



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

SEPTEMBER 2025

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The final figures are now in for our Trivia Day and what a wonderful result we had. Total ticket and food sales were \$2,711.00 and raffle ticket sales were \$1,371. With expenses of \$616.75 deducted, the final profit was \$3,465.25. The Committee decided to contribute \$543.75 from our assets to round this amount to \$4,000.

Caroline will send a card to Women and Children First advising them that the money will be transferred next week. Once again a huge thankyou to everyone who contributed to making this event such a success.

We are now in the process of planning our fabulous, fun Christmas lunch. We will be going to Limani Seafood Restaurant on Tuesday 25th November so please save this date. The cost of the lunch will be \$45 and we will be collecting the money from our next meeting. You can either pay cash at Booklovers Club Day or book discussion day, or make a bank transfer to:-

Northern Beaches Bookclub, BSB 062 208, Account No. 010 218 903. Please ensure you put your name on your bank transfer.

When making your booking please advise if you have any specific dietary requirements. More details about the lunch to follow in the October Bulletin.

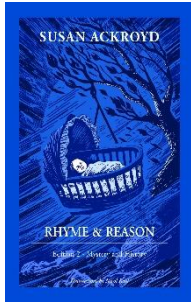
Wendy McNeilly
Vice President

SPEAKER FOR SEPTEMBER

Susan Ackroyd will be our speaker for September. She has excelled in many careers, commencing as a High School English/ History teacher, then spent over 20 years teaching migrants and refugees.

Susan retained to become a lawyer, where she spent 6 years delving into Elder Law. The Education sector lured her back, and she investigated poor quality training, poor standards in age care and early childhood education.

Now retired, Susan has written *Rhyme and Reason* (English history through nursery rhymes). Published in April by Austin Macauley, London.



‘RHYME AND REASON’

Gain an understanding of history from medieval times through to the 1700s through these rhymes and their stories.

Understand how a nursery rhyme we recite today started life as a political comment and was passed down through the years until now we have forgotten the politics.

The fascinating origin of many of our well-known rhymes dates back at least to the 13th century. Most of the 26 rhymes explored in the book are political satire, mocking the establishment of the day, such that heads or liberty were not lost. The Tudor and Stuart periods of the 16th and 17th centuries produced rhymes depicting the turbulent relationship between monarch and people, catholic and protestant, and how parliament and king battled over taxation.

It is quite amazing that orally transmitted rhymes from the 13th to the 18th centuries are still known and recited today. Parents, grandparents, and teachers will find the origin of these rhymes fascinating.

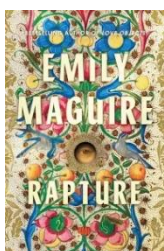
Denise Hyland

SPEAKER FOR AUGUST

Our author for August was Emily Maguire, speaking about her latest book **Rapture**.

Emily Maguire is the author of seven novels, including *An Isolated Incident*, shortlisted for the Stella Prize and the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2017, and *Love Objects*, shortlisted for the Australian Book Industry Awards Literary Fiction Book of the Year and the Margaret & Colin Roderick Literary Award in 2022, as well as three non-fiction books. Her articles and essays on sex, feminism and culture have been published widely including in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, *The Observer* and *The Age*. Emily works as a teacher and as a mentor to young and emerging writers and was the 2023 HC Coombs Creative Arts Fellow at the Australian National University.

Emily told us that she received a notification that her book **Rapture** has been nominated for the Prime Minister's Award.



Rapture is impeccably researched and vividly imagined; this is historical fiction of the highest caliber. In Maguire's hands, the legend of Pope Joan becomes a story that women of every generation will recognise: a story of embattled womanhood, forced subterfuge and constant, fear-ridden struggle.

Emily spoke about the many influences that contributed to the making of this story. She read a wide variety of books about Christianity, set in medieval times around the 9th to 11th Century. There were many manuscripts each with conflicting stories about Pope Joan.

Emily Maguire has created an earthy, visceral, and sensual tale, full of devotion, intrigue and passion. Ninth-century Europe feels astonishingly tangible and vivid, and Maguire's protagonist, Agnes, is utterly compelling as she sweeps all before her, treading where no woman has dared venture before. *Rapture* is a reminder of the price women throughout history have been forced to pay in order to fulfil their ambitions, satisfy their intellectual curiosities and to quench their thirst for life.

The motherless child of an English priest living in ninth-century in Mainz, Germany: Agnes is a wild and brilliant girl with a deep, visceral love of God. At eighteen, to avoid a future as a wife or nun, Agnes enlists the help of a lovesick Benedictine monk to disguise herself as a man and secure a place at the revered Fulda monastery.

