SA Writers Centre fostering, developing and supporting writers and writing

2012 Annual Report



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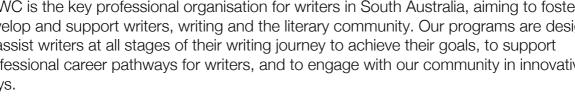
SAWC is the key professional organisation for writers in South Australia, aiming to foster, develop and support writers, writing and the literary community. Our programs are designed to assist writers at all stages of their writing journey to achieve their goals, to support professional career pathways for writers, and to engage with our community in innovative ways.

Amy Matthews Nan Halliday Fiona Smith Susan Errington Sue Fleming Ben Mylius Michelle Prak

Sarah Tooth	Director
Vanessa Jones	Program Manager
Steph Thomson	Office Manager
Malcolm Walker	Communications Officer
Lesley Beasley	Accounts
Sharon Kernot	Project Officer, Disability Project
Patrick Allington	Project Officer, Seniors Project
Niki Vouis	Project Officer, Membership Review
Writers in Residence	e Lilliana Rose, Dr Ianto Ware

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Sandy Verschoor Chair **Deputy Chair** Treasurer (to November) Treasurer (from November)





The SA Writers Centre acknowledges the support of its sponsors and partners.













Staff

Profile

Chair's Report

2012 has been a significant year of achievement for the SA Writers Centre and one of which we can be extraordinarily proud.

Headed by the indomitable Sarah Tooth, who commenced in the position of Director in January, the team hit the decks running and didn't stop. Sarah worked closely with the Board, staff and membership throughout the year as we reviewed our strategic plan with a clear focus on why, how and what we deliver through our programming and services to the South Australian writing community. We all felt a renewed energy for the Centre and its goals.

Sarah and her team successfully delivered 100% of our KPIs set against our strategic plan including a series of innovative workshops and master classes, a new Writer in Residence project and new creative and sustainable partnerships with local and national bodies.

Our community activities embraced all comers with a revitalised focus on access and inclusion through youth programs, disability projects and an inspiring senior's project.

Writing Australia continued to take a lot of Sarah's time and energy with SAWC effectively and successfully delivering the Unpublished Manuscript award for the second year.

We farewelled a few long time supporter and staff member Jude Aquilina and wish her every success for her future. For a second year, we thank our landlord Malcolm Reid Pty Ltd who responded with generosity to our needs by reducing the SAWC rental til June 2013. And our members kindly donated to specific projects, such as the Residencies.

Sadly this AGM will see three of our Board members leaving us. I would like to personally thank and acknowledge Amy Matthews our Deputy Chair, Nan Halliday, our Treasurer and Sue Fleming for their wonderful contribution and commitment to the SAWC over the past few years. I have greatly valued both their friendship and professionalism.

It has been a real pleasure to Chair the SAWC this past year and look forward to another exciting year ahead.

Sandy Verschoor Chair

The SAWC staff and Board have much to celebrate at the end of 2012. Having successfully negotiated a year of intense change and renewal, we ended the year with many new projects and procedures, a rejuvenated office space, and a renewed and clear focus.

In the wake of the retirement of Barbara Weisner, whose 25 years at the helm came to an end in Dec 2011, the first half 2012 saw the Board and staff enter an intense period of review, informed by the need for financial and organisational sustainability. This review saw a number of significant changes in direction, including some that were difficult, such as the end of the popular Young Writers Nights.

2012 also saw significant staffing changes, with the hiring of Steph Thomson as Office Manager, who not only relieved much of the administrative load on staff, but also dedicated herself to streamlining and updating office procedures. We also welcomed Vanessa Jones as the Emerging Writers Project Officer, who then stepped in to Program Manager position mid-year, when Jude Aquilina left the Centre.

Amidst these changes, we ran the most successful 12 months of programming for a number of years, delivering professional and innovative programming for SA writers, including workshops, masterclasses, residencies, forums, seminars, new presentation and publication opportunities, awards and professional advice and support services.

2012 saw a specific focus on emerging writers, with our first survey of the sector held mid-year. The results of this survey, and the discussion that took place at the subsequent forum, have been crucial in shaping our program.

