

President's Report: Gippsland Writers Network

1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

Overview

The membership base grew over the year but not by the same levels as the previous year. A decision to incorporate led to the decision to formalise a name change from 'Group' to 'Network' to better reflect our vision. Events offered members a chance to enjoy face to face workshops or online activities.

Members

At the end of the 2018/19 year, there were 93 contacts on our database. Of these 25 were paid members. Members represent all areas of Gippsland.

Weekly emails were sent to all members offering a number of writing opportunities and author talks or festivals.

The committee consisted of:

President, Vicky Daddo

Treasurer, Tash Agafanoff

Secretary/Membership officer, Tyson Pink

Events

GWN organised two face-to-face workshops 'Why is the Character Like This? And How to Run a Writers Group' with facilitators Alice Robinson and Fin Ross. The first was held at Bairnsdale Library on 27 October 2018 and attracted 8 bookings. The second was scheduled for Warragul Community House on 17 November 2018 but failed to attract any bookings and was cancelled.

The workshop was priced at \$40 per person. GWN received a Grace Marion Wilson grant of \$880 to cover the tutor's fees, venue and marketing costs. A portion of the unspent funds was returned following the cancellation of the second event.

The plan to take this workshop around the region was stymied by the lack of interest.

In 2019, we held three Write-In events. Two at Traralgon Library in January and February and one at Warragul Library in March. These were reasonably well attended with up to six participants.

There was one online workshop on Point of View conducted via the chat room host Stinto. This took place on 28 July 2019 and was attended by three participants.

Digital

Work commenced on upgrading the website to allow for more efficient online transactions, easier navigation and a suite of plug-in applications.

The Facebook page is active but is not regularly updated due to lack of time and resources.

Incorporation

The Gippsland Writers Group was a paid member of Writers Victoria for the 2018-19 year.

A move towards incorporation began early in 2018 and was completed in May 2019. The organisation's members agreed to a name change from Gippsland Writers Group to Gippsland Writers Network to better reflect the aims and vision of the organisation.

This meant changes to the organisation's banking, membership forms, website, Facebook presence and other listings.

Incorporation does give the group more stability as it becomes a recognised legal entity and perhaps a greater platform from which to organise further events and attract funding.

Following the name change and subsequent incorporation and changes to bank details, the organisation purchased a PO Box to set up a mailing address.

Summary

This was a year of consolidation, of testing the waters for online events and to continue to provide opportunities to our members. It was disappointing in terms of financial member renewals and attractions, and for attendance at the events we organised.

With the new incorporation, PO Box and website we look forward to increasing the membership base and building a reputation for delivering a variety of online and face to face events that our members find useful and informative and match their needs and requests.