



### **Welcome to the 64th edition of The Beacon**

And that's a wrap....well almost - there is more, always just a little more as we share our final newsletter of the 2024. It is impossible to begrudge the joy in the air at this time of year! Yes, Christmas is a tricky time for some, yet the end of the year means time to reflect.

We are so lucky to have you in our corner!

**Yes, you!**

You read our newsletter fortnightly, celebrate the wins with us (thank you for the lovely emails about

our Australia Day Award) and commiserate the losses (we are still rueing missing the big grant, but have bounced back and are in full flight applying for more support)

So today, in this newsletter, it is about the 'wins' and the wonderful opportunities, and yes, more wins for children here next year.

Our first THANK YOU to local author Just Marty for letting us share the Christmas cacophony adapted from the front cover of his book 'The Adventures of Rowdy Roo'. Adding to the cheer, we will receive copies of the book for the celebration that is the Festival of Small Schools (more about this below). The fundraiser is proving to be a hit and we are just over half way to our goal of \$5,000! So much to be grateful for!



Just a reminder The Lighthouse will close for 2024 today, Friday 13 December, and we will be back to

shine our light on the literacy high seas from  
Tuesday 28 January 2025. Yes, we are still  
working behind the scenes, so email if you have  
any thoughts, aspirations, needs, or ideas  
[hello@thelighthouse-toowoomba.org](mailto:hello@thelighthouse-toowoomba.org)



## Festival of Small Schools

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MPAIGN REMINDE  
R ❄️ · 🎅 · 🎁 ·

It's the most wonderful time of the year and The Lighthouse Toowoomba is calling on the community to make this Christmas a special one for small schools in the Toowoomba region, by supporting our Festival of Small Schools initiative.

Monies raised from the campaign will go towards engaging an author for a school visit on a day in Term One or Term Two 2025.

**We are absolutely buoyed by the support we have received which has enabled us to fund 6 author visits for 2025 so far.**

**It is our ultimate goal to have an author visit to ALL 17 of our tiny schools and \$5000 is the**



## **magic number that we need to make this happen!**

Inspired by the success of sending Dr. Sam Lloyd to Haden State School, Mater Dei Primary School, Toowoomba East State School and Sacred Heart Primary, this campaign is a first-of-its-kind event for the Darling Downs and has a wonderful snowball effect for literacy in the community.

### **Small Schools: A Unique Challenge**

Pinpointing eligible schools isn't always straightforward due to differing statistical definitions and geographical boundaries. The Darling Downs region alone encompasses over 1,800 schools, and while schools like Flagstone Creek, Helidon, and Withcott appear on broader maps, they fall outside the Toowoomba Regional Council area. Despite these challenges, The Lighthouse Toowoomba is committed to ensuring small schools in the region receive tailored support and opportunities.

According to recent Queensland education data, over 880,000 students attend school statewide, but smaller schools can sometimes miss out on programs available to larger institutions. The Festival of Small Schools campaign is an opportunity to ensure these students feel connected, inspired, and valued.