As well as supporting career pathways and training opportunities, we provided direct paid employment opportunities for more than 60 South Australian writers who took part in our program as workshop leaders, facilitators, resident writers, presenters, judges and panellists.

Director's Report

Our Community Writing Projects continued to grow, with the Seniors Writer in Residence project exceeding all expectations, thanks to the incredible dedication and skill of Patrick Allington. Sharon Kernot continued to drive the Disability Project, acting as Writer in Residence for writers with a disability, and seeing an extraordinary year of publication outcomes and a new annual reading and performance event.

As mentioned in the Chair's Report, the team successfully achieved 100% of our Key Performance Indicators. These are the measures we set ourselves each year to monitor the work we do directly to achieve our goals. This is a remarkable achievement given the dramatic staffing, financial and organisational changes we were undergoing. This is testament to in part to our renewed focus, giving the board, management and staff a clear and targeted map to achieving our goals.

However, these successes are mostly testament to the wonderful team of people here who dedicated much of their lives to passionately supporting the members and the SA writing community. To Steph, Vanessa, Patrick and Sharon, but also of course Malcolm Walker and Lesley Beasley, who have thrown themselves into the new era, patiently guiding and assisting me in all areas, far beyond their core duties. We all also acknowledge our wonderful volunteers, in particular Jennie Cumming, whose enormous contribution is sincerely valued.

I'd also like to thank Arts SA, in particular Angela Salomon and Clare Tizard, for their ongoing support for both the Centre and the literary community in SA, and to thank my fellow board members of Writing Australia, with whom I shared an intense but rewarding ride.

My final thanks go to the brilliant SAWC Board, and our Chair Sandy Verschoor in particular, all of whom work extremely hard to ensure the Centre's success, and without whose commitment and support we would not be able to do what we do.

Sarah Tooth

GOAL 1 Build a vibrant & diverse community of writers

In 2012, our core program drew attendances of over 4,000 writers. SAWC established the Writer in Residence Program and curated a season of monthly forums, seminars and performance events.

Book Fair

Presented with Wakefield Press and the National Year of Reading. Attended by more than 500 people, it featured Wakefield writers, 15 self-published writers, a book launch and a panel session on "The Future of Reading", featuring Laura Kroetsch, Amy Matthews, Cath Kenneally, Connor O'Brien and Sarah Tooth.

Multicultural Writers Day

Presented with Spoke Festival, brought together writers to discuss network building, professional development and pathways to publication.

Preview to Writers Week

The first in a series of successful AWW/SAWC collaborations.

E-exchange

Presented with the ASA. Writers, publishers and other industry professionals came together to discuss, debate, and share information about digital writing and publishing.

Emerging Writers

Survey and Forum: provided networking opportunities and discussed results of SAWC's survey of emerging writers, featuring Lisa Dempster, Connor O'Brien, Farrin Foster, Emily Craven, Vanessa Jones.

Young Emerging Critics Roundtable: Co-

presented with Jane Howard, to bring together emerging Adelaide critics.

Zine Archive: lanto Ware, SAWC WiR, presented a discussion and exhibition featuring 20 years of Adelaide zines.

NaNoWriMo: writing event

Versify

Celebrating diversity in spoken word and poetry, featuring national and local hip hop MCs performing acapella raps (Prime, Koolta, Social Change, Dialect), bilingual performance by Lionel Fogarty and Juan Garrido-Salgado, and the launch and heat of the SA Poetry Slam.

Book Launches

SAWC hosted 35 book launches for members and other SA writers.

Operational Report

GOAL 2

Provide training, information & opportunities to assist SA writers achieve writing goals.

Workshops and Masterclasses

A program of 32 workshops were held, attracting 309 attendees. These workshops were targeted at writers with a range of abilities and backgrounds, from aspiring to established.

SAWC held 8 masterclasses delivered by international and interstate writers, presented in conjunction with: Writing Australia; the Australian Society of Authors; Australian Writers Guild; May Gibbs Trust; the Children's Book Council and Wilkins Farago Publishers.

Feedback

2012 saw an extraordinarily high level of feedback across all our programs, with 95% of participants rating our services very good or higher (scoring us 4 or 5 out of 5). We also achieved a very high rate of participant feedback, as 92% of participants filled in written feedback forms.

