



BUILDING CONFIDENT, CREATIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH STORY

Story Island Project Annual Report 2016–17

President's Report

Once upon a time in Tasmania, a tiny island buffeted by fierce southern seas, there were 2 young women who dreamed of helping the island's children, much as Dave Eggers helped the children of San Francisco at 826 Valencia.

Kate Gross and Emily Bullock founded the Story Island Project, and later realised they would need a board to help them achieve their goals of helping kids tell their stories and develop their literacy and literary skills in the process.

Thus began the search for board members happy to give their time and energy to the fledgling project. Fortunately, more people volunteered than were needed, and a most committed group of people gathered in July 2016 for the inaugural board meeting. It has been great to work with people as generous and dedicated as those on the Board – between them there is a diverse range of skills and talents, and I thank them for their enthusiasm and hard work. In particular, board member Susan Bartie worked very hard to ensure that all was in place for the Project to become an incorporated body in August 2016.

In November last year, the Project was officially launched at an event attended by Her Excellency, the Governor of Tasmania, Professor Kate Warner. The launch included an inspiring address by Cath Keenan, Co-founder and Executive Director of Sydney Story Factory, our equivalent in New South Wales, and readings by students whose work we published in the *Stories from the Island* anthology.

Equally committed and talented are Emily Bullock and Kate Gross, who have run a range of very successful workshops with students, culminating in the wonderful celebration of the *Stories of the Brooker Highway* project at Moonah Arts Centre in August 2017.

It is because of Kate and Emily's dedication and passion for the Project that it has been so very successful thus far. Their enthusiasm for working with young

people is contagious and their skills have allowed the young writers to flourish.

They have been tireless in their dedication to the Project, collecting stories, working with schools, contacting sponsors, building a huge support network, managing publicity for the Project's various events, and all of this in a volunteer capacity! Our major goal for the coming year is to seek adequate funding to make the Project sustainable in the longer term.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Story Island Project so far, and for helping us to light the spark of creativity for hundreds of young writers. We hope that in time, the spark becomes a veritable bonfire that can be seen from far out on those stormy seas around Tasmania.

Lynne Hanlon
President

Board members 2016–17

President Lynne Hanlon
Senior Vice President Susan Bartie
Vice-President Beth Warren
Treasurer Angela Yao*
Secretary/Public Officer Kate Gross

General members

Emily Bullock
Finegan Kruckemeyer
Melinda Maddock
Louise Mills
Victoria Ryle

Youth Representatives

Michael Stratford Hutch
Lily Stojcevski

* Note: Louise Mills replaced Angela Yao as Treasurer of the Story Island Project at a board meeting held on 28 June 2017

About the Story Island Project

Chapter One: 2016–2017

Once upon a time on a windswept island in the Southern Ocean, writers were winning international prizes while nearly half the island's adults struggled to read and write. Emily Bullock and Kate Gross asked themselves what they could do to support young Tasmanians to find their own voice, through writing stories.

Emily and Kate decided to create an organisation called The Story Island Project. Their project built on the foundations laid by inspiring projects such as San Francisco's 826 Valencia, 100 Story Building in Melbourne and the Sydney Story Factory.

They realised that they could not make this project happen by themselves, so they gathered together a team of passionate, skilled people to help change the narrative around literacy in Tasmania, one community at a time...

What: The Story Island Project is a new non-profit organisation that supports young people to improve their literacy skills through creative storytelling.

Goals: Our goals are to nurture a generation of storytellers and improve literacy skills for young Tasmanians.

Why: We believe young people thrive when they can share their stories and write in their own voice.

How: We work with schools and community groups, with an initial focus on Hobart's northern suburbs, to empower young people (aged 6–18) through our innovative, project-based creative writing activities.

Our project-based approach enables young people to own the writing process and strengthens their ability to express themselves clearly and with confidence.

We empower the communities around young people by collaborating with families, schools, businesses and local organisations.

Activities: Our range of fun, creative activities are based on our belief that storytelling is at the heart of literacy, and story connects people to community.

We get young people excited about writing and give them the tools they need so they can be confident writers at school and beyond. We honour young writers by promoting their work and producing publications.

2016–17 projects

Stories of the Brooker Highway, February–September 2017

Stories of the Brooker Highway was the Story Island Project's major community storytelling project for 2017. Delivered in partnership with LINC Tasmania, Moonah Arts Centre and a range of local schools, this project celebrated the northern suburbs as a place rich in stories, and a community filled with strong, creative voices.

Stories of the Brooker Highway featured stories and images collected from and created by the local community about their experiences living and working around the Brooker Highway. More than just a 17km stretch of road from Bridgewater to Hobart, the Brooker Highway is the common thread that connects Hobart's northern suburbs.

The stories and images collated in this project were featured in an exhibition curated by the Story Island Project, held at Moonah Arts Centre in August–September.

Who on earth has stories about a highway?

The stories and images included in *Stories of the Brooker Highway* captured some of the overlooked, the surprising and the unusual features of a stretch of road that is so familiar to all who live in the area.

The Story Island Project collected stories from community members at locations and events across Hobart's northern suburbs in February–April, including: Glenorchy LINC, MONA Market, Moonah Taste of the World Festival, Moonah Arts Centre, Glenorchy Art and Sculpture Park (GASP!) and the Hobart Showground Sunday Market. In these sessions, we engaged with around 150 people, collecting stories about the Brooker Highway and spreading the word about the Story Island Project.

In May–June we led creative storytelling workshops at three schools located alongside the Brooker Highway: Austins Ferry Primary School, Montrose Bay High School and Claremont College. In these workshops, 54 students engaged with the true stories and archival images of the Highway collected from the community, then reimagined the life of the Highway in new and exciting ways. Some students produced creative stories and illustrations based on the community stories; others imagined creative possibilities for the future of the Brooker Highway. Artist Leigh Rigozzi, author Julie Hunt and children's publishing expert Victoria Ryle joined us for some sessions to share their expertise with students.

Stories of the Brooker Highway also included a collaborative story that was crafted by around 50 students from the six schools located on the Brooker Highway: Austins Ferry Primary School, Claremont College, Montrose Bay High

School, Goodwood Primary School, Bowen Road Primary School and Campbell Street Primary School.

We were thrilled to have some fabulous guest speakers at the launch, including Eileen Brooker – whose father Edward Brooker first conceived of a northern suburbs highway in the 1940s – and Tasmanian author Danielle Wood, who shared her heartfelt memories of 422 Brooker Highway – the beloved house that was the hub of her family for many years. Young writers James and Dakota also shared the wonderful creative stories they wrote as part of this project.

Bee Literate project – July–November 2017

This project was delivered in partnership with Goodwood Community House, Goodwood Primary School and Tasmanian Junior Beekeepers. The Bee Literate school holiday workshop took place at Goodwood Community Centre in July. A joyful celebration of bees and beekeeping, it was held in honour of late Goodwood resident and keen beekeeper Fred House, who died last year at the age of 99.

A group of 10 young people from the Goodwood community came along to learn about bees and beekeeping from Anita Long of Tasmanian Junior Beekeepers, then worked with us on some writing and illustrations that convey the fascinating facts they learned. In late 2017, these pieces will be compiled into a book to teach the local community all about the importance of bees to the environment.

Global Story Club, *National Geographic Kids* – ongoing

The Story Island Project has an ongoing partnership with *National Geographic Kids* magazine. We work with young writers aged 8–14 to write creative stories for the Global Story Club page in *National Geographic Kids*, which is published monthly and circulated across Australia and New Zealand. In 2016–17, 13 young writers became published authors through this partnership!

***Stories from the Island* anthology – October–November 2016**

Stories from the Island is an anthology of pieces from 18 young writers. These pieces were developed in Story Island Project workshops throughout 2015–16. The anthology was curated by Story Island Project Youth Representatives Lily Stojcevski and Michael Stratford Hutch, and launched at a public celebration at the Moonah Arts Centre in November 2016.

***Write Your Own Story* workshops – Cosgrove High School, November 2016**

A series of workshops with 30 Year 9 and 10 English students, in which students told their life stories through objects that have significance in their lives. They constructed a simple, six-page origami book to present their stories.

School holiday workshops at Glenorchy LINC, July and October 2016

Four one-hour workshops with 30 young people aged 5–14, held at Glenorchy LINC. The July workshops were part of a workshop series coordinated by the Tasmanian Writers Centre, supporting the Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania's Young Creative Writers Awards 2016.

***The Lost Voices of Old Hobart Town: Of Sea and Storm*, Festival of Voices, July 2016**

Two day-long workshops held as part of the Festival of Voices, at TMAG, July 2016 with eight young people aged 12–18. The young writers wrote monologues based on the theme of 'Old Hobart Town' and TMAG's Tempest exhibition, which were then read out by local Hobart 'personalities' at the Festival of Voices in July 2016.

Launch of *A Changed and Uplifted Life* – July 2016

A Changed and Uplifted Life is the personal story of Caroline Cochrane, detailing the challenges she has overcome in her life, and the positive impact of her involvement with the Choir of High Hopes Hobart. In early 2017, the Story Island Project gave Caroline individualised support to develop her book. This included one group workshop with Choir members and several weekly individual workshops with Caroline. The project culminated in a publication launched at the Festival of Voices in July 2016.

