



Circulating

An experience

A place

A symbol

A sign

Honouring women's experiences

Nurturing wisdom in all people

Working for justice in our world

Sophia 225 Cross Rd
Cumberland Park
South Australia 5041

Office: 10am-2.45pm
Tuesday-Thursday
& last Fridays of month
10am-1pm

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September 2024



www.pixabay.com/illustrations (thanks to [nhudibnumukhtar](#))



“When my cats aren’t happy, I’m not happy. Not because I care about their mood but because I know they’re just sitting there thinking up ways to get even.”

Percy Bysshe Shelley



Message from the Coordinating Team

Dear Friends

Spring is almost upon us. The Adelaide Hills, where I live, are full of glorious wattles of different shapes and all shades of yellow, blossoms are in full bloom in their range of pinks and white all heralding spring is imminent and the long cold winter is over. The dams are full to the brim and the countryside is looking beautiful and green. It's such a contrast to when I wrote for the last newsletter!

The new reverse cycle refrigerated air conditioning has been installed. In the main conference room it has a simple push on or off button to operate. It is set to automatic as per recommendation, to simplify operation. It works on a thermostat so will periodically turn itself on and off whilst in use. Please do not alter the settings. In the rest of the building each small room can be controlled individually, for personal comfort and also saving on energy costs.

We farwelled Kaye Mehta from the Core Group recently. Kaye has served two terms and been a wonderful asset contributing her skills and wisdom over those years. Kaye will now transition over to the Futures Group to use her talents in that regard. Deborah Callison has now joined the Core Group. Deb is an ESL tutor and a regular garden volunteer. Thank you both Kaye and Deb for all your dedicated service to Sophia. We also say goodbye to three long serving ESL women: Cathy Brideson, coordinator; Chris White and Marie Mirza, child minders and educators. Thank you for the many years you have been involved. We wish them well in their future endeavours and look forward to seeing them at Sophia in the future. Rosanne Debats has celebrated a special birthday recently. Many wishes for a wonderful new decade Rosanne!

You may have noticed some delicious and gorgeous looking hand made chocolates for sale as a fundraiser for Sophia in the main room recently. These are lovingly made by Bronnie Speedie's partner Ian Paul, who is a chocolatier. We are most grateful for Ian's generosity and kindness in this pursuit. They will only be available for another month so get in quick if you haven't already treated yourself. Weather is a factor in their production and soon it will be too warm. I can highly recommend them!

Best Wishes

Sophia Vogt & Wendy Jollands
Coordinator & Coordinator Support



**If you are looking for a gift, consider gracesgalleryandgifts.com at 10917 Moseley Square, Glenelg!
Grace is an ex-Cabra student with Down Syndrome, an artist and an ambassador for people with disabilities.**



Sophia News

Global Sacred Circle Dance Day

World Sacred Circle Dance Day was celebrated around the globe on Sunday 7 July. Our Sunday Circle Dancing group joined in with the three 2024 World Circle Dances plus more of our own selection including Xmas in July dances. The love, joy, peace & beauty rippling through the time zones, expressing as global connection & unity, was shared on a dedicated International FaceBook Page.

Drawing to the end of our 2024 WSCDD was quite emotional as we held each other in a group hug, connected & united, the vibes generated seeming to echo around the world & back again.

Following afternoon tea, it was time to express our joy & thanks which Heather led with great gusto!

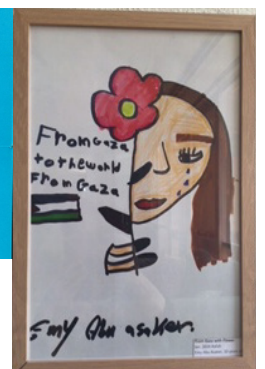
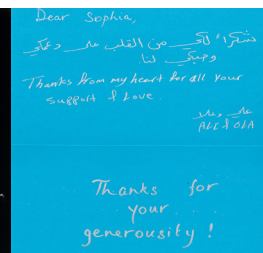
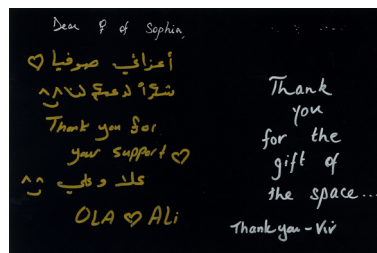


