

SPRING 2023

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EUROA FRIENDS
CELEBRATE 30 YEARS!

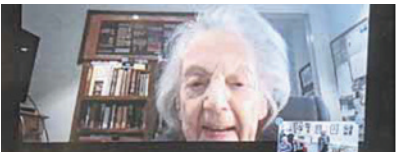


Lifelong member: Justus Hagen (Left) presented Leanner Baker with flowers, recognising her as the only person to have been a FOEL members for its full 30 years.



Cutting the cake: Libby Woodhouse and Leanner Baker had the honour of cutting the 30th anniversary cake.

Pioneering group joined by
101 year-old founder



The national voice for 15 million Public Library Members

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Message from the FOLA PRESIDENT



What's a University Study Hub? Sounds Like a Library to Us!

If you follow the news, you might be aware that earlier this year the federal government commissioned a higher education review.

Why? The government holds the view that Australia's universities need to invest more in teaching and learning, and higher education needs to become more accessible to traditionally disadvantaged groups. Australia's future will require more people to have tertiary degrees, and these should be more equitably distributed across the population.

As Jason Clare, the minister for education, has said, in Australia, too often one's postcode is one's destiny. That is, young people who grow up in underserved communities where few adults hold tertiary degrees are far less likely to pursue higher education than their counterparts in more privileged parts of Australia. To solve this problem, the Accord has recommended, via an interim report, that university study hubs be established in some of these underserved geographies, both in country areas and also in outer areas of large cities.

At this point, you might be asking yourself why you are reading this in a newsletter about and for friends of public libraries. It's not quite as long of a bow as you might think.

The government doesn't want to give universities more money to solve this problem. Post pandemic, when every university student was forced to study online, it's clear that most students want to study in a "hybrid mode" — attending campus when necessary or beneficial, and learning online when the convenience outweighs the time and cost of travel.

The government proposes to solve this problem by introducing something it's calling "Suburban University Study Hubs" Their idea is to encourage organisations to apply for funding to create physical spaces open to higher education students where they can access individual and group study spaces, use digital technologies and receive support from knowledge professionals.

"the minister for education, has said, in Australia, too often one's postcode is one's destiny."

"The government doesn't want to give universities more money to solve this problem."



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“For about the same total expenditure as the budget of a single, average-sized Australian public university, taxpayers fund more than 1,700 public libraries.”

Now the reason for this column might be a little more obvious. FOLA's board has been following the Accord process closely and has made two lengthy submissions to the consultation process which can be summed up as follows:

Suburban and Regional University Study Hubs already exist. They are called public libraries and there are tens of thousands of higher education students using their local libraries for exactly the purposes described. The logical — and indeed only sensible — way to deploy the nearly \$70-million (!) of allocated funding is to grant it to existing libraries in identified geographies so that they can enhance and expand their capacity to support local higher education learners.

This is a good example of the types of challenges FOLA is seeking to address as we adjust our focus beyond individual Friends groups toward the wider frame of better public libraries — especially in regional, rural and remote communities — for all Australians. It is simultaneously shocking — yet not surprising — how little is known or understood about public libraries across the country.

For about the same total expenditure as the budget of a single, average-sized Australian public university, taxpayers fund more than 1,700 public libraries. These libraries attract tens of millions of visits each year, hundreds of millions of loans and virtual interactions, and billions of dollars in economic return on the investment. Yet all libraries are not equal. Those in densely populated parts of our large cities, as well as those in the largest regional centres, benefit from their geographies and the capacity of their communities to invest.

That is why FOLA has commissioned a study into the systemic underfunding and substantive inequities in library services available in country areas relative to densely-populated metropolitan



areas. Our report, which contains a meta-analysis of data collected from state libraries in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, will be published shortly. It will also contain profiles of country libraries that are exceptional in their design, collections, staffing, programming and community impact. We hope these libraries serve as examples of what is achievable when communities and governments come together to build essential educational infrastructure.

