



MANLY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

[WWW.MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU](http://WWW.MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU)

# MANLY A CELEBRATION OF THE POWER WRITERS' AND JOY FESTIVAL OF READING, WRITING, AND IDEAS 28, 29, 30 MARCH

[MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU](http://MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU)

# 2025

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.



# Contents

Welcome	3
Useful Information	5
Friday	7
Saturday	12
Sunday	23
Schools Program	32
At A Glance	34
Sponsors	36
Festival team	36

[manlywritersfestival.org.au](http://manlywritersfestival.org.au)  
Email: [hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au](mailto:hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au)  
Share your moments #ManlyWF25

BlueSky: @manlywritersfest  
FB: @manlywritersfestival  
Instagram: @manlywritersfestival



# Welcome

Welcome to the second annual Manly Writers' Festival from Friday, 28th March to Sunday, 30th March 2025.

A wonderfully rich and diverse collection of more than 125 writers, academics, journalists, thinkers, and creators will appear across more than 50 events in our venues in Manly and in Brookvale.

As we think, read, talk and laugh together over three days, we hope the festival program helps you to celebrate the power and joy of what we write and read to connect people, spark curiosity and inspire change.

The latest in social media and AI, cooking, workplace issues, music, sport, mental health, grief, history, politics, foreign policy, true crime, biography and memoir as well as mystery, romance, historical, young adult and contemporary fiction, and debut authors, are all here in our packed three days.



Amongst our array of authors, award-winning writer of fiction and non-fiction, **Blanche d'Alpuget** will launch her latest novel on the opening evening of the festival on Friday 28th March.

We are delighted to welcome **Damian Collins OBE**, a former member of the House of Commons and Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy in the UK. Damian will talk about his biography of David Lloyd George. He and **Julie Inman-Grant**, the e-Safety Commissioner, will also participate in a discussion of vital importance to parents and grandparents on the latest in social media and AI.

On Saturday evening, we have a fundraising **Charity Literary Trivia Night** in aid of the Northern Beaches Community Cancer Charity (NBCCC), with host **Murray Shaw** from the Nine Network and quizmaster **Kate Grant** of the Mackellar Girls' High School English Faculty.

Finally, on Sunday, we move our main venue from the Darley Smith Building on The Corso to the Manly Golf Club for a series of discussions on other aspects of Australian culture – music and sport – and culminating in **The Chairman's Lounge** experience with **Joe Aston** as our closing session.

Since the inaugural festival last year, Manly Writers' Festival has become a separate entity with charitable and deductible gift recipient status from the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and the Australian Taxation Office. I would like to thank the foundation Board members for their willingness to be

part of this start-up cultural event for the region and who, along with me, give their time voluntarily.

Thank you also to the volunteers who will help on the three days of the festival. We couldn't do it without them.

Thanks must also go to our Friends of the Festival for continuing to be trailblazers in their support. You can become a Friend of the Festival for one or three years by joining via the website at [www.manlywritersfestival.org.au](http://www.manlywritersfestival.org.au).

Finally, we could not have a festival without the financial support of **The TAG Family Foundation**, **Fair Play Publishing**, and **the Northern Beaches Council**.

We also thank **Gleebooks** as the official book retailers, **Hennessy Coffee** for the coffee cart, **Aide de MD** for supporting the Schools Program, and **Manly Observer** as our Media Partner.

I hope you are excited by the program that follows and you enjoy the 2025 Manly Writers' Festival.

**Bonita Mersiades**  
*Festival Founder & Director*

[manlywritersfestival.org.au](http://manlywritersfestival.org.au)  
**Email:** [hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au](mailto:hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au)  
Share your moments **#ManlyWF25**

**BlueSky:** @manlywritersfest  
**FB:** @manlywritersfestival  
**Instagram:** @manlywritersfestival



# Useful Information

## How to Book

All tickets must be booked and paid for online at [www.manlywritersfestival.org.au](http://www.manlywritersfestival.org.au) or directly via the Humanitix website or app. Please download your eTicket on your mobile phone or print it out at home for scanning.

Early access ticket purchases are available for Friends of the Festival from Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January until Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February. Tickets will be made generally available from Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Tickets will be available until the allocation is exhausted. Tickets will be available for purchase at the venues on the day except for special events.

Please note that different arrangements apply for the Schools Program on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> March.

## Refunds

A full refund will be given for cancellation by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024, minus the ticket processing fee and merchant costs.

## Venues

### Main venues:

#### Friday & Saturday: **Darley Smith Building & Courtyard**

St Matthew's Anglican Church  
The Corso  
MANLY

*Enter near Anita Gelato*

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

#### Sunday:

#### **Manly Golf Club**

38-40 Balgowlah Road  
MANLY

*We are upstairs at the Manly Golf Club.*

#### Special Events:

#### **Manly Spirits Distillery**

4A/9-13 Winbourne Road  
BROOKVALE

#### **Manly Surf Life Saving Club**

South Steyne  
MANLY

#### **Manly Golf Club**

38-40 Balgowlah Road  
MANLY

## 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.org.au](http://www.manlywritersfestival.org.au), downloading our App (available March), and by subscribing to our e-news.

# Ticket prices

## Opening Evening Book Launch with Blanche d'Alpuget

\$55

## Charity Literary Trivia Night

\$100/table of 8

\$15/person

## The Chairman's Lounge

\$55

## Conversation Circle / Manly Poetry Salon

\$30

## All other sessions

\$22

## Day Pass (attend any session you wish on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, excluding Special Events and the Conversation Circle)

Friday: \$99

Saturday: \$119

Sunday: \$79

## Fiction Pass (attend any or all of the 11 Fiction sessions on any day):

\$219

## Gleebooks

**Gleebooks** is open from 9.30am - 3.30pm on Friday and Saturday, and 9.30am-4pm on Sunday.

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

## Coffee

Our on-site barista, provided by **Hennessy Coffee**, is open from 8.30am to 4.30pm each day, with coffee, tea, and fresh juices.

### *In their own words (2024 attendees):*

"It was such a delight to celebrate the creativity of the Northern Beaches community so close to home."

"Fantastic local event with wide selection of authors."

"A boutique festival with a big program."





## Icon Guide

= Fiction &amp; Storytelling

= History

= Crime &amp; Mystery

= Sport &amp; the Beautiful Game

= Memoir &amp; Personal Journeys

= Lifestyle

= Music &amp; Performing Arts

= Social Issues &amp; Big Ideas

= Highlights &amp; Special Events

## Friday, 10am–11am

## Author Talk: Heather Morris



Heather Morris

**Heather Morris** hails from a somewhat familiar New Zealand upbringing in a small rural community, part of a large family surrounded by several generations, excelling in sports, doing okay at school, and devouring information and stories. Heather indulged in her passion for writing with a scriptwriting course while raising a family and working as a social worker at a medical centre in Melbourne. Then, in 2003, she was introduced to Lale Sokolov, and the rest is history! It is a meeting that resulted in a screenplay and, secondly, in a book on Lale's story known as *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* (2018). She has since published three more Holocaust novels, and her latest book, *Sisters Under the Rising Sun* (2023), is set in a Japanese POW camp in Indonesia in World War II.

**Host: Michael Brissenden**

## Friday, 11.20am–12.20pm

## Fighting The Long Goodbye



Anthony Sobb and Family

**Heidi Coupland's** husband, Peter, a grief counsellor, was diagnosed with leukaemia.

**Anthony Sobb's** wife, Kim, a solicitor with the DPP and a non-smoker, was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer.

**Michelle Lesh's** husband, Mark Raphael Baker, Associate Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, wrote his memoir while dealing with pancreatic cancer.

Their respective memoirs, *A Single Lifeline*, *My Business Is Now North* and *A Season of Death*, share the story of diagnosis, treatment, fight for survival, their relationships, looking after children, acceptance, and the most personal of experiences for which there is no textbook—the grieving process.