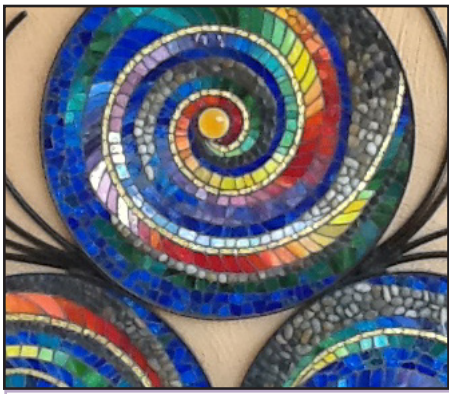
Fundraiser for Palestine

On August 11th, the Sophia Singers held their first ever Benefit Concert for Palestinian couple Ola Taleb and Ali Abusafia, to raise money for their families suffering in Gaza from the war. The afternoon concert (for many of us) went beyond our wildest expectations, to be an outstanding success, with over 120 people attending, and over \$5000 raised. Held at beautiful Sophia, the Sophia Singers performed eight songs on the themes of peace, love and hope, accompanied by guest flautist Rachel Fisher on two songs.

Ola and Ali spoke about their journey from Gaza to Adelaide, and their family's heartbreaking situation as they struggle to find safety, food and medical supplies. Poet Dinali Devasagayam read from her book *Meanderings on the Margins* (2022), about identity, belonging and refugees, and director, playwright, and actor Rosalba Clemente performed a short story about "Mrs Church" a neighbour from her Italian-Australian childhood.

Art work by Gazan children was on display, and the whole event finished up with a tasty spread of Middle Eastern and European food. A big thank you to all who donated, performed, attended, helped with set up and clean up, and anything else to make this event so special. Money donated has already been received by the family to pay for medical supplies, food and clothing.





Sophia News

Nurturing Friendships, Sharing Stories

The July gathering was a very big one for the celebration of 'Christmas in July' with feasting and games!



Volunteer/Facilitator Morning Tea and AGM

A good sized group gathered in June to catch up and to carry out the formalities of being an incorporated entity.

Changes to the Core & Futures Groups

Since Roseanne Debats is retiring from the Futures Group, Kaye Mehta has chosen to retire from the Core Group and join the Futures Group instead.

Changes to the ESL Program

Cathy Brideson, Facilitator, and Chris White and Marie Mirza, Childcare, are all retiring from ESL but the program will continue, albeit with fewer participants than in earlier years.

Kaye Wellington will take over the coordination.

Chocolatier extraordinaire!

You may have wondered who makes the packets of delicious hand-made chocolates for sale at Sophia, with the exotic sounding names: dark chocolate cherry and sherry; milk chocolate pineapple cream fondant; dark chocolate Cointreau liqueur; milk & dark chocolate truffle.

Ian last made chocolates in England when he was twenty-two and now, in his retirement has polished up his considerable skills to bring pleasure to us and raise money for Sophia! (All takings go to Sophia). Such chocolate making is complex. For example, autumn-winter are the seasons when Ian can maintain the temperature in his kitchen to 20 degrees and produce the chocolates.

Ian lived close by Sophia for 13 years and frequented the Sophia and Peace Gardens, often weekly. He especially sought refuge there during some years of his inability to work as a chef due to frozen shoulders - the tranquility and beauty of the environment being a soothing balm. He loves to make chocolates. To contribute them to the Sophia community and others, raising funds for Sophia is a joy for him. It is his appreciation for all that he received over the years in being able to visit and be in the gardens.



If you miss out on the chocolates this year, you will have them to look forward to next year! Then you will also see some boxes of chocolates which could make a lovely gift item. Ian makes and decorates the boxes in the warmer weather in preparation for the chocolate making season. The first year of this new venture, Ian made boxes for Easter eggs. However, the weather was too warm to make chocolates for our Easter, so he waited till the weather got cooler and called them 'Autumn Festive Eggs'. The photos show Ian with his collection of boxes for the 2024 year awaiting the chocolates and a close-up of a cellophane packet of four. Thank you, Ian! *Fiona Johnston*

Sophia News



Helen Oxenham OAM

Helen Oxenham, a passionate pioneer for women's safety from Domestic & Family Violence, passed away recently on July 22nd. Helen was in her 94th year.

