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Honouring women's experiences

Nurturing wisdom in all people

Working for justice in our world

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December 2022

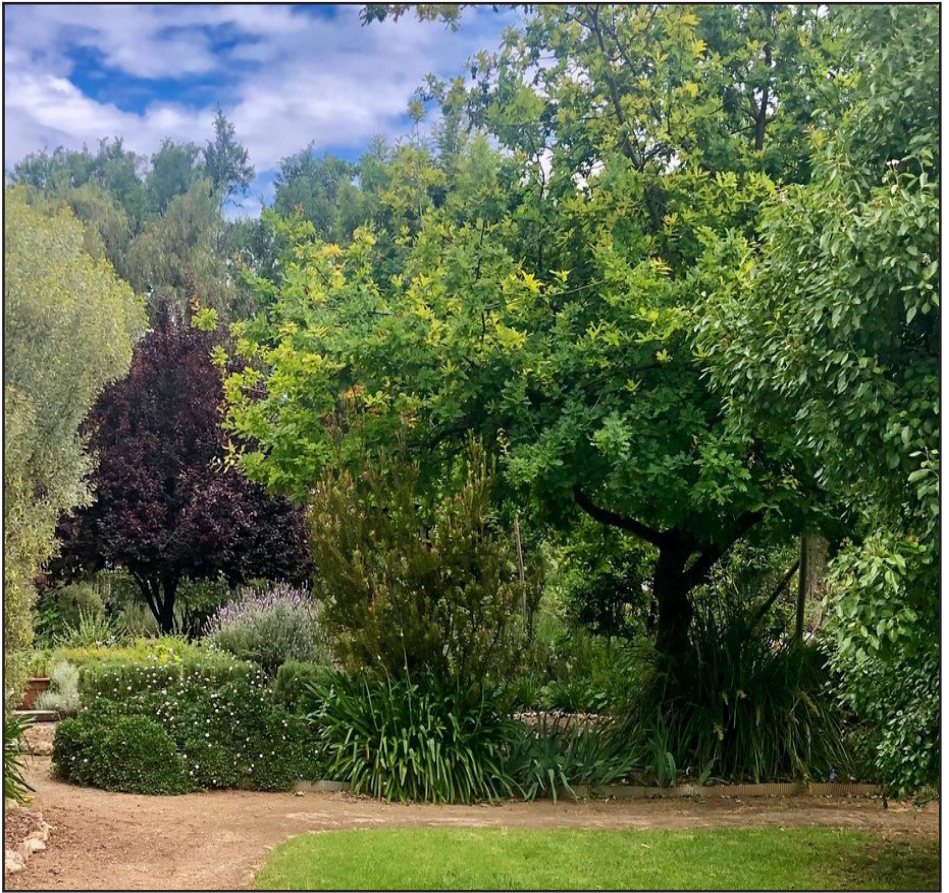


Photo from Open Garden Event

*I like gardening - it's a
place I find myself when I
need to lose myself.*

Alice Sebold

HelloHomestead.com



Message from the Coordinating Team

Dear Sophia Members,

As we draw towards the end of the year at Sophia I would like to reflect on what an incredibly busy and eventful year it has been. Covid is still with us, but despite this we have continued to remain open and functioning, offering both our Program events and our beautiful space for hirers. Fortunately not too, too many of our community have succumbed to COVID, me included. However, many of us have had family and friends who did. A highlight of the year was the thrilling event of launching the long awaited Sophia 30 year history book. Attended by around 100 people this event was such a celebration of all the creativity, skill and devotion of so many of our community. We could not have envisioned a more wonderful event than we managed to plan and execute! Many of us are now dipping into the beautiful pages of our book with delight and great curiosity no doubt. We are indeed most proud of the result of almost six years of work to produce our amazing book!

Only a few weeks later we hosted our Open Gardens SA event, showcasing the Sophia and Dominican Peace gardens to the general public. What a fantastic day this was, with almost 400 people availing themselves of the opportunity to peruse our environment. The atmosphere was fantastic; genuine interest and appreciation of what was on offer. It was so lovely seeing many people wandering around, obviously most intrigued with our peaceful surrounds. The stalls were buzzing, the morning and afternoon tea was in big demand, and people were most interested to explore the Sophia building to find out what we are all about! A massive thank you to all the people who contributed to making this event happen, two years in the planning and preparation, and to all the helpers on the day. We could not have done this without you. Certainly a spectacular success on every level!