**Host: Suellen Dainty**



Amy Hutton (left) and  
Ingrid J. Adams (right)

## Long Live The Romance Novel

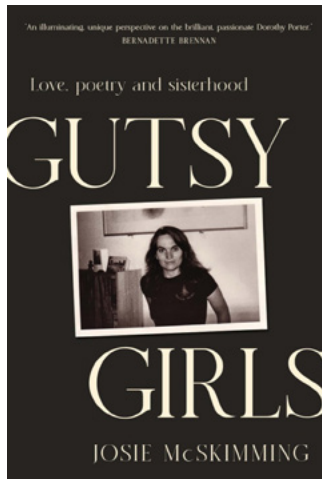
*Haunted Hearts* by **Amy Hutton** is a fast-paced, contemporary romance set on New York's Long Island with a spooky twist and a rom-com vibe. Think swoony with a side of spooky. *Transcended* by **Ingrid J. Adams** transports us to the Northern Beaches in the 1990s with a messy love 'rectangle', in the sequel to her previous novel. At the heart of both stories is romance, with themes of second chances, the impact of everyday decisions, and shared destiny.

**Host: Zena Shapter**

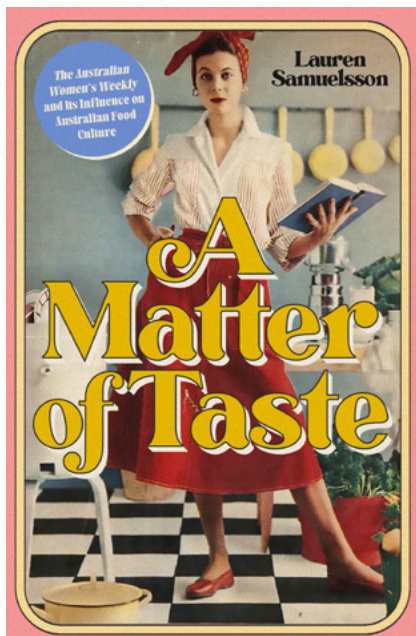
## Trailblazing Women

Regardless of the times, some women dared to be different. We speak with three authors of biographies about women who have blazed their own trail. In *Miles Franklin Undercover*, **Kerrie Davies** examines the little-known second decade of acclaimed author Miles Franklin, who was impoverished and in service in Australia and the US, and her advocacy for working women. In *Unconventional Women*, **Sarah Gilbert** speaks to women who were part of a closed convent in the 1960s during significant social upheaval. In *Gutsy Girls*, **Josie McSkimming** writes of the unpredictable family life on the Northern Beaches, generational trauma, and deep sisterly bonds between her and her two sisters, particularly her eldest sister, poet Dorothy Porter.

**Host: Victoria Haskins**



## Friday, 12.40pm-1.40pm



## A Culinary Odyssey

Despite Australia's reputation for food as somewhat bland and dull before the wave of post-WW2 migration, these two books strongly argue that was not the case. **Lauren Samuelsson's** *A Matter of Taste: The Australian Women's Weekly and Its Influence on Australian Food Culture* shows that the magazine was highly influential in encouraging Australian women (yes, mostly women in the kitchen!) to be adventurous and to develop a uniquely Australian culinary culture.

**Host: Summer Land**





Quentin McDermott

## Justice for Kathleen Folbigg 🔍

Kathleen Folbigg was wrongfully convicted in 2003 for the deaths of her four children. She was pardoned and her convictions overturned in 2023 after a long and unrelenting campaign for justice from a dedicated team of lawyers, friends and supporters. **Quentin McDermott's** book, *Meadow's Law*, meticulously examines the intersection of flawed legal principles and groundbreaking scientific discoveries that ultimately led to Kathleen's exoneration after two decades behind bars. Drawing from his extensive research and involvement in the case, McDermott sheds light on the pivotal role of investigative journalism in challenging miscarriages of justice. This session offers a profound exploration of the complexities within the legal system and the relentless pursuit of truth, for anyone interested in true crime, justice, science and the power of investigative journalism.

**Host: Anne Maria Nicholson**

## Changing Life 🌅

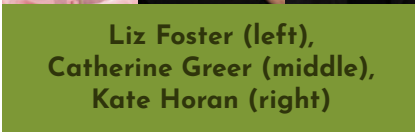


Christine Newell (top),  
Jo Peck (middle),  
Carol LeFevre (bottom)

When **Christine Newell** pulled over to the side of the road in a dinosaur costume, sobbing her heart out, she knew it was time for a change. So she took a role with an experimental theatre company in Seoul, immersing herself in South Korean culture and shifting her mindset, resulting in *Five Seasons in Seoul* (released in March). **Jo Peck** found herself in the middle of a cliché when her husband of 35 years left her for a younger woman. Once she picked herself up and dusted herself off, she wrote an inspiring and funny memoir, *Suddenly Single at Sixty*, that takes us from shock and despair to a new life. For the 'Boomer' generation, which spawned the likes of The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, The Beach Boys and the Rolling Stones, **Carol LeFevre** says that turning 70 was like an assault. You're constantly told your generation had it 'lucky' and ruined it for everyone else. In *Bloomers*, Carol explains that people aged 70+ are not at the end of things but are still on their way and fully intent on embracing late-life flourishing. Join us as we discuss their journeys of reinvention—whether through immersing themselves in a new culture, finding humour in heartbreak, or embracing the possibilities of later life.

**Host: Suzanne Leal**

## New Voices in Fiction I 📖



Liz Foster (left),  
Catherine Greer (middle),  
Kate Horan (right)

Discover the fresh voices shaping contemporary fiction in this engaging session with **Liz Foster** (*The Good Woman's Guide to Making Better Choices*), **Catherine Greer** (*Bittersweet Bakery Café*), and Northern Beaches local **Kate Horan** (*The Inheritance*). Join them as they discuss their inspirations, creative processes, and what it means to bring new energy and ideas to the world of fiction.

**Host: Liz Deep-Jones**

# Friday, 2pm-3pm



Jane Caro

## Author Talk: Jane Caro 📖 🏆 🔍

**Jane Caro** is a Walkley Award-winning columnist, author, broadcaster, and social commentator. She has worked in marketing and advertising and has penned over 15 books across a range of genres, including novels, women's issues, religion, and memoirs. Her latest novel, *Lyrebird*, is based on the premise that lyrebirds are exceptional mimics. So, when one emits the sound of a woman screaming in terror and pleading for her life, how do a young PhD student and an inexperienced detective convince anyone that the bird witnessed a murder without an actual missing person, let alone a body? In her latest thriller, released on April 1st, Jane highlights injustices faced by marginalised women.

**Host: Angela Priestley**



Amanda Goff

## Bipolar Journeys: Stories Of Strength, Struggle, And Self-Discovery 🌅

**Amanda Goff** (*Misfit*), a journalist, has written two previous memoirs, but this is the first as herself, Amanda. She was diagnosed with bipolar at age 48 after having spent the previous ten years as a high-profile escort. **Sarah Martin** (*Dear Psychosis*) writes of her daughter suffering a psychotic episode while travelling in Turkey, a subsequent diagnosis of bipolar, and the confronting impact on her family. **Jacqui Louise Swallow** (*The Bipolar Runner*) navigated school and university despite a troubled teenage and, as a young mum, realised that keeping active helped her manage bipolar better than anything and set herself a goal of running the Melbourne Marathon.

