

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

**KYOGLE  
READERS  
WRITERS**



2023 has been a year of great progress for our organisation. Building on the success of the Kyogle Writers Festival, which was auspiced by our good friends at the Kyogle District Arts Council, our group made a decision to go it alone, forming the Kyogle Readers and Writers inc.

The name was chosen to reflect a sense of place, and to acknowledge the inter-relationship between readers and writers and their importance to any celebration of the written word.

This was reflected in our 2023 programming which saw us host renowned Kurdish-Iranian Journalist Behrooz Bouchani alongside his translator and editor Omid Tofighian to a sell out audience in town.

Showing off the diversity in our programming, chef and writer Christine Manfield was also warmly received by the town to another strong crowd.

Next cab off the rank was our inaugural 'Literary Allsorts' mini-fest which we intend holding in the 'off years' in between our festival proper. This event, held in the lovely Roxy Gallery space was well received by the community, and brought together a wide diaspora of writers, identities and lived experiences to our stage. The writers had a wonderful time in town, and were glowing their reflection on us as an organisation and Kyogle more generally.

Our poet on the road Vince Stead has been active as ever representing himself and the group within the broader Northern Rivers poetry scene, at schools events west of the range and happily at the Nimbin Poetry Cup and the New South Wales State poetry competition.

The Kyogle Readers and Writers was also very pleased to assist in hosting the launch of local project 'Fire Stories', which was wrangled together by local author Jarrah Dundler and his team.

The film, 'Crossing' produced as part of the 2022 Festival has continued to attract audiences, screened locally at the Byron Bay Film Festival, Flickerfest as well as internationally in the US and Europe in 2023.

Our Partnerships Manager Kevin Markwell has been very active in the grant writing space securing funding for our 2024 festival and the continuation of our writers in residence program which will be launched in the coming weeks.

The group has also been working hard behind the scenes with the (much needed) stream lining of our financial and administration systems thanks to the two Sues, Millican and Page while our two community liaisons Graeme Gibson and Margie Brace have ensured that we remain active in our community spaces.

Graeme in particular ensured the ongoing success of our annual poetry competition, which saw entries from across the country. This competition will kick on in 2024.

We round the year off with a celebration of the release of Kyogle poet Carlie Daley's new work 'Alluvium' to a packed house at the Roxy Gallery.

We are building steadily towards the 2024 Festival which will take place in Kyogle on the 17th and 18th of May, which will, once again, bring the best of Australian writing to our small town.

We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Kyogle Council, in particular Ruth Tsitinibinis at the Roxy Gallery; Ian and Corrine at the library as well as Chris White and Matt Sorensen in their respective roles.

As with any community organisation we lean heavily on other organisations such as Gugin Guddaba Land Council, Kyogle Together, Rotary, the Village Hall Players, Landcare, Tidy Towns and the Uniting Church.

Locals such as Wendy from Clay Corner, Shannon from Kyogle Osteopathy, Kate McGain from Hey Friend, and Jasmine and Thor Phillips and Dee Cameron have also been generous in their support.

Within our region Arts Northern Rivers have been vital to our success.

Organisations like ours exist on the backs of a team of dedicated volunteers, and I would like to extend a warm hearted thanks to the members of the committee who have worked so well together in 2023, and to our amazing community members who assist in putting on events in our region.

To you, our inaugural members, we look forward to seeing you at our events moving forward, either as supporters or volunteers.

Lastly, on a personal note, it has been immensely satisfying to help build, what is, a high calibre, ongoing engagement with the arts within this community and I can't wait for you all to see what we have planned next.

**Paul Shields**  
**Creative Director**  
**Kyogle Readers and Writers Festival**