### **How the Community Can Help**

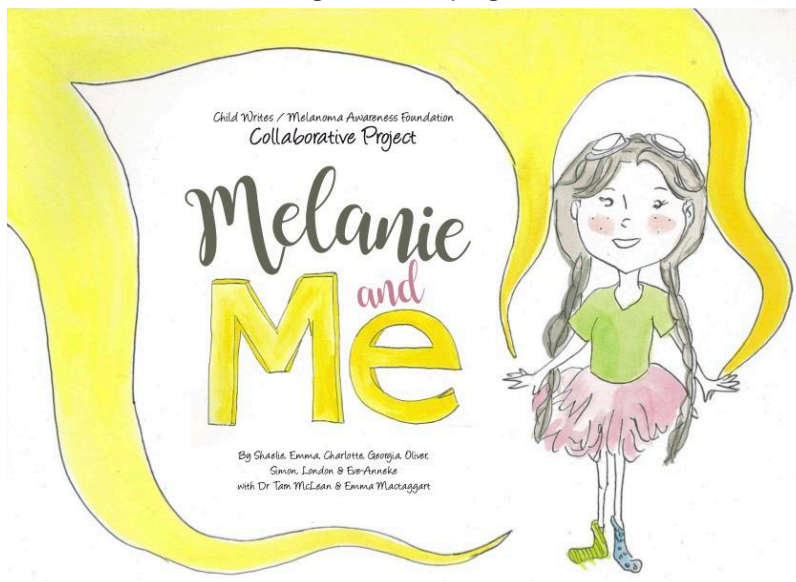
Funds raised will be used to organise author visits during Terms One and Two of 2025. Donations are tax-deductible and can be made via The Festival of Small Schools Christmas Fundraiser <<https://thelighthousetoowoomba.supporterhub.net.au/donations/festival-of-small-schools-christmas-2024-fundraiser>> .

Small schools are at the heart of rural communities, and providing access to literacy

enrichment can have a profound impact,” said Emily MacManus, The Lighthouse Keeper of The Lighthouse Toowoomba. “This is a chance for everyone in our community to contribute to a brighter future for these children.”

The campaign is already gaining traction among local principals, with schools encouraged to register their interest on a first-come, first-served basis.

Join us in sharing the joy of reading this holiday season. Your support will bring the power of storytelling to the smaller student communities in the Toowoomba region, one page at a time.



Summer vibes means ice cream, slow days, and no lunch boxes... but it also means lots of time outside and dealing with those pesky UV rays! We have asked the Melanoma Institute of Australia for more wrist bands - they turn purple when the UV rating is HIGH so we can give them to schools with copies of 'Melanie and Me'

Mr V - (Mr Vilotto) - Year 1/2 Teacher at Thirroul Public School said,

*"After reading "Melanie and Me" to my students this morning I noticed a significant increase in the number of students who stopped to put sunscreen on before they left the classroom for their outdoor break." This change in behaviour wasn't just for*

the day either, as Mr V is pleased to report that the kids from his class are continuing to use the sunscreen more often and without prompting!!!

In a letter to Ruth Logan, Professor Georgina Long AO - Co Australian of the Year 2024, said,

*"Many thanks for the fabulous children's books, Maverick, and Melanie & Me. They are such beautiful books with wonderful messages for children and adults alike.... Many thanks again for your work and collaborations."*

This book is an example of education in action, and sharing the sun safety message written to an 'overcoming the monster' plot line in a children's picture book by children for children, and seeing the book reprinted because of generous donations really is a wonderously awesome example of The Lighthouse in action, joining the dots and simply making something happen.

Once the hard work is done creating these books, it is merely printing, or rather, the limitations of a budget that dictates how many children receive the books. We are very [open to embracing printing partners](#) for another print run if you are keen to get these books into the hands of children in your community.



**Made to Move Exhibition**

The "Made to Move" exhibition by Nadine Reynolds was a dynamic exploration of creativity and motion, captivating 177 visitors during its successful run. Held in The Write Gallery, the exhibition showcased Nadine's innovative techniques for unlocking creative potential through visual storytelling and interactive design.

The exhibition featured six events, including the opening event and creative workshops, inspired participants to engage with their own untapped creativity.

Professor Laurie Johnson from UniSQ praised the exhibition, stating: *"The 'Made to Move' exhibition by Nadine Reynolds is a thought-provoking, eye-catching proof of concept of the artist's capacity to connect people with their untapped creative potential. I look forward to working with Nadine to apply the same process to researcher motivations and personal investments in their own work."*



## A Round Up of Made to Move Workshops

This week, **The Write Gallery** at The Lighthouse Toowoomba welcomed artist Nadine Reynolds for a series of engaging art workshops under her exhibition 'Made to Move'. Nadine's sessions provided participants with the tools to explore their creativity in a supportive and inspiring environment.