I first met Helen when she visited SOPHIA many years ago, with information about "The Spirit of Woman" - an organisation, founded by Helen, with the support of her daughter Heather and a small number of friends, in recent years.

Helen established the 1st Women's Shelter in Christies Beach in the early 1970's, providing a room at the back of her husband's Watch Repairs Shop. Since then, Helen had been successful in fostering a memorial: "The Place of Courage" in many Council areas, like Christies Beach, Cheltenham, Murray Bridge and others - as well as in the Dominican Peace Gardens - (sadly, our "Grieving Woman" sculpture was stolen from the Peace Gardens last year).

More and more of these "ripple sites", with beautiful sculptures to help focus the thoughts of visitors, who come to sit quietly, remembering and grieving the many lost lives of women and children to the scourge of Family and Domestic Violence.

Before the end of the year, we will again place a replica of the stolen "Grieving Woman" sculpture - (this time in the Sophia Spiral Garden, where it will be more protected and in sight of a newly installed security camera).

Helen and I became good friends, both living in Hill Avenue - making it easy for me to call in on Helen and chat with her about her inspiring work for the safety of women and children.

The Celebration of Helen's life was a beautiful and memorable occasion - I was very privileged to conduct Helen's Funeral Committal, blessing her with these final words, on a life beautifully lived, with a passion for the safety and wellbeing of women and children:

"Loving and tender God,
as You did not lose Helen in giving,
so we do not lose Helen by her return.
Life is eternal and love is immortal.
Death is only an horizon and an horizon is nothing,
save the limit of our sight.
Prepare us also for that happy place,
so that where You are, and where Helen is,
we may be also, for evermore."

On Helen's Memorial Card were these beautiful words:

"She made broken look beautiful and strong look invincible. She walked with the Universe on her shoulders and made it look like a pair of wings"
(Ariana Dancu.)

Maureen O'Connell

In loving
MEMORY OF



HELEN OXENHAM

"In celebrating your life, we honor the many ways you championed women's rights and equality. Your voice will continue to echo in our hearts and actions."



Remembering My Friend Rebecca

(d. 18th August 2023)

The labyrinth* symbolises both our paths, converging at centre to be present with the Holy One. In the foreground, rosemary for remembrance. In the view beyond, but vivid in my memory, a fig tree, all bare twigs.



I recall the 'fig sticks', your name for those knobby grey prunings we burnt in the fire, releasing white sap, distinct figgy smell, a rare time of sharing my family home comfort with you, Rebecca, soul friend for more than six decades to come.

Now in those dead seeming branches, waiting for new life, two birds are perching, flutter in dance, companionable, as we were, though each in her own self, often separated by distance, and in older age, with diverging ideas of faith.

Dawn Colsey

*At Sophia



Sophia News

Afternoon Tea in the Library with Dr Kiera Lindsey

Saturday afternoon, 17th August, was no ordinary afternoon. It was time for the sixth annual Afternoon Tea in the Library! We gathered at Sophia to hear Dr Kiera Lindsey, historian, writer and passionate speaker, tell us about the process of writing speculative history in the form of fiction, and in particular, in her third and latest book, 'Wild Love', the ambitions of Adelaide Ironside, Australia's first artist to astonish the world. In this novel, with its meticulously researched foundation, Adelaide Ironside's life and work are brought to life by many historical characters and events in Sydney in the 1830s-1850s and Rome and London in the 1860s. Adelaide was a feminist and dedicated her short life to her art, with the support and companionship of her mother.

We are grateful to Kiera Lindsey for coming to Sophia and introducing us to Adelaide Ironside in such an engaging way. We also, as usual, enjoyed the generous afternoon tea and the opportunity to share our current favourite books.

'Wild Love' is available for loan in the Sophia Library (A823.4 LIN).