We have a new library volunteer. Nadeya has kindly taken on the task of dusting the library shelves which is much appreciated. Thank you Nadeya.

Rosanne our finances volunteer has undergone knee replacement surgery recently. We wish her a speedy and full recovery. May your rehabilitation regime help bring you back to us with much more mobility than you have had in the past months!

**Best Wishes,
Sophia Vogt & Wendy Jollands
Coordinator & Coordinator Support**

SOPHIA WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE REPORT

Dear Sophia Community,
I was writer-in-residence at Sophia every Tuesday during September & October 2022. It was my intention during this time to use the resource of Sophia - its library and community - to develop and research for my next non-fiction project.

Following my first book, *Holy Woman: A divine adventure*, a memoir & critique of patriarchal religion, I am now wondering what opportunities there are for a postmodern feminist spirituality. This follows my own yearning for wholeness but also reflects, to some extent, the Western consciousness/conundrum. Once again, I am drawing threads between the personal, the political, and the spiritual. But now I am also exploring methods of healing my body, my psyche, the earth, and societal structures.

Research Questions

How do people experience 'the divine'?, What can 'the goddess' mean to women?, What are some psychospiritual methods of healing from patriarchy?, How can we move from a psychology of oppression to a psychology of liberation?

Research Undertaken

Interviews:

I interviewed four people from the Sophia Community who answered my call out which asked for stories of the goddess, and to find out what the goddess means to them. Two other people have gotten in touch for a conversation in the future. Rosanne Debats has given me access to her archive of correspondence with Thea Gaia, which gives an incredible timeline of the evolution of goddess spirituality in South Australia, as well as a closer understanding of a personal spiritual engagement with the Divine Feminine.

Conclusion

What I have achieved: absorbed important thinking from the ten books I read from the Sophia Library, recorded personal descriptions of goddess spirituality, developed direction and form of non-fiction book.

Reflection:

Most of all it has been a blessing to be present in the regular comings and goings of Sophia. I participated in the Women's Writing Group (thank you Jenny, and all who shared their work) and volunteering in the library with Fiona. While I was in the building I heard groups meeting for Interplay, Singers, Circle Dancing and Meditation. The lead up and come down to two big events happened while I was here: the launch of the Sophia History book, and the Open Garden Day. Having a regular desk at Sophia didn't just give me access to the extraordinary resource of the library; my time here has taught me the importance (and beauty) of being with people.

I am grateful to all I have been in contact with and hope to stay in touch. I am moving to Alice Springs / Mparntwe for the next few months so won't be around, but you can always catch me online!

I am especially thankful to Fiona - for her idea of becoming a writer-in-residence - for the support of Sophia and Penny, the friendship of Annie, and the generosity and wisdom of those who shared their stories.

If you would like any more information on what I am researching / writing about, or have your own story to tell, feel free to get in touch at louise.a.omer@gmail.com

*With love, Louise Omer
louiseomer.com*



Coming Events & Courses

NOTE: All courses and events MUST be booked.
(They may not run if there are too few enrolments OR they may cause problems for the Facilitator in processing extra people on the day.)

Please phone 8373 3781, or 0439 594 363 or email to info@sophia.org.au.

Payment must be made no less than one week before to secure booking (except for regular events).
If cost is an issue please talk with Coordinator.

FEBRUARY

A Sophia Welcome to 2023

Maureen O'Connell & Sophia Vogt

Celebrate the beginning of our new year! Bring food & drink to share.

NB. FINGER food only please.

Tues 7/2 6.00pm-8.00pm | Cost: \$5 All welcome

You CAN Ask That!

Kaye Mehta

An opportunity for non-Indigenous Australians to explore our questions and concerns about a Referendum on a First Nations' Voice to Parliament. Join us for a thought provoking session.

Refreshments provided. No need to book.