**Host: Suzanne Leal**



Melinda Ham (Left) and Sahira al Younany (Right)

## Reflections: Transition To A New Land 🌅

What does it mean to start over in a new land? This session dives into the heart of the refugee experience, about how you navigate a world where you look different, talk differently, worship differently, and you effectively have no choice but to leave the land of your birth. Join us for a conversation about identity, belonging, and the powerful stories of those who share what transitioning to a new country means to 'fit in.' We speak with author **Melinda Ham** and Iraqi refugee **Sahira al Younany** about *The Lucky Ones*.

**Host: Antony Loewenstein**

# Friday, 3.20pm-4.30pm

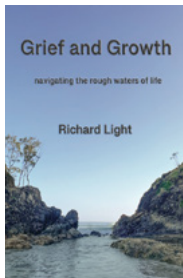
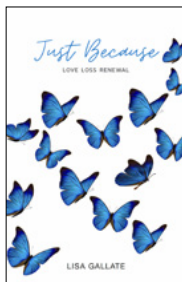


Emily Maguire (left) and James Vella-Bardon (right)

## Historical Fiction Beyond The Border

In a break from the generally Anglo-centric historical novel, **Emily Maguire's** *Rapture* brings us the deeply devout 18-year-old Agnes from Mainz in Germany who, with the help of a lovesick Benedictine monk, disguises herself and becomes a matchless scholar and teacher, John the Englishman who is celebrated from Athens to Rome. In *Ring of Ruse*, **James Vella-Bardon** brings *The Sassana Stone* pentalogy to a close when the protagonist 'Santi' (a survivor of the Spanish Armada shipwreck in Ireland) takes part in the Battle for Gaelic Connacht, which was met by England's most significant force at the time. Both are stories of self-determination, courage, and faith, drawing on history, legend, and imagination.

Host: Victoria Haskins



## Holding On And Letting Go: Finding Strength Through Loss

Loss is a universal human experience, but how we navigate it is deeply personal. In this moving session, hear from authors whose lives have been shaped by sudden tragedy and the profound process of healing.

**Lisa Gallate** (*Just Because—Love, Loss, Renewal*) and **Richard Light** (*Grief and Growth*) share decades-spanning reflections on coping with bereavement and finding ways to move forward. From a different perspective, funeral director **Richard Gosling** (*After the Worst Has Happened*) offers profound insights into allowing others to grieve while discovering unexpected beauty in a life surrounded by death. Together, these stories explore the journey from devastation to hope, offering comfort, inspiration, and wisdom for anyone touched by loss.

Host: Suellen Dainty





## Friday, 6.30pm-9pm



Blanche d'Alpuget

### Opening Special Event And Book Launch 📖🏆🔍

**Join us for the thrilling launch of Blanche d'Alpuget's latest novel, *The Bunny Club*.**

Step into the gripping world of Evelyn Sinclair, the beloved morning television host whose glamorous life takes a dark turn. Adored by the public but on the brink of losing her career behind the scenes, Evelyn escapes to her Southern Highlands retreat for what she hopes will be a weekend of romance. Instead, she is found dead under mysterious and chilling circumstances.

As detectives unravel a web of secrets, the shocking truth behind her death emerges. Why did her station boss visit that weekend? Who sent her a bouquet of yellow roses wearing PPE gear? And what connects her fate to a peculiar group of individuals with pink plush bunnies on their backpacks?

**Blanche d'Alpuget's** latest novel is a racy and thrilling tale of crime, intrigue, and redemption, where nothing is as it seems, and the truth will leave you breathless.

Join us at Manly Spirits Distillery for a complimentary themed cocktail on arrival, an antipasto platter, and your very own pink bunny for this special opening night event.

**Host: Jeremy Fernandez**

**Venue: Manly Spirits Distillery, Brookvale**

## Saturday, 9.30am - 10.30am



Julie Inman-Grant (left) and  
Damian Collins (right)

### Ai And Social Media: Shaping Today 🌐🏆

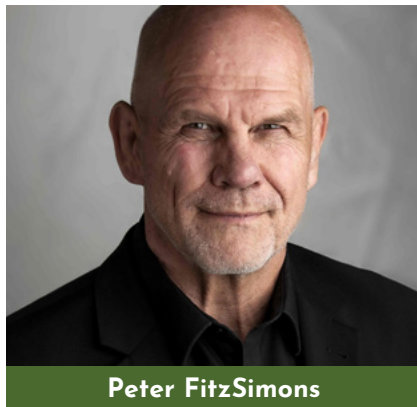
Join us for a discussion exploring the rapidly evolving digital landscape and its profound societal impact. From the transformative power of artificial intelligence to the dramatic shifts in platforms like X and Meta, this session will dive deep into the pressing questions of our time:

- How is social media shaping our children's lives?
- What are the ethical challenges of AI and its role in our digital world?
- How can parents and grandparents navigate this overwhelming new terrain to ensure safety, balance, and well-being?

Featuring two of the world's leading voices in the conversation:

- **Julie Inman-Grant**, Australia's eSafety Commissioner and a global advocate for online safety and digital responsibility.
- **Damian Collins**, former UK Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy, and an expert in tech policy and regulation.

**Host: Steve Cannane**

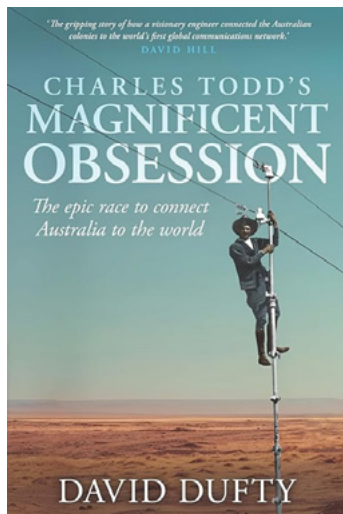


Peter FitzSimons

## Author Talk: Peter Fitzsimons

Journalist, sports commentator, Wallabies lock, and acclaimed author of more than 40 works of non-fiction, **Peter FitzSimon's** latest book *The Legend of Albert Jacka: From the brutal shores of Gallipoli to the battlefields of France*, charts the epic story of the first Australian soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Gallipoli in 1915. A national hero, Jacka moved on to France, where he earned the Military Cross at Pozieres and battled at Bullecourt, eventually coming home after a sniper's bullet and gassing at Villers-Bretonneux.

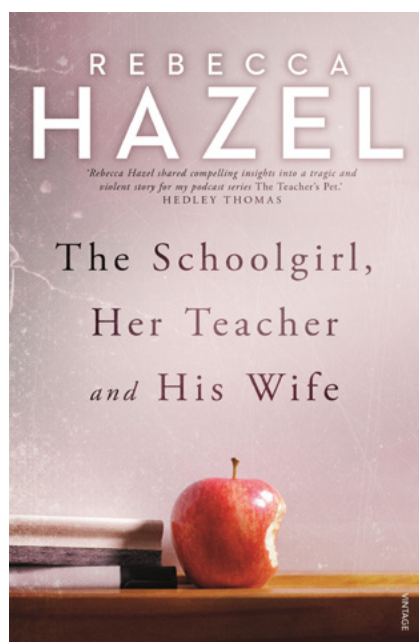
**Host: Anne Maria Nicholson**



## Before The NBN And Snowy 2.0...

The construction of 3,000 kilometres of overland telegraph from Adelaide to an undersea cable in Darwin Harbour is seen as the most remarkable feat of engineering in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Australia. Still, it nearly collapsed in the face of monumental obstacles. The year was 1870, and mail took six weeks to get to England by sea. Graziers had to wait three months to learn what their wool clip was worth in London. Australians hungered for the speedy communication a telegraph connection would bring. Engineer Charles Todd said he would complete it in eighteen months. **David Dufty's** engaging account of the epic race against time in *Charles Todd's Magnificent Obsession* is a tale of passion, heroism, violence, tragedy, and a cracking yarn.