## **Watercolour Workshop**

Participants in the watercolour workshop were treated to a calm and interactive session, where they worked quietly yet collaboratively in a friendly atmosphere. Nadine's step-by-step instructions made the techniques easy to follow, ensuring everyone could enjoy the slow-paced, reflective activity.

Oliver, a participant, shared their enthusiasm:

"This was a really great introduction to watercolour! I love that we learnt how to use warmer colours to suit the Australian landscapes, and the advice we got on affordable art materials was really helpful."

## **Cartooning Club**

The cartooning club brought together a diverse group of 9 adults and 13 children, creating a lively yet calm and inclusive atmosphere. With Nadine's instructions, participants could unleash their inner cartoonists while fostering a social and creative connection.

Donna, one of the attendees, summed up the experience beautifully, "This workshop makes me feel happy, creative, arty, free, relaxed, and inspired."

Ellie, along with several others, expressed a common sentiment, "This workshop makes me feel happy."

Ayden M added, "This workshop makes me feel excited."

## **Landscaping Basics**

A private lesson in landscaping basics offered a quieter, more intimate learning experience for one adult and one child. Despite the small scale, the



session reflected Nadine's signature social and friendly teaching approach.

Nadine Reynolds has left a lasting impact on participants, nurturing their confidence and creativity. These workshops continue to demonstrate The Lighthouse's commitment to providing inclusive, artistic experiences adults and children for the Toowoomba community





## Thank you Trevor

What a lovely afternoon! Thank you for being so incredibly generous with your time. Glenda had organised so many book bundles, and to have you here to add the ribbons and have them bagged and ready for Pittsworth State School is fabulous! It is our most time-consuming, yet rewarding thing we do - finding new homes for children's books - and after three years, over 20,000 have been redistributed. You have to love those landmark moments and we continue to celebrate your generosity and thoughtfulness as those books keep rolling in.



## Legal Deposit Receipt

Confirmation emails just in... All the books for this year (Melanie + Me, Maverick, Superhero, and Colour My World, have been received at the Queensland State Library and accepted for Legal Deposit. This is one of the best jobs a publisher gets to do - and happily these books are now included in the permanent collection of books by Queensland authors. Happy Days.

## We Have Been Recognised!



Each year at the Toowoomba Australia Day Award Celebrations, an Australian Flag from Parliament House, is presented to a local group or organisation who has made a significant contribution to the Toowoomba Region and Community.

We are thrilled, chuffed and humbled to announce that The Lighthouse will be recognised at the 2025 celebrations!

The Australia Day Awards Ceremony will take place on Sunday 26 January 2025 from 8.30am – 11am at Picnic Point.

Every one of you reading this right now is a fabulous supporter of The Lighthouse so join us if you can to celebrate on the day.





## Books on way to Pozieres and Thulimbah State Schools

Thank you to Karleen for picking up the books and toys for Pozieres and Thulimbah State Schools. We were such lucky to be in contact with Karleen's daughter Lauren as she is the Business Manager for Pozieres. Pozieres is right on the boundary of the Toowoomba Region, so it was a bonus when she said she goes to Thulimbah as well.

One of the reasons we celebrate this is we have managed to engaged with at least one child from 86% of the schools in the region over the last three years. This means reaching 80 schools out of a possible 96! When we add Thulimbah, Jimbour, Kaimkillenbun, and Bowenville State Schools, it assuages our guilt a little when thinking about the 16 still to go 😊