Saturday 18/2 2.00pm-4.00pm Cost: Gold coins All welcome

MARCH

An Introduction to Aboriginal Art

Annette Jarrett

Deepens and continues the conversation with local Kaurna First Nations community members and led by a Kaurna artist. This session, limited to 10-12 people will include insights into the cultural links between story and traditional art and also the use of paints, colours and materials. You will be provided with materials and an individual canvas to keep. **At the Living Kaurna Cultural Centre at Warriparinga, off Sturt Rd, NOT at Sophia.**

Thursday 23/3 10.30am-1.00pm

Cost: \$50 (paid to Warriparinga on the day) All welcome

Sunset Soirees: Fabulous 50s

Marisa Ala Dea

Four musical evenings of friendly fun, reminiscing, singing along to Golden Oldies and grooving to the songs that rocked your socks off all those years ago! Each evening will focus on a different decade. (See other listings) Bring your friends, your partners and make new memories!

Friday 31/3 6.00pm-9.00pm

Cost: \$15 Members \$12 All welcome

APRIL

The Referendum on a First Nations' Voice to Parliament.

Kaye Mehta

What could we do next? (See February listing) Refreshments provided.

Saturday 22/4 2.00pm-4.00pm

Cost: Gold coins All welcome No need to book

Explorations

Jenny Wightman

Indigenous & European Cultures - Australian Indigenous people are now gifting us with more knowledge of their unique culture - we can learn valuable lessons from it. Can we gift them also?

Tuesday 4/4 1.30pm-3.30pm

Cost: \$25 Members \$20 Women

MAY

Annual General Meeting

Please join us. It will take place after our annual Volunteer & Facilitator gathering at 11.00am and will be the tabling of annual reports at 12.30pm followed by light refreshments.

Tuesday 9/5 12.30pm All welcome

Sound Bath & Self-Inquiry Meditation

Glenyce Durdin & Wendy Davidson

Experience and enjoy the unique combination of sound bath and self-inquiry meditation, where sound and inquiry open the door to nurturing self-care and resting in your true nature. Bring your own mat, cushions, rug, snacks, lunch & water bottle. Suitable for 18+yrs.

Sunday 28/5 11.00pm-4.00pm

Cost: \$60 Members \$50 All welcome

JUNE

Winter Haiku Workshop

Fiona Johnston

Join us to find out more about haiku and have a reflective time in the Sophia garden with pen and paper in hand.

Thursday 1/6 2.00pm-4.30pm

Cost: \$10 Members \$8 Women

Jigsaw Swap Day

Come in to exchange a jigsaw for another one to do over the colder months! No need to book.

Tuesday 6/6 11.30am-3.30pm

No cost All welcome

Sunset Soirees: Psychedelic 60s

Marisa Ala Dea

Four musical evenings of friendly fun, reminiscing, singing along to Golden Oldies and grooving to the songs that rocked your socks off all those years ago! Each evening will focus on a different decade. (See other listings) Bring your friends, your partners and make new memories!

Friday 9/6 6.00pm-9.00pm

Cost: \$15 Members \$12 All welcome



Regular Events

MONDAYS

Hatha Yoga for Wellbeing Dinali Devasagayam

A gentle style of yoga including postures, breathing and relaxation techniques to stretch, strengthen and energise the body and calm the mind. Suitable for all. Please bring yoga mat & blanket. Weekly.

Monday starts 6/2 10am-11.15am Cost: \$15 Members \$12 All welcome

TUESDAYS

Mindfulness Practice Barb Hancock

A monthly group to practice Mindfulness Meditation in the beautiful space of Sophia. Each session comprising of a guided meditation focusing on the breath; time to explore the natural beauty of the garden and a guided Body Scan practice.

Tuesday 7/2, 7/3, 4/4 9.30am-11.00 Cost: \$10 Members \$5 All welcome

Sophia Singers Margaret May

Come and explore the beauty of women's spirit through song. Build skills, confidence and community in a fun and positive environment. Newcomers welcome! Weekly during school terms. Starts 1/4/2

Tuesday 4.00pm-6.00pm Cost: \$12 Members \$10 Women

Friends of the Peace and Sophia Gardens

Jenny Wightman, Nel Morrison

We invite you to join our enthusiastic group of volunteers for a Working Bee on the second Tuesday of the month to help maintain the beautiful gardens. Delicious morning tea provided. No garden experience necessary

Starts Tuesday 7/2 9.30am-12.00pm All welcome

Feminist Theologies Re-Visited

Maureen O'Connell & Sophia Vogt

An invitation to first gather for morning tea & to connect. Please bring a book/article on Feminist Theologies to share, discuss, listen.. Stimulating conversation is always had! New participants welcome too! Women

Tues 1/4/2, 11/4, 13/6, 8/8, 10/10 10.45am-12.30pm Cost: \$5 Members \$3

Women Writing Jenny Wightman

Do you like to write? You don't have to be a published author or a formidable wordsmith to join this group of women who meet to explore their experience of life through writing. Anyone with an interest in writing is most welcome!

