



THE BEACON



A Look Into The Lighthouse

**Today you are you!
That is truer than
true! There is no
one alive who is
you-er than you!"
Dr Seuss.**



**KERRY O'BRIEN
MEETS OUR LOCAL
KIDS.**

**TOM ALAN WINS A
FURPHY.**

**BENNY THE BIN
CHICKEN LAUNCH.**

**INTERNATIONAL
"READ TO ME" DAY.**

A Lighthouse Update

This past few weeks has been star studded and joyful at The Lighthouse Toowoomba. We are very well caffeinated now that Emerge has opened its doors and thank goodness as we have had to be buzzing for Kerry O'Brien, Thomas Alan, and Momentum Mental Health.

We want to extend a special thank you to Christina Callaghan and Wippells Autos who donated so many books that the pile was almost taller than us! Thank you to all our donors in this busy week especially the delivery of some very cute puppets from Di Tate.

We would also like to extend a special welcome to Caitlin Evans who, as a former Child Writes author, has created a famous author height chart which we already scribbled all over with childish glee.

KERRY O'BRIEN CHATS WITH LIGHTHOUSE KIDS



It's no surprise to anyone who has been paying attention to the news that this week past has been a big one in the political life of Toowoomba. With no election yet called the pathways of campaigning are already well trodden, and one pair of feet belonged to beloved journalist Kerry O'Brien. Kerry was in town to discuss the role of independents in Australian democracy but popped into The Lighthouse to check out what was happening in this new, exciting venture.

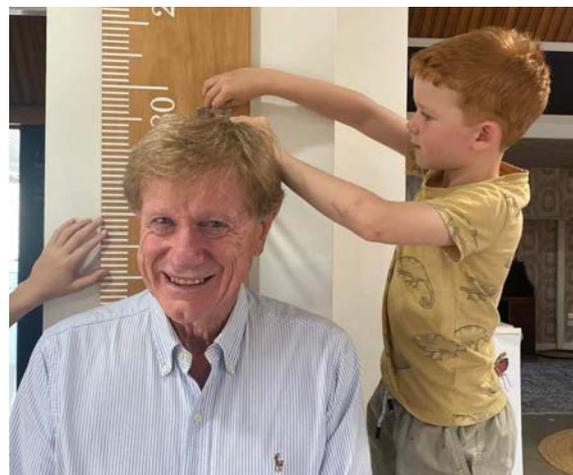
Kerry O'Brien was thrilled to be met by our very own red head Johnny MacManus and confided conspiratorially that he was known, at Johnny's age, as "Carrots." There was something magical about watching children interact with one of Australia's national treasures uninhibited by the knowledge that this was the man tasked with getting to the bottom of Thatcher's opinions of apartheid, or in fact, who Thatcher was at all. It was lovelier still that Kerry was so generous with his stories that he leaned down to talk, finding common ground in shared heroes.

It was later in the podcasting room that Kerry was truly put through his paces by Toowoomba's own treasure, Mahsa Nabizada.

Mahsa is a year twelve student, captain of public speaking, and a fabulous representative of youth in our region. The two discussed the increasing polarization of views, the responsibility of media, and the changing landscape of media relations in Australia ending with this observation from Kerry:

"Cynicism is kind of easy. Skepticism is healthier, and I think that we should never lose faith in our capacity, person by person and together as groups, to actually force our politicians to respond properly to us."

Thank you to Kerry and Mahsa for such an amazing conversation. We hope to release this interview as a podcast very soon!



BENNY THE BIN CHICKEN FLIES HIGH AT WRITE GALLERY LAUNCH

The ubiquitous bin chicken has garnered quite the following in the last couple of years. Culturally the ibis has gone from despised pest to appearing on the patterns of some of the coolest, quirkiest clothing designs of the last year. Now, Terese Eglington has added to the narrative with her own unique twist.

Benny the Bin Chicken tells the story of an ibis who loves to decorate. Using his talent to see beauty in strange things he saves his habitat from destruction with his own artistic skill. The book is utterly charming being both written and illustrated by Terese who clearly also sees beauty in the overlooked. We were honored to help launch her latest book and enjoyed playing with our own versions of memory sculptures as part of the art lesson which followed.

Those interested in purchasing one of these beautiful books can find them on her website at <https://tereseeglington.com/>



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN INTERNATIONAL "READ TO ME" DAY

Thank you to everyone whose lovely videos and livestreams brought a smile to readers all over the world. "Read To Me" Day has been a love project of Emma Mactaggart for seven years and each year brings a little bit of joy into the world.

This year has been no different. You can see videos of people participating on our Facebook page. So far there have been 7809 views on the collected videos. Thank you again to Yvonne Mes for designing this beautiful illustration to celebrate the day.



TOM ALAN TALKING FURPHY FAME

The winner of the 2021 Furphy prize sits down to chat at The Lighthouse

The Furphy Award honors the Australian tradition of a good yarn and gives a chance to emerging writers to flex their short story-telling muscles. While it is always an amazing chance to read some of the best writers in Australia the winner for 2021 is one of our own who lives and works in Toowoomba.

Thomas Alan is one to watch, but for an hour or so he was another visitor to The Lighthouse popping in for a quick chat about writing, workshops, and creativity.

While his short story “Oranges” (*available on the Furphy Awards website*) is punchy, raw, and emotionally visceral the man himself is quietly spoken often circling round a topic to make sure everyone is included. It's this consideration and openness which must make him an excellent teacher aide, and his commitment to raising other artists in his circle fits perfectly into the ethos of The Lighthouse.

We highly recommend checking out Thomas's story either on the website or supporting the Furphy awards by purchasing this year's anthology at any of our local bookstores. Thomas will be joining us again at The Lighthouse as part of Toowoomba's Wordfest in June.



THANK YOU TO OUR BOOK DONORS

Christina Callaghan
and
Wippells Autos
Toowoomba

Upcoming Events



THE KIDS'
CANCER
PROJECT

WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY!



Free workshop for
children 9 - 12 years

We will write and illustrate a book that will be
uploaded to an online library for children in hospitals
around Australia.

This amazing workshop is also being recorded and will
be used to create a promotional video to motivate
others to consider entering in 2022!

8AM MONDAY 4TH APRIL ALL DAY! YES, UNTIL 5PM.

**BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH BOX, SOME SNACKS, A WATER
BOTTLE AND YOUR IMAGINATION!**

Limited places available. Please email
emma@thelighthouse00woomba.org to sign
up OR use the QR code to books your spot.



THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT



WRITE A BOOK
IN A DAY

Welcome Tenants

We would like to extend a bright, shiny Beacon welcome to our new Birdsnest tenants!

Matthew Symonds is a graphic designer whose company Ninethirty is focused on increasing site visitation and transforming those visits into members. We are very happy to welcome him into his new home in the Birdsnest.

Jade Reilly is a writer and criminologist who is currently finalizing her first crime fiction novel, 'Signs of Life.' Jade began writing this manuscript in 2020, after gaining a place on the selective entry Curtis Brown Creative three-month novel writing program. She is mentored by UK crime fiction novelist, William Shaw, and was recently awarded a scholarship by the Somerset Literary Festival to participate in the highly regarded commercial fiction masterclass taught by best-selling Australian novelist, Fiona McIntosh.

Jade has two young children, Eve and Finn, a wonderful husband and two boisterous labra-doodles. As such, coming upon a 'room of one's own' will afford her the peace and quiet she needs to finish and finally submit her manuscript in July 2022. If you see her and she is not writing, please report to management immediately. She has already become the heart and soul of this place and we would be lost without her.

