

Coffs Harbour *Writers' Group*



Established September 1986

Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre

PO Box 1953 Coffs Harbour NSW 2454

President: Lorraine Mouafi

Vice-President: Jean Read

Secretary: Rhonda Rand

Treasurer: Suzanne Tainish

Publicity and Social Secretary: Karolyn Gibson

Membership Secretary: Ninette van Zyl

Newsletter Editor: Ron Marke

Website: www.coffsharbourwriters.wordpress.com

No. 259

NEWSLETTER

April 2013

Announcements

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON AGM

It is a nice feeling knowing that the members have faith in myself being worthy of the role as President again for a second year, thanks for your vote of confidence.

With the AGM now over for another year, I am pleased to announce that Jean Reid will remain as Vice-President.

Rhonda Rand will continue in the challenging role of Secretary, with some technical assistance from one of our new members, Rosalie Skinner. Janice Terry has decided to vacate the Treasurer's position after three years. Thank you Janice for being Treasurer, it has been a pleasure knowing that our financials are all in order for another new member, Susanne Tainsh, to take on the Treasurer's position.

With all the amazing social and publicity works Karolyn Gibson has attended to over the past year, she will remain our Publicity and Social Secretary. Thanks for your energy and enthusiasm Karolyn, you have certainly been instrumental in bringing about change by introducing new locations for our social gatherings, Christmas party and of course skills learning workshops throughout last year and planned throughout this year.

Ron Pike has decided to step down from his membership role due to his outside our group's activities interests becoming pretty full on for him over the next eighteen months. Thank you Ron for your assistance with memberships over the last year. Ninette van Zyl, past President of our group, has kindly agreed to be our Membership Secretary.

And last but not least, Ron Marke will remain our Newsletter Editor. This year has seen it become digital ready for our members to view online.

Thursday 4th April Meeting: after the business meeting we will get on with readings. Only original writings are permitted to be read which can include revised stories under original titles or renamed ones. We meet at Coffs Harbour Ex-Services Club at 10.30 am

Last Social: Twelve members enjoyed various readings and discussion at Buddha's Cafe in Toormina on Thursday 21st March. The weather was also kind to us.

Next Social: will be held at Coffs Harbour Botanic Garden on Thursday 18th April at 10 am.

Important Notice: for the time being monthly newsletters can be read and downloaded on the group's website. Lorraine has organised that the website will only show committee members names and positions under the heading of the newsletter for privacy reasons. The arrangement is that after I have typed the newsletter and am satisfied with it on my computer, I send it electronically to Lorraine who has the knowledge to do the rest on the group's website. Go to www.coffsharbourwriters.wordpress.com Under Newsletter click on April Newsletter to read or print. If you still prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, that's all right. – Editor.

New Members: Welcome Janice (Jan) Hopkins Butler, Jane Thompson Powter and Rosalie Skinner. We sincerely hope you'll benefit from our members writings, future workshops, and enjoy our friendly company, and indeed learn from each other.

President Again: At the conclusion of our March meeting some of the members spoke to me about not having sufficient information about IP (intellectual property), especially with regards to publishing their works online using '**members stories/poems**' section on our own website.

<http://coffsharbourwriters.wordpress.com/members-storiespoems/>

With this in mind I have arranged a guest speaker, Vincent Butcher, Senior Lawyer, Slater & Gordon to come along to our 2 May meeting to discuss:

- ⤴ Ownership of IP once it goes onto the Internet?
- ⤴ What strategies can the Coffs Harbour Writers Group put into place to protect members 'works' on the website?
- ⤴ Can written works by others be formatted into audio without acknowledgement of the owner's works?
- ⤴ How much can someone copy from written works without acquiring ownership consent?
- ⤴ What strategies should members do to prove ownership of their works?

Please note this in your diary.

A Letter of Appreciation and Acknowledgement

by Karolyn Gibson March 2013

I discovered five tips, seven mistakes and so many more considerations during the Coffs Harbour Writers' Group March workshop 'Memoir Writing – Advance Class', presented by Leonie Henschke.

This workshop was the third session of a series presented by Leonie over the last twelve months. I have continued to build skills and ability because of Leonie's skilful and carefully structured lessons.

Leonie is always well prepared for this vibrant vocal group of writers. She kept us thinking and encouraged us to test the boundaries we continually place on our writing and ourselves. I always come away amazed at the progress I've made in my understanding of the art of writing and its expressive ability.

I learn to question and allow myself to believe. I revisit my life as I know it on paper and learn to make it visual and touchable and invited the readers to participate through their own use of their senses. I let my story go free so it forms a life and voice of its own and I know others in the group are just as involved.

Thank you Leonie, you have presented us with another inspirational and informative workshop. I am already looking forward to July for your next workshop with Coffs Harbour Writers' Group, 'Making Characters Real'. Believe in the power of the story.

In September 1986

According to Life Member Freda Caley, these persons were foundation members of the CHWG: Jim Robinson, Jim Burgess, Max Knight, Jean Botthell, Kathleen Giganent and Freda Caley

My First Lie by Jack Lee

This pathetic little story I'm not anxious to tell. But as I recall, way back in 1930s, a straggly seaside town was a reddish and darkly green church. I sat restless through many a sermon call which, like shadows, left no tracery at all.

Later the relaxed pastor would lead us out, mingling freely, spoke without doubt. Sartorially, everyone gave of their best. Nature smiled, contentment manifest, until one skinny, tentative kid asked his burning question – 'Where is God? Where is his throne?'

My family's reactions I no longer know, but, taking me right up into his arms the pastor paused, then mightily replied – "See that fluffy cloud over there?" pointing with his finger to make me stare. "Over there, floating free, well, on the other side, that you can't see sits God on his great marble throne!"

