

Coffs Harbour Writers' Group



Established September 1986

Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre

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PO Box 1953, Coffs Harbour 2450 www.coffsharbourwriters.com



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Committee Members

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Greetings

It's been a fabulous month with much writing, learning, talking and sharing...and networking. More from Lorraine in her Report on the Grassroots Writers' Weekend but we are all extremely grateful to our 'club' for hosting such a wonderful festival and all the spin-offs and recognition coming through from this high profile event. It's festival time of year and we're quickly into the Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival on the June long weekend and then Byron Bay in the first week of August. A feast for the writing muses. All our writers have been busy but we would like to particularly congratulate Lisa Reily (currently in Greece – see later in the Newsletter). *The Curse*, her feature screenplay, has recently been selected as a quarter-finalist in the 8th Annual StoryPros Awards, a U.S. screenwriting competition. It is a mythological drama, based on the book, *The Curse of the Minotaur: A Tale of Ancient Greece*, by Tom Stone.

Lisa has been a member of Coffs Harbour Writers' Group since 2011. This is Lisa's second feature screenplay and her first competition entry for this script. She has recently written a second version of the script and plans to enter it into other competitions in the near future.

So all you creative spirits out there keep thinking and typing! *Leonie*

What's on in June?

**Wednesday, 3 June, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm Monthly Meeting Coffs Harbour Writers' Group
Coffs Harbour Ex Services Club**

Thursday, 4 June, 7.00 pm Launch of Coffs Coast Writers' Centre, Bayldon Community Centre, Toormina Road, Toormina. See coffscoastwriterscentre.com.au. Discounted entry fee of \$5 for our members.

Friday 5 June – Monday 8 June, Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival 5 – 8 June 2015.
See bellingwritersfestival.com.au for booking details.

Thursday 18 June, Social Morning 10.00 am Janice Terry's Coffs Harbour unit.-Telephone 0266528518 for address details.

President's Report

Huge Success for 2015 Grassroots Writers' Weekend

A huge thanks to the organising sub-committee members, who worked tirelessly ensuring that this year's GWW event was a success, Leonie Henschke, Rosalie Skinner, Robyn Veugen, Suzanne Tainsh and Roger Harris, with manual maneuverings of the partitions throughout the weekend by Bruce Meder. Of course we cannot forget those wonderful morning and afternoon teas, which were co-ordinated by Yvonne Kachel.

The weekend is now over and we are extremely pleased with the final outcome demonstrating the CHWG ability to plan, co-ordinate and present an amazing array of presenters for the concurrent workshops and plenary sessions suitable for everyone's needs to assist with learning additional knowledge and writing techniques. And, of course, we cannot forget those invaluable networking and friendship opportunities formed with other writers' groups.

Feedback received is encouraging with comments such as; "wonderful few days, workshops were fantastic, want to go back and do it all again, splendid job in presenting the talented presenters, am pumped, congratulations to everyone involved, excitement and interesting sharing of knowledge."

Next year's Grassroots Writers' Weekend will be hosted by Nambucca Valley Writers' Group 1 to 3 April, 2016 at Valla Resort.

Sydney Writers' Festival (SWF) live streamed into Coffs Harbour Jetty Theatre

With the expansion of SWF horizons and a first, the 'Live and Local' digital live-streaming project taking the festival sessions into 10 regional centres across NSW was an achievement and so beneficial for the audiences, especially here in Coffs Harbour where we could just sit back and enjoy listening to the world's finest authors.

SWF partnered with arts centres, libraries and writers groups, such as ours who agreed to MC the Friday 22nd sessions throughout the day thanks to Leonie Henschke, and myself on Saturday 23rd May. This particular session 'Radical Rethink' in my opinion, could have gone on for hours, as it was quite relevant and controversial.

30th Year Anthology Book – 2016

As mentioned over the past few months, CHWG will have been an ongoing writers' group for 30 years in September next year. To help celebrate this wonderful achievement we will be embarking on a 30th year Anthology book, where all members will have the opportunity to submit their stories and/or poems. Submissions will be based on an agreed theme to an established format with a deadline enabling the production to be finalised well before the book launch and celebration.

Over the coming months we will announce the name of the external person who will project manage this project on behalf of CHWG.