Tuesday 21/2, 21/3, 18/4 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: \$5 Members \$3 Women

Connect Play Create Trish Fairley

Fun, creative and playful, using the improvisational tools of InterPlay, we move our bodies, tell stories, use our voices and create stillness. It's a great way to connect with others, live more lightly and experience grace.

Tuesday 21/2, 21/3, 18/4, 1.30pm-3.30 Cost: \$15 Members \$12 Women

Nurturing Friendships, Sharing Stories

Maureen O'Connell, Elaine MacFarlane & Sophia Vogt

These gatherings welcome those with a disability or disadvantage. Come, connect, make new friends and share stories over a light lunch. Carers and friends welcome too!

Tuesday 28/3, 23/5 1.00pm-3.00pm | No cost All welcome

WEDNESDAYS

English Classes for Refugee Women

These classes provide English tuition and practical life skills for refugee women and others not able to access alternative classes. Supportive environment with child-minding provided. Weekly during school terms. Starts 8/2

Wednesday 10.00am-12.30pm No cost Women

Circle Dancing for Health & Wellbeing

Marisa Ala Dea

Meaningful, joyful & uplifting, Circle Dance combines easy to learn dance steps with music from around the world. Previous dance experience not required & all women welcome. Weekly during school terms. Starts 1/2

Wednesday 1.30pm-3.00pm Cost: \$15 Members \$12 Women

Silent Meditation Annette Jarrett

Do you often long for silence, quiet rest and a time to be still? Come to our weekly silent meditation, during school terms. Starts 1/2

Wednesday 3.30pm-4.15pm Cost: Gold coins All welcome.

Grief's Journey

A monthly support group for younger adults who have lost their spouse/partner. The group aims to provide support following the untimely death of a partner in a nurturing environment of shared experiences, empathy & understanding.

Wednesday 1/2, 1/3, 5/4 7.00pm-9pm Cost: \$5 Members \$3 All welcome

The Enneagram Penny Cahalan

Join Penny on a journey to explore your inner emotional landscape. This year we will be looking in greater depth at how type influences our way of being.

Wednesday 8/3, 12/4, 10/5 4.30pm-7.00pm

Cost/session \$15 Members \$12 All welcome.

THURSDAYS

Hatha Yoga for Wellbeing Dinali Devasagayam

A gentle style of yoga including postures, breathing and relaxation techniques to stretch, strengthen and energise the body and calm the mind. Suitable for all. Bring yoga mat & blanket. Weekly.

Thursday starts 2/2 5.45pm-7.00pm Cost: \$15 Members \$12 All welcome

FRIDAYS

Serendipity Sessions Marisa Ala Dea

Monthly gatherings exploring a variety of activities to engage & enrich our creative selves. Includes a Good Friday Peace event, a Midwinter Spiral Walk and joyful, sustaining practices for mind, heart and soul. We begin in February by constructing a simple Finger Labyrinth & 'walking' it in a gentle meditation experience.

Fridays 3/2, 10/3, 7/4, 19/5 2.00pm-4.30pm (except Fri 7/4 at 5.00pm-7.30pm) Cost: \$12 Members \$10 Women

SATURDAYS

Women's Poetry Circle Judith Haines

Supportive group of women poets who meet to share their poetry, develop writing skills, experiment with style and enjoy a creative group process. The format includes writing workshops and guest readers. If you are interested in exploring poetry & poetry writing, please join us. No prior knowledge needed.

Saturday 11/2, 8/4 2.00pm-4.00pm Cost: \$5 Members \$3 Women

SUNDAYS

Sunday Circle Dancing Lyn Porter

Come breathe in the peace & serenity at Sophia as we dance to uplifting music from around the world with easy to learn steps carefully taught with focus on enjoying the dancing and moving meditation experience. Visitors welcome.

