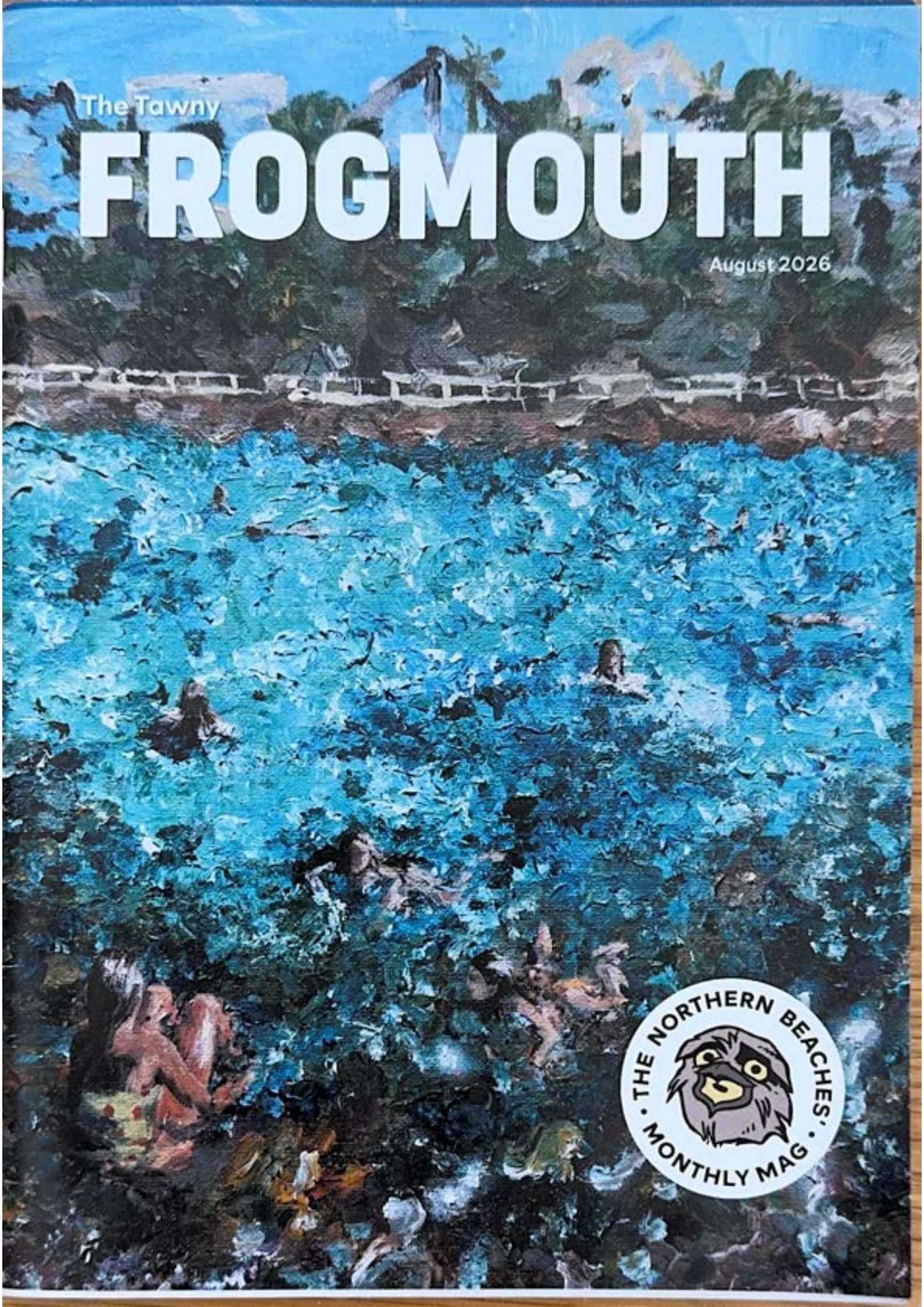

The Tawny
FROGMOUTH
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THE NORTHERN BEACHES'
MONTHLY MAG

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Tawny Frogmouth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians, the Gayamaygal and Garigal and their Country on which we Tawnies nest today.

By these words we show our respect to all Aboriginal people. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging and the spirits and ancestors of the Clans that lived in this area.

Northern Beaches Readers Festival

Back for its biggest year ever, the festival is helping keep Australian stories alive

If you visit Avalon over the weekend of 25 to 27 September, chances are you'll notice a literary buzz in the air. That's because more than 50 of Australia's best authors and hundreds of readers will be mingling in and around Avalon Recreation Centre for the Northern Beaches Readers Festival (NBRF), one of the Northern Beaches' most vibrant cultural events.

Though at least 100 authors live locally, and several hundred active book clubs are registered with our libraries, there was no dedicated literary festival on the Northern Beaches until the first NBRF was held in 2022. Now hosting its third festival, the biennial NBRF has gained credibility as the only literary festival in Australia with a 100% focus on fiction and 100% on Australian authors.

"We started the festival because we realised Australian authors of popular genres like crime, romance, historical fiction, rural noir, mystery and women's fiction were often being overlooked by other literary festivals," says festival director Sandie Docker, an internationally published Forestville author of contemporary women's fiction.

"Our aim was to support the literary community's growth and sustainability through connecting authors and readers. NBRF has become a vital way of supporting Australian authors to make a living and continue to create fiction that tells Australian stories."

The program is due for general release on 14 August and features household names including Michael Robotham, Natasha Lester, Chris Hammer, Jane Caro and Monica McInerney. Also on offer are writing workshops, a lively debate, cheap 'Festival Fiver' sessions on what it's really like to be an author in Australia, and a cocktail party where readers can schmooze with their favourite authors.

The 2026 event is set to be the biggest yet, with well over 1,600 tickets expected to be sold. A total of 13 authors and facilitators from the Northern Beaches will appear, including



Michael Robotham & Festival director, Sandie Docker

Matt Nable, Ali Lowe, Petronella McGovern, Kate Horan and Amy Hutton. The festival will also feature nine debut authors – whose first books are coming out this year – sharing the stage with their more famous peers as a way of raising their profile.

Behind the scenes will be a small army of volunteers, including local and interstate readers and writers ranging in age from 20 to 70, all of whom love the Australian literary community and share a deep passion for reading.

The festival's patron is internationally best-selling crime writer Michael Robotham, who writes from his famous 'cabana of cruelty' in Avalon. Michael says he's been impressed by the festival's community feel and focus on reading for pleasure.

"It's first and foremost aimed at readers and it celebrates writing in all genres, especially those that are sometimes overlooked or sidelined by larger literary festivals," Michael says. "Roll on September. Put the dates in your diaries. Avalon will be the place to be."

When? 25–27 September 2026

Where? Avalon Recreation Centre, 59 Old Barrenjoey Road, Avalon

See our program: nbrf.com.au/authors

Buy tickets: Visit our website at nbrf.com.au

Can I get a discount? Yes! Sign up to the NBRF newsletter at nbrf.com.au/contact and get **15% off** from 31 July to 13 August.

Scan the QR code for all details

Words: **Helen Signy**