

SUMMER/AUTUMN 2020/2021

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## Batting for Change

@ Government House, Canberra



L-R: Jack Goodman, President FOLA, Robert Knight, Executive Director Riverina Regional Library, Adele Casey, Executive Officer NSWPLA, Alyx Casey and Jackson Casey.

*The national voice for 13 million Public Library Members*

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# The past year

# 2020

The challenge of recent times has not only confronted our way of life, but the things close to us. Our friends and family, our libraries and our Friends of Library groups. The pandemic has also offered us new opportunities, some yet to be realised.

For our national organisation, FOLA is also having to 'reinvent' itself. After 25 years the focus of our operations is shifting – as Friends groups fold, the membership grows older, the service level in libraries improves, new libraries continue to be built throughout the country and the use of social media and technology alters the way we interact.

FOLA celebrated 25 years in Adelaide on 5 December 2019 with a function at the State Library of South Australia, home of the first library Friends group in Australia in 1934. We were pleased to have as our guest speaker the celebrated author, Mem Fox. For this historic occasion FOLA published the booklet 'FOLA Anniversary: Celebrating 25 years 1994-2019'.

It has also been a time to thank contributors to the development of Friends, and in December 2019, Jack Goodman and myself presented a Life Membership to our founding patron, the Hon Michael Kirby AC, CMG, in his chambers in Sydney.



The year also must record the loss of two of our most esteemed members who have died. Margaret Broeks former Treasurer of FOLA for 14 years and president of her local Friends of Altona Library (Vic) for a period of 28 years. Another outstanding leader we remember is Dr Alan Brissenden AM, a past president of the Friends of the State Library of SA and a great supporter of our national body. Leadership has been critical in the development of Friends, and these remarkable individuals deserve our heartfelt thanks.

Friends from around the country have continued to provide a range of activities – Bookshops, School partnerships, Author talks, Prison partnerships, Staff development funding, History research, Partnerships with local business, Volunteer training, Short story competitions, Home library services, Gift memberships and Lobbying for new and improved library buildings.

Our president, Jack Goodman has been providing us with new thinking and direction for FOLA in the coming decade, and his Annual Report gives further detail. This is something all Friends must decide. How to meet the future with new visions that will create new opportunities for Friends.

**Daniel Ferguson**  
Executive Director & Founder

*“It has also been a time to thank contributors to the development of Friends.”*

*“Our president, Jack Goodman has been providing us with new thinking and direction for FOLA in the coming decade.”*



# FOLA on Facebook



Via Friends of Slaithwaite Library, UK.

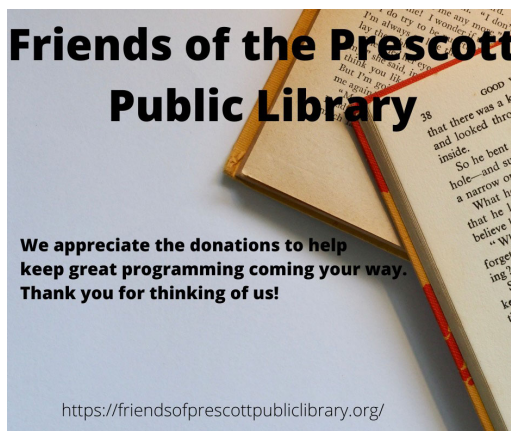


Friends of Libraries Australia

Today is Library Lovers' Day, so go say hello to your local library, and show them some love — feeling loved.



From Friends of the Oakley Library, California, upon re-opening.



From Friends of the Prescott Library, UK.



Library at Marienburg Castle, Germany, 19th Century,...



Last week was the amazing grand finale of the first year of #nationalbackyardcricket -- a beautiful game played at the Governor-General of Australia's residence in Canberra. Drawing a connection between the national sport and the nation's public libraries was a win for everyone.

## *National Backyard Cricket:*

# A New Vision for Philanthropy in Public Libraries

Since their initial development in Australia, our public libraries have been the responsibility of local government. Generations of Australians have diligently paid their local rates and, in return, councils have provided the bulk of the funds necessary to build facilities, populate collections of materials, and staff them with trained professionals.

Depending on where you live, your local library may receive modest supplemental support from your state government. Though in nearly every case state funding for public libraries has been on the decline over the last several decades.