Upcoming Workshops/ Guest Speakers

Over the next few weeks the committee members will meet to discuss relevant workshops and/or guest speakers for the rest of the year and into early 2016. If you have suggestions on the type of workshops or guest speakers, please advise one of the committee members or myself. *Regards Lorraine.*

New Writers' Centre for Coffs Coast

The new CCWC (Coffs Coast Writers' Centre) has been formed to be a hub for local writers and readers in the Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Dorrigo and Nambucca regions. Activities will include a regular program of readings, book launches, workshops, writers in residence and writer school visits. The Centre will also contribute to the coordination of the annual Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival, hoping to ensure its continued growth and sustainability into the future. Our members are invited to a launch on Thursday 4 June at 7.00 pm with a special entry fee of \$5. The address is Bayldon Community Centre, Toormina Road, Toormina. There will be an interview by Irina Dunn with noted Australian author Robert Drewe. See the website www.coffscoastwriterscentre.org.au

Want some guidance in preparing a reading for the meeting?

THIS MONTH'S WRITING PROMPT (HOMEWORK)

Write on the topic '*The Road Home*'. It could be fiction, poetry, non-fiction, an article, a blog post - anything you like. You may like to bring it to the July meeting to share with the group.

CRITIQUE GROUP

Do you want to improve your writing? Are you aiming to submit your work to competitions or publishers sometime in the future? If so, you might be interested in joining a critique group. Please let Robyn know at the next meeting or by emailing robyn.veugen@gmail.com.

(Please note, as this stage it is envisaged that this group would meet in the evenings so as to allow people who are busy during the day to be involved. However, if a daytime group would suit you better, please also let Robyn know. It may be possible to start a second group if there is enough interest.)

This would be an **extra** activity and would **not** be part of the regular 1st Wednesday meeting at C.ex or the regular 3rd Thursday social meeting.

Members write...

Roger Harris

~~The Waste~~ Wasted Land. *T's arris*

Ever read T S Eliot's *The Waste Land*? Course you have, it's mandatory reading, for all would be literary students. Have you ever understood it? I've long maintained the theory that it is thus called because Eliot was wasted when he wrote it. There's an entire [website](#) devoted to trying to understand the Wasteland, it was written in 1922, that's 90 years, for god's sake give it up. There are two types of people in this world; one's like me who has no idea what Eliot was on about, and those who lie about it. I have it on good authority that he later became a script writer for Abbott and Costello, and penned the line in *Who's on First*, "I don't even know what I'm talking about". If you find someone who claims to understand *The Waste Land*, find out what they're on, I want some.

I had a book of poetry when I was a kid; there was one that went, "I wandered lonely as a cloud", what was he on? Lonely as a cloud... news flash Mr Wordsworth, that's up to a 20,000 foot drop, it's going to hurt even if it was into "a host of golden daffodils", daffodils my foot, I reckon they wuz poppies myself.

We do know that it was a different cloud to the one Mick Jagger was on, or he would have been told to [“Get Off”](#) now Mick could probably have stayed up there with what he was on, and just to prove it Keith Richards is still up there. Sadly Keith actually passed away in the seventies, but was, and remains so “Stoned” that he hasn't realised it yet.

What about Shakespeare, a literary terrorist if ever there was one. Best line he ever came up with “Let's kill all the lawyers” (we should have taken him up on that one) do they stick him in jail for inciting violence, do they hell, no they make some kinda literary god out of him so he can continue to terrorise school kids and students for hundreds of years to come, and still continues to this day! Much Ado About Nothing? Spare me the bleedin' obvious.

[Ed note: the views expressed in the above piece are very definitely the writer's own! Want to read the poem? Google The Waste Land by T.S.Eliot – it's a great literary piece.]

Travels with Lisa Reily and Ion Corcos

An Excerpt from Ion's April Newsletter

Lisa and I are still, happily, in Chania in Crete. We are staying in a great apartment, which feels very much like home. Unfortunately, we need to move out soon, as the season prices increase dramatically. So, we have spent the last two weeks walking the streets and emailing hotels for a new place to stay!

Thankfully, we have found somewhere. It's smaller than our current place, but it's got everything we need. And it's not overpriced like the many quotes we received! It's nearby, which is great, because we love it here by the bay. We plan to stay in Chania for April and May.

We have also confirmed that Lisa can stay in Greece for up to six months. This is great news! We hope to travel around Crete, visit the island of Kos, and then head off to Turkey.

Last week, we went for a beautiful bus ride to Kissamos, which is about 35km west of Chania. We passed through many small villages, filled with beautiful olive, lemon and orange trees. The town of Kissamos itself is a working town, so a lot of the shops are closed this time of year. We had a great gyros for lunch in a local taverna, complete with a warm fireplace, traditional brick walls and a few Greeks!

There are many differences in Greece, which we notice each day. Yesterday, I counted ten dogs playing together on the nearby empty beach. The afternoon light here is magnificent – I have only ever seen this type of light in Greece. The locals are starting to cut back their trees and burn the cuttings – lots of chain saws going and small fires! Locals are swimming in the nearby bay, even though the outside temperature is in the low teens; we walk by in scarves and coats!

It has been quite an experience. Overall, we have found much peace here. We are happy and writing.

www.ioncorcos.wordpress.com

Faceless Women

Ion Corcos

Waves crash on nearby rocks, I'm about ten,
sitting in a small room full of paintings,
patterned fabrics on sofas from a long time ago,
a room filled with untouchable pieces,
be careful where you step, rickety tables,
dad's deep voice, mum crying in the bathroom.

Oil paint in a wooden frame, he always liked wood,
no wind, the sky blue, yellow sun in the corner.
Three women stand on a beach,
face the water, backs laced with thin bikinis.

There is no fear in the world of these three women
captured unknowing in his glance.
The world he pictured,
not the stifled world
we lived in.

Painted like a memory,
a small cove sheltered from waves,
not the beach we lived near.
I might be mistaken, haven't seen the painting
for more than five years now.

Thunder crashes, cold rain falls,
only the sound of hard drops
thudding, and his voice, like thunder,
the light gone from the world
as the world closes down.
The hand that made it
is not the man I knew. He had time to paint
three women,
a world we did not know.
No time for us; no time
now he is gone.

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30 Days of Poetry Love with Ion Corcos

As a part of National Poetry Month in April, Lidy Wilks conducted interviews with poets each day. Ion was interviewed about his poetry. His interview was posted on her website on 16 April 2015. The web address is quite long, so if you are interested, it's easiest to just type in 'Ion Corcos interview' and the link will appear.

Sally Ross

A MEMORY OF LOVE

This bed holds a memory, a memory of two, held safe and warm,
covered with the quilt of patch-worked emotions.
A memory of a future begun, the bridal vale left hanging,
in the space of a single existence.
This bed holds a memory, a memory of morning sickness,
sleepless nights, breast milk soothing babies cries.
A memory of hide and seek, thunderstorms,
scary dreams and monsters, underneath it.
This bed holds a memory, a memory of two again,
blissful lie ins, reading Sunday papers, in peace.
A memory of grandchildren, sleeping over,
dippy eggs and breakfasts in bed.
This bed holds a memory, a memory of unemployment,
retirement, ups and downs, illness and pain.
A memory of grief and loss, an impression
of a soul, no longer present.
This bed holds a memory, a memory of lives well lived,
of comfort and security, but most of all, a memory of love...

Writing and Competition Deadlines

15 June 2015: The Affirm Press Mentorship Award

Applications are open for the Affirm Press Mentorship Award. A creative partnership between Affirm Press and Varuna, four writers will be offered the opportunity to develop exceptional new writing working with the Affirm Press publishing team whilst in residence at Varuna. www.varuna.com.au

30 June 2015: The 'Lost in the Bush' History Writing Competition

Entries are invited for the Wimmera Wordsmith's History Writing Competition. Three categories: Non-fiction (with sources), narrative history and creative writing up to 4,000 words with first in each category receiving \$100. www.writingwa.org/articles/lost-in-the-bush-history-writing-competition

22 July 2015: Albury City Short Story Award

Submissions are invited for the 2015 Albury City Short Story Award. The theme for this year's Award is 'Journeys'. The winner will receive \$1,000, with prizes also awarded for highly commended stories. www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/wam/short-story-award

27 July 2015: Visible Ink Anthology

Submissions are open for the Visible Ink's upcoming 27th edition. This year's theme is 'After the Rain', and they will be accepting narrative non-fiction and fiction, poetry, flash fiction, visual art and photography. www.visibleinkanthology.com

17 July 2015: The Nib: Waverly Library Award for Literature

This prestigious award provides a winner's prize of \$20,000 + trophy. All genres of writing including fiction and non fiction, published between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 are eligible for entry. waverley.nsw.gov.au/nib

30 July 2015: The Asher Literary Award

Submissions open on June 12 for the Asher Literary Award. Offered biennially to a female author whose work carries an anti-war theme, it is valued at \$12,000. www.asauthors.org > [Services](#) > [Awards](#)

24 August 2015: Thunderbolt Prizes from New England Writers' Centre, Armidale, NSW

Crime Fiction, Crime Non-Fiction and Crime Poetry. <http://www.newc.org.au/thunderbolt-prize.html>

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