Sun 5/2, 5/3, 2/4, 7/5 3.00-5.00pm Cost: \$18 Members \$15 All welcome

Buddhist Meditation Celia Karpfen

We are a non-denominational group who meet for qigong, dharma talks, sitting and walking meditation and discussion. Our practice is influenced by mindfulness and commitment to a spiritual journey. Participants are encouraged to see themselves as their own spiritual authority.

Sunday 8/1, 12/2, 12/3, 9/4 9am-11.30 Cost: \$6 Members \$4 All welcome



Sophia News

Volunteer Finance Team

SOPHIA has a new volunteer to be part of the finance team. Jo Cookes, Sophia member, is a bookkeeper who works part time in the paid workforce. She is currently learning what is required from Rosanne in record time! Thank you so much for answering our request and joining the team. You are most welcome Jo!

Volunteer Vacancy: Social Media Coordinator

Are you a technical whiz? Want to use your creativity to contribute to building SOPHIA's profile online? SOPHIA is looking for a Volunteer Media Coordinator to help manage the Sophia website. We encourage creativity if you're interested in creating unique content as well! What we're looking for:

- Experience using and managing websites
- Attention to detail (spelling & grammar)
- Strong understanding of Sophia values & messaging style
- Creativity!

If you're interested, please contact Sophia outlining why you're interested and your relevant skills and experience. Thanks!

Interesting website

An organisation in Moonee Ponds, Melbourne - goddess wisdom for the contemporary age: <https://www.thegaiatemple.com/>

Book Launch in September

Dear Women Who Brought Spirals of Connection to Birth,

The book is so beautiful, so informative, so creative, so detailed and comprehensive, such a communal and personal and spiritual history. You deserve so much thanks and appreciation for all your labours - a complicated gestation and birth, I know, from what brought you to tears at the launch.

I feel almost overwhelmed at how much of my own life from 1994 to the present day is reflected in the book, both in prose and poetry and in the wallhanging, and the courses I've done and continue with, and in the beauty of the garden which I've always loved. And of course in the many people who have become friends. Thank you especially for appreciating my writing.

With gratitude and love for a task done superbly well, and wishing you the many blessings of Sophia,

Dawn Colsey

SOPHIA

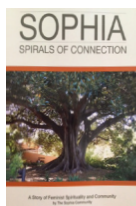
Spirals of Connection

A Story of Feminist Spirituality & Community

By the Sophia Community

This is a beautiful publication, celebrating the first 30 years of Sophia. There are still a small number of copies which can be purchased for \$75.

The book was launched last September and is a creative, collaborative history, bringing alive the stories of Sophia's beginnings & long history. It includes poetry, photos, art works and a Sophia chronology. It is available for borrowing in the Sophia library.



Aboriginal Art Workshop

Annette Jarrett organised an art and cultural workshop at the Living Kurna Cultural Centre at Warriparinga in Marion in September.

This is some of the lovely artwork produced by those attending.



Open Garden Day in October



Thanks to everyone who contributed to a brilliant day with absolutely perfect weather! These are some of the comments from the Visitors Book: *very calming, stunning, extraordinary garden, little oasis in suburbia, we didn't know they were here, very, very peaceful, congratulations, wonderful experience!* It seems that the almost 400 visitors attending all had a wonderful time.

As a fundraiser it was also spectacularly successful, making over \$5000 from the entrance fees, plant/produce/craft stalls and morning & afternoon teas. Well deserved after so much work planning and getting ready - many, many thanks!

New Group at Sophia

Friends of the Peace and Sophia Gardens

Jenny Wightman, Nel Morrison

We invite you to join our enthusiastic group of volunteers for a Working Bee on the second Tuesday of the month to help maintain the beautiful gardens. Delicious morning tea provided. No garden experience necessary Starts Tuesday 7/2 9.30am-12.00pm All welcome

Volunteer Vacancy: Garden

There are some weekly jobs that need doing around the Sophia garden. These include watering pot plants, weeding the labyrinth, raking paths especially under the Grevillea, cleaning and refilling bird baths. If you are interested, please contact the Sophia office. Thanks!



