

# Coffs Harbour Writers' Group



*Established September 1986*

**Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre**

## May 2015 Newsletter No 280

PO Box 1953, Coffs Harbour 2450 [www.coffsharbourwriters.com](http://www.coffsharbourwriters.com)



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### Greetings

It's all systems go for the Grassroots Writers' Weekend 8 – 10 May with a fabulous line up of workshops and an equally fabulous line up of participants, including ourselves! It will be fun, informative and stimulating so get your friendly caps on because we want show what an hospitable club we are and, who knows, maybe make lifelong friendships with people who love the things we do. Our members have all been active in different areas; some organising the writers week end, others participating in Coffs always varied artistic pursuits, some remembering back to distant lands (see Roger's story) around Coffs and members like Ion and Lisa off on the other side of the world in Greece! Read on and find out what has been happening! And thank you to Danielle and Ron for hosting yet another fabulous Social Morning! Be careful Danny and Ron, members will turn up there every month!

## What's on in May?

**GRASSROOTS WRITERS' WEEKEND 8 – 10 MAY HOSTED BY COFFS HARBOUR WRITERS' GROUP AT COMMUNITY VILLAGE EARL STREET COFFS HARBOUR BEHIND COLES SUPERMARKET IN HARBOUR DRIVE.**

**Wednesday, 6 May, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm Monthly Meeting Coffs Harbour Writers' Group  
Coffs Harbour Ex Services Club**

**Thursday 21 May Social Morning Hidden Link Café, Sawtell Nursery, Hogbin Drive, Sawtell.**

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## President's Report

With so much happening around us at present like the Anzac Centenary and of course the upcoming Grassroots Writers' Weekend, it has been difficult focusing on my own writing works, something that displeases me, as I was really doing a lot of writing some time ago now. My personal blog has been sadly neglected for quite a long time.

The acknowledgement of Anzac Centenary started me thinking about my own heritage, which to my surprise my great Uncle Mayson Penn was one of the casualties in World War 1. He died on Hill 60 at Gallipoli on 23/8/1915 aged 23 and buried at Lone Pine Memorial Cemetery Gallipoli.

Reflecting over what has been shown in the media, despite how one feels about war, makes me realise how we owe our lives and our country to heroes like him. Bless you Great Uncle Mayson Penn.

### **Anzac Centenary Project:**

Some time ago one of our members, James Hall, instigated discussions around our writers' group getting involved in a Coffs Harbour specific Anzac Centenary project, where we sought stories around the impact the First World War had on Coffs Harbour diggers and their families.

I know there are many stories that could be written by our members and I would encourage this to happen.

Danielle Babb has kindly offered to be the gatekeeper for such stories. She has already written an interesting story, which is on our website, about a military nurse who was an early feminist, fearless and compassionate towards the wellbeing of the soldiers.

### **Resources:**

I am currently including resources suitable for our members to use on our website under 'Projects & Resources' link on CHWG website. These resources are tried and tested tools to help you on your writing journey. This section will increase over time.

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**Members write...****Roger Harris****The Stratford Standard****23<sup>rd</sup> April 1591****Playwright Found Dead in River Avon****From our Cadet Reporter: Roger Harris**

Little known playwright one William Shakespeare has been found dead in the river Avon. Mr. Shakespeare's body was found at the bottom of the river with the pockets of his overcoat stuffed full of hitherto unpublished manuscripts.

Following poor attendances at the first night of his play Henry VI, an audience of a mere thirty two, most of whom left at intermission, leaving only the critics to endure to the bitter end, writing stinging reviews, including that of Marcus Brutus of Roman Stone magazine, who in his editorial described the play as much ado about nothing.

Alas poor William for we knew him not, and students of literature for the next four hundred years, did but rejoice.

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**Travels with Lisa Reily and Ion Corcos****Hi from Lisa and Ion in Greece!**

We are still living in Chania, Crete, and plan to stay for two more months.

Below is an excerpt from Ion about our travels. It comes from his website, where he posts a monthly newsletter about poetry and now, our travels. If you're interested, you can check it out at [www.ioncorcos.wordpress.com](http://www.ioncorcos.wordpress.com)

### **An Excerpt from Ion's Monthly Newsletter**

Following on from last month, Lisa and I stayed on in Bali for another ten days. We moved on from Lovina to Jimbaran, about three hour's drive on the other side of the island.

Jimbaran is famous for sunset seafood dinners on the beach and is generally a nice area. But we spent most of our time catching up on writing. Otherwise, we spent our time in a very warm pool, heated by the sun. It was peaceful and beautiful, located in a Balinese garden by mangroves.