So begins the life of John a matchless scholar and scribe of Fulda, then a charismatic heretic in an Athens commune and, by her middle years, a celebrated teacher in Rome. There, Agnes (as John) dazzles the Church hierarchy with her knowledge of the old and new languages of Europe, theology and Church law - and finds herself at the heart of political intrigue in a city where gossip is a powerful (and deadly) currency. When the only person who knows her identity arrives in Rome, she will risk everything to once again feel what it is to be known - and loved.

Louise Matthews

SPEAKER FOR OCTOBER

Loretta Barnard is our speaker for October. She is an author, arts writer, reviewer, editor, and project manager and also is a member of our Book Club. Over 40 years, she worked in educational, academic, technical, legal and trade publishing, as editor, writer, researcher, manuscript assessor, picture researcher, proof-reader, commissioning editor and project manager. She's been a contributing writer to a range of reference books; is a published poet; and has authored five non-fiction titles (including 2020's 'Kindred Chords: Australian Musical Families'). Loretta studied Australian history in her undergraduate degree, before completing her MA in English literature from UNSW. She's currently a reviewer for the Music Trust Australia's 'Loudmouth' magazine, and a regular contributor on the arts to a number of online sites.



Loretta will be talking about her book '*Imagining Australia: a history of our nation through music, film, literature and art*'.
Publisher: MoshPit Publishing, 2023

'*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 movies, paintings, photographs, songs, and books. It puts them in the context of the times they were made, and asks what they say about who we were and who we have become.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – Library Open from 10am

	September	October
Club Day and Author Talk Open from 10 am – Author talk at 11 am	9 th	14 th
Management Committee 12 pm	---	28 th
Book discussion	23 rd	28 th

Assistant Librarian's Roster SEPTEMBER 2025

	TUESDAY		THURSDAY
2	Louise Matthews	4	Hilary Macorison
9	Club Meeting Glenys Murray, Jennifer Seale	11	Chris Horton
16	Wendy Austen	18	Wendy Webb
23	Book Discussion Glenys Murray, Jennifer Seale	25	Chris Hughes
30	Nerilyn Schooley		

Book Discussion:

September 23rd “The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek” by Kim Michele Richardson presented by Sue Steedman (copy available from Booklovers Library, Northern Beaches Library has 3 hard copies, 1 audio book and 1 ebook)

From the Librarian:

Book Discussion presenters needed for October 21st and December 9th.

There will be a list of new books in the October Bulletin

Glenys Murray



BOOK REVIEW “IN THE MARGINS” by Gail Holmes.

Discussion led by Heather Proctor

Historical novel set in the turbulent times in Staffordshire England in 1647. It is a fictional account of an historical woman of that time, Frances Wolfreston.

She was taught to read by her mother, and like her mother, collected books, including some of Chaucer, and early works by Shakespeare. The strength of the mother/daughter relationship is strong

Frances is married to Henry, an Anglican rector in the western town of Statfold. In the novel she has two sons, George, and Middy who is intellectually disabled, and Frances is pregnant again. She is aware of many of the problems in the parish – poverty, tithes, crop problems for farmers, and folk with few opportunities. She takes on teaching a young girl to read with her two sons, and two other boys.

Henry XIII has been king after his older brother Arthur died, and he was crowned aged 17. As I think of my children, and the many I have taught, I am very aware of how immature many 17 year old teens can be! Perhaps that partly explains some of his decrees, though selfishness and the delight in power could also be involved.

When the Catholic church refused Henry permission to divorce, he left the church, established the Church of England, and himself as Supreme Head of it. Parliament introduced the Recusancy Act in 1538 (not repealed until 1791). Part of this Act at that time made it compulsory for everyone to attend Anglican worship every Sunday, despite their own beliefs. Absences would be noted, people fined and after repeat absences, gaoled for disobedience. Frances, who can read and write, is given the responsibility for recording absences, which she is not happy about. Her mother has been gaoled for repeat absences. Luckily she has a good friend, Candace, who is wealthy and influential, and also a good cook and servant, Peg. Candace pays Frances’ mother’s fine, and she is released from gaol.

The novel allows us to understand some of the difficulties of living in that time - clothing, transport, no schools, home remedies for medicines, the position of women in that society and the power of men.

It is Gail Holmes debut novel, though she is an experienced writer, and her creation of landscape and characters is a delight

Everyone in the book club enjoyed reading the novel and discussing the issues it presented. One of the delights of it is its reminder of the joy of reading, which is so much easier these days with libraries and schools.

The deadline for the October Bulletin will be 24th September 2025

BOOKS OPEN DOORS