We will share the report — tentatively titled *The Heart of the Country: Australia's Country Public Libraries* — with all FOLA members as well as library leaders and decision makers, and local, state, and federal governments and politicians. An enormous amount of thought and effort has gone into the creation of the report. To our knowledge no one has ever tried to tell the story of the nation's country public libraries — and the unique challenges they face — in this way before. And while I hope the report will make for powerful reading, its success will hinge entirely on the extent to which it receives the widest possible audience.

To this end, please do whatever you can to assist in sharing the report so that together we can spark a national conversation about this critical issue.

Jack Goodman
President, FOLA

The 10th Anniversary celebration **of Byron Bay Library**



Byron Bay is Best known for its lighthouse, magnificent beaches, and lush hinterland. A hidden story is how the community pulled together to build a new library, centrally-located and capacious.

Plans for a new purpose-built library were drafted in 1993, however it took nearly two decades to pull the funding together. Passionate locals spang into action and in the mid-1990s Friends of the Libraries Byron Shire, with Peg Gloor as President, started a campaign for a new library.

The politically savvy Friends of the Libraries Byron Shire were determined to garner support and raise funds, including member Jenny Coman who was also a Councillor. Jan Barham, Mayor of Byron Shire 2004-2011 remembers:

“When I was elected to Council in 1999, I joined Jenny on the Library Committee. Over 12 years we pursued the goal to deliver a new library, we investigated many options and had many setbacks as land prices in the Bay had risen and the council was in serious debt.”

President, Bob Levitt continued being a strong advocate, fronting up regularly to Council meetings. Early fund raising involved selling second-hand books outside the (old) library, along with a yearly raffle, along with support from the Byron Writers Festival.

Apart from funding the other challenge was to find an appropriate site. A land swap with the Arakwal Elders and Council enabled a site where the library now stands.

Council gained additional funding from NSW Community Building Partnerships and the State Library of NSW providing \$400,000 of a total of \$3.25 million. The building designed by architects Stephenson & Turner gained a 5 green star rating in recognition of its ecological and sustainable design and construction.

A slow, and at times painful process requiring great perseverance, the Byron Library celebrated its 10th anniversary in February 2023.



“The politically savvy Friends of the Libraries Byron Shire were determined to garner support and raise funds.”

“President, Bob Levitt continued being a strong advocate, fronting up regularly to Council meetings.”

*“Byron Library celebrated its
10th anniversary in
February 2023”*

Another Bookshop opens

FRIENDS OF MANSFIELD LIBRARY (VIC)



"The FOMLs have supported the Mansfield Library since 1991 through advocating for the Library, fund raising and supporting Library activities."

"on 30th August 2023, we opened our new "Little Shop of Good Reads""

The Friends of Mansfield Library Inc (also known as the FOMLs) are pleased to have recently joined Friends of Libraries Australia. We would like to introduce ourselves and contribute an item for "Friends Around Australia" section of the quarterly newsletter.

The FOMLs have supported the Mansfield Library since 1991 through advocating for the Library, fund raising and supporting Library activities. More recently, the FOMLs have been running a pop up used book shop and large scale sales on the Mansfield Bush Market days (four days a year). The FOMLs had a vision of operating a used (or preloved) book shop in a permanent location, however retail space rent in Mansfield is prohibitively expensive.

Fortunately Mansfield Shire Council had a building with some vacant space. After 18 months of lobbying by the FOMLs, Council decided to grant a licence to the FOMLs and on 30th August 2023, we opened our new "Little Shop of Good Reads" at 31 Highett Street, Mansfield Victoria.

Deb Westphalen, Secretary.



The refurbished entrance to Mansfield Library.

FOLA making a difference

PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Office of the Mayor

Our Ref: GF/7.41.1/11 EI2023/216133
coulet mayor Premier Public Libraries 300823

30 August 2023

Hon Peter Malinauskas
Premier of South Australia
GPO Box 2343
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Hon Andrea Michaels
Minister for Arts
GPO Box 464
ADELAIDE SA 5001



BY EMAIL: Premier@sa.gov.au

BY EMAIL: MinisterMichaels@sa.gov.au

Dear Premier / Minister

State Funding of South Australia's Public Libraries

At Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 8 August 2023 an email from Mr Jack Goodman, President of Friends of Libraries Australia regarding State funding for public libraries was tabled along with a letter he had drafted to you.