I was young and a dreamer, I suppose, rather stupid and naive to boot. Confidence nose-dived, dismay flooded in, but oddly, he started me out on my wonderful yellow brick road trying to think for myself to meditate, to contemplate, and wonder about it all.

Criticism – A Personal View by Jack Lee

Criticism is a delicate art.

The critic must be prepared to listen carefully. Remember the poet's ego is involved. Yet objectivity and sheer good manners are also involved.

Is your criticism capable of falling under the mantle of the 'Brotherhood of Writers'? All efforts as a critic should be aimed at better poetry if possible, and at a greater flow of the best.

Criticism means to me, to be really interested in the poet, and even making contact between meetings if wanted. Face to face contact is usually most fruitful. I see the critic as most valuable to the poet and the group.

Before the meeting, the poet should be thoroughly prepared. Want to stand up to recite, or read the new poem, which may not be hot off the press. Don't let your latest poem be stillborn and just tolerated by the group.

Consider bringing in, by the poet, say five copies of this precious, latest poem. Hand them around if members are interested and pro-active. Then at the next meeting, if members want to, they can bring back the poem with their criticisms written all over them.

At the end of all this, does the poet feel more empowered?

I hope so.

First Chats Short Story Slam

Our social secretary and publicity officer reports she received the following email from Penny Dennis, via Shirley Barnett, from CHATS, as follows:

Inviting all interested people to the First Chats Short Story Slam, Saturday 4th May, 1.30 pm at the Mud Hut, Duke Street, Coffs Harbour.

Find a short story of about 5 to 7 minutes long, something you have written yourself or something from an anthology by a published author. Open theme, that is, any topic you like. You can read from the page, that is, no need to memorise, so hone in on your narrative and acting skills.

Every reader will be judged by the audience on skill as a story teller (using score cards): the favourite "Slammer" of the afternoon will be rewarded with a small prize.

Being a social event there will be a BBQ, a little wine and a few delicious nibbles too ... if you have the urge to bake, give in to it and bring along the results. So pop the date in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there. Call or email Penny for more information (0407-396038).

pendennis@bigpond.com

Quote

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives.

It is the one that is most adaptable to change". — *Charles Darwin*

Sunrise by Marjorie Fisher

I woke early this morning – December 18, 2010 – remembering it was my son Michael's twenty-second wedding anniversary.

Aware that sleep was over for now, I rose at 5.25 and opened the curtains in the lounge room, curious to see what the coming day would bring.

Desiring a clear view of the dawn unveiled by curtains, I stood at the glass balcony door, and on seeing the first signs of approaching light in the pale blue sky, I stood still to watch the spectacle.

My field of vision was framed by the door. On my right was a patch of dense grey cloud above the low hill. Behind the hill, a long strip of grey cloud stretched across the horizon behind the trees, tapering into a jagged edge at the end, and reaching about two-thirds of the way across my picture. This ragged end of the cloud was highlighted with streaks of gold, creating a pleasing contrast to the dull grey colouring of the remainder.

I could not leave this living picture. I watched fascinated as it changed minute by minute. The low grey strip gradually took on a tinge of mauve, beginning at the left end and graduating slowly along the entire length towards the far end. The cloud patch above the rise still remained dense deep grey while the illuminated end became brighter.

Soon the edge of the sun peeped above the horizon behind the trees, lighting the cloud as it slowly rose, and silhouetting the trees in black against its brilliant golden light. The cloud became outlined in gold as the sun rose, appearing colourless against the strong light, and the patch of cloud over the hill lost its density and lightened up with streaks of fleecy white wool.

Very soon the glowing golden orb was fully visible behind the trees, casting a light of such brilliance that I could not comfortably look at it. I turned to the other end of the long strip of cloud, now a slightly deeper blue than the sky, and gradually changing colour as the sun continued to wend its daily path across the sky above the horizon.

The glare diminished somewhat and I looked back to the sun. It was now disappearing behind the cloud, and once again the end of the cloud was just an outline in pure blinding white light, while the cloudy strip became deeper blue, with fluffy white edges, appearing like fairy floss.

Eventually the sun rose above the cloud from behind it, concentrating its penetrating rays on the glass door and beyond, into the room to focus on the television, showing with crystal clarity my need to clean the glass door and remove the dust from the television screen. Two more chores I must attend to, amply illustrated by the sun without a word.

I glanced once more at the cloudy strip, now misty on the horizon, and hoped that despite all the necessary tasks in life, I will always find time to watch a sunrise, a wonder of nature that occurs every day but is never the same twice.

[Marjorie is a member of our group and lives in Tasmania. This story was read at the last social meeting and members present voted to have it published in the April newsletter. Thank you, Marjorie.]

Writing Competition

Shoalhaven Literary Award For Short Stories 2013. *The aims of this biennial competition are the recognition of literary excellence and the enhancement of the image of the Shoalhaven as a place of strong cultural development. Sponsored by the Shoalhaven Arts Board, the Shoalhaven Branch of the Fellowship of Australian Writers, and Bundanoon Trust. Short Story, Open Theme, and 3,000 words.* First Prize: **\$1,000** and a **two week artist's residency** at the Arthur Boyd Centre at Bundanoon, NSW. Second Prize **\$300**. Third Prize **\$100**. **\$200** Encouragement Award for a winning entry for a Shoalhaven resident. Judge: Australian Writer Moya Simons, short-listed four times for the Young Australia Best Book Award. Entry Fee: \$10 per entry. Normal Competitions apply. **For Entry Form and full Conditions of Entry, visit:** www.fawnshoalhaven.org.au Results and judge's report will be published on the above web site from 21 September, 2013. For further information contact the Shoalhaven Competition Registrar, Colleen Duncan, phone (02) 4421 3076 or email holly.collie@gmail.com **Closing date 31 May 2013.**