Fiona Johnston



Winter Haiku Workshop with Fiona Johnston

In late July nine women gathered at Sophia for a winter haiku workshop focused on Australian women's haiku (including ours!). It was a relaxed, reflective time. We brought our favourite haikus to share and talked about what attracted us to those haiku. We saw that these days, haiku in English are not strictly 5-7-5 syllables in a three-line structure. Most important in writing a haiku or short poem is: 'mind open, deep attention'.

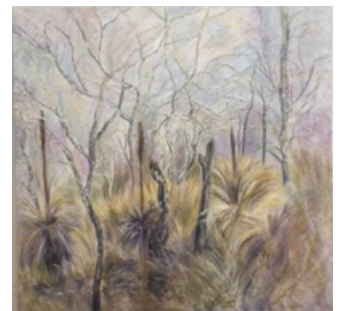
We enjoyed having time to write and share some haiku and were inspired by haiku in the (discontinued) Australian magazine, 'Paper Wasp'. Here are three haiku written by Nel, simply while sitting in the conference room, at the workshop:

Leafless branches
Branches full of
leaves
Colonialism

Piano music
Indigenous
baskets
Mingling of
traditions

So many chairs
Endless
possibilities
Waiting

We had such a good time that we decided to gather again in spring to write and talk about haiku. If you'd like to join us, email Fiona at fjplmetro@gmail.com.au



"Nature's Gifts" by Marree De Souza

This painting has a strong connection with the Kurna garden at Sophia & Marree related how she was drawn to a vision of a "fairyland" as the lichen on the trees reflected back the light. She & some of her friends were enjoying hiking in the Flinders Ranges when she captured this special moment on camera & the artist in her soaked up memories of the colours which is one of the signature skills that Marree carries as an artist. Marree is also one of my Circle Dancers. "Nature's Gifts" was purchased by me at Marree's one person Art Exhibition during June 2024 at Port Adelaide & donated to Sophia. It was the second most expensive art piece at her exhibition.

I'm pleased "Nature's Gifts" has found a lovely home in the main room at Sophia where many people can admire its beauty & the wonderful talent of local artist Marree de Souza.

Lyn Porter



Sophia Library

New Additions to the Sophia Library: *Come in and borrow!*

Celtic Design-Illuminated letters Aidan Meehan 745.4 MEE

Those Who Leave and Those Who Stay Book 3 Middle Age Elena Ferrante (fiction) 853 FER

Am I black enough for you?-10 years on Anita Heiss 920 HEI

The Story of the Lost Child Book 4 Maturity Elena Ferrante (fiction) 853 FER

Caring for the Dying Michael Barbato 362.75 BAR

The Brain's Way of Healing-Stories of remarkable recoveries and discoveries Norman Doidge 610 DOI

The Woman Who Cracked the Anxiety Code-the extraordinary life of Dr. Claire Weekes Judith Hoare 921 HOA

Otherland- A journey with my daughter Maria Tumarkin 920 TUM

This Is Not A Drill-An extinction rebellion Clare Farrell, Alison Green, Sam Knights, William Skipping (editors) 333.72 FAR

Brain rules for ageing well - 10 principles for staying vital, happy and sharp John Medina 571.8

The Power of Silence-against the dictatorship of noise Robert Cardinal Sarah with Nicolas Diat.
(Tr by Michael J.Miller) 264 SAR

Wisdom's Feast-Sophia in study and celebration Susan Cole, Marian Ronan and Hal Taussig: 220.64 COL

Careers and Motherhood Challenges and Choices How to successfully manage your career through pregnancy & motherhood
Karen Mitchell 306.87 MIT

The Memory Artist Katherine Brabon (fiction) A823 BRA

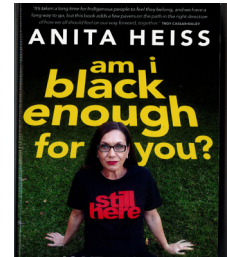
Fishing For Lightening-The spark of poetry Sarah Holland-Batt 808.1 HOL

Illuminata-Thoughts, Prayers and Rituals for Everyday Life Marianne Williamson 242.WIL

I'm Perfect-How our bodies shape the people we become Lee Kofman 158.1 KOF

New Revelations-Cardinal-The rise and fall of George Pell Louise Milligan 920 MIL

The Way to the Spring-Life and Death in Palestine Ben Ehrenreich 920 EHR



Donations for the Sophia Library

The Sophia Library now welcomes donations of books suitable for the Library collection or for our regular book sales. When deciding which books to donate, please keep in mind that Sophia is feminist, honours women's experiences, nurtures wisdom and works for justice in our world. Thank you!