Residencies

SAWC ran a series of formal residency opportunities for SA writers to develop their practice, including: SAWC Writer in Residence for emerging writers; Places, the Writing Australia residency project, which saw Anne Bartlett win a residency to Bruny Island; Writers at Work in partnership with National Year of Reading and Public Library Service of SA. SAWC selected Stephen Orr to be the SA writer.

Publication Opportunities

New publication opportunities for writers were developed in 2012, including: **33** South Australian poets, fiction and nonfiction writers published in *Southern Write*;

SAWC collaborated in Express Media's **Buzzcuts** Project in Adelaide, giving arts reviewing opportunities for young writers;

The **Seniors and Disability projects** had significant publication outcomes for participants, both through traditional and digital publishing pathways.

Awards

Writing Australia's Unpublished Manuscript Award Salisbury Writers Festival Competition SAETA Spring Poetry Competition Open Your Mind Poetry Competition City of Unley Short Story Competition TAFE's Professional Writing Program's Best Creative Writing Student Prize.

Information and Support Services

SAWC undertook a Membership and Information Services Review to identify what services and information is requested most regularly, and how SAWC can best meet those needs in the writing community, and amongst our members.

We have now developed a more comprehensive online information resources, a series of key PDFs (how to get published, self publishing, etc), and have a range of member only resources/templates for funding applications, budgets, cover letters, synopses etc.

SAWC fielded more than 15,000 inquiries from members, writers, industry and the public, provided referrals and direct support to more than 1700 SA writers, held more than 150 one on one feedback sessions and supported 42 writing groups.

SAWC moved to quarterly editions of *Southern Write*, rather than 11 per annum. We also secured an ISSN, and added both fiction and poetry submissions. This has brought increased publication outcomes for members and SA writers.

Our fortnightly enews is now freely available to all, rather than being restricted to members only. 29 editions were sent, to an average of 900 recipients.

The Centre has seen an extraordinary growth in its online communications, thanks to both a new strategy and a dedicated social media manager:

Dec 2012 Total visitors	Dec 2011	% Increase
33,852	25,238	34%
Total visits		
50,191	35,152	42%
Total number of	Authors Profiles	
118	97	21%
Total hits on Aut	thor Profile pages	6
81,966	37,780	117%
Dec 2012	Dec 2011	% Increase
Facebook		
1,346	900	50%
Twitter		

300

1,394

Two Adelaide University interns worked with the team to examine both the 'new member experience' and to scope a blogging project to be launched by SAWC in 2013.

365%

GOAL 3

Develop sustainable relationships with key organisations and partners

SAWC partnered with the City of Salisbury to present with Salisbury Writers Festival. 101 tickets were sold, overall attendance was 350, with 12 South Australian writers appearing on panels and workshops.

SAWC Director sat on a number of industry bodies including:

Writing Australia Board and National Operation Group; Arts SA Assessment Panel – Arts Organisations Community;

AICSA Creative Futures Reference Group; Flinders University Bachelor of Creative Arts Course Advisory Committee.

Staff speak regularly to organisations and groups about issues facing the literary sector, including: Public Libraries of SA Annual Conference presentation "Partnerships, Ending and a Strategic Focus for Libraries in the literary sector";

24 presentations to groups and organisations on SAWC and our services;

128 interviews and meetings with organisations and media about SA writers.

Writing Australia

The Director was a member of the Writing Australia Board and National Operations Group. During 2012, this involved monthly meetings in Melbourne and fortnightly teleconferences with the Directors of 4 other state writers centres (NSW, Vic, ACT, Tas).

The key projects, include: Unpublished Manuscript Award (SA); Places, the national residency project (Tas); Tours, the national touring project (Vic); Webportal, the website /online learning portal (NSW).

In late December 2012, Writing Australia was defunded by the Australia Council, 2 years into its 3 year triennial funding agreement as an emerging key organisation.

The Australia Council have now made the decision to revert to annual program funding of state writers centres for 2013 and beyond.

At the end of 2012, the future of both the collaborative national network of writers centres and the national projects above remained unclear.

GOAL 4 Create an innovative program of community activities

The **Seniors Project**, a collaboration between SAWC and Helping Hand, and funded through Perpetual Trustee, was an innovative and exciting project that exceeded all expected outcomes, including establishing ongoing writing connections between the residents and local community.