Mr Goodman pointed out that the State Government had chosen to renew its commitment in support of public libraries whilst excluding any indexation for inflation.

This statement raised an alarm in the Chamber and Council resolved for me to write this letter bringing to your attention that libraries need to be adequately resourced and that the current level of funding is insufficient to provide quality services.

Public libraries provide myriads of services to the local community. They offer programs for every demographic, from infants and toddlers to the elderly. They are a facility that promotes lifelong learning, facilitates the development of digital information and literacy skills, and deliver opportunities for learning, personal development, and creativity through a rich program of events and activities. Whilst public libraries are important in the metropolitan area, they are even more critical in our rural, regional, and remote communities.

In these smaller communities, often the public library is the only venue that is open to the public on a regular basis providing free shelter from the weather and access to recreational and educational materials. It also provides a comfortable space to learn, provide community support and access to free Wi-Fi and to technology and devices that would otherwise be unaffordable. It is a great space for interactions and connections, bringing people together.

As Premier and Minister for Arts, I urge you to revisit your decision and lock in the inflation-based indexation of the State's contribution.

Yours sincerely

Des Noll OAM
MAYOR

Telephone: (08) 8733 0900
Email: mayor@wattlerange.sa.gov.au

cc Jack Goodman, President – Friends of Libraries Australia

Wattle Range - a great place to live and work

“Libraries need to be adequately resourced and the current level of funding is insufficient to provide quality services.”

“The public library service is often the only venue that is open to the public on a regular basis.”

Recognising the
FRIENDS OF EUROA LIBRARY (VIC)

The Euroa Gazette
Incorporating the Nagambie Times and Violet Town Sentinel

Friends rejoice

A VERY special, 101-year-old guest last week joined a celebration of the Friends of the Euroa Library (FOEL)'s 30th anniversary. About 30 people filled the back room of the Euroa Library on Wednesday, where the guest of honour Peg Lusink, the founder of FOEL, joined via Zoom, her face enlarged on a TV screen. It was the centenary's own suggestion to join via Zoom after she could not find a driver to take her to Euroa from her apartment in the inner-city Melbourne suburb of Carlton.

Ms Lusink - the first Victorian woman to have been appointed to the judiciary and a former Justice of the Family Court - was remarkably sharp-minded, holding the crowd as she regaled them with tales from the first days of the FOEL.

She had been living on Binney Street, Euroa, across the road from the library in the house beside Doug Stone Gold Maps, when one day she thought to herself, "I need a project" - so, she looked across the road at the library and thought, "that library looks like it needs friends".

That idea in 1993 became the FOEL, an independent group of community members who worked on improving and raising funds for the Euroa Library. It was one of the first groups of its kind in Australia and came one year before the formation of a larger group, Friend of Libraries Australia (FOLA), an association which today includes "Friends" groups all over Australia, with five in the Goulburn Valley.

Ms Lusink was FOLA's first president in 1994. At last week's celebration,

The Euroa Gazette asked Ms Lusink why libraries are still important today, and her answer certainly pleased the crowd of book lovers gathered in the room. "I think they're probably more important than they've ever been," she said. "People still want to have books, they will always want to have books - we're not going to suddenly lose our ability to ask about things."

Continued page 2



BY DARREN CHAITMAN
@darrenchaitman
nmedia.com.au

On Monday 21 August 2023 four Friends gathered over an online Zoom meeting. Two of them in Melbourne and two in Sydney. The participants were: The Hon Peg Lusink AM, the first President of the Friends of Euroa Library and first National President of FOLA, the Hon Michael Kirby CMG, AC the first Patron of FOLA, Jack Goodman the present President of Friends of Libraries Australia and Daniel Ferguson, FOLA Executive Director and Founder.