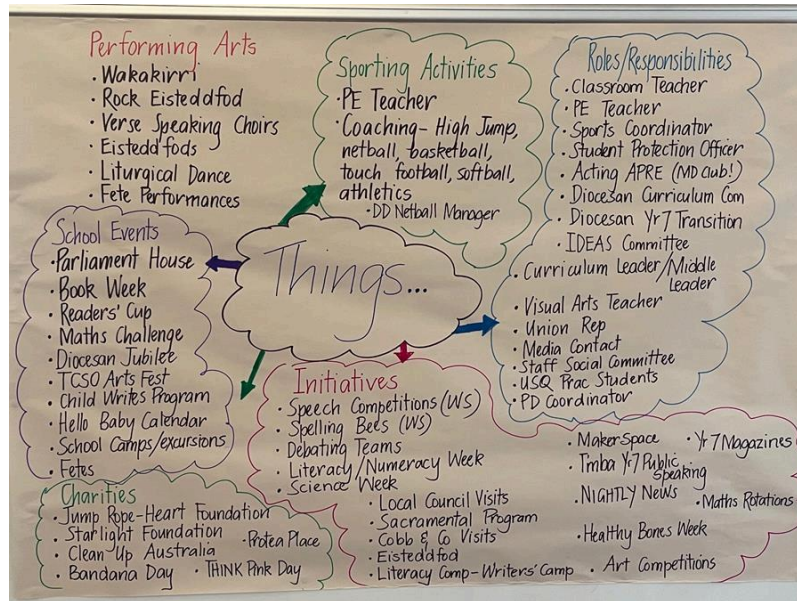


## Fond Farewell

We say happy retirement to Leigh Luchty this fortnight after 40 plus years in the education department and the last three as art teacher at Mater Dei . Emma first met Leigh over a decade ago at Sacred Heart Primary School when she did the one-on-one version Child Writes program with a handful of children. We have also had Leigh



front of mind as we look at our Hello Baby Calendar as many of her art students submitted entries to the calendar competition. We wish you all the best with your next chapter Leigh!



## Made to Move in Review

A collaborative exhibition with Nadine Reynolds

The Write Gallery 16 November-06 December 2024.

A review by Sandy Pottinger.

The Write Gallery at The Lighthouse is a happy light-filled space that is the perfect venue for Nadine Reynold's "Made to Move." This is an exhibition that links science with history, art with storytelling, culture with experience, and halts

movement in a vibrating moment. In its own quiet way, it embodies the words of Inayat Khan, Indian Sufi musician, poet, and philosopher who said:

*“What science cannot declare, art can suggest, what art suggests silently poetry speaks aloud, what poetry fails to explain in words, music can express. Whoever knows the mystery of vibrations indeed knows all things.”<sup>1</sup>*

The silk paintings offer a contemporary interpretation of a process that has a long and noble history reaching back some three thousand years to China. In the background of the creative activities that shape the exhibition there are echoes of mulberry leaves, silkworms, cocoons, and silk, a textile which combines delicacy with strength.

Through a series of workshops artist and teacher, Nadine Reynolds has engaged the interest and participation of fifteen children to create a very special collaboration. The young artists explored portraiture, painting to music, and ideas drawn from their imaginations. Using these images as her basis, Reynolds filtered them through her own particular skills in painting on silk to produce panels of interest. Her extension work is presented with the original artwork by the young participants. This adds a further visual presence as well as encouraging confidence and involvement in her collaborators. The light, floating fabrics, untethered and unframed, become banners of honour. The kinetic movement generated by a sudden breeze or the passage of a viewer adds a certain energy that captures the transient joy and effervescence of childhood. A number of the works include embroidered embellishments that highlight a detail or emphasise a line. Some of these have been completed by a group of volunteers who formed an old-fashioned sewing circle in which to share their skills that cross generations of women's domestic artistry. As well as the collaborative

pieces the exhibition includes a series of tantalising art historical fragments which translate effectively to the silk painting format. These are accompanied by brief didactic statements that share Reynold's recollections, interests, and consuming passion for the arts.

1 Khan, H.I., *The Mysticism of Sound*, (Revised Edition), 2014, Shambhala Publications, Boston, p,13



Thank you Adapt!