The Friends of Libraries movement has been one of the few structured channels through which Australians have been able to support the development of their local libraries. Until now.

In the latter half of 2020 Friends of Libraries Australia Inc (FOLA) was approached by the LBW Trust — a cricket-themed charity that has raised millions over the years in support of education initiatives in cricket-playing nations. The LBW Trust (it stands for Learning for a Better

World and is a fun play on words) had decided it wanted to expand beyond its support of learning programs in countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal and Afghanistan and find a way to make a difference closer to home.

FOLA seized the opportunity to introduce the leadership of the LBW Trust to Australia's public libraries, the work they do, the services they provide, and the difference they make to millions of Australians every day. The chairman of the Trust, David Vaux, AO, was particularly taken by the role country libraries play, leveling the playing field of educational opportunity by acting as an alternative entry point for learning and further education.

The fact that libraries are so often overlooked in terms of the work they do and the return on investment they provide also struck a chord. Research in Australia and many other countries over many years has repeatedly shown that a dollar invested in public libraries provides between three and eight dollars of "return" in the form of economic benefit to local communities. And yet in spite of this knowledge,

*"The chairman of the Trust, David Vaux, AO, was particularly taken by the role country libraries play, leveling the playing field of educational opportunity by acting as an alternative entry point for learning and further education."*



*“the idea of National Backyard Cricket Day rapidly took shape as a fun way for everyone to get involved with an enjoyable game in support of a great cause.”*



annual “Australia’s Biggest Morning Tea” fundraiser, the idea of National Backyard Cricket Day rapidly took shape as a fun way for everyone to get involved with an enjoyable game in support of a great cause.

The concept deserves some elaboration. Its key elements are:

- Each year, January will be designated National Backyard Cricket Month.
- During the month a national media campaign will run to encourage all Australians to get outdoors to enjoy a game of backyard cricket — and raise funds for an educational cause.
- Participants can register their games on the National Backyard Cricket website — [www.nationalbackyardcricket.com](http://www.nationalbackyardcricket.com) — invite their friends, and make donations. They can also choose which of the Trust’s educational programs they want to support — from Kathmandu and Sri Lanka to Australia’s country public libraries.

High profile patrons include a number of Australia’s cricket legends, including Dennis Lillee and Greg Chappell, as well as current Governor General David Hurley and former Governors General Sir Peter Cosgrove and Sir William Deane.

(Continued overleaf)

public libraries in Australia remain relatively underfunded according to international best practice and other benchmarks.

The LBW Trust also had a brilliant idea for fundraising. Leveraging its sporting theme, as well as the nation’s love of cricket, it developed the idea of a National Backyard Cricket Day. Along the same lines as the Cancer Council’s



## *National Backyard Cricket:* A New Vision for Philanthropy in Public Libraries

(Continued)

What sort of activities at our libraries will the funds raised by National Backyard Cricket support? The initial intention is to enable libraries to enhance the educational sessions they offer for learners of all ages through, for example, the upgrading of physical resources, including computers and connectivity; and the running of English language sessions for refugees. Other opportunities to build connections will arise, no doubt. We can imagine book clubs that may feature a cricket theme, or indeed collaborations between libraries and local cricket clubs. With luck and perseverance, people's imaginations will take hold and they will add their own spin (pun intended!) to the ways that cricket and libraries can come together for the greater good.

The LBW Trust has ambitious plans to make National Backyard Cricket Day an annual event and to encourage thousands of games of cricket in every corner of the country.

What makes this so significant for Australia's libraries? Part of the excitement is the potential for National Backyard Cricket Day to raise awareness of the nation's public libraries and the critical role they play in local life, particularly in regional communities.

Even more interesting is the potential to build a bridge between Australia's passion for sport and its quiet respect for libraries as local learning institutions. Few people realise that public libraries are the nation's largest membership-based organisations, that nearly half of all Australians are members of their local library, and that visits to public libraries across Australia exceed by far the combined attendance at all professional sporting events in the country.

In the past, many library advocates have bemoaned the fact that sport attracts an outsized share of government funding (at all levels of government), as well as public and media attention, while libraries' contributions

often go unnoticed as they toil in the shadows. But this is not a surprise. No one tunes in to watch a test match between libraries, and you'll probably never see a librarian on a tin of Milo or telling you which brand of vitamins is best for your health.

