Introduction

Big Sky: Wild Blue Yonder invites you to take a leap of faith into unknown territory. That is exactly what happened ten years ago, when Geraldton Regional Library held its first readers and writers festival.

Since then, Big Sky has gone from strength to strength, offering the community a host of experiences and introducing them to many talented artists. This year is no exception, when we will welcome writers from across Australia to our city. They are taking a giant step by agreeing to travel to Geraldton, and we will welcome them with open arms, ensuring they are treated with the respect and interest they deserve. Every artist has a story to tell – they have been brave enough to step away from their comfort zones to create amazing tales which span a variety of emotions and genres – grief, depression, romance, fantasy, crime, memoir, comedy and poetry – to name a few.

It is only through the artist’s work and dedication to their craft that we, the consumers of their creativity, can travel into the wild blue yonder – to discover new territories, form new opinions, be entertained and stimulated by the words and ideas of these very special guests.

The City of Greater Geraldton is proud to be celebrating 10 Big Years of Big Sky and hopes you will join us in taking that leap into the wild blue yonder where your imagination can run wild!

Susan Smith
Manager Libraries and Heritage
# Big Sky 4 Youth

Sessions for school students only

**Ticketed events:** $10.00

Friday 12 September 2014

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<th>Time</th>
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<th>Venue</th>
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<td>9.45am – 10.45am</td>
<td><strong>Concurrent Sessions</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Jumping out of your comfort zone</strong></td>
<td><em>Isobelle Carmody</em></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Isobelle Carmody</em> talks about her writing and why it is important to journey into that “wild blue yonder” for inspiration.</td>
<td><em>John Willcock College</em></td>
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<td><strong>Flying through books</strong></td>
<td><em>Sally Murphy</em></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Sally Murphy</em> loves telling stories, especially when they are about fun and interesting characters.</td>
<td><em>Geraldton Regional Library</em></td>
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<td>11.00am – 12.00pm</td>
<td><strong>Devouring urban fantasy</strong></td>
<td><em>Joe Ducie</em></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Join <em>Joe Ducie</em> on an action packed adventure with characters who inhabit a darkly atmospheric world.</td>
<td><em>John Willcock College</em></td>
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<td>1.45pm – 2.45pm</td>
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<td>1.30pm – 2.30pm</td>
<td><strong>The magic of music and stories</strong></td>
<td><em>Kaleidoscope Ensemble</em></td>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
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<td><em>Kaleidoscope Ensemble</em> will delight their audience bringing books to life in an entertaining, interactive session that bursts at the seams with colourful music.</td>
<td><em>Geraldton Regional Library</em></td>
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<td>2.00pm – 3.00pm</td>
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<td><em>Our Lady of Mt Carmel Mullewa</em></td>
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<td><strong>Beyond Puberty Blues</strong></td>
<td><em>Gabrielle Carey</em></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>Since co-writing <em>Puberty Blues</em>, <em>Gabrielle Carey</em> has lived a varied life which has taken her to many places. Surprisingly, one of them was Geraldton, where she discovered some family secrets while researching her latest book about Randolph Stow.</td>
<td><em>Geraldton Grammar School</em></td>
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<td><strong>Beyond Puberty Blues</strong></td>
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1.30pm – 4.00pm Adult Masterclass

Comedy a go-go
Tim Ferguson is a genius: he will show you how he is a genius.
Venue: Geraldton Regional Library
Ticketed Event: $50.00
Limited numbers
Please book and pay at the Library.

1.30pm – 4.00pm Adult Masterclass

Short story writing
Tony Birch will guide you through the basic techniques in the art of the short story: narrative voice, point-of-view, character, and story development.
Venue: Geraldton Regional Library
Ticketed Event: $50.00
Limited numbers. Please book and pay at the Library.

5.30pm – 7.30pm

Festival opening
MC: Geraldine Mellet
Venue: Geraldton Regional Library
Music: Kaleidoscope Ensemble
Come along and help us celebrate the tenth year of Big Sky. Bring along some friends, meet our guests, have a bite to eat and enjoy the music of Kaleidoscope Ensemble. The perfect way to start the weekend.

