

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2022 Friends AGM was held on 10 November, with Friends Committee Chair Margaret Nichols welcoming members in person and online.

Margaret noted that as the COVID pandemic continued to affect people's lives during the year, the Friends Committee was guided by the Library in its conduct of an events program. Twelve events were held, a mix of in-house, online and hybrid events. The White Gloves, 'Irish Echoes', curated by Dr Richard Reid, was particularly popular as were the launch of the NLA-published book *Vintage Knits* and the riotous evening with four Canberra actors presenting scenes from plays depicted in the *On Stage: Spotlight on Our Performing Arts* exhibition. The 'Poetry Lounge' Zoom event was not at all like poetry lessons often endured during school days.

Declining membership numbers are an issue. A working group has been set up by the Friends Committee to develop initiatives to reverse this trend.

Treasurer Jo Schumann presented the financial report. The pandemic and membership income both affected the financial outcome; however, a small surplus was recorded and the organisation remains in a healthy financial position. The Auditor had issued an unqualified opinion.

Margaret announced the award of the 2023 Creative Arts Fellowship—Sam Wallman, an internationally recognised comics-journalist, cartoonist and editor whose project at the Library will focus on the 1970s unionists Green and Pink Bans. Sam thanked the Friends in an online video.

Margaret also announced the award of the Friends Medal to Kerry Blackburn, a Library volunteer, Friends newsletter editor and former Committee member. Margaret noted that it was hoped the Travelling Staff Fellowship award would be announced in coming weeks.*

The meeting concluded with Margaret thanking Library staff for their support, and retiring Committee members Ken Douglas, Larissa Karpish, Nivi Nair, Jo Schumann and Karin Oldfield. Seven nominations were received for the 12 elected positions on the 2023 Friends Committee; all were accepted at the AGM. Five positions remain vacant on the Committee and Margaret encouraged members to come forward if they were interested in being co-opted.

** The Friends Committee was subsequently advised that, due to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on travel, no applications were received from Library staff in 2022 for the 2023 Travelling Staff Fellowship. The Committee will undertake to manage this in conjunction with the Library.*