FOLA is understandably excited about this opportunity. While some may say we are straying from our mandate to support the creation and continuation of friends groups in Australia, we view it differently. FOLA's mission is to work toward better public libraries for all in Australia. In this regard, building new partnerships and connections with other organisations that share FOLA's altruistic bent is at the core of our mission. We hope all supporters of Friends groups will join us in looking for ways to help libraries engage with National Backyard Cricket to build enthusiasm and support for these essential educational initiatives.

The inaugural 2021 National Backyard Cricket campaign concluded with a game and reception at the Governor-General's residence in Canberra on the 4th of February. In spite of COVID restrictions, a group of representatives from the LBW-Trust, the embassies of several countries where the Trust sponsors educational programs, as well as a number of librarians from regional NSW were able to travel to Canberra to enjoy the hospitality of the Governor-General, David Hurley and his wife, Linda. And while the cricket was definitely of the backyard variety, the sentiment and enthusiasm for National Backyard Cricket Day gave us great confidence that it will become a new Australian tradition — and that the nation's country public libraries will be better off as a result.

<https://nationalbackyardcricket.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/FOLAFriends/photos/a.1051087868355000/2149286271868482>

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*"And while the cricket was definitely of the backyard variety, the sentiment and enthusiasm for National Backyard Cricket Day gave us great confidence that it will become a new Australian tradition."*

# Friends of Whitton Library UK

Richmond upon Thames



The Friends of Whitton Library exists to promote and support Whitton Library, encourage library use and run events of interest to it's users.



*The Friends post regular videos on language skills, craft activities, local history and other topics.*



*They also post news and information from the library, including information relating to COVID 19.*

# Friends of Delaware County District Library

OHIO, USA

ADVOCATES, FUNDRAISERS & VOLUNTEERS



Our Friends group was honored to be awarded the Ohio Library Council's award for Best Library Friends Group in the State of Ohio! Way to go FOL!

## *Building a Literary Community!*

Formed in 2007, the Friends of the Delaware County District Library is a non-profit organization that supports the mission, services and needs of the Delaware County District Library (DCDL). We attempt to focus public attention on the DCDL and its many contributions to the Delaware County community.

The Friends raise funds through our volunteer service by hosting book sales, author visits and children's events and through membership dues and donations. In 2019, we awarded over \$30,000 in grants to the Delaware County District Library. DCDL grants help support the Summer Reading Club and other library initiatives.

Remember when you Join, Donate or Volunteer with the Friends you support all four DCDL branches: Delaware, Orange, Ostrander and Powell. We are always looking for volunteers to help with our Friends initiatives and activities.

### **Learn more about the Friends:**

Website: [www.delawarelibraryfriends.org](http://www.delawarelibraryfriends.org)

Email: [info@delawarelibraryfriends.org](mailto:info@delawarelibraryfriends.org)

Facebook: [friendsofthedelawarelibrary](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofthedelawarelibrary)

*"The Friends raise funds through our volunteer service by hosting book sales, author visits and children's events."*

Follow us on social media & check out some of our fun events!

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#)

[Become a Volunteer](#) [Become a Member](#) [Library Locations](#) [Make a Donation](#)

FOL Inquiry?  
We'd love to hear from you!



# President's Report — 2020

Presented at FOLA Annual General Meeting  
on 18 March 2021

*Dear FOLA Members,*

*“So much of what makes friends groups work is the friendships — the personal relationships and kindnesses — that develop amongst like minded people.”*

You probably don't need to read yet another commentary about how 2020 was “unprecedented,” that we are living in “strange times” and that the world “will never be the same.” In fact, the past year has had a profound impact on what FOLA, friends of libraries groups around Australia, and libraries themselves, have been able to achieve.

The closing down of travel and enforcement of social distancing that occurred in mid-March 2020, and the periodic lockdowns in various geographies over the remainder of the year and into 2021 has meant that, for the first time ever, we will be holding our Annual General Meeting virtually this year. That's a sad thing, simply because so much of what makes friends groups work is the friendships — the personal relationships and kindnesses — that develop amongst like minded people.