Friday 12 September 2014

Share your secret
Everyone has a secret, something we don’t or can’t share. It might be something we like or something we are ashamed of – it could even be funny. We all carry secrets, big and small – it’s all part of being human. But how would it feel to actually tell your secret, to reveal it without being identified. Would it be a release, a weight lifted?

As part of Big Sky, we are inviting people to share a secret anonymously by filling out the “Share a Secret” postcard which will be available at the Library and selected locations around Geraldton and Mullewa. Post your secrets to the Library, or place them in collection boxes at the Geraldton and Mullewa Libraries so they can be displayed during Big Sky.

Sharing your secret could change your life!
### Saturday, September 2014

**9.00am – 9.45am** Geraldton Universities Centre

**Keynote address**

**No end to it:** The enduring adventures of reading and writing.

The books we read transport us out into the wild blue yonder, shaping our expectations, influencing the way we live. How much do we owe to our reading lives, and how does what we read influence what we write?

*Liz Byrski*

**10.00am – 12.00pm** Durack Institute of Technology

**Food of the Southern Forests**

*Sophie Zalokar* will share some of the delicious recipes which will feature in her new book.

Ticketed Event: $25 per head. [Please book and pay at the Library](#)

Pre-order Sophie’s book through the Co-op Bookshop

**10.15am – 11.15am** Geraldton Universities Centre

**Music and mayhem in the kids’ tent**

Join author *Sally Murphy* and musical duo *Kaleidoscope Ensemble* for an hour of stories, music and craft. Play some music, listen to stories and make your own musical instrument!

**10.15am – 11.15am** Concurrent Sessions – Geraldton Universities Centre

**Outsiders**

*Tony Birch* and *Craig Sherborne* write about people who are marginalised in society — yet they show how all lives have their victories, no matter how small.

Moderator: *Lorraine Chapman*

**Moving among strangers**

*Gabrielle Carey* joins *Ashley Hay* to discuss her obsession with Randolph Stow and her family’s links to Geraldton.

**Workshop: writing fantasy**

*Isobelle Carmody*  
Is writing fantasy all about myths and legends, or more to do with the basics of good story telling?

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**11.45am – 12.45pm** Concurrent Sessions – Geraldton Universities Centre

**The scales of injustice**

Where does justice lie in the search for truth within our courts?

*Bret Christian* and *Dawn Barker* in conversation with *Malcolm Smith*.

**The hook**

*Joe Ducie* and *Isobelle Carmody* use many ploys to reel in their predominantly young adult audience.

Moderator: *Glyn Parry*

**Workshop: poetry**

*Annamaria Weldon*  
How do we capture the essence of a place so that it may be seen with new eyes?
The preface has been written by Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston (Ret’d) and contains personal contributions from successful search and its aftermath.

The book first and foremost has been written to commemorate the 645 men lost on search, and commemoration. Each chapter contains family photos of those lost and images relating to that chapter.

The book — edited by Finding Sydney Foundation past directors Ted Graham, Kim Kirsner, Bob Trotter and Bob King has four themes — the context of the search, the challenges confronted in mounting the search, activities related to the search, and commemoration. Each chapter contains family photos of those lost and images relating to that chapter.

The book includes stories by family members of the men killed located by the Finding Sydney Foundation in 2008, solving one of the most baffling mysteries in Australia’s naval history.

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In 1991, the Australian Oceanography Workshop to determine the general location of the wreck of Kormoran, then developed, with his colleague John Dunn, a science based paper locating the wreck of Kormoran 10 nm from her true location in 1998 than in 2004, refined the location to an accuracy of 2.7 nm.

The preface has been written by Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston (Ret’d) and contains personal contributions from successful search and its aftermath.

Mayor Ian Carpenter and Ted Graham AM
Please book at the Library
Poetry in the pub
Annmaria Weldon and Kaleidoscope Ensemble
Venue: Hampton Arms Inn, Greenough
Enjoy the rustic feel of historic Greenough whilst you indulge in poetry readings, good food and wine, and the sounds of Kaleidoscope Ensemble. Includes Open Mic sessions.
Ticketed Event: $45 per head. Includes buffet dinner, entertainment and return bus to venue. Licensed venue.
Please book and pay at the Library. Bus departs from the Library carpark at 6.30pm.