Some of the points of interest during the discussion was how libraries and Friends have changed during the past 30 years.

For example, 30 years ago we did not have the internet and the present media that comes from the world wide web was not available. There were at the time, some 94 Friends groups established around Australia. The present number is more like 60. Many public libraries were controlled by a single municipal council, where as today, council amalgamations have had significant impact on what could be termed the 'local library'.

FOLA along with Friends groups have changed significantly. And also has the funding of public libraries, particularly with the vagaries of local and state government funding. Unfortunately, often to the detriment of country libraries.

Continued overleaf

Congratulations to Friends of the Euroa Library on 30 years

I WRITE on behalf of Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA) to congratulate the Friends of the Euroa Library for their exceptional result as they celebrate their 30th anniversary.

The Friends movement has proved to be of enormous value across Australia, and nowhere more so than in rural and regional communities such as Euroa.

When individuals who are passionate about their local library join together, the results can be incredible.

From donations of books, furniture and equipment to supporting renovations and upgrades to library infrastructure, and the establishment of your bookshop, the Friends of the Euroa Library has shown what a difference can be made over the course of three decades.

FOLA has sought to provide support for the hundreds of friends groups that, like FOEL, have operated across Australia - mostly in rural and regional areas - over the last 30-plus years.

We are so pleased to see the Friends of the Euroa Library continuing to thrive as it heads into its fourth decade.

Jack Goodman,
Friends of Libraries Australia president

"The Friends movement has proved to be of enormous value across Australia, and nowhere more so than in rural and regional communities such as Euroa"

"FOLA is looking to support both Friends groups and Country Libraries."

"While patterns for successful Friends groups are likely to remain, the sustaining 'drivers' that delivered success in the past no longer operate."

Recognising the
FRIENDS OF EUROA LIBRARY (VIC)
(Continued)

Consequently, it has given FOLA the opportunity to undertake a project with the LBW Trust, in support of country public libraries, where the majority of Friends of Library groups are situated. 2023 marks the third year of this partnership between the LBW Trust and National Backyard Cricket Project, whereby this year a total of \$110,126 has been distributed to 78 country/ rural libraries across Australia, for projects in value from \$500 to \$1500.



And so, some 30 years on FOLA is looking to support both Friends groups and Country Libraries – to even-up the playing field of funding in support of rural communities.

Not all Friends groups have a Bookshop run by the Friends to give additional support to the group, such as Euroa. And few Friends groups have lasted 30 years.

New year, 2024 marks the 30th year for FOLA. Launched on 9th December 1994 at the State Library of Victoria, when Peg Lusink and Ely Cameron were present from Euroa, to hear FOLA Patron, Michael Kirby address the gathering, and conclude his address by stating:

“Friends of Libraries are those who wish to pay something back, and not only in note and coin, for the great gift of civilisation which libraries offer to us all. We should not take that gift for granted. We should tell our librarians how much we appreciate their efforts. We should tell our governments to continue with strong support – pointing to the countries in our region which are flourishing now from their investment in education, libraries and information systems.

And we should tell our fellow citizens and ourselves that it is not enough to depend upon others. We must ourselves make an effort to ensure that this precious heritage is passed, enhanced and enlarged, to the coming generations.”



The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG

And as Daniel Ferguson, FOLA founder stated at the 25th anniversary of FOLA:

“While patterns for successful Friends groups are likely to remain, the sustaining ‘drivers’ that delivered success in the past no longer operate. Libraries have changed, communities respond in different ways than in the past. How we respond to the new needs of our library communities will be the hallmarks of the success for Friends of Library groups in this country in the future.”

Congratulations to this remarkable achievement. And may the Friends of Euroa Library continue for another 30 and more years.



*Attendees at the FOEL
30th anniversary celebration*

“And few Friends groups have lasted 30 years.”

“the sustaining ‘drivers’ that delivered success in the past no longer operate. Libraries have changed, communities respond in different ways than in the past..”

