cain	The accidental farmer Sam Vincent with Summer Land	A fine romance Ingrid J. Adams, Amy Hutton, Lucy Lever with Liz Deep-Jones
1.30pm-2.30pm	Olympic boycotts, death threats, doping and a Cold War Michelle Ford Eriksson MBE, Craig Lord with Julian Linden	Jewish Life Michael Gawenda with Michael Brissenden	Just Gladys Paul Farrell with Darren Mara	What could possibly go wrong? Robert Gott with Tracey Kirkland
3pm-4pm	The state of our media Gavin Fang, Michael Gawenda, Tracey Kirkland, Walter Marsh with Michael West	Cognitive Dissonance in the American Biblebelt Constantine Campbell with Summer Land	Myth or legend? Lachlan Strahan with Victoria Haskins	Life as literature Kirsty Jagger, Sara M. Saleh with Amanda Austen
4.30pm-5.30pm	From hero to zero Nick McKenzie with Sarah Dingle	Women through the ages Kim Cornish, Maggie Kirkman, Sarah McKay with Michaela Kalowski	You couldn't make it up, could you? Tim Ayliffe with Michael Brissenden	

Closing Event

6pm-7.30pm

Geopolitical Dynamics

Allan Behm, Edward Cavanough, Mark Edele, Antony Loewenstein, Lachlan Strahan with Michael Brissenden

Special Event

Schools Program

Fiction

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Festival team

Founder, Director & Curator:
Bonita Mersiades

Media & PR:
Watterson PR

Commercial Advisor:
Jill Valentine

Brand identity & design:
Kimberly Pringle

Volunteer Coordinator:
Libby Walstab

Poetry Curator:
Michele Seminara

We Bleed the Same Curator:
Liz Deep-Jones

Social Media

Facebook: facebook.com/manlywritersfestival
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