Hunting and gathering from the Southern Forests
A magical dinner.
Indulge in a three course meal inspired by recipes created by our guest chef Sophie Zalokar.
Matching wines will accompany each course.
Venue: Zeewijk Training Restaurant, Durack Institute of Technology
Ticketed Event: Price to be advised
Please book and pay at the Library
Pre-order your copy of Food of the Southern Forests on the night.
Sunday September 2014

11.00am – 12.00pm Concurrent Sessions at Geraldton Universities Centre

**Missing at sea**
*Annie Boyd* and *Ted Graham* have devoted hundreds of hours researching two ships lost off the West Australian coast.  
Moderator: *Ross Halsell*

**What is news?**
*Bret Christian*, *Liz Byrski* and *Joe Ducie* discuss the value of local news and how it is consumed.  
Moderator: *Peter Sweeney*

**Secrets and lies: our hidden lives**
*Postnatal depression and surrogacy are the subjects of Dawn Barker's two novels. She discusses these issues with May Doncon.*

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**9.30am – 10:30am** Geraldton Universities Centre

**Q and A: Stop the world, I want to get off!**
*Has technology taken over our lives? Are we losing touch with reality?*  
*Sarah Drummond, Bret Christian, Ashley Hay and Gabrielle Carey* in conversation with *Arthur Muhl.***

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**11.00am – 12.00pm** Geraldton Universities Centre

**Book signing session next to Festival Bookshop GUC**

**1.00pm – 3.30pm Literary Lunch Bentwood Olive Grove**

**Music:** Kaleidoscope Ensemble  
**MC:** Geraldine Mellet  
The picturesque setting, coupled with delicious homemade food at Bentwood Olive Grove, will provide a fitting finale to the festival. Sit back, relax and listen as guests read favourite passages from their works.  

**Readings:** Craig Sherborne, Sarah Drummond, Liz Byrski, Annamaria Weldon.  
**Venue:** Bentwood Olive Grove  
**Ticketed event:** $62.00  
**Please book and pay at the Library**
Biographies

**Annamaria Weldon**

Annamaria is a widely published poet, essayist and freelance writer. Born in Malta, she spent her childhood in North Africa, Central America and the United Kingdom, before moving to Australia in 1984.


**Bret Christian**

Bret Christian is a newspaper journalist who began his career on Perth's *Daily News*, later working in Melbourne and Sydney before starting his own suburban Post Newspapers group at the age of 28. He has twice won UWA's Lovekin Prize for excellence in journalism. He still owns and edits the Post newspapers.

Bret enjoys delving into crime and finding out the reasons behind wrongful convictions. His book *Presumed Guilty* is subtitled: When cops get it wrong and courts seal the deal, was published last year in Melbourne. Bret still owns and edits the Post newspapers.

**Ashley Hay**

Ashley Hay's latest book is *The Railwayman's Wife*. She is the author of five previous books including *Gum, Museum* (with visual artist Robyn Stacey), and *The Body in the Clouds* her first novel, which was shortlisted for a number of prizes including categories in the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and the New South Wales and West Australian Premier's Awards, and longlisted for the 2011 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award.

A former literary editor of *The Bulletin*, she contributes to a number of publications including *The Monthly*, *Australian Geographic*, and *The Australian*, and her essays and short stories have appeared in volumes including *Brothers and Sisters* (2009), various issues of the *Griffith Review*, *Best Australian Essays* (2003), *Best Australian Short Stories* (2012), and *Best Australian Science Writing* (2012).