“Friends of Libraries are those who wish to pay something back, and not only in note and coin, for the great gift of civilisation.”

Advocacy and Action

SUPPORTING LIBRARIES AND DRIVING CHANGE

THE AMERICAN WAY – FROM FRIENDS OF TENNESSEE LIBRARIES



“The library has organised the training of a pool of community members as adult literacy tutors.”

<https://vimeo.com/766506651>

State House Representatives, Sam Whitson and Darren Jernigen offer advice on how to communicate effectively with your legislators about the importance of libraries to your community.

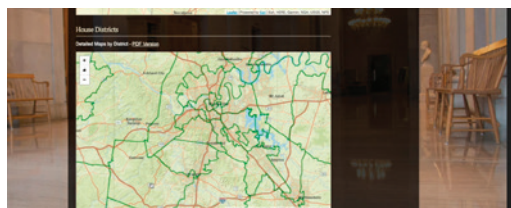
This video gives an insight into how the Friends of Libraries operate in the community in America. An interesting view of how the political and community are inter-woven into the fabric of Friends and libraries in the USA.



Founded in 1992, Friends of Tennessee Libraries (FOTL), a 501(c)(3) organization, is a network of volunteers.

- We promote libraries and their Friends.
- We support libraries and their Friends.
- We advocate funding for libraries on a local, state, and national basis.

Join us as we work together to build a strong, supportive network of citizens promoting the value of libraries as institutions essential to democracy. The urgent need for financial investment in our libraries continues to grow, and FOTL intends to reinforce the front-line efforts of local Friends.



“Libraries are free, have that important, close connection with our communities, and usually have suitable, private spaces.”



Governor Lee's Proclamation Recognizes Friends of Libraries Week in Tennessee

Friends Around Australia



BALMAIN (NSW)



A RECENT EVENT...

**Friday 21st July - Corsets and Coaches:
Getting the Historical Details Right**

Pamela Freeman is a multi-award winning author of more than 40 books. As Pamela Hart, she writes the Poppy McGowan mystery series and historical novels, including Regency romances, Roaring Twenties' dramas and WWI epics.



BYRON BAY (NSW)

Our AGM was followed by a very informative & heartrending talk from Rod & Deb and the work they have been doing in some small villages in the north east corner of Nepal. Rod has written a book telling the story including the importance of working closely with the people of the village.



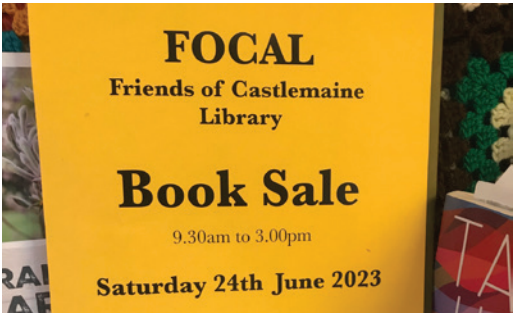
LAUNCESTON (TAS)



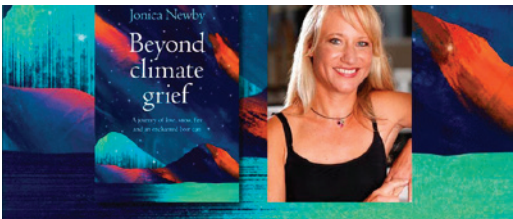
A wonderful performance by Denni Sulzbuger today for 'Live at the Library'! The mellow sound of her cello could be heard throughout the building.

PAYNESVILLE (VIC)

CASTLEMAINE (VIC)



KIAMA (NSW)



Jonica Newby in conversation with Robyn Williams. Saturday 4 November, 2 pm. Kiama Library (upstairs). \$8 FOKL members / \$10 guests (includes afternoon tea).



Admire the talent of our young artists. Here are the winning entries in FOPL Create a Book Mark Competition 2023. Congratulations to winners and a big thank you to all entrants .