Susy and Adam... there is nothing slowwwwwwww about these two, especially when they are in full flight wrangling the young people who are here each week for Adapt Mentorship programs. We love Wednesdays! The energy is palpable and it is teaching us all about the power of story. To hear what these children have had to deal with, their aspirations and dreams, see how engaged they are, and best of all, witness first hand how self-regulated they are in this environment has indeed been extraordinary. An additional THANK YOU to four treasures who helped Emma for two days moving furniture and resetting the spaces for the start of 2025. It is no understatement to say it couldn't have happened with you!



### **Thank you Toowoomba Anglican School**

750 books! A magnificent gift! We did take a photo of the very hard working team who delivered the books on a very hot day, but it has gone astray! Once we receive amazing donations like this, we add a sticker encouraging the new owner to add their name. We strike out the dewey reference on the spine, and we count them in. This is a resource hungry process happily facilitated by volunteers (and this week in particular, William who was here for work experience!) If this all sounds like something you may like to help us with, purchasing more stickers is a priority! The stickers cost 43c each and yes, we print locally, so



keep us in mind if your office is having a fundraiser or your school is having a 'gold coin free dress' day!



## Thank you Ruth!

Ruth Logan brings so much love and sunshine to our world! It was a battle of wills, and watching Emma and Ruth negotiate a possible Child Writes book at the beginning of the year bought us all so much laughter! With Superhero for The FKG Group with Rockville State School already in planning, it was a firm 'no' from Emma, and yet, here we are at the end of the year with Melanie and Me reprinted, and 1000 copies of Maverick by the students from Year 6 at St Saviour's being distributed throughout Queensland and northern New South Wales. Suffice it to say Ruth won, and we couldn't be more grateful for her fierce determination. Thank you also to the Logan family and their dear friends for the financial support.

# Maverick

by Year 6  
St Saviour's



BE SUN SAFE  
BE LIKE MAVERICK!



Emma stumbled across this image she made for a presentation and wanted to share it. The children directly influence the character design in books, and having the steps side-by-side is the simplest way to demonstrate the entire process.

To understand more, start with this [Scholastic article](#) as it shares more insights into the value of children seeing themselves portrayed in books.





## Thank you Bernadette!

Sometimes we are so in sync we even all turn up to start the day dressed the same - well, in this case, in a variation of navy and white! Bernadette is one of our mighty Twinkles volunteer readers, and every week heads to Harlaxton State School to read to a gaggle of little ones.



## A wrap for Terese

Terese had her last term 4 workshop with these budding artists this week! Those arresting little owls and gorgeous grins attest to the fun all our workshop attendees had. We are so delighted that Terese will be back teaching her talents in 2025.

Come along and explore story setting and illustration ideas using a variety of art media and activities to encourage creativity. Terese's Term 1 workshops are designed to help children further utilise their art skills in drawing, and painting, and explore mixed media as an illustrative style. Terese is a celebrated author, artist and educator, and this will be her 10th workshop series with us at the Lighthouse!

**Wednesday 5th February 3:45-5:15pm until  
Wednesday 26th March 2025.**

- Full Term Fees: **\$200 and includes 8 full comprehensive** 1.5hr workshops and ALL materials.

[You can sign up now for Adventures in Art for Term 1 2025!](#)



**A study of science and sorcery**



## **William Zietsch's reflections on the benefits of the Science and Sorcery club:**

The Science and Sorcery club is a spectacular gathering of aspiring writers, getting together to exchange writing ideas, get inspiration, and generally have fun. The club is very social, but as a current participant there I can assure you that everyone is very accepting of whoever might join. It will never take more than three lessons to be good friends with others, even if you're more on the socially anxious side, the club will get you out of your shell, and the supervisor is really friendly and has many a story to tell, but overall the club is a good way to socialise and make friends with others.