*“The other fact to remember is that the last global pandemic occurred almost exactly a century ago, so we have no global living memory to guide us in our response..”*

But how fortunate are we that the year of COVID-19 happened at a time when we have sufficiently digitised our lives so that we could migrate to the virtual sphere many of the interactions that used to require face-to-face interaction? Perhaps you will say this is being overly optimistic about an event that has largely been a global tragedy. I would disagree. The fact is that pandemics have been a fact of life since humans began living in close quarters in villages, towns and cities. The other fact to remember is that the last global pandemic occurred almost exactly a century ago, so we have no global living memory to guide us in our response.

How did friends groups and libraries, and FOLA respond to the myriad challenges 2020 presented?



Throughout the year libraries were forced to close, often for extended periods of time. We learned a lot about their resiliency as many of them moved quickly to expand their online offerings and to migrate their face-to-face offerings, including things like story time, book clubs, and high school study talks to Zoom-style video meetings.

At the same time, many Friends groups struggled because so many activities that are part of annual calendars — book sales, fundraisers, presentations, etc. had to be postponed or cancelled. Sadly, several Friends groups around the country have concluded that 2020 was a “bridge too far,” and they have decided to wind up their organisations. This is often because, like many volunteer organisations, FOLs can struggle to attract new members to rejuvenate their associations. When this happens, an event like a pandemic can reveal structural weaknesses within organisations.

## President's Report — 2020

Presented at FOLA Annual General Meeting  
on 18 March 2021

(Continued)

This is a key reason why FOLA continues to pursue a range of new initiatives, to diversify its portfolio of activities and find new ways to reach people for whom the mission of Friends is appealing, even if the traditional structure of a local FOL group is less so.

One of 2020's main projects was FOLA's partnership with the LBW Trust, a cricket-themed charity that traditionally has raised funds for education programs in cricket-playing nations. The LBW-Trust approached FOLA because it was implementing a new fundraising program — National Backyard Cricket Day — and it wanted some of the funds to support a worthy educational cause in Australia. FOLA set about educating the executive of the LBW Trust about the role public libraries play in their communities and together we agreed that Australia's country public libraries would be worthy recipients of donations.

I have written in more detail about the National Backyard Cricket Day partnership in the most recent edition of FOLA's newsletter, and I hope you will take a few minutes to learn about the program. I know many longtime supporters of FOLA and local FOL groups may feel that National Backyard Cricket Day is a strange departure from FOLA's mission. Yet if you consider that all Friends of libraries would like to see better resourced, more capable public libraries for all in Australia, then this project makes perfect sense.

Our hope is that, with the support of public libraries across Australia, National Backyard Cricket Day becomes an important event in the nation's annual calendar of fundraisers. If libraries and Friends groups can embrace it, and perhaps put their own local spin on the event, then we may be able to bring together Australians' love for both sport and lifelong learning. The possibilities are enormous, if we are brave enough to let our imaginations.

No doubt 2020 was a trying year for the nation. Yet we can count our blessings that we live in a country where we have sufficient civic spirit to follow the guidance of our political leaders and public health experts. The pandemic has been nowhere near as tragically disruptive in Australia as it has been elsewhere, including the United Kingdom, many European countries, and the US and Canada. Part of that civic spirit that has served our nation so well comes from institutions like public libraries and the Friends groups that support them. By giving something of ourselves to our communities, we reap many-fold the benefits of a stronger, better educated and all around happier society.

**Jack Goodman, FOLA President**

*"Part of that civic spirit that has served our nation so well comes from institutions like public libraries and the Friends groups that support them."*

*"together we agreed that Australia's country public libraries would be worthy recipients of donations."*

Bangalow  
Heritage House  
Corner Ashton  
& Deacon Streets  
Bangalow

FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES BYRON SHIRE PRESENTS  
AUTHOR EVENT

**SEAN DOYLE**

Thursday, 25 March 2021  
From 5.30pm Entry \$10

Bookings are essential at [www.byronbayfol.com](http://www.byronbayfol.com)  
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NIGHT TRAIN TO VARANASI  
SEAN DOYLE

FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES BYRON SHIRE

# Friends Around Australia



## FRIENDS OF WINGECARRIBEE LIBRARIES

**FRIENDS OF WINGECARRIBEE**

Presentation and Media Skills

## FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

**Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc.**  
@NLAFriends · Nonprofit Organization

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Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc. is at National Library of Australia  
March 16 at 12:35 PM · Canberra, ACT