**Host: Darren Mara**



## True Crime: Tales Of Betrayal, Escape And Justice

Step into the world of true crime with **Michael Adams** and **Rebecca Hazel**, as they explore two extraordinary stories of betrayal, escape, and the pursuit of justice. **Michael's** second true crime book, *They'll Never Hold Me*, deals with the case of Kevin John Simmonds, who established himself as an anti-hero to many following a never-before-accomplished escape from Long Bay Gaol, and despite being accused of the murder of a prison warden. He led seven carloads of police and tracker dogs on a chase for more than five weeks until he was eventually re-captured. **Rebecca** is a lawyer who got talking to a colleague at a women's refuge in Manly in 2007, who confided to her that she thought her ex-husband, Chris Dawson, had murdered his first wife, Lynette. With the woman we now know as 'JC' as her initial source, Rebecca's book, *The Schoolgirl, Her Teacher, and His Wife*, recounts the story of Dawson's behaviour in plain sight for more than 40 years with meticulous care and rich research.

**Host: Chris Allen**



# Saturday, 10.50am – 11.50am



Jumaana Abdu

## Reflections: Conflict In The Home Of Your Heart 🌅🌐

How can storytelling highlight the human cost of conflict, provide solace, and inspire hope for a brighter future? Don't miss this exploration of the transformative role of writing during times of crisis. **Jumaana Abdu** writes novels and essays, her most recent work being *Translations*. **Sara Haddad** is an editor and writer whose novel, *The Sunbird*, is a modern parable that tells the story of millions of people yearning to go home.

**Host: Antony Loewenstein**



Tim Ayliffe (left),  
Michael Brissenden (right)

## Politics, Power, and the Thrill of the Chase 📖🔍

Dive into the fast-paced world of political intrigue and crime with **Tim Ayliffe** (*The Wrong Man*) and **Michael Brissenden** (*Smoke*), two genre masters with journalism in their veins. Drawing from real-world experience, Ayliffe and Brissenden craft stories that blur the lines between fiction and reality, exposing the darker side of power, corruption, and ambition. In this thrilling session, they discuss the art of weaving current events into gripping narratives, the challenges of staying authentic in high-stakes storytelling, and how their journalistic careers have shaped their writing.

**Host: Helen Vatsikopoulos**







Lech Blaine

## Two Families On A Collision Course: A Memoir

In *Australian Gospel: A Family Saga*, acclaimed author **Lech Blaine** explores the fraught intersections of faith, family, and identity in a gripping memoir. On one side, Michael and Mary Shelley are devout fundamentalist Christians who reject what they see as the indulgences of Australian culture—sports, swearing, and alcohol. On the other, Lenore and Tom Blaine are publicans with a raucous, rugby league-obsessed household, raising both their biological and foster kids, including Lech himself. This sensational tale, woven with Blaine's signature wit and keen insight, chronicles these two families' profound tensions and unexpected connections. It is a story of love, loyalty, and the clash of worldviews, offering an unflinching look at the ties that bind and the beliefs that divide.

**Host: Steve Cannane**

## Saturday, 12.10pm – 1.10pm



Andrew Fowler

## "I Don't Think, I Know."

When French President Emmanuel Macron spoke those words in response to a question about Australia's cancelled submarine deal with France, it was clear that the fallout from the decision was nuclear in more ways than one. Author **Andrew Fowler** reveals what drove Australia to shift from France to its traditional allies, the USA and UK, in signing the AUKUS deal. By interviewing sources in Paris, London, Washington, and Canberra, Fowler assembles the narrative that led to Australia choosing a nuclear-powered US submarine, which some experts believe seriously jeopardises Australia's ability to defend itself. *Naked—The Submarine Fiasco that Sank Australia's Sovereignty* won the 2024 Walkley Book Award.

**Host: Mark Corcoran**



Lisa Kenway (left),  
Kyra Geddes (middle),  
Helen Signy (right)

## New Voices in Fiction II

In this second instalment of New Voices in Fiction, we meet more emerging authors with fresh perspectives and original storytelling. This session brings together **Lisa Kenway** with her thriller, *All You Took From Me*, and two historical novels from **Kyra Geddes** (*The Story Thief*) and **Helen Signy** (*Maya's Dance*). Join them as they discuss their inspirations, creative processes, and what it means to bring new energy and ideas to the world of fiction.

**Host: Liz Deep-Jones**



Shireen Morris

## Reflections: Dispossession Of Your Land



Almost 18 months after The Voice referendum, it is regarded as one of the key political failures of the Prime Minister and his government. We reflect on the emotional and cultural impact of this pivotal event and explore the heartbreak, resilience, and ongoing journey of Australians deeply affected by its rejection through *Broken Heart* by lawyer and adviser on Indigenous Constitutional recognition, **Shireen Morris**, and through two novels that explore the same themes: *The Desert Knows Her Name* by **Lia Hills** and *The Leaves* by **Jacqueline Rule**.

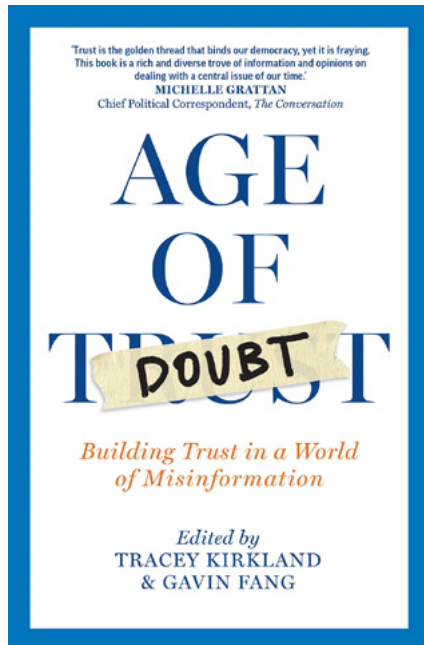
**Host: Isabella Higgins**

## Fractured Foundations: Trust In An Uncertain World



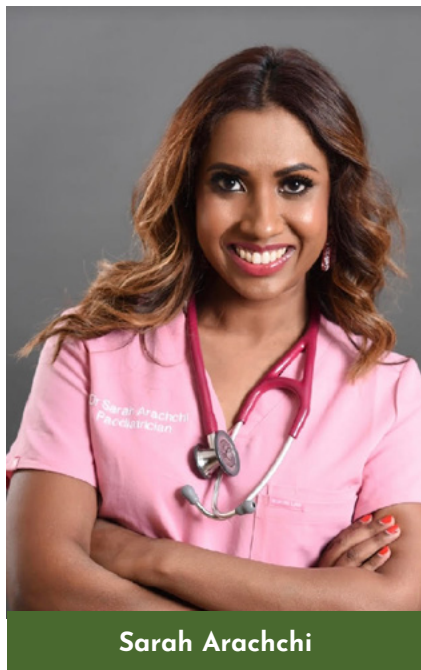
Almost the entire world seems polarised. We're overcome by misinformation, and we are told we can no longer rely on our institutions, which once gave us stability and certainty. So, how can we restore trust and confidence in our world? **Gavin Fang** and **Tracey Kirkland's** *Age of Doubt* brings together top thinkers from various sectors, including **Julia Baird** who joins the panel, who attempt to tackle doubt and chart a pathway towards trust.

**Host: Michael Brissenden**





# Saturday, 1.30pm – 2.30pm



Sarah Arachchi

## Breaking the Mould: Women, Medicine, and the Power of Storytelling 🌐

Doctors are trained to diagnose, treat, and heal—but what happens when they turn to writing to make sense of their experiences? In this conversation, **Sarah Arachchi** (*Brown, Female, Doctor*), **Lisa Kenway**, and **Jumaana Abdu** explore the intersection of medicine and storytelling, reflecting on the challenges of being women in a high-pressure profession and how their backgrounds shape their perspectives.