For our unique **Disability Project**, 2012 saw new clients, more publication outcomes, and new additions to the project, including reading opportunities, and a networking event for writers, their families, friends and carers. We also hosted the Open Your Mind Poetry Competition presentation and readings, with Carole Whitelock and the Mental Health Coalition.

SAWC also mentored and supported Writers Victoria to develop their project for writers with a disability, which was launched in mid 2012.

Both the Disability and Seniors projects held reading and performance events to celebrate works produced during the year, and to give participants an opportunity to gain professional presentation skills and build networks.

Youth Project

In 2012, all existing programs were reviewed against SAWC goals and strategies. For a number of reasons, it was decided to end the Young Writers Night project, with its focus on primary school students. SAWC developed and piloted a project plan for 2013, with a renewed focus on young writers 13 – 17 years old.

GOAL 5 Grow funds and organisational processes to support activities

SAWC increased income earned through commercial activities to 10% of turnover. This does not include membership income, however, which brings self-generated income up to almost 30% of annual turnover.

Membership remained relatively steady, with 921 financial members as of 31 December 2012, compared to 948 at the end of 2011.

The Board and Management also developed a range of policies and procedures, including HR and WHS, and implemented new contractual and staffing review processes.

Staff also developed organisational procedures and manuals, and moved to online office procedures including digital archiving, bookings and other time saving practices.

SAWC also streamlined our volunteer program, reducing the number of office and administrative volunteers in key roles, and building dedicated and experienced volunteer teams in key areas to reduce the TOIL accumulation of staff.

Management continued to work with ArtsSupport to develop an Annual Appeal Program and Philanthropy Plan, which saw funds raised to successfully launch the Writer in Residence Project.

Volunteers

Without the assistance of our volunteers, SAWC would not be able to deliver the services we do. Our warmest thanks and appreciation to: Connie M Berg Mark Calidcott Panos Dionysopoulos Louise Friebe Stephen Lord Denise Martin Mag Merrilees Jean Morris Hakim Oerton James Ogilvy Libby Parker Mel Prior Anne-Marie Smith Izzy Stevens And of course everyone who has given their time of the last 12 months to come and fold our newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

Under Sarah Tooth's meticulous stewardship, SAWC's financial position has been delicately balanced this year.

There have been changes in the mode of delivery of many of our services, with an increased focus on self-generated income. We have successfully increased our earned income in both absolute terms, and as a percentage of our annual turnover. This focus will continue into the future.

During 2012 our accounting processes were all reviewed and streamlined, making the processes more transparent with all reporting now generated directly from MYOB. The move to digital record keeping also began 2012.

We were able to extend the 50% rent reduction negotiated in 2011 until 30 June 2013 and hope to continue this for a further 12 months.

Membership subscription income has remained stable.

In late December the Australia Council unexpectedly defunded Writing Australia but they have made a one-off grant of \$40,000 in core funding for 2013, giving us sufficient time to plan for annual funding grants and prepare our budget for 2014 accordingly. In addition we have a commitment from Arts SA to honour our current triennial funding agreement until the end of 2014.

SAWC finished the calendar year to 31 December 2012 with a surplus of \$680. While our unaudited statements for 2012 showed a surplus of approximately \$2,500, as budgeted, there was an auditing issue with our Depreciation Schedule that affected our bottom line. It was discovered that there were a number of items on the schedule that had been disposed of in previous years. Writing off these assets meant a significant adjustment to the final audited surplus. Now this issue has been identified and corrected, it will not be a problem in future years.

At December 31 our bank balance was \$94,898 and our current assets of \$102,186 were in excess of our liabilities of \$86,039. Members Funds ('equity') were \$30,509.

A special thanks to Lesley Beasley who keeps SAWC finances running smoothly.

Nan Halliday (Treasurer to November 2012) Fiona Smith (Treasurer from November 2012)

Board of Management Report

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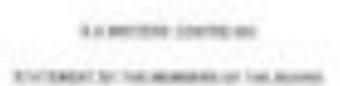
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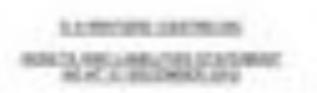
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