Executive Director

SELLING THE MESSAGE

Friends are confronted with a plethora of ways to communicate and – Sell the Message. Sometimes, the most direct is the old-fashioned way - the front page of the local newspaper or feet on the ground at an event.



However, what may be suitable for one Friends group, may not be for all. Adapting to what most fits with your community and Friends group is often key to a successful message sell.

Friends of Euroa Library in Victoria, have for the past 30 years been adapt in getting local newspaper coverage. Therefore, they were pleased recently when they hit the front page of the local paper after celebrating 30 years of success in the community.

Many Friends have turned to social media to tell the story, especially Facebook and YouTube. Others make available e-newsletters from the Friends website, along with making available a downloaded printed newsletter.

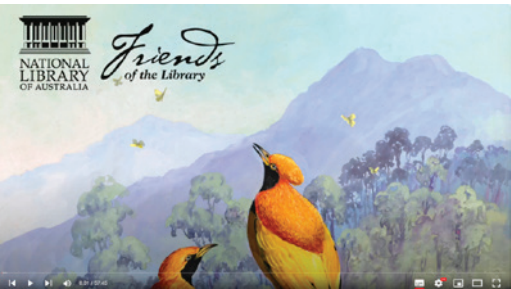
Take a look at a few successful Friends offerings from around Australia: Byron Shire Friends, Balmain Friends, National Library of Australia Friends and overseas, check out the Friends of Tennessee Libraries. These groups have existed often for 30 years, so they have tested what works for them and the communities they serve.



3 Friends at a Stand — Byron Friends



Friends of Libraries, Byron Shire — handing over a cheque for \$8,000



Videos of talks presented at Friends of the National Library of Australia events.

2020-2021

COMING UP@OPENBOOKGROUP:

11th August 2020
Girl, Woman, Other
By Bernadine Evaristo

8th September 2020
Buckley's Chance
By Garry Linnell

13th October 2020
Your Blue Eyed Boy
By Helen Dunmore

10th November 2020
The Education of an Idealist
By Samantha Power

8th December 2020
The Man in the Red Coat
By Julian Barnes

9th February 2021
The Erastics
By Vicki Lavigne-Harvey

WHEN: 2nd Tuesday of every month, 1pm—3pm

WHERE: Meeting Room, Balmain Library

EMAIL: info@fobl.org.au

PHONE: Jan 0498 48 5677, Gillian 9810 5951

No bookings needed. Refreshments provided.

FREE!

FOBL.ORG.AU

OPEN BOOK GROUP

Friends of BALMAIN LIBRARY

Friends of Balmain Library book group.

Membership Application

CATEGORIES Membership fee incorporating News Update Individual \$15 ☐ FOL Group — 0-25 Members \$25 ☐ FOL Group — 25+ Members \$50 ☐ Libraries \$105 ☐ Institutions incl. Libraries with multiple Friends groups \$105 ☐ Corporations \$105 ☐ Extra copies of News Update \$10 per annum ☐	RETURN ADDRESS FOLA Inc. FOLA Treasurer, Kristina Barnett, 42 Marian Place, Prospect SA 5082 PAYMENT DETAILS My cheque/money order is made payable to: Friends of Libraries Australia Inc. FOLA Treasurer, Kristina Barnett, 42 Marian Place, Prospect SA 5082 Amount enclosed \$	ADDRESS DETAILS Name: Address: Postcode: Phone: Email:
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Friends Resource Book | Daniel Ferguson

- Establishing a successful Friends group
- Keeping your Friends active
- Incorporation
- Public liability
- Library management issues
- How to
- Latest and best ideas and much more...

The authoritative guide and source book for Friends of Library groups in Australasia

Order Form	
Name 	
Address 	
Postcode 	Please send me a copy of Friends of Libraries Resource Book (2005) Enclosed is my cheque for \$59.95 plus \$10 postage & handling (cheque payable to — Friends of Libraries Australia Inc.) Mail to: FOLA Treasurer, Kristina Barnett, 42 Marian Place, Prospect SA 5082 www.fola.org.au

About Us

FOLA NEWS UPDATE

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