

Katharine Susannah Prichard Foundation AGM Report 2019

Elizabeth Lewis – Chairperson

I can't believe it's been a whole year since I wrote my last report of the happenings at KSP Writers' Centre! It's been another full and varied year of supporting writers in developing their work towards publication. Thanks for having me back for a second year as your Chairperson, it's been a year of doing what we do well and trying completely new things!

Writers in Residence

Thanks to the continued support of the Shire of Mundaring, Friends of Katharine and valued members of our Literary Committee, this year we've had an even larger complement of talented writers staying in our self-contained writers' cabins who've enriched our literary community here at KSP:

Established Writer in Residence: Les Wicks

Emerging Writers in Residence: Susi Fox & Ilka Tampke

Next-gen Writers in Residence: Eda Gunaydin & Yen-Rong Wong, arriving in November and featured at our November Literary Dinner.

Invited Writer in Residence: Louise Allan

Fellows: Rachel Watts, Tania Walker, Emma Young, Sid Walls, Helen Thurloe, Ashley Goldberg, Adele Dumont, Bill Wilkie, Peta Shaw, Natalie Cooke, Penny Gibson, Kathy Sharpe, Kate Murdoch, Molly Schmidt, Elanna Herbert, Annie Barrett & Jacqueline Maley

Published Author Program: Angela Gardner & Sue Murray

First Edition Fellows (as part of the Four Centres Emerging Writers Program, sponsored by the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries, in partnership with Fremantle Press): Scott-Patrick Mitchell, Kelly Van Nelson, Amanda Gardiner & Tracey Gregory

CALD Fellow (position sponsored by Rashida Murphy): Emily Sun

New Writer Program: Mark Keenan, Karen Wishart & Madeleine Johns

Foundation Fellow (in partnership with the Eleanor Dark Foundation and Varuna the Writers House): Michelle Symes

First Edition Retreat: Esme Wilmot, Shannon Meyerkort and Michelle Symes under the experienced tutelage of Dr Laurie Steed

Westerly Writers Development Program (in partnership with Westerly Magazine): 5 writers selected for the Westerly Development Program will stay at KSP later this year/early next year.

Literary Program

2019 has seen the successful continuation of our literary program with 3 of our popular Literary Dinners featuring our Writers in Residence (and a 4th coming up in November) showcasing fabulous costumes from Togas through to Film Noir and of course the accomplished works of our Writers in Residence, 7 Friday night Sundowner sessions featuring guest authors, poets and writing professionals sharing their wisdom over a glass of complimentary Lion Mill wine (our 8th and final Sundowner features TAG Hungerford winner Holden Sheppard on the last Friday in November), a series of 7 writing workshops ranging in focus from short stories to poetry to thriller writing to memoir, an 8 week screenplay course with John Beaton, a 4 workshop Self-publishing course run by Lisa Wolstenholme, Wild Weeds Press and special guests Annabel Smith and Holden Sheppard, as well as our May Open Day (Katharine's Birthday Open Day is coming up on the 1st December), our Spooky Stories Night, 4 writing competitions with significantly more entries this year, 2 Holiday Hubs for young writers, thank you Melinda Tognini, and the very special 'Colours of Katharine' 50th anniversary commemoration event.

Colours of Katharine

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the passing of Katharine Susannah Prichard. The 'Colours of Katharine' event, to honour the writer and the lady that Katharine was, took at least a year of planning.

A huge diversion from our usual program of literary events, we thank the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) for the funding to commission Louise Helfgott to write a play commemorating the life of Katharine Susannah Prichard and celebrating her friendship with renowned pianist David Helfgott. DLGSC also provided funding for the commemoration event. Louise Helfgott spent many hours reading Katharine's works and walking in the gardens at KSP to write the play 'Potchnagoola' and we thank her for her time, heartfelt dedication and skill in writing the snapshot of Katharine's life and person that was shared in 4 special performances (2 extra performances in local schools are happening this week). Big thanks also to our wonderful director Douglas Sutherland-Bruce and talented local actors Kerry Goode and Cameron Tarran who played Katharine and David. A highlight of the event was special guests David and Gillian Helfgott coming over for the opening night and David playing some of Katharine's favourite pieces on the piano here at KSP.

Another very special part of this event was the launch of a commemorative anthology 'Kaleidoscope', collecting competition winning submissions of poetry, fiction and non-fiction on Katharine's life and continued presence at the Centre. We thank anthology judges Shey Marque and Nathan Hobby for their expertise in curating such a diverse and historically significant collection. It was an honour to have Karen Throssell, the granddaughter of Katharine & Hugo, come all the way to Perth to launch the anthology for us. Thank you Karen.

Big thanks also to Nathan Hobby, our Katharine expert and biographer, for your advice and support for this event.

Special thanks to everyone who supported this event, and especially our Director Shannon Coyle, Board of Management and volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this event possible, doing everything from grant writing to ticket sales to promotions to making cheese platters to cooking the barbeque, setting up chairs, and learning the Charleston! The 'Colours of Katharine' play performances and open day was a huge event packed with members and visitors and we are so pleased that so many people came out to learn about Katharine's life and writing and to celebrate her legacy with us.

Thanks

We are fortunate to have the continued support of dedicated donors who believe in the work we do at KSP, much gratitude to Tabetha Rogers Beggs (Little Black Dress Productions), Rashida Murphy, Peta Shaw, Flora Smith and Karen Treanor as well as our 2019 Public Fund donors - Nadine Browne, Dr Bill Leadbetter, Derek Sherin, Marek Toczyłowski and Anne Watkins. Your generosity allows us to support writers in so many ways – what a gift!

