



THE BOOKLOVERS' CLUB NORTHERN BEACHES INCORPORATED

(Incorporated in NSW under the Associations Act 2009)

No: Y2222011

1395b Pittwater Road, Narrabeen 2101

MEETINGS: 2nd and 4th TUESDAY each month from 10am

Website: <https://tinyurl.com/bookloversnb>

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& Louisa Baker

NOVEMBER 2025

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Club Members, The end of the year is fast approaching and this will be our penultimate bulletin for the year. There will be one more bulletin in December, covering both December 2025 and January 2026.

Our annual club Christmas lunch will take place on the 25th of November at Limani Seafood Restaurant, Narrabeen at 12noon for 12.30. We have 41 paid up attendees, so if you are interested in attending and celebrating another successful year with Booklovers you can either pay \$45 at Club Day on 11th November, or by bank transfer to Booklovers Northern Beaches: BSB 062 208, account number 010218903 by Friday 14th November. Please ensure you have your name on the bank transfer, and advise if you have special dietary requirements.

Our final meeting for the year will take place on December 9th. We don't have an author talk on this day, but would like someone to volunteer to lead a book discussion. Please email Glenys Murray if you would like to volunteer to do this. (see email address at the head of the bulletin.)

I want to remind everyone that we usually also have a discussion on the 4th Tuesday in January that focuses on the books that club members have read over the holiday break. Come prepared to speak about the books you have been gifted for Christmas and the books you've enjoyed and would recommend to our membership.

Our club Secretary, Carolyn Darmanin, has received a note from the family of one of our lifetime members, Jean Nysen. We were pleased to hear that Jean is approaching 103 years of age, and that as a former Bulletin Editor we can only assume that taking on roles at the Club ensures longevity!

*Maria Tomaino
President*

AUTHOR FOR NOVEMBER - Aura Parker 'Bowerbird Blues'



This new picture book from Aura Parker stars a beautiful bowerbird on the search for blue! It's a moving story of longing, love and connection, that unfolds as the bowerbird's search sends him soaring across the sea, sky and city. He swoops and snatches vibrant treasures for his collection, and soon his bower – a mix of natural and unnatural objects – attracts something greater and more fulfilling than he could ever have imagined.

Bowerbird Blues has been shortlisted for CBCA Picture Book of the Year

2024

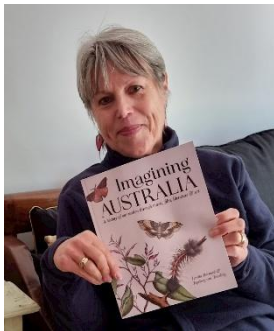
As an illustrator, designer and writer, Aura Parker creates bodies of work, including textile designs, prints and picture books.

Aura Parker's bodies of work are constantly evolving. She often draws on themes of nature, humanity and childhood. Her work is insightful and imaginative with a playful sense of humour. Aura is the author and illustrator of eight picture books published with Scholastic Australia and Penguin Random House which have been published internationally and received awards such as Children's Book Council of Australia Notable and the Speech Pathology Book of the Year. Meerkat Splash has also appeared on the ABC's enduring Play School program, read by Lachy Wiggle. Aura's picture book, Bowerbird Blues was chosen for ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime and read by 2.3 million people in May 2024. Her latest book is Bowerbird Brood, published in November 2024.

Denise Hyland

AUTHOR FOR OCTOBER

Loretta Barnard was our speaker for October discussing her book '*Imagining Australia: a history of our nation through music, film, literature and art*'. Loretta Barnard & Ingeborg van Teeseling. Publisher: MoshPit Publishing, 2023.



She is an author, arts writer, reviewer, editor, and project manager. Over 40 years, she worked in educational, academic, technical, legal and trade publishing, as editor, writer, researcher, picture researcher, proof-reader, commissioning editor and project manager. She has been a manuscript assessor, a senior mentor for writers under 18, and has also worked as a ghost writer.

Loretta was part of the team that produced *Earth Platinum*, which measures 1.8 metres x 1.4 metres, and is the world's biggest atlas, as recorded by the *Guinness Book of Records*. There is a copy in the State Library of New South Wales, that they display from time to time.

She's a regular contributor on the arts to a number of online sites, including *Sydney Arts Guide*.