From navigating identity and bias in the medical field to the emotional weight of patient care, these doctor-writers share what their profession has taught them about resilience, humanity, and the stories that need to be told. Why do doctors write? What role does personal narrative play in medicine? And how can storytelling change the way we see healthcare, race, and gender?

Join us for an intimate and thought-provoking discussion on breaking barriers in medicine and literature.

**Host: Charlotte Rimmer**



## Made In India 🌐

The Indian diaspora in Australia is one of the country's fastest-growing and most vibrant and diverse cultural groups. According to recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data, more than 700,000 Australians identify as having Indian ancestry, many of whom are first-generation migrants. *Growing Up Indian in Australia*, compiled by **Aarti Betigeri**, is a heartfelt, reflective account of navigating two worlds: the rich traditions of Indian heritage and contemporary Australian life. Betigeri and her contributors, including Manly local **Sharon Verghis**, capture the joys, struggles, and humour of straddling two worlds, also captured by the tales of **Deep Gujral** (*Manjits and the Tandoor of Secrets*) through his experience as a Sikh child at one of Sydney's most conservative private boys' schools to an event and restaurant enterprise catering largely, but not exclusively, to the Australian Indian community.

**Host: Summer Land**





Damian Collins

## Rivals In The Storm: War, Peace And The Price Of Leadership 🏆 🏛️

Elected to the House of Commons in 1890 as a 27-year-old, David Lloyd George was audacious, charming, witty, energetic and a good debater. A Welshman who grew up in poverty, he was from the 'wrong side of the tracks' compared with parliamentarians of the day and demonstrated a profound empathy for those for whom class denied opportunities. On the one hand, history has judged him as an early appeaser of Germany before World War I and a Prime Minister (1916-1922) who made several unforced strategic errors. On the other hand, he is seen as the Prime Minister who won the Great War and as having an intuitive reading of geopolitical issues. He saw the need – at least in the short term – for 'a special relationship' with the United States; he foreshadowed another world war after the many compromises implicit in the Treaty of Versailles even though he was one of its architects; and closer to home led negotiations that culminated in an independent Ireland. We talk with former Conservative MP **Damian Collins**, the author of *Rivals in the Storm: How David Lloyd George Won the War and Lost his Government*.

**Host: Geraldine Doogue**



Hayley Scrivenor (left),  
Patricia Wolf (right)

## The Heart of the Land: Crime Fiction in the Australian Landscape 📖 🔍

Step into the evocative landscapes of Australian crime fiction with two rising stars of the genre. **Hayley Scrivenor** (*Girl Falling*) and **Patricia Wolf** (*Opal*) bring their richly atmospheric settings to life, where the land itself becomes a character shaping the stories of secrets, resilience, and survival. From the tightly woven community dynamics of a small town in Scrivenor's first book, *Dirt Town*, to the vast, untamed outback of Wolf's DS Lucas Walker series, this session explores how the sunburned country amplifies tension, deepens mysteries, and provides a canvas for gripping storytelling.

**Host: Tim Ayliffe**



# Saturday, 2.50pm - 3.50pm



## Australian Historical Fiction

We discuss Australian historical stories from 18th century England to World War II with three authors. *Free* by **Meg Keneally** blends storytelling with social critique in the story of Molly Thistle, who is transported to the new penal colony after stealing a horse and defies convention to create a commercial empire. *To Sing of War* by **Catherine McKinnon** weaves together an Australian nurse and soldier in New Guinea, scientists in Los Alamos, and a mother in Japan, connected in a moment of history in a tale of friendship, love, and war.

**Host: Victoria Haskins**



## Frontline Perspectives: Reporting The World Beyond Borders

Join some of Australia's most distinguished foreign correspondents—**Michael Brissenden, Steve Cannane, Andrew Fowler, Isabella Higgins** and **Helen Vatsikopoulos**—for an illuminating discussion on the challenges, triumphs, and ethical dilemmas of reporting from the world's most dynamic and turbulent regions. Drawing on their extensive experience, they'll share behind-the-scenes stories, explore journalism's evolution in an era of disinformation, and discuss the critical role of foreign reporting in connecting audiences with global events. This session offers a rare opportunity to gain insights into the risks and rewards of working on the frontlines of history.

**Host: Bonita Mersiades**



## "I Haven't Been Everywhere, But It Is On My List." (Susan Sontag)

Travel ignites curiosity, broadens perspectives, and transforms lives. This session brings together writers who capture the thrill of exploration and the unique stories discovered along the way. Whether far away or a 'staycation', their travel uncovers connections to history, culture, food, celebrations, and the human spirit. A session that is perfect for dreamers and seasoned travellers alike!

**Panel: Tracey Croke, Helen Hayes, Megan Holbeck, Anthony Sobb**

**Host: Rananda Rich**





Ariane Beeston (left),  
Craig Semple (right)

## Resilience And Recovery: Navigating Mental Health Episodes 🌅

Two deeply personal journeys that explore episodic mental health breakdowns, the path to recovery, and achieving a new equilibrium. Psychologist **Ariane Beeston** (*Because I'm Not Myself, You See*) provides an intimate look at her struggles with post-partum depression and hallucinations. **Craig Semple** (*Getting Back Up Again*) shares his experience after dealing with post-traumatic stress and severe depression following 25 years as a detective. Together, their memoirs illuminate what is needed to confront unexpected and unforeseen challenges and the courage to rebuild a fulfilling life.

**Host: Tracey Kirkland**

## Saturday, 4.10pm – 5.15pm



Debra Oswald

## Change And Choice 📖

Meet Betty: storyteller, feminist, eternally curious and on the eve of her hundredth birthday party. Women's lives have changed significantly in those one hundred years, and we get to learn from one ordinary but extraordinary woman who has lived through a century in **Debra Oswald's** latest novel, *One Hundred Years of Betty*.

**Host: Anne Maria Nicholson**



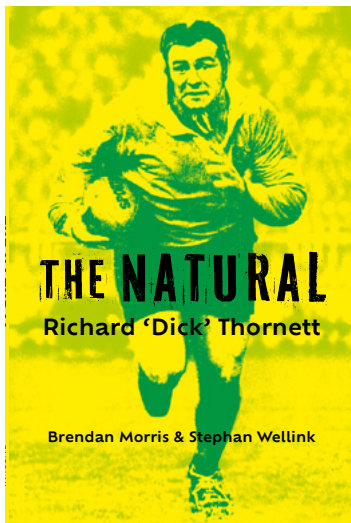
Magan Magan

## Manly Poetry Salon 🌅👤

Immerse yourself in the rhythms, emotions, and revelations of poetry with a collection of poets: **Alise Blayney, Cocoa the Conscious, Magan Magan, Paul Mitchell, Djon Mundine, Michele Seminara**. In this vibrant session, each poet will share their unique voice and perspective, delving into themes of identity, culture, connection, and the human experience. Through readings and discussion, discover how poetry challenges, heals, and shapes our experiences and the world around us.

**Host: Michele Seminara**





## The Natural: Dick Thornett's Sporting Life 🏆

Richard 'Dick' Thornett was a sporting prodigy who displayed exceptional skills as a schoolboy, which only grew in adulthood. The youngest of three athletic brothers, Thornett represented Australia at the Rome Olympics in water polo, toured with the Wallabies to South Africa and New Zealand alongside his brother John, and, with Ken, played a crucial role in the Kangaroos' success in 1963-64. When it came to sport, Dick Thornett had the X-factor. However, despite his widely praised athletic abilities, he endured significant personal struggles. **Brendan Morris** and **Stephan Wellink's** biography, *The Natural - Richard 'Dick' Thornett*, is set to be published in March.

