

Friends in May

A message from the Chair:

A few of our members have commented on the modest rise in membership fees which came into force in February 2003. It is appropriate to explain why this was done.

The object of the Friends of the National Library is 'to encourage public and private support of the National Library'. Support can and does come in a number of ways, including creating and maintaining a climate of opinion helpful to the Library. It is fundamental that the Friends exist for the Library and not vice versa.

The Friends Committee in 2001 resolved that the Friends should give positive support to an initiative of the Library which could not be met, either wholly or in part, from the funds provided by the Government. This was the proposed Treasures Gallery, 'a place where some of our nation's rarest and most cherished cultural items will be displayed for the enjoyment of all Australians' (extract from the National Library's website). The need for such an extension of the Library's exhibition spaces was highlighted by the success of the *Treasures of the World's Great Libraries* exhibition in December 2001 – February 2002 which clearly showed that the general public is indeed interested in such things.

The sum of \$25 000, which had been accumulated over several years and was in a term deposit, was withdrawn in 2001 and presented to

the Library specifically as a donation towards the Treasures Gallery. A further \$10 000 was given to the Library for this purpose at the Annual General Meeting in December 2002, and it is the hope of the Committee that a similar sum will be available at the end of 2003.

However, costs are rising (especially catering costs), and it was acknowledged that if the Friends of the National Library is to achieve this aim, and at the same time provide a financially viable program of events to interest the membership, a rise in fees would be needed.

The Treasurer has told the Committee that he believes the current budget will produce a satisfactory result, and it is unlikely that the fees will have to be increased again for some considerable time.

RUSSELL DOUST
Chair
Friends of the National Library
of Australia

Susanna de Vries is an art historian and lectures at the University of Queensland. Born in London, she studied art history, literature and history in Paris and Madrid, before coming to Australia in 1975. She has been the recipient of a Churchill Fellowship to study Renaissance art in Italy, a Tyrone Guthrie Fellowship to write in Ireland, and has written extensively on art and history both here and



Henrietta Drake-Brockman (1901–1968)
Portrait of Miles Franklin
black and white photograph; 4.5 x 3.6 cm
Pictures Collection
nla.pic-an24432289

overseas. Susanna was made a member of the Order of Australia in 1996 for her contributions to art and literature. She is the author of many books, several of which have won awards.

Susanna has completed two volumes in her four-volume series *Great Australian Women*, and it is about this series and the pioneering women it documents that she will speak when she delivers an illustrated lecture for Friends on 11 May at 2 pm. Interested Friends should not miss this opportunity to learn of Susanna's impressive research into this fascinating topic. Some of the personalities covered by her talk include Miles Franklin, Henry Handel Richardson, Joice Nankivell Loch, Dame Roma Mitchell and Kylie Tennant, so be sure to book early.

JAMES HALLIGAN
Executive Officer

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2003

Meet the Author

Susanna de Vries will give a talk about her two volumes of *Great Australian Women*.

Date: Sunday 11 May 2003
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Friends Lounge
Admission: Friends \$8, others \$10, includes afternoon tea, bookings essential

For bookings, details of membership and subscriptions, contact:

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