The benefits of the Science and Sorcery club might include:

- Socialising and making friends
- Getting writing ideas from other's experiences
- Having fun
- Sharing writing ideas, inspirations and unloading stress from the day to a group of relatable, and accepting people

These benefits all positively affect a participant's mental and social health, so it would be almost completely beneficial to attend. If the club was a movie, I'd rate it a 5/5, but the club is not a movie, so I can only highly recommend attendance. The people are accepting and social, the supervisor is friendly and good-natured, and overall, you'll have tons of fun and make plenty of friends, all these and countless more reasons are why it would be beneficial to your mental health.

**[You can now sign up for Science and Sorcery in Term 1 2025!](#)**



We are famous - well, at Ramsay State School!  
 Look - we made it to the newsletter. Thank you  
 Ramsay SS for recognising how fabulous an  
 author visit was, and how well received the  
 bundles of books were...



Thank you Emerge!

Happy days! Tasha went from being one of the  
 Emerge kids to now being a formidable Emerge  
 youth leader, and yesterdays visit was so  
 welcomed. The children arrived bearing a stunning

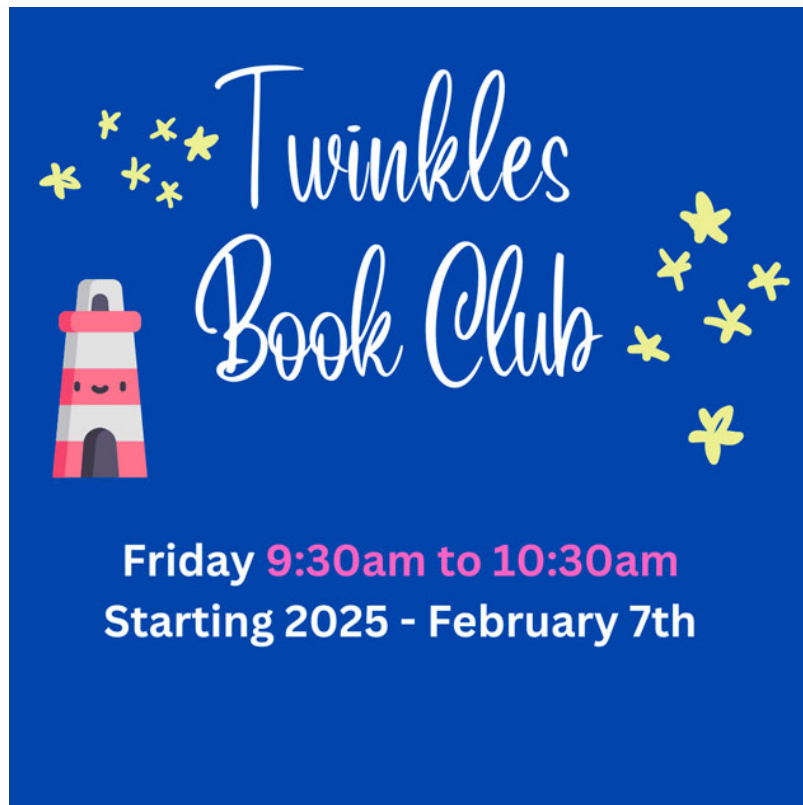
hamper of home-made goodies (Emily as wayyyy to slow to get the chocolates) and we loved every second of the catch up. No-one ever gets away from here without a stash of books (perfect timing for long summer reading) and art supplies.



Hi ho, hi ho, off the lovely books  
go...

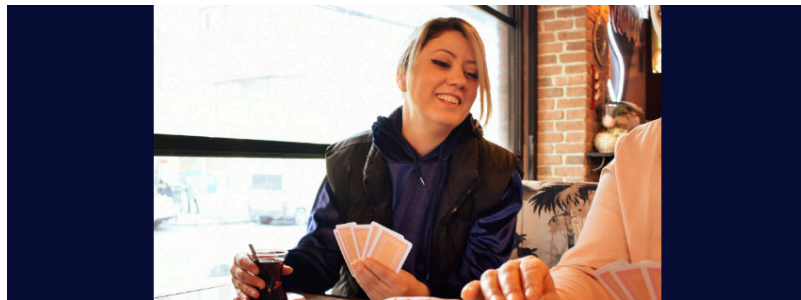
96 bags of books, 5 per bag, so 480 in total to the caseworkers for the **Department of Child Safety** children. Our priority is ensuring we get books into the hands of the most vulnerable children in our community and we were so grateful for the help in distributing these!