On a day out, we visited Nusa Dua, a nearby high-end resort area. We had not been there before. On arrival, we had to go through a security checkpoint. It felt like we were entering a very exclusive zone. The beaches there were nice, kept clean by the hotels that line the beaches. All seaweed and other debris was raked off the sand. Some hotels even had their own private beaches. It was great to be in a clean area, but it was too sanitised. It did not really feel like Bali - more like *The Truman Show*!

From our hotel in Jimbaran, we could also walk about a kilometre to a local supermarket. The road there was typically Balinese: a few cows, many dogs and chickens, lots of laundries, a few Bakso shops (they only sell bowls of meatballs in broth), lots of rubbish and old colonial Dutch buildings. Overall, it was a good last few days for us in Bali. We both felt we could return and stay here for a while.

Our next stop was Athens, via Istanbul. At Istanbul airport, we walked through snow flurries from the plane to the airport shuttle. It was 0 degrees Celsius! It was the same when we arrived in Athens. This was a big change from the Balinese heat!

It was great being in Athens again, speaking Greek and enjoying some delicious Greek treats. We took a few long walks around the city. Though it was cold, there were still tourists around. We had a great time going to a smoke-filled taverna, complete with bouzouki player!

We are now in Chania, Crete. Our apartment is fantastic, with central heating and a balcony overlooking olive trees. We saw a hawk circling the area on our first day. It is great here, and we feel at home. We have the beach a hundred metres from us, snow-covered *White Mountains* behind us, and two supermarkets nearby which is great.

We will be staying in Chania for about two months. If we can't get a visa extension for Lisa, we will visit Turkey for a few months.

### **News from Lisa Reily**

Lisa has recently completed her second feature screenplay *The Curse*. She was very excited to finally reach its conclusion, until her university lecturer made her fix the ending three times! (The final-final-final ending is yet to be confirmed).

*The Curse* is based on the book, *The Curse of the Minotaur: A Tale of Ancient Greece*, told and annotated by Tom Stone. Lisa met Tom online, when she read one of Tom's other books, *The Summer of My Greek Taverna: A Memoir*. She really enjoyed the book, so contacted Tom to say so.

Last year, Lisa and Ion met Tom in person during their travels to LA. It was then that Tom offered Lisa the chance to write her screenplay, based on his book. It has been a real privilege for Lisa to be able to use Tom's work and he has become a great friend!

## Sally Ross

### SEASONS OF LOVE

I first loved you,  
Wandering alone under summer clouds,  
Spying hosts of golden daffodils,  
But I was too young then,  
To know what your words were worth,

I loved you,  
The second time in spring,  
As a teen pouring out my immature angst,  
You stayed silent, you didn't judge me,  
But you made me feel better,

I loved you again,  
In my discontented winter,  
As a buffer for my pain you were still  
there,  
As I waited the glorious sun,  
You knew the summer would come,

Now in my autumn years,  
I love you again,  
This strange romance you and I,  
This dance on paper,  
This dalliance of delight,

You who have comforted me,  
Through all the seasons of my life,  
But I didn't know,  
Until now,  
That I really loved you,

As I sit and write you once more,  
I put my pen to your papered autumn  
leaves,  
Your branches shield me, from harsh  
comments,  
Your trunk holds firm it will not be  
swayed,

Your roots go way back, deep into the past,  
You are much older and wiser,  
Than I will ever be,  
I will always love you,  
My beloved,  
Poet Tree...

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## **Rosalie Skinner in the Archibald Prize**

Our Group member, artist and writer, Rosalie Skinner, was a guest recently at the opening of the Archibald Prize exhibition at the Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery. Rosalie is famous for many skills but here she spoke of her time as a young protégé of, and model for, renowned Australian portrait painter, Joshua Smith. Joshua Smith, born in 1905, was selected for the Archibald 45 times, won in 1944 and is hung in galleries across Australia and around the world. However, he is most remembered as the subject of William Dobell's Archibald prize-winning 1943 work which aroused intense controversy and a court case on the grounds that it was 'caricature'.

Ultimately, when Dobell's right to the prize was upheld, the case became a lively debate about modernism and ushered in a new era for the Archibald.

Rosalie talked of her experiences with Joshua and the effects of the Archibald Prize, both as exhibiting artist and source of controversy, on this humble, talented man. It is one face of the Archibald. Rosalie was also a face of the Archibald – Joshua's painting of her was hung in the Archibald Prize in 1974. Rosalie displayed her portrait at the Opening.

The Archibald Prize exhibition continues at the Gallery until 30 May (open Tuesday to Saturday 10 am – 4 pm) with free guided tours at 11 am. Don't miss it – it's fabulous.

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*That's all for now. Don't forget, contributions please. Your own stories, book or film reviews, writing exercises...whatever takes your fancy. Leonie*