**Annie Boyd**

Non-fiction writing has been a significant departure for the multi-talented Annie Boyd, whose career thus far has spanned civil engineering, university physics teaching, flute-playing, industrial design, web development, and computer programming. Born in Perth, Western Australia in 1956, she returned to her home state in the year 2000. An interest in scuba diving was soon revived, and it was a chance conversation at a maritime archeology meeting that sparked her interest in the mystery of S.S. *Koombana*. A meticulous researcher and natural storyteller, Boyd brings a rare assurance to the printed page. *Koombana Days* is her first major published work. It is unlikely to be her last.
Craig Sherborne

Craig Sherborne's memoir *Hoi Polloi* (2005) was shortlisted for the Queensland Premier’s and Victorian Premier’s Literary Awards. The follow-up, *Muck* (2007), won the Queensland Premier’s Literary Award for Non-fiction. Craig’s first novel, *The Amateur Science of Love* (2011), won the Melbourne Prize for Literature’s Best Writing Award, and was shortlisted for a Victorian Premier’s Literary Award and a NSW Premier’s Literary Award. His writing has appeared in most of Australia’s literary journals and anthologies. He lives in Melbourne.

Dawn Barker

Dr Dawn Barker is a psychiatrist and author. Dawn grew up in Scotland, but in 2001 she moved to Australia, completed her psychiatric training and began writing. In 2010, Dawn's first novel, *Fractured*, was selected for the Hachette/Queensland Writers Centre's manuscript development programme, and it was published in 2013. Her most recent novel, released in July 2014, is *Let Her Go*.

Dawn has also written non-fiction articles on parenting and psychiatry for various magazines and websites, including *Mamamia*, *Essential Baby*, and the *Medical Journal of Australia*. She lives in Perth, Western Australia, with her husband and three young children.

Gabrielle Carey

Gabrielle Carey is the author of novels, biography, autobiography, essays, articles and short stories. She teaches writing at the University of Technology, Sydney, where her infatuation with Randolph Stow is happily tolerated. Her first book, *Puberty Blues*, co-written with Kathy Lette, has been adapted for film and television. Her most recent books are the memoir, *Waiting Room* (2009) and *Moving Among Strangers: Randolph Stow and my family* (UQP, 2013).

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Geraldine Mellet

Geraldine Mellet has worked as a radio and television broadcaster, columnist, documentary maker, media trainer and facilitator.

She has also written for children's tv drama and co-written *Whose Hand is This?* a book on a couples experience of stroke and recovery.

She is currently WA coordinator for the campaign to introduce the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Geraldine Mellet
Joe Ducie

Joe Ducie, 26, currently resides in Perth, Western Australia. Joe attended Edith Cowan University and graduated in 2010 with a Degree in Counterterrorism, Security and Intelligence. Joe has also studied Creative and Professional Writing at Curtin University. His first Young Adult novel, The Rig, won the Guardian and Hot Key Books Young Writers Prize in 2012.

He is primarily a writer of urban fantasy and science fiction aimed at young adults and, when not talking about himself in the third person, enjoys devouring books at an absurdly disgusting rate and ambling over mountains – preferably at the same time. Follow Joe on Twitter: @joeducie

Isobelle Carmody

Isobelle Carmody is a well known Australian author who has written many novels and short stories for children and adults and has a host of award winning novels to her credit. She began the first of her highly acclaimed Obernewtyn Chronicles while she was still at high school and worked on it while completing a Bachelor of Arts and then a journalism cadetship. Obernewtyn went on to be shortlisted in the “Older Readers” section of the CBC Book of the Year Award.

Isobelle is currently working on The Red Queen, the final book in the Obernewtyn Chronicles which will be published later this year. She is also working on the screenplay for her novel Greylands.

Isobelle has recently relocated from Prague to Brisbane where she is studying for her PhD.

Kaleidoscope Ensemble

Australian violinist Gillian Catlow studied violin at the Sydney Conservatorium and was a founding member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra before moving to Europe in 1977. Returning to Australia to settle in Perth in 1997, Gillian later married Charles Hoernemann, a guitarist, producer, composer and educator.

The aim of Kaleidoscope ensemble has always been to lead audiences to discover the magic of music through stories and theatre.

Gillian and Charles delight their audience with a diverse and ever-expanding repertoire including Gypsy Jazz, Brazilian Choro, Tango, Bossa Nova, Samba, Waltz Musette, compositions from Scandinavia, Beatles and tunes from the Great American Songbook. In short, if they love it, they play it! Gillian and Charles produced their first joint CD in 2012 and are currently recording their second album.