**Host:** Tim Ayliffe

## Saturday, 4.10pm - 5.45pm

## Conversation Circle: Navigating The Shifting Global Order 🌍🗳️



A thought-provoking discussion that unpacks how pivotal political events—like the rise of autocrats and the shifting power in Eurasia—are transforming geopolitical relationships and the world order as we know it. Our expert panel will delve into the profound implications of these shifts and their drivers. Drawing on their recent books and extensive political and international experience, our panellists will offer unique insights to help make sense of a rapidly changing world.

**Panel:** Damian Collins, Dennis Glover, Amelia Lester, Geoff Raby, Don Watson

**Host:** Geraldine Doogue

# Saturday, 7pm - 10pm

## Special Event 🏆

Join Us for a Fundraising Literary Trivia Night - A Special Event for Book Lovers!

Think you know your Austen from your Orwell? Your Shakespeare from your Shelley? Your Keneally from your Carey? Put your literary knowledge to the test, and join us for a night of fun, facts, and fundraising!

## Special Event

- **What:** A special Literary Trivia Night featuring rounds on classic literature, modern favourites, famous authors, and much more.
- **Who:** Hosted by **Murray Shaw** of the Nine Network with plenty of laughs, brain-teasers, and prizes for the winning teams. Quizmaster: **Kate Grant** of Mackellar Girls High School English Faculty.
- **Why:** All proceeds from the event will go toward NBCCC.org.au, supporting people living with cancer on the Northern Beaches.

Bring your book club, friends, or family and make it a night to remember. Whether you're a literary scholar, just love a good story, or want to help a good local cause, this event is for everyone who shares a passion for the written word.

**Venue: Manly Surf Life Saving Club**



# Sunday

## Manly Golf Club



Joe Aston

Sunday sees us move to the Manly Golf Club where we offer a captivating choice for enthusiasts of music and sport – both critical aspects of Australian cultural and literary life – celebrating the stories behind the passions that move us and bring us together as friends, families, and society.

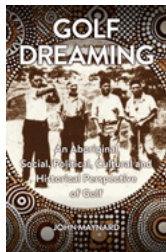
After a day of inspiring stories and performances, unwind with champagne, high tea, and a deep dive into Australia's cultural and corporate identity with the Manly Writers' Festival version of the much-coveted 'Chairman's Lounge' with **Joe Aston** in a one-on-one with **Helen Vatsikopoulos**.



# SPORTS

## Sunday, 9.15am–10.15am

### Sunrise Raconteurs: From The Fairway To The Goal Line



Kick off your Sunday with two master storytellers who know sport—and life—inside out. **John Maynard** (*Golf Dreaming*) takes us on a journey into golf through an Aboriginal lens, blending memoir, untold history, and cultural insight. **Jim Fraser** (*Tales of Wagging Tails*), former Socceroos goalkeeper and police dog handler, and Western Sydney Wanderers Academy coach, shares fascinating tales from the field, the force, and beyond.

Over breakfast, join these two raconteurs as they swap stories about resilience, connection, and their love of sport—whether it's football, golf, cricket, or racing. This session promises a hearty mix of humour, historical and cultural insights, and unforgettable anecdotes, setting the tone for a wonderful day!

**This session is suitable and free to young people aged 13-18.**  
**Host: Simon Hill**



## Sunday, 10.30am – 11.10am

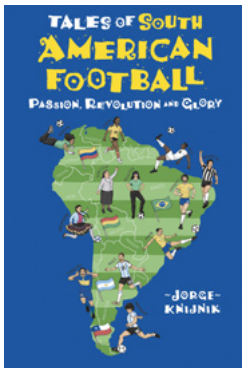


### Football Power Brokers 🏆

In the high-stakes world of global football, the days of self-representation are long gone. Enter the agents: the power brokers, dealmakers, and behind-the-scenes strategists shaping the careers of the game's brightest stars. While fans revel in the magic of the matchday, the real drama often unfolds off the pitch in a world few truly understand. *The Agents' Game* by **Peter Paleologos** pulls back the veil on the industry, offering a rare glimpse into the lives of 28 top agents from Australia and beyond.

**Jorge Knijnik's** *Tales of South American Football* captures the elegance of the star players and the visceral struggles in South American societies and describes the social and political context of football on the continent where *jogo bonito* is a force that divides and unites people. The backdrop of the continent's volatile politics, oppression, and inequality is painted behind vignettes of football games, players, politicians, and the sport itself.

**This session is suitable and free to young people aged 13-18.**  
**Host: Nia Owens**



## Sunday, 11.30am – 12.20pm



### The Soccer Anzacs Project 🏆 🏛️

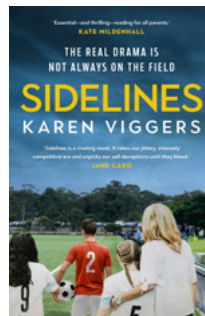
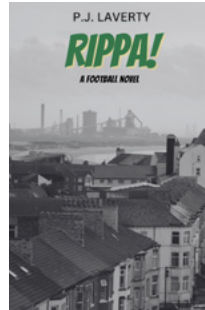
The Soccer Anzacs project honours Australian soccer players who served in the AIF during World War One. Most fought on the frontlines in the Dardanelles, Egypt, and the Western Front, while a few contributed in other critical roles. Featuring a database and soldier stories at [www.socceranzacs.com.au](http://www.socceranzacs.com.au), the project—led by Dr. Ian Syson—is supported by a federal government grant. This presentation offers a sneak peek at the website, set to launch on Anzac Day 2025.

**This session is suitable and free to young people aged 13-18.**  
**Presenter: Ian Syson**





# Sunday, 12.45pm-2pm



## Reading The Game: Inspiring Young Readers Through Football 📖🏆

Football can capture hearts and minds, making it a natural hook to get young people excited about reading. In this engaging session, meet six talented authors who use the beautiful game to tell stories of ambition, identity, resilience, and self-discovery.

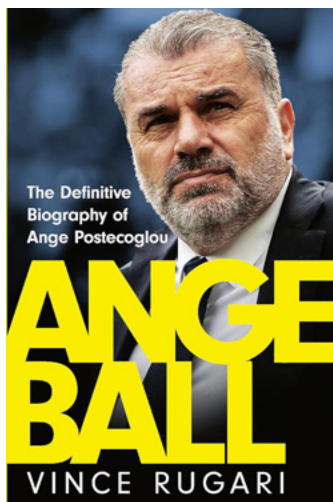
**David Weiner** (*The Goals That Changed Australia*) takes readers through iconic moments in Australian football, from John Aloisi's unforgettable World Cup penalty to Cortnee Vine's heroics in 2023. **Amy Schembri** (*Making It... Or Not*) explores the real-life journeys of young footballers navigating their path from junior leagues to professional careers.

On the fiction side, **Liz Deep-Jones** (*Lucy Zeezou*), **P.J. Laverty** (*RIPPA!*), **Texi Smith** (*Abebi*), and **Karen Viggers** (*Sidelines*) delve into the emotional highs and lows of young characters whose lives are shaped by football. Together, they explore how sport-themed stories provide a powerful lens for addressing issues like family, cultural identity, perseverance, and personal growth.

Whether you're a young dreamer, an educator, or a parent, this session will inspire you to see how football stories can kickstart a lifelong love of reading.

**This session is suitable and free to young people aged 13-18.**  
**Host: Niav Owens**

# Sunday, 2.15pm-3pm



## Angeball 🏆

Only a 'true believer' in football in Australia would one day think an Aussie coach could be the manager of an English Premier League team. Ange Postecoglou is one such true believer who made it happen. He has coached club teams at the highest level in Australia, Japan, and Scotland, as well as the Young Socceroos, the Socceroos, and now, Tottenham Hotspur. Along the way, he has picked up 13 major trophies. Postecoglou is known for an uncompromising attitude favouring a possession-based play known as 'Angeball'—the actual 'beautiful game'—that looks good but may not necessarily get results, leading to frustration from fans and owners alike. **Vince Rugari** has written the definitive biography of Ange Postecoglou.