Thank goodness **Colliers** were so generous and leaving us with all of these office chairs when they went to their new digs in Hume Street! When not in use by our wonderful volunteers, they really were the best trolleys :)



## Thank you Helen - Twinkle!

Helen will be our 'Twinkle' here at The Lighthouse in Term 1, reading each Friday. You are welcome to bring your toddler for some lovely reading time, stay for the hour, or just one book.



So excited to be organising another program with the amazing young people who participate in the program **T2S (Transformation 2 Success)**. They self nominate to be involved in the program, and the focus to seek opportunities for them to discover potential pathways for them to follow.

We are going to work on a very special micro-project with them, and whilst not revealing anything right now, can say it could involve an exhibition, art work in curious locations, and writing :) This follows the success of this years art-



based program as part of Colour My World. This from the coordinator:

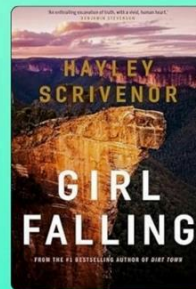
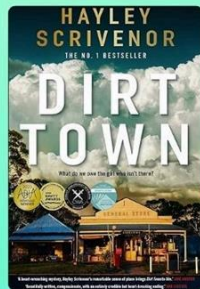
*"It was amazing to see the growth of the young people who connected with you through T2S last year. The pride confidence and joy that they all had at seeing their art work become something real was amazing.*

*It was also lovely to see The Lighthouse engage our young people in community events and treat them like any other young person of the street the confidence and impact that that has had on them is exceptional.*

*So many of the parent have also commented on how you were able to get two young people in partial to attend and stand up during the book launch in front of community noting that their young people would have never done this before."*

There is no doubt we were equally proud of the participants, and truly can't wait for the next project!

## Meet Hayley Scrivenor Author



Join us at the Highfield's Library, 32 O'Brien Road,  
Highfields.

10am, Monday 23rd December 2024

Bookings essential

(Contact Heather - 0413305513)

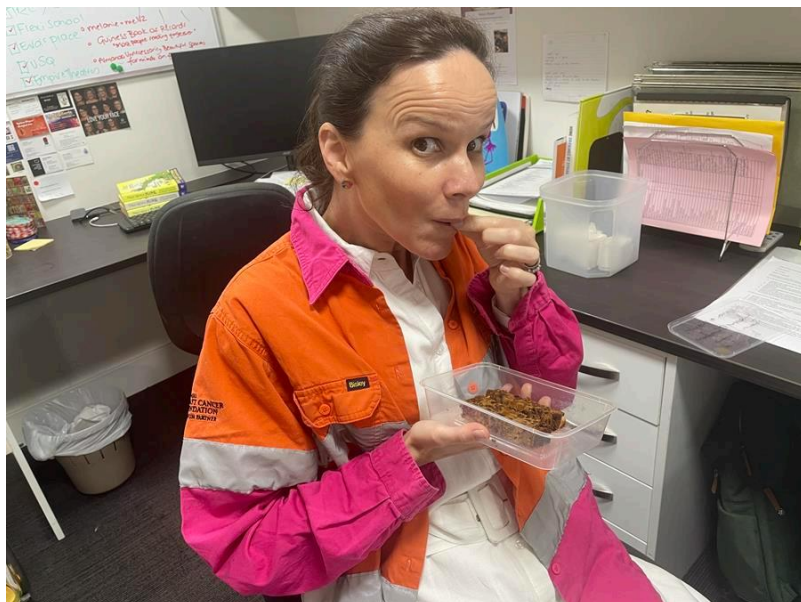


## One last thing...

Emily is not here to give this newsletter one final read before the 'send' button pressed! This may well be the beginning of a glorious challenge of finding the most outrageous photos from the fortnight, but even Emily will agree that if focussing on the reason for this photo - Liz's famous Christmas Cake - then it is worth including!