Liz Byrski

Liz Byrski is the author of seven novels and a number of non-fiction books, the latest of which is Family Secrets (July 2014). She has worked as a freelance journalist, a broadcaster with ABC Radio and an advisor to a minister in the West Australian Government. Liz has a PhD in writing from Curtin University where she teaches professional and creative writing.
**Sarah Drummond**

Sarah Drummond is a fisherwoman, PhD student and blogger. She is currently working on a novel about the sealers and Aboriginal women who sailed from Bass Strait to King George Sound in the 1820s. She has had essays and short fiction published in *Shadow Plays: An Anthology of Speculative Fiction*, *Short Stories Australia*, *Indigo Journal*, the *Best Australian Essays 2010*, *LINQ Journal*, *Kurungabaa Journal* and *Overland*. Her first work of non-fiction, *Salt Story*, was Fremantle Press’s fastest selling new release in 2013.

**Sally Murphy**

Sally Murphy didn’t want to grow up, so she’s decided to be a big kid for as long as she can get away with it. Sometimes, though, she manages to masquerade as a grown up, because when she’s not writing for children she’s a mother of six, teacher and book reviewer. Sally’s books include verse novels *Pearl Verses the World* and *Toppling*, picture books *Do Not Forget Australia*, *Meet Mary MacKillop* and *Head Hog* and lots of others. Her writing has won awards including the Mary Ryans Award in the Queensland Premier’s Literary Awards, the children’s book category of the WA Premier’s Literary Awards and the Speech Pathologists' Book of the Year Award.

For adults, Sally runs the popular book review site, Aussiereviews.com, reviewing Australian books for all genres.

**Sophie Zalokar**

Sophie Zalokar was born and raised in the Barossa Valley and trained as a chef under Australian food icon Maggie Beer. She went on to travel and cook around the world, settling in Fremantle, Western Australia in 1990.

Her first book, *PicNic: Outdoor Feasts in the Australian Landscape* was shortlisted for the Jacob’s Creek World Food Media Awards and Vittoria Australian Food Media Awards in 2003. She has developed recipes for magazines and newspapers and is a judge for WA Signature Dish in 2014.

Sophie and her family moved to Pemberton, where she and her husband opened Foragers Field Kitchen and Cooking School. Sophie’s work is underpinned by her commitment to nurturing real food created with a deep respect for the land, primary producers and local food heritage and culinary traditions.

**Glyn Parry**

Glyn Parry was born in the north-east of England. He grew up in the town where *Billy Elliott* was filmed. When he was 12 he came to Australia to live and was encouraged to write. In 1992 *LA Postcards* was published to critical acclaim. Since then there have been nine other books for teenagers and children: *Monster Man*, *Radical Take-offs*, *Mosh*, *Stoked!, Sad Boys, Scooterboy, Spooking the Cows, Harry & Luke* and *Invisible Girl*. His first novel for adults, *Ocean Road*, was published in 2007. Glyn is currently working on an adult thriller.
Tony Birch is the author of *Shadowboxing* (2006), the short story collection *Father’s Day* (2009), and most recently *Blood* (2011), which was shortlisted for the 2012 Miles Franklin Award, and won the Civic Choice award for the Melbourne Literary Prize in the same year. His most recent book is *The Promise* (UQP – 2014).

He is a frequent contributor to ABC local and national radio, and a regular guest at writers’ festivals. He lives and works in Melbourne, where he teaches in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne.

Ted Graham is one of four authors of the book *The Search for HMAS Sydney – An Australian Story*. Ted has enjoyed a long career in offshore survey, marine operations, logistics and project management in many parts of the world.

Ted founded and chaired the Finding Sydney Foundation which researched, funded and project managed the successful search for HMAS Sydney and the German Raider HSK *Kormoran* in 2008. In recognition of this work Ted was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), a recipient of the Naval Association of Australia Presidents Commendation, a co-recipient of the 2010 Western Australian Citizen of the Year “Gold Swan” Award and is an Honorary Associate – Western Australian Museum and an Honorary Member – HMAS Sydney Association.