Loretta told us that she grew up in a family of musicians." My grandmother Kath Barnard led her own dance band from the 1930s through to 1950s in Melbourne. Her band was still performing at various venues well into the 1960s. Female bandleaders at the time were, as you might imagine, few and far between. Kath was a pianist; her husband Jim, my grandfather, was a multi-instrumentalist, playing drums, saxophone and banjo. By day, he was the stationmaster at Mentone railway station in suburban Melbourne; by night, he donned his suit and accompanied my grandmother to wherever they were performing that evening. Kath and Jim's oldest son, Len, joined his mother's band at the age of 11 as the drummer. At that time, my father Bob was about

six years old and he'd accompany the family to their gigs where he slept under the piano. In his early teens, he too, joined the band, playing the trumpet."

"The brothers Len and Bob Barnard would go on to become leading lights in the Australian jazz scene. Bob, in fact, became famous all over the world for his masterful musicianship and distinctive tone. My parents counted among their good friends musicians, singers, writers, painters, photographers, producers, dancers, actors, composers, poets, journalists – a whole slew of creative people.

Loretta grew up in a family where the arts were considered of the utmost importance. We were taught to listen to music, to really hear what the musicians were doing, how they interacted with one another, how they could convey emotions and moods via their instruments. Reading books was de rigueur for all of us. Parents and kids – we always had our heads in books.

We had a few Russell Drysdale prints on the walls, my mother being particularly fond of his depictions of the Australian landscape. My father dabbled in painting, and he too, was drawn to Australian landscapes, something that captivated many of the creative artists we write about in *Imagining Australia*. The writers who visited our home spoke about the creative processes involved in writing, as much as the subjects about which they wrote. The journalists commented on various social and political matters that were, of course, beyond my ken. My parents and their artistic friends were gripped by a fervid passion for improving the world, and many felt it could be done through the arts.

Needless to say, my brothers and I embraced the arts. I've been writing about the arts (among myriad other things) for many years; my brothers are both musicians. My two sons are also musicians and music producers; one of my daughters-in-law is an actor. Music, literature and the arts in general, are therefore central to our lives. But my family is not unique. Even if you're not aware of it, the arts, in varying degrees, play a critical role in *all* our lives. Art really is everywhere. Indeed from the earliest days of humankind, we have made art.

"While we were discussing writing this book together, Ingeborg and I found ourselves asking, 'Is there a different lens through which creative people view the world?' There's no definitive answer, but it's true to say that great artists interpret the world, which in turn often helps the rest of us understand it. In their own individual ways, creative artists look at society and share their own particular observations about it. It's that notion of the melding of the arts with what happens in our part of the world that formed the conceptual basis for *Imagining Australia*. We've attempted to show how society and the creative arts are two sides of the same coin. You really can't have one without the other."

'*Imagining Australia*' tells an incredibly interesting story of our nation through the eyes of people who are trained to see... artists, writers, painters, musicians, filmmakers: they hold up a mirror and tell us who we are. In more than 80 well-researched and highly engaging chapters, '*Imagining Australia*' looks at our history by discussing the music, film, literature and visual art of our country. These creative works are put the context of the times in which they were made. They ask what they say about who we were, and who we have become.

Louise Matthews

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – Library Open from 10am

Club Day and Author Talk Open from 10 am – Author talk at 11 am	November 11 th	December No author talk
Management Committee meeting 12 pm	---	---
Book discussion	25 th <i>No book discussion</i> <i>Christmas Party</i>	9 th Book discussion TBC By separate email

Assistant Librarians' Roster NOVEMBER 2025

	TUESDAY		THURSDAY
4	Louise Matthews	6	Hilary Macorison
11	Club Meeting, Jennifer Seale	13	Chris Horton
18	Wendy Austen	20	Wendy Webb
25	Xmas Party	27	Chris Hughes

BOOK DISCUSSION

November 25th – no discussion as day of Christmas Lunch

December 9th - **Volunteer needed.** Details will be sent by separate email in November.

BOOK DISCUSSION 2026:

I'm trying to get our Book Discussion schedule for the first half of 2026 organised. To ensure we have a great lineup of books and to give everyone a chance to lead a discussion, I'm setting a goal to have the calendar filled for January through June 2026 by the second Tuesday of January. As a reminder, presenting a book discussion is an important part of our club, and it's a great way to share a book you love and guide a conversation. It doesn't have to be a formal presentation, it can be as simple as bringing a few questions to spark our discussion.