**This session is suitable and free to young people aged 13-18.**  
**Host: Simon Hill**



# MUSIC 🎵

## Sunday, 10am – 11am

### Creative Lives In Fiction: Stories Of Love, Ambition And Self-Discovery 📖 🎵

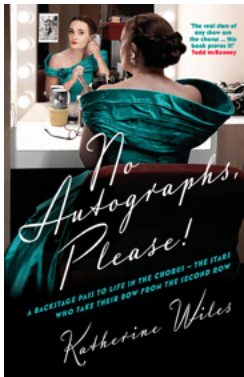


Explore the intricate dynamics of identity, ambition, and creativity with **Deborah Pike** (*The Players*), **Jessie Tu** (*The Honeysuckle*), and **Gillian Wills** (*Big Music*). Through the lens of coming-of-age journeys, the tension between art and societal expectations, and the complexities of love and ambition, these novels illuminate the universal struggle to find one's place in a rapidly shifting world. Join us for a compelling discussion on how cultural and societal pressures shape personal growth and creative expression and what it means to forge an authentic identity amidst competing demands.

**Host: Summer Land**



## Sunday, 11.20am – 12.20pm



### ‘Quiet Please, There’s A Lady On Stage’ (Peter Allen) 🎵 📖

**Katherine Wiles** is not a household name, and that’s how she likes it, by choice. She has built a career by being part of the chorus of Opera Australia since 2007. And she writes about it in her memoir *No Autographs, Please!* balancing charming self-deprecation with professional style and confidence and in respectful homage to her chorus colleagues.

**Host: Tracey Spicer**

## Sunday, 12.40pm – 1.40pm



### ‘There Are Mountains In Our Way, But We Climb A Step Every Day’ (Joe Cocker) 🎵 📖

**Josh Piterman** is the only Australian to play the Phantom and Jean Valjean in London’s West End. His new book, *Behind the Mask*, reveals that, despite his on-stage presence and assurance, the journey to the top has not been easy, and he regularly experiences stage anxiety, panic attacks, and fear of failure. His book includes backstage tours, lessons learned, wisdom, humour, and advice on navigating through a life with purpose.

**Host: Suzanne Leal**

## Sunday, 2pm – 3pm



Katherine Wiles

### ‘Teach The Children Well’ (Crosby, Stills, Nash And Young) 🎵

Studies show that music education helps improve cognitive function and literacy. Increasingly crowded curriculums and finite resources have seen schools cut back on music programs, resulting in thousands of children leaving primary with no formal music education. Many schools that try to retain some music in their curriculum often deliver it by a generalist teacher who has received 17 hours of music education in their four-year degree, compared with 350 hours for a generalist teacher in South Korea. How do we ensure policymakers and educators see the bigger picture of the value and importance of music education to every child’s development?

**Panel: Max Holzner, Josh Piterman, Gillian Wills, Katherine Wiles**  
**Host: Suzanne Leal**



# Sunday, 3pm-3.45pm

High Tea is available, with a special performance from West Phil. 🥂🎵

## Sunday, 3.45pm - 5pm

### Special Event: The Chairman's Lounge



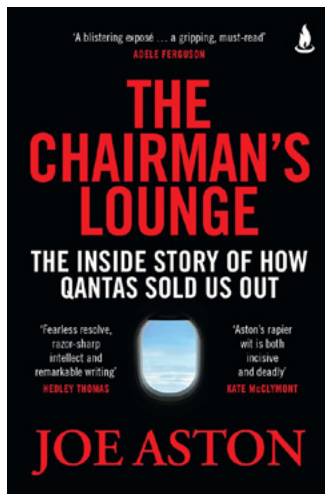
We may not be “the most exclusive club in the country,” as former Qantas CEO Alan Joyce once claimed, but we’re offering the next best thing!

Join us for the Manly Writers' Festival's very own **Chairman's Lounge**—a glamorous and insightful closing session featuring celebrated author and journalist **Joe Aston**. With his trademark wit and incisive commentary, Joe will reveal how Qantas, once Australia's most beloved national carrier, managed to spectacularly crash its reputation.

Set against the elegant backdrop of the **Manly Golf Club**, this exclusive event is the perfect way to wrap up the Manly Writers' Festival in style. Enjoy **champagne and high tea** while delving into the fascinating world of corporate identity, brand loyalty, and what happens when it all comes undone.

**Host: Helen Vatsikopoulos**

**Venue: Manly Golf Club**



#### Icon Guide

📖 = Fiction & Storytelling

🏆 = Sport & the Beautiful Game

🎵 = Music & Performing Arts

🏛️ = History

🏠 = Memoir & Personal Journeys

🌍 = Social Issues & Big Ideas

🔍 = Crime & Mystery

✂️ = Lifestyle

🥂 = Highlights & Special Events

## Friday, 12.30pm-1.30pm



### Masterclass

#### Lunchtime Masterclass: Navigating Copyright: Essential Insights For Authors And Publishers

Join us for an engaging and informative workshop presented by the Copyright Agency, designed to demystify copyright and empower authors and publishers. Whether you're an aspiring writer, an established author, or a publisher navigating the complexities of intellectual property, this session will provide essential guidance on protecting your work, managing rights, and avoiding copyright pitfalls.

Discover practical tips on licensing, fair use, and compliance in the digital age. Learn how the Copyright Agency supports creators and gain valuable resources to help you succeed in the literary and publishing world.

Don't miss this opportunity to safeguard your creative journey and enhance your professional expertise.

**Presenter: Josephine Johnston, CEO, Copyright Agency**

## Saturday, 9.30am-10.30am



### Workshop

#### Workshop: Unlock Your Best Work: The Power Of A Personal Editor

Every great writer needs a great editor. Even though traditional publishers will conduct their own structural and/or copy edits, a personal editor helps get a manuscript into shape before submitting it and *should* help to reduce the time to publication. Whether crafting your first manuscript or polishing your next bestseller, working with a professional editor can transform your work from good to extraordinary. Join us for a workshop to explore how professional editors can help refine your narrative, sharpen your prose, and ensure your manuscript is ready for publishers or, if self-publishing, your readers. Learn what to expect from the editing process, how to find the right editor for your needs, and why collaboration is the key to success.

**Presenter: Rananda Rich**



# Saturday, 12 Midday – 2pm

## Workshop

### Workshop: Writing Your Life Story

What story could be more significant than the story of your life? Whether it's for your family, friends, or yourself, this workshop will guide and inspire you to write your life story. This workshop will help motivate you to record and weave your life story regardless of age.

Discover how to make your story both compelling and engaging, how to create the road map that led you to where you are today, and how to bring details to life. Find the focus of your life story, then learn how to translate it into a workable structure for your memories. Outline a plot skeleton in class.

By the end of this workshop, you will understand what and how much you need to write. Through in-class writing and editing exercises, you'll learn how to transform your memories into stories and determine the best way to start telling your tale. Your story is worth sharing. Explore and share it!

No writing experience is required.

**Presenter: Zena Shapter**



# School Program

## Fact or Fake: Your Guide to News Literacy

It's increasingly important that young people understand how 'news' is presented to them in the 21st century to be able to form their opinions and ideas about our ever changing world.

Students of English, History, MultiMedia and other subject areas may all benefit from this incredible day where we dig deep into how the news is told and its impact on us as readers and writers.

With persuasive and discursive writing as major components of the curriculum, understanding how 'Op-Ed pieces', PR and media influencers impact our understanding of 'news' is also vital. Our program, led by those at the forefront of news telling, will enlighten students in Years 9 and above, as to just what the news means in contemporary Australia.

Join **Gavin Fang** and **Tracey Kirkland** from the ABC, **Kim Smee** from the Manly Observer, and **Jill Valentine** from the Jarden Group for a dynamic one-day session to sharpen your skills in distinguishing fact from fiction.

---

### Session 1: Introduction to News:

**Time:** 9.30am-10.15am

**Topics:**

- What is news?
- Types of news (hard news, soft news, opinions, editorials).
- The role of news in democracy and society.

**Interactive Activity:** • Group discussion: "What's the most important news story you've heard this week? Why?"

---

### Session 2: Real vs. Fake News:

**Time:** • 10.15am-10.45am

**Topics:**

- What is fake news, and why does it exist?
- How to spot fake news: analysing sources, verifying facts, identifying bias.

**Interactive Activity:** • Students will be shown several short articles or headlines and work in small groups to decide which are real and which are fake, explaining their reasoning.

**Break: 15 minutes**

### Session 3: Writing News:

**Time:** 11am-11.30am

**Topics:**

- The structure of a news article (headline, lead, body, conclusion).
- Writing clearly and concisely.
- The importance of accuracy and neutrality.

---

## Session 4: News vs. PR:

**Time:** 11.30am-12 noon

**Topics:**

- What is PR (Public Relations), and how is it different from journalism?
- How PR influences the news (e.g., press releases, corporate communications).
- Identifying when news is PR-driven versus independently reported.

**Interactive Activity:** • Students are shown examples of news stories and PR materials (e.g., a press release) and discuss the differences.

---

## Session 5: Fact-Checking and Journalist Responsibilities:

**Time:** 12 noon-12.45pm

**Topics:**

- Tools and methods for fact-checking.
- Ethical responsibilities of journalists.

**Interactive Activity:** • Students use online tools to fact-check a given statement or piece of news.

**Break: 30 minutes**

## Session 6: Practical News Writing Challenge:

**Time:** 1.15pm-2.15pm

**Activity:**

- Students choose from scenarios (e.g., a sports event, a school fundraiser, a natural disaster, a concert tour) and work in pairs to create a headline, an introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph.

## Wrap-Up and Reflection:

**Time:** 2.15pm-2.30pm

**Topics:**

- Summary of key takeaways and how students can use their newfound skills to engage with the news critically.



## Friday at a Glance

<b>10am-11am</b>	<b>Author Talk:</b> Heather Morris				
<b>11.20am-12.20pm</b>	Fighting the Long Goodbye	Long Live the Romance Novel	Trailblazing Women		
<b>12.40pm-1.40pm</b>	A Culinary Odyssey	Justice for Kathleen Folbigg	Changing Life	New Voices in Fiction	
<b>2pm-3pm</b>	<b>Author Talk:</b> Jane Caro	<b>Bipolar Journeys:</b> Stories of Strength, Struggle and Self-Discovery	<b>Reflections:</b> Transition to a New Land		<b>Masterclass:</b> Navigating Copyright—Essential Insights for Authors & Publishers
<b>3.20pm-4.30pm</b>	Historical Fiction Beyond the Border	<b>Holding On and Letting Go:</b> Finding Strength Through Loss			
<b>6.30pm to 9pm</b>	<b>SPECIAL EVENT: BOOK LAUNCH:</b> The Bunny Club by Blanche d'Alpuget				

## Saturday at a Glance

<b>9.30am-10.30am</b>	AI & Social Media: Shaping Today	<b>Author Talk:</b> Peter FitzSimons	Before the NBN & Snowy 2.0	<b>True Crime:</b> Tales of Betrayal, Escape and Justice	<b>Reflections:</b> Conflict In The Home of Your Heart	<b>Workshop:</b> Unlock Your Best Work—The Power of a Personal Editor
<b>10.50am-11.50am</b>	Politics, Power & the Thrill of the Chase	<b>Two Families on a Collision Course:</b> A Memoir				
<b>12.10pm-1.10pm</b>	"I don't think, I know."	New Voices in Fiction II	<b>Reflections:</b> Dispossession of Your Land	<b>Fractured Foundations:</b> Trust In An Uncertain World	<b>12 midday - 2pm Workshop:</b> Writing Your Life Story	
<b>1.30pm-2.30pm</b>	<b>Breaking the Mould:</b> Women, Medicine, and the Power of Storytelling	Made In India	<b>Rivals in the Storm:</b> War, Peace and the Price of Leadership	<b>The Heart of the Land:</b> Crime Fiction in the Australian Landscape		
<b>2.50pm-3.50pm</b>	Australian Historical Fiction	<b>Frontline Perspectives:</b> Reporting the World Beyond Borders	"I haven't been everywhere but it is on my list."	<b>Resilience and Recovery:</b> Navigating Mental Health Episodes		
<b>4.10pm-5.15pm</b>	Change and Choice	Manly Poetry Salon	<b>The Natural:</b> Dick Thornett's Sporting Life			

## Saturday at a Glance (continued)

4.10pm-5.45pm

### Conversation

**Circle:** Navigating the Shifting Global Order

7pm to 10pm

**SPECIAL EVENT:** FUNDRAISING LITERARY TRIVIA NIGHT

## Sunday at a Glance

9.15am-10.15am

### Sunrise

**Raconteurs:** From the Fairway to the Goal Line

10am-11am

### Creative Lives

**in Fiction:** Stories of Love, Ambition and Self-Discovery

10.30am-11.10am

Football Power Brokers

11.20am-12.20pm

'Quiet Please, There's a Lady on Stage'

11.30am-12.20pm

The Soccer Anzacs Project

12.40pm-1.40pm

'There Are Mountains in Our Way, But We Climb a Step Every Day'

12.45pm-2pm

### Reading the

**Game:** Inspiring Young Readers through Football

2.15pm-3pm

Angeball

2pm-3pm

Teach the Children Well

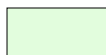
### MUSICAL INTERLUDE

3.45pm-5pm

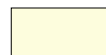
**SPECIAL EVENT:** The Chairman's Lounge



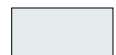
Suitable (and free) for young people aged 13-18



Special Event



Workshop / Masterclass



Fiction

# Sponsors

## Foundation Partners:

The TAG Family Foundation  
Fair Play Publishing

## Supported by:

Northern Beaches Council

## Bookseller:

Gleebooks

## Coffee Partner:

Hennessy Coffee

## Accommodation Partner:

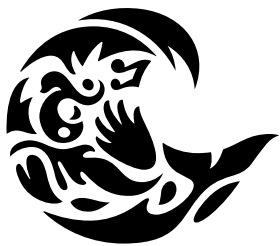
Q Station

## Media Partner:

Manly Observer

## School Program Supporter:

Aide de MD



northern  
beaches  
council



hennessy  
coffee



AidedeMD  
MENTORING BUSINESS LEADERS

# Festival team

## Founder, Director & Curator:

Bonita Mersiades

## Board members:

Jaimie Fuller  
Bonita Mersiades  
Golasa Nahid  
Trevor Thompson  
Jill Valentine

## Brand identity & design:

Kimberly Pringle

## Website design:

Flow Creative

## Poetry Curator:

Michele Seminara

## Media & PR:

DMCPR Media

## Concierge/Volunteer Liaison:

Izabella Deep-Jones

## Operations Coordinator:

Callum Lord

# Social Media

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/manlywritersfestival](https://facebook.com/manlywritersfestival)

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

**BlueSky:** [@manlywritersfest](https://www.bsky.app/profile/manlywritersfest)

**Email:** [hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au](mailto:hello@manlywritersfestival.org.au)

**Join the conversation:** #ManlyWF25





# MANLY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

[WWW.MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU](http://WWW.MANLYWRITERSFESTIVAL.ORG.AU)