The local team features Geraldton orators Julian Canny, Brian Poller and Rosie Sitorus, bringing laughs, wit and sass with a full dose of hometown advantage.

Julian is a regional comic and businessman, delivering his unique brand of humour to towns across the state with his local comedy venture ‘The Comedy Emporium’, the number (and only) one in Geraldton. Brian is an alumnus of numerous writers’ festivals, and his intelligent humour, acerbic wit and age-based wisdom will lend the team a competitive edge, while his abilities as a physiotherapist will make sure they win comfortably. Rosie’s debating pedigree is born of a curious mix of competitive public speaking, performance poetry and linguistics. She currently works in Geraldton as a field linguist at the Bundiyarra – Irra Wangga Language Centre.

Tim Ferguson is a comedian, producer, director and writer. He toured internationally with comedy trio the Doug Anthony Allstars (DAAS) for a decade. DAAS regularly appeared on various Australian TV shows including The Big Gig (ABC) as well as on British TV including Friday Night Live (ITV), Viva Cabaret (Ch 4) and their flagship show DAAS-Love (BBC).

He has written for sitcoms including *DAAS Kapital* [ABC], *Shock Jock* [TV1, Comedy Channel UK], the online drama series *Forget The Rules* and the feature film *The Edinburgh Years*. Tim’s hosting/writing credits include *Don’t Forget Your Toothbrush* [Nine], *Unreal TV* and *Big Brother Insider* [Ten]. *Carry a Big Stick* is Tim’s latest book, in which he openly talks about life with MS.
Arthur Muhl

Since the early 1980s, Arthur has worked at numerous commercial and community radio stations as well as the local ABC.

In 1991, Arthur relocated from Brisbane to Perth, continuing his broadcasting career as Breakfast Show host and Program Manager at a local radio station.

When not behind the microphone, Arthur spends his time dabbling in the kitchen and enjoys a variety of regular exercise including walking and swimming and collecting music.

Arthur and his wife Heather have their hands full with their active and healthy 8 year old boy Nathanael.

Peter Sweeney

Peter Sweeney was recently appointed editor of The Geraldton Guardian and hails from Berwick, 45km south-east of Melbourne.

He started a four-year cadetship there in 1972, and came to WA in 1977.

Peter worked on the Sunday Independent, Daily News (both defunct), WA Trotting Association, Radio 6PR, Flynn Sattler Public Relations and for 17 years was a senior journalist at The Sunday Times.

He spent two years working as a boarding master and development officer at Christian Brothers Agricultural School at Tardun and at Clontarf in Perth and as a job coach at Mercy Employment in Fremantle.

Peter returned to Victoria in 2008 and worked in numerous media jobs, before being offered the Geraldton role.

Lorraine Chapman

Lorraine Chapman is a primary school teacher at the best little school in the whole world, Chapman Valley. She loves teaching kids, her sausage dogs and the adventure of writing. Lorraine is the president of Geraldton’s own writing group, Writers of the Coral Coast. “It is inspiring and exciting to meet with a group of writers, particularly when we all tackle the same writing exercise and see where the writing journey takes each one.”
Locations & Contacts

Geraldton Regional Library
37 Marine Terrace Geraldton  Ph: (08) 9956 6659

Geraldton Universities Centre
33 Onslow Street Geraldton  Ph: (08) 9920 4400

Durack Institute of Technology
173 Fitzgerald Street Geraldton  Ph: (08) 9956 2700

Hampton Arms Inn
388 Company Road Greenough  Ph: (08) 9926 1057

Zeewijk Training Restaurant
173 Fitzgerald Street Geraldton  Ph: (08) 9956 2732

Bentwood Olive Grove
34732 Brand Highway Greenough  Ph: (08) 9926 1196

WA Museum - Geraldton
1 Museum Place Geraldton  Ph: (08) 9921 5080

BIG SKY
READERS & WRITERS FESTIVAL

Celebrating
10
BIG YEARS