Thank you Liz for dropping in every Tuesday, starting the conversation with 'Is there anything you need help with' - and if we say YES, you dive in and work, if not, you simply keep moving with your day. This is one of the most generous thoughtful contributions and we are so grateful.

(and yes, the cake was delicious :)



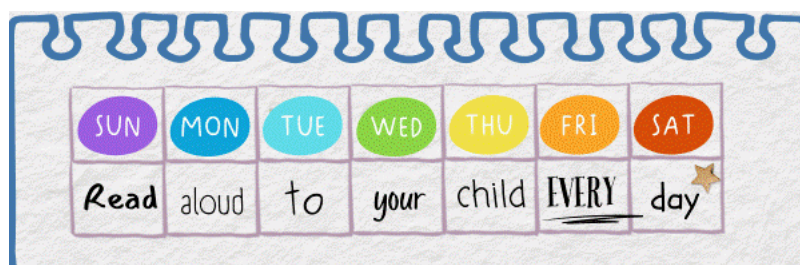
Together we can do what it takes to ensure every child in Australia reads, writes, and creates with confidence.

This goal informs everything we do at The Lighthouse. If you were curious as to 'how', we have:

- A library inspiring parents to read to their children every day, fostering a love for stories, the joy of reading, and getting books into homes.
- A writers' centre empowering children to experience the impact of their own words, sparking a passion for expression and for writing.
- A gallery igniting children's curiosity and wonder by engaging them with cultural experiences, nurturing their imagination and their creativity.

### Did you know...

The Lighthouse is supported by the The Child Writes Fund Ltd and it is a **registered charity** and All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.







What does a three year trial look like when it comes to the numbers? Our impact has been substantial, and this is entirely due to your unceasing support, the absolute dedication of incredible volunteers, and the passion and drive from our staff. With a full time equivalent of 1.1 people, it is no wonder our grant applications look so unconventional.

Questions include 'how do you achieve so much', through the spectrum of disbelief to 'surely you have more help than this?' Our reply - we turn ourselves inside out to ensure children's lives are enriched, determined to do our bit to ensure every child in Australia can read, write, and create with confidence.

The reality is 126 Margaret Street is only being utilised 20% of the time, our volunteers are exhausted (thank goodness it is Christmas break), our staff never get to the bottom of the 'to-do' list, and yet the need is there.

**It is all about timing.** It has been the impeccable management of our finances by Emily that ensures we can keep the doors open until June 2025, which may indeed give us enough time to be noticed at a federal, state, and local level.

We will continue applying for every grant we are eligible, in the hope we finally can demonstrate to

those clutching the purse strings that we serve a very important role in our community.

Fingers and toes crossed :)

 **9329**

Number of children involved with programs and events, now add the adults = 21,750

 **86%**

Students from 80 of the 93 schools in the region have been involved

 **728**

Number of FREE children's workshops (and including adults = 956, estimated total value \$334,600)

**67** 

Total number of exhibition / events in The Write Gallery

**20,548** 

Number of books we have found new homes for (estimated value \$308,220)

**\$491,271**   
\$316,600 received via donations  
\$174,671 received via grants

 volunteer hours  
**6401**



## The Lighthouse Toowoomba Impact Statement

Tuesday 22 February 2022 to Friday 30 November 2024



The Lighthouse Toowoomba  
126 Margaret Street, Toowoomba, 4350

We acknowledge the First Nations storytellers of the land on which we work and tell our stories. We respect the ongoing relationships with water, land, and story by the people of this place, their elders, their ancestors, and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

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