Glenys Murray

MEMBERSHIP

What a wonderful year we have had for new members to our Booklovers' Club. Fifteen new members this year and what lovely ladies they all are. Quite a few have already undertaken to actively contribute to our club - Loretta by speaking as an author of her latest book, Kerry as our new "tech guru" and Pauline as a leader for book discussion. Thank you to each of you. I would encourage members to be brave and offer your skills and abilities to make our club stronger and more interesting by adding your particular ability.

In March next year we have our AGM and we would love to have one of our new members offer to take a position. Please talk to our President, Maria, if you feel you would like to offer your services. By actively "doing" in the club, we get to know you and you get to know us and feel more connected to this wonderful club.

If you are enjoying your new membership, don't forget to talk to your friends and bring them along. Remember, their first visit is free.

To all of our longstanding members, please seek out our newest members and make them feel very welcome.

Chris Horton

NEW BOOKS SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

Trent Dalton, Gravity Let Me Go

True-crime journalist Noah Cork stumbles upon the story of a lifetime, a murder mystery delivered to his door. His obsessive pursuit of the truth threatens to unravel his own life, forcing him to confront the stories we hide and their ultimate cost.

Minnie Darke, Three Juliets

In a small town, a charismatic Shakespeare scholar named Romeo captivates three different women, all named Juliet. A witty, contemporary romance exploring fate, rivalry, and messy love triangles as each Juliet fights for her version of a happily-ever-after with him.

Garry Disher, Mischance Creek

In the stark outback, Constable Paul Hirschhausen investigates the suspicious death of a young woman. His inquiries into the tight-lipped rural community uncover a web of family secrets, old grudges, and simmering tensions where danger lurks just beneath the surface.

Chris Hammer, Legacy

When a journalist is found dead, his old friend Martin Scarsden is drawn into a dangerous investigation. The case uncovers a conspiracy of spies, political corruption, and hidden histories, forcing Martin to question who he can trust in a world of powerful secrets.

Kristen Hannah, Summer Island

A public scandal forces talk-show host Ruby to retreat to her estranged, famous mother's home on Summer Island. Forced together, they must confront painful memories and long-held secrets to heal their fractured relationship and rediscover the meaning of family.

Richard Osman, *The Impossible Fortune*

Ex-detective Amy and her grandson investigate the cold case of a famous adventurer who vanished after discovering a mythical treasure. Their hunt for the truth pits them against dangerous rivals, forcing them to solve a clever puzzle, decades in the making.

Alli Parker, *Until the Red Leaves Fall*

Based on a true story, this historical novel follows Ying, a young Chinese woman in colonial Australia. She navigates immense hardship and prejudice while searching for her family, uncovering deep secrets and fighting for her place in a hostile new world.

Heather Rose, *A Great Act of Love*

In the aftermath of a devastating tragedy, a diverse group of survivors gathers in a theatre. They find connection and begin to heal through the shared act of storytelling, exploring grief, hope, and the profound resilience of the human spirit.

BOOK DISCUSSION OCTOBER- *100 Years of Betty* – by Debra Oswald –

led by Chris Hughes and Pauline Rajaratnam

Born into poverty in pre-war London, and growing up fast during the Blitz, Betty grabs the chance at a bigger life by migrating to Australia. On board the SS *Asturias* she meets three people who will influence the course of her life – Pearl, a good-hearted party girl, Athena, a Greek woman on her way to marry a man she has never met, and Leo, a German Jew who lost his family in the war.

In Sydney, Betty is making ends meet as a waitress at the famous Trocadero dance hall when she stumbles into a rushed courtship with Donald, a wealthy businessman, and dedicates herself to being the ideal 1950s suburban housewife. But life has other plans for Betty, and soon she must find a way to do more than survive.

This is the story of a strong, intelligent woman born too early in time to make the most of her talents without having to fight for everything. It's about the defining force of motherhood, the family we make, and how the determination to live life to the hilt, with all the joy and sorrow that entails, can lead to a life beyond one's wildest imaginings.

Set against a century of world events and social upheavals, Betty's story takes us to the frontlines of the anti-war protests and the women's liberation movement of the 1970s, to the AIDS crisis during the 1980s, to living in Mexico and eventually becoming a TV screenwriter. Even in her nineties, Betty is still passionately engaged with the world, still surprising us.

One Hundred Years of Betty is the sweeping saga of one particular ordinary, fabulous woman living through a century of massive change: Betty as a child, teenager, lover, worker, friend, mother, activist, writer, recluse, angry woman & loving woman.

***Pauline Rajaratnam
And Chris Hughes***

The deadline for the December/January Bulletin will be 26th November 2025

BOOKS OPEN DOORS