Sophia Library

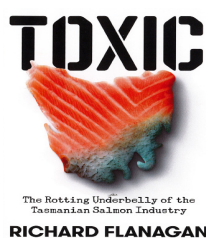
*Why don't you come into the Sophia Library and check it out? We are always adding new books.
Borrow, read and maybe review!*

Book Review

TOXIC

The rotten underbelly of the Tasmanian Salmon industry

Richard Flanagan 333.72 FLA



Richard Flanagan is a Booker Prize winning and well known Tasmanian writer. It's called 'Toxic' for good reason and its findings are shocking. The opening page says "If we purchase the commodity, we participate in the crime".

I did know they feed the salmon grain, some of which is genetically modified because of depletion of wild fish stocks and that negates some of the Omega 3, (which is the main reason we eat salmon) and that they dye the flesh pink for marketing purposes but the environmental, economic and health impacts are more stark than have been identified to the public.

The practices of Tassal (in particular), Huon and other smaller companies are exposed along with the government's complicity because of economic impacts which are huge. Salmon farming is the biggest industry in Tasmania since the decline of forestry. There are also references to Norway and other countries in the food chain.

Some of the many worrying issues are:

- High overuse of antibiotics because of overcrowding could contribute to human resistance.
- The dye used is made from petrochemicals and though they quote many enhancements that only applies to the natural dye and not the synthetic dye, which is the one used in Tasmania
- Fish meal mainly from South America is treated with ethoxyquin to prevent self combustion in transit. This is petrochemical based and was originally produced by Monsanto as a pesticide. It accumulates in body fat and can affect baby foetuses.
- Soy production for fish food in the Amazon leads to excessive land clearance and most soy production in the world is used in animal fodder. Use of soy leads to reduction of Omega 3 and increase of Omega 6 in the case of salmon farming.
- Fish meal is expensive so it is supplemented with guts, beaks, feathers, feet, heads of slaughtered chickens which would have otherwise gone to waste dumps - are used to bulk up the fish food along with soy.
- Hormonal and chromosomal breeding practices are used to grow the fish faster and fatter because it results in more profit but they are often deformed and have a painful shorter life but less input, more profit!!

- Pens are up to 20m deep and are a toxic mix of faeces and urine. RSPCA and WWF endorse salmon production as ethical but are highly paid for their endorsements.
- Fresh water is needed to dilute pollution and is taken from terrestrial sources to bathe the fish and then this polluted water is tipped back into marine environments. A lot of this is conducted on huge factory ships which operate 24 hrs per day to clean fish. The noise is constant and in places, locals find it impossible to sleep without earplugs and is causing medical problems.
- Tassal's use of fresh water in 2020 was estimated to be 2 million tonnes and Hobart is the next driest city to Adelaide. The east coast has much lower rainfall than west and that's where most salmon farming is conducted. Tasmanian waters are the fastest warming seas with climate change and becoming more unsuitable to grow salmon (cool water fish) which are getting more diseases etc so more intervention eg antibiotics are used, some of which flushes into local water affecting quality and other marine animals.
- Jellyfish are the principal survivors in the polluted water and now are heading toward dominance in the food chain replacing fish and crustaceans.

I haven't detailed the destruction of Macquarie Harbour which had to be largely abandoned, nor the intimidatory bullying and threats by Tassal on nearby landholders and those who oppose and speak out. Even a critical comment on Facebook has been known to get threatening phone calls. Nor have I mentioned the plan to double production and sites on the east coast, which is very dry reading.

This sounds like a sci-fi fantasy and is really scary stuff. Flanagan is a Rhodes Scholar, so I think he would be able to research effectively and maybe wouldn't put his enviable reputation on the line. If only some of these things were true, it seems a rogue industry and possibly protected because of the potential economic fallout in the poorest state of Australia.

Read the book and spread the word. There is so much more information in the book!
Mary Raymond and Marian Gray

Pop-Up Library Book Sale

Next time you're at Sophia, check out our Pop-Up Sale in the main room. Items are \$2 each and are changed every few weeks.

Donations

At present we are not having large book sales and our storage space is full. If you have books that may be suitable to add to our Library collection please bring them in. If not, please donate elsewhere.