Join the Friends for their first online Meet the Author event of 2021, with acclaimed author, Tony Birch. Tony will be talking about his award-winning book, *The White Girl*.  
Book now <https://www.nla.gov.au/event/meet-the-author-tony-birch>  
Tony Birch is the author of three novels: the bestselling *The White Girl*; *Ghost River*, which won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Indigenous Writing; and *Blood*, which was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award. He is also the au... See More

*the white girl*

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Photos

Join us for our first event of 2021!  
Stunning drawings, fascinating stories and delicious light refreshment before.  
For more information, go to <https://www.nla.gov.au/the-legacy-of-e-c-manfred-an>.

## FRIENDS OF BALMAIN LIBRARY

**2020**

COMING UP@OPENBOOKGROUP:

	<b>11th February 2020</b> The Buried: The Archaeology of the Egyptian Revolution By Peter Hessler		<b>12th May 2020</b> The Weekend By Charlotte Wood
	<b>10th March 2020</b> Small Island By Andrea Levy		<b>9th June 2020</b> Milkman By Anna Burns
	<b>14th April 2020</b> Olive Kitteridge By Elizabeth Strout		<b>14th July 2020</b> In Our Mad and Furious City By Guy Gunaratne

**WHEN:** 2nd Tuesday of every month, 1pm—3pm  
**WHERE:** Meeting Room, Balmain Library  
**EMAIL:** [info@fobl.org.au](mailto:info@fobl.org.au)  
**PHONE:** Jan 9810 5130, Gillian 9810 5951  
No bookings needed. Refreshments provided.

**FREE!**

**FOBL.ORG.AU**

## FRIENDS OF IPSWICH LIBRARY SERVICE

Friends of Ipswich Library Service (FOILS)

**What are Friends?**

Friends of Ipswich Libraries (FOILS) is a group of enthusiastic library supporters who are interested in promoting and enhancing Ipswich Libraries and strengthening the links with the community.

The Friends group was formed in October 2003. It is now more than 100 members strong and still growing. The patron is Ipswich born, influential poet and novelist, Thomas Shapcott.

**What do Friends do?**

In consultation with Library staff, 'Friends' organise community based events and activities that help promote Ipswich Libraries and enrich the cultural life of the community. Some popular events include Lunch in the Library, High Tea with Friends, Trivia Nights, the Books for Babies project and book sales.

## FRIENDS OF TOWOOMBA LIBRARIES

Toowoomba Region Libraries Survey

We operate 13 libraries across the region. These facilities provide a wide range of programs and services including children and youth programs, local history collections, computer classes, author talks and community meeting rooms. Thank you to everyone who completed a survey during February. We're excited to say that we received over 1000 surveys!

Survey results will be available here, at our libraries and customer service centres and in BOLD magazine from mid-2021.

Survey responses will be confidential and Council will not have access to individual feedback.

I say there, folks - why not Hop! Hop! Hop!

to Friends of Paynesville Library's BUMPER

**EASTER BOOK SALE**

FRIDAY 2nd, SATURDAY 3rd, SUNDAY 4th & MONDAY 5th APRIL 2021

FRIENDS OF PAYNESVILLE LIBRARY

## Membership Application

### CATEGORIES

Membership fee incorporating News Update		
Individual	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOL Group — 0-25 Members	\$35	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOL Group — 25+ Members	\$70	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libraries	\$140	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutions incl. Libraries with multiple Friends groups		
Corporations	\$140	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extra copies of News Update		
	\$10 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>

### RETURN ADDRESS

**FOLA Inc.**  
FOLA Treasurer,  
Dr David Parker, PO Box 32  
Burnside SA 5068  
Phone: (03) 9338 0666  
Fax: (03) 9335 1903

### PAYMENT DETAILS

My cheque/money order is made payable to:  
Friends of Libraries Australia Inc.  
FOLA Treasurer,  
Dr David Parker, PO Box 32  
Burnside SA 5068

Amount enclosed \$

### ADDRESS DETAILS

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

## 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

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#### 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, Dr David Parker, PO Box 32  
Burnside SA 5068  
[www.fola.org.au](http://www.fola.org.au)

## About Us

### FOLA NEWS UPDATE

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