Remember the Sophia Library Pop-Up Book Sales!

A small number of books are always for sale in the Sophia Conference Room. These items are changed approximately every 3 weeks. This is proving to be a successful fund-raiser for the Sophia Library.



Regular Events & Activities

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 3/9, 1/10, 5/11, 3/12 9.30am-11.00 Cost: \$10 Memb \$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 13/2

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 2nd Tuesday of the month to help maintain the beautiful gardens. Delicious morning tea provided. No garden experience necessary.

Tuesday 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

Tuesday 8/10 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. Any woman with an interest in writing is most welcome!

Tuesday 17/9, 15/10, 19/11 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: \$5 Members \$3

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 17/9, 15/10, 19/11 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 24/9, 10/12 1.00pm-3.00pm | No cost All welcome

Community Award

Annie Gleeson, Sophia member, has recently received an award from the Clarence Park Community Centre for her 37 years of service to the Food Co-Op there.

Congratulations, Annie!

Maryanne Sanders, the intrepid traveller, in Mongolia, fulfilling a lifelong dream to ride one of the hardy Mongolian horses!





Regular Events & Activities

WEDNESDAYS

English Classes for Refugee & Migrant Women

These classes provide English tuition and practical life skills for refugee women and others not able to access alternative classes. Supportive environment. Weekly during school terms.

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.

Wednesday 1.30pm-3.00pm Cost: \$18 Members \$15 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.

Wednesday 3.30pm-4.00pm Cost: Gold coins 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 11/9, 9/10, 13/11 4.30pm-6.30pm Cost/session \$15 Members \$12 All welcome.

FRIDAYS

(NB. THURSDAYS: No Regular Activities)

Serendipity Sessions - Marisa Ala Dea

Monthly gatherings exploring a variety of activities to engage & enrich our creative selves..

Friday 20/9, 11/10 2pm, 15/11, 13/12 2.00pm-4.30pm Cost: \$15 Members \$12 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 12/10, 14/12 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.

Sunday 13/10, 3/11, 1/12 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 13/10, 10/11, 8/12 9am-11.30am. Cost: \$6 Members \$4 All welcome



Coming Events & Courses

NOTE: Please book in for courses and events.

Please phone 8373 3781, or 0439 594 363 or email to info@sophia.org.au.
(They may not run if there are too few enrolments OR it may cause problems in processing extra people on the day.)

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

SEPTEMBER No Calendar Events.

OCTOBER

Quiz Night

A Sophia community fun event.
Gather a table of friends and BYO drinks & nibbles!
Book a table from the beginning of October.
Saturday 26/10 4.30pm-7.30pm No cost. All welcome.

NOVEMBER No Calendar Events.

DECEMBER

Honouring Spring, Embracing Summer

Elisabeth Kathleen

As each season ends and welcomes in the new season you are invited to come, reflect on and renew a commitment to your own healing, empowerment and the gifts each season bestows on us to share with the world. Bring journal & something related to summer. BYO Lunch.

Friday 6/12 10.00am-3.00pm Cost: \$60 Members \$50 Women

End of Year Celebration!

It is our tradition to gather in December to celebrate our time together during the year.

Come & celebrate with us!
Bring food & drink to share.
(FINGER food only please)

Thursday 12/12

6.00pm-8.00pm

Cost: \$5 All welcome



Mary Magdalene Monthly Circle

GOLDEN LIGHT
HEALING COMES FROM WITHIN

DATE: SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH (START 9TH OCTOBER 2024)
TIME: 7PM-9:30PM
VENUE: THE SOPHIA CENTRE
ADDRESS: 225 CROSS RD, CUMBERLAND PARK
RSVP: SUSAN 041883304
[HTTPS://EVENTS.HUMANITIX.COM/MARY-MAGDALENE-STORY-CIRCLE](https://events.humanitix.com/mary-magdalene-story-circle)