Spreading the word

In 2016–17, we've shared our vision for the Story Island Project at a number of public events, including:

- presenting a paper (evaluating the impact of the Stories of the Brooker Highway creative workshops) at the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment's *Education Transforms* symposium (July 2017)
- leading a discussion table at the *Plugged In: Ideas for an Island Economy* forum, hosted by Scott Bacon MP (July 2017)
- speaking at a lunchtime meeting of the Moonah Rotary Club (August 2017)

If you would like us to come and speak to your group about the Story Island Project, please get in touch!

2018 and beyond

Our focus for the next few years of the Story Island Project will be on telling people about what we do, securing ongoing funding, building our community of support, recruiting and training volunteers, running more and better workshops at schools and during school holidays, inspiring the community through community storytelling projects like 2017's *Stories of the Brooker Highway* project, and working with our Board of Management works to support our goals.

We will know we are achieving our goals when young people tell us they feel confident about their writing, when literacy rates start improving in our target area, and when we've grown the Story Island community through partnerships, volunteering, activities and events.

How you can help

We encourage community members and organisations to join us in building a more confident, creative community. Here are just a few ways that you can help us:

Volunteer: Be part of our creative storytelling workshops, or help out behind the scenes to build the profile and capacity of our organisation.

Donate: Contribute financially to our organisation so that we can reach more young people through our creative storytelling projects.

Connect: Help us make contact with like-minded individuals and organisations willing to sponsor our work with young people in Hobart's northern suburbs.

Story Island Project details

The Story Island Project (Tasmania) Inc

Mailing address: 41 Leonard Avenue Moonah TAS 7009

Phone: 0405 177 057 (Emily Bullock) 0409 856 979 (Kate Gross)

ABN: 81 478 918 677

TFN: 988 827 366

Incorporation number: IA11920

BSB: 017-010

Account number: 4074-92166

Financial report to 30 June 2017

As at 30 June 2017 *The Story Island Project* raised \$7750.49 in its first year, and had a cash-at-hand balance of \$4335.34.

The majority of the income was received as donations at the November 2016 launch, with additional income earned through workshops for LINC and Commissioner for Children's creative writing workshops in July and October 2016. There was some income through sales of the *Stories from the Island* anthology.

Expenditure was limited, with the major expense items relating to insurance and setup costs such as equipment and promotional material.

There was no expenditure on salary or employee-related expenses.

There were no major assets purchased during the year, with the most expensive item a microphone valued at \$196. Purchased items not considered consumables are noted in Attachment 3, and for accounting purposes have been allocated as expended items for the year.

Insurance will be an ongoing expense with the next invoice due early in the 2017–18 financial year.

Attachments:

1. Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2017
2. Income statement 1 August 2016 – 30 June 2017
3. Note on Assets 30 June 2017

Louise Mills

Treasurer

16 September 2017

(Note: Louise Mills replaced Angela Yao as Treasurer of the Story Island Project Treasurer at a board meeting held on 28 June 2017)

Attachment 1- Balance Sheet

The Story Island Project Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2017

Created 15 September 2017

Assets

Account	Balance
Current Asset	
Cash on Hand	4,335.34
Total for Current Asset	4,335.34
Total Assets	4,335.34

Liabilities

Account	Balance
Total Liabilities	0.00

Equity

Account	Balance
Previous Year(s) Earnings	0.00
Current Year Earnings	4,335.34
Total Equity	4,335.34
Total Liabilities and Equity	4,335.34

Attachment 2 – Income Statement

The Story Island Project: Income Statement

Reporting period 01/08/2016 – 30/06/2017

Created 15/09/2017

Revenue

Accounts	
Donations	6877.03
Interest Income	6.74
Workshops	809.52
Sales	57.00
Total Revenue	7750.29

Operating Expenses

Accounts	
Equipment	382.80
Venue Hire	266.00
Administration	153.00
Catering	225.42
Bank Transactions	24.00
Insurance – General	1,057.10
Office Supplies	208.49
Printing and Reproduction	354.75
Travel Expenses	269.93
Promotional Expenses	473.46
Total Operating Expenses	3,414.95
Net Profit	4335.34

Attachment 3 – Assets year ending 30 June 2017

Item	Quantity	Value	Accounting Notes
A-frame Story Island sign	1	\$198.00	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Banner – Story Island (vinyl, horizontal)	1	\$76.92	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Bean bags	3	\$450.00	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Microphone (USB, Blue Yeti)	1	\$196.00	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Pull-up banner (Story Island)	1	\$175.00	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Pull-up banner (Brooker Highway exhibition)	1	\$120.00	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017
Tables	2	\$87.80	Expended item allocated to equipment (cash at hand) as at 30 June 2017