Huge thanks also to the Shire of Mundaring, Lotterywest, WA Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries, Bendigo Bank Mundaring, Earnshaw's Real Estate, Patrick Bertola (Lion Mill Winery) and Douglas Sutherland-Bruce (Swan Magazine). It's such a special thing to be part of a community that sees the value in supporting the creative arts and you really do make it possible for us to support writers towards achieving their dreams of publication.

Projects

Katharine's Cabin: Last year we had some sad news when we found Katharine's writing cabin had been badly damaged by termites. Thanks to a generous grant from Lotterywest we were able to fully rebuild and refurbish the cottage this year in line with heritage requirements. This allowed us to upgrade some of the outdated materials and electrics as well.

The grant also allowed us to refurbish our KSP office with new floor, paint, blinds and furniture and also to have some much needed, purpose-built storage cupboards installed in the writing room. Thanks Lotterywest!

Wild Weeds Press:

KSP's self-publishing service under the capable direction of Lisa Wolstenholme continues to see members receive a high quality of editing, typesetting and publishing support and provides regular consultations and advice to help members navigate self-publishing, whether in print or online. Lisa has run 2 sold out 'Publishing Online' workshops in the last year and a sold-out series of 4 workshops on Self-publishing.

Wild Weeds Press designed and published our very special 'Kaleidoscope' anthology for 'The Colours of Katharine' event which sold out on the day and will be reprinted due to demand. 2 Wild Weeds Press clients will have their books published by the end of this year.

Challenges

The potential challenges we face over the next year are due to the success of our literary programs so they are good challenges to have! Chiefly, our writing competitions and our Writer in Residence programs are growing in popularity with each year. There is a lot of admin involved in processing a large number of competition entries and Writer in Residence/Fellowship applications. This next year I would like to see us invest in more efficient ways of managing such a large volume of paperwork and online admin to make sure we make the best use of staff and volunteer time and maintain a high level of professionalism that is on par with other competitions and residencies nationally.

It is also important that we continue to take the best care of the beautiful heritage house and grounds we are privileged to call 'Katharine's Place'. Older houses require regular maintenance and this year we became aware that with increased guests we have increased strain on our makeshift laundry. Adaptations to the existing laundry are difficult due to the asbestos walls in that room so we hope to erect a purpose-built laundry shed on the property this year, in closer proximity to the cabins for ease of use.

We are also looking at how best to maintain and care for the collection of heritage items entrusted to us e.g. Katharine's books, manuscripts and photos to ensure they are safeguarded against damage or loss. We are working on a clear collections policy and potential digitisation project to this effect.

The People

This wonderful program and the many opportunities for writers provided by KSP would not be possible without such a generous and dedicated team of staff, volunteers and supporters.

Our Executive Staff: Director Shannon Coyle, Retreats Co-ordinator & Executive Officer of Wild Weeds Press Lisa Wolstenholme and Chairperson and Administration Officer Elizabeth Lewis who together manage the huge amount of administration it takes to run an active Writers' Centre, Retreat Program, self-publishing service and Literary Program. The KSP staff team bring a high level of professionalism and heart to KSP that is invested in seeing our Centre offer the best possible support, culture and opportunities to writers everywhere.

Our Volunteers:

Our wonderful writing group facilitators: KSP's Writing Groups are going strong. Big thanks to the group facilitators who make it possible for so many of our members to gain encouragement, support and feedback for their writing on a regular basis: Mardi May, Helen Doran-Wu, Jane Wallis, Phil Mayne, Wence Vahala, Linda Bennett, Andy Ward and Renee Hammond. I must also congratulate our writing groups on the high quality anthologies they produce each year - keep an eye on our online bookshop to get your copy.

Our experienced committees: We are grateful to our committee members, who continue to be an essential cog on the wheel of our core program. KSP's Literary Advisory Committee – Mardi May, Glen Phillips, Juliet Marillier, Brian Dibble, Melissa O'Shea, David Caddy, Guy

Salvidge, Nathan Hobby, Melinda Tognini and Rashida Murphy – who assist the board with program planning and are responsible for Writer in Residence selection; and KSP's Events Committee – Rebekah-Jane Sheedy, Lisa Wolstenholme, Elizabeth Lewis, Sam Gray, Valerie Goodreid, Sheree and Bernie Lewis, Taysha Sullivan – who always jump in with willing hands at KSP's many community events and festival stalls.

Our dedicated Board of Management – who meet monthly to discuss and decide all things maintenance and care of the KSP property and program and cook the fabulous literary dinners, volunteer at events and do the washing up! Chairperson: Elizabeth Lewis, Treasurer: Bob Perks, Secretary: Lisa Wolstenholme, Members: Michael Kyd, Valerie Everett, Mardi May and with a special welcome to new board members Shireen Watson and Agnes Tay.

And last but certainly not least ...

Our cheerful housekeeper Sheree Lewis, and husband/maintenance man Bernie Lewis.

Our super-duper Gardening Co-ordinator Fern Pendragon who keeps the grounds looking lovely and who did a lot of extra work in preparation for 'The Colours of Katharine' event.

Our youth tutor Renee Hammond who continues to be a marvelous mentor to KSP's 2 groups of young writers.

Our multi-talented Wild Weeds Press and Events Intern Rebekah-Jane Sheedy.

Our ever reliable and behind-the-scenes hard-working office assistant Fay Dease.

Ongoing supporter and champion of the KSP Writers' Centre, Patron Glen Phillips.

Without you all, KSP would not be able to offer the quality of service and warmth of welcome we are known for, you make our community the home that it is for so many writers. Thank you.