

Coffs Harbour Writers' Group



Inc.
Established September 1986

Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre

May 2016 Newsletter No 290

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

Committee Members

President:	Lorraine Penn 6653 3256 lmproject@bigpond.com
Vice-President:	Roger Harris rogerch@tpg.com.au
Secretary:	Rosalie Skinner 6652 2919 roseiswriting@gmail.com
Treasurer/Membership Secretary:	Suzanne Tainsh polyart42@gmail.com
Social Secretaries:	Yvonne Kachel Yvonne.kachel@bigpond.com
Newsletter Editor and Publicity:	Leonie Henschke 0412668315 leonie@henschke.net.au

Greetings

I always think that one of the best qualities we can imbue in our children (apart from 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you') is to be curious. Curious about the world – 'why is it so? As writers we are curious about people, their histories, their motivation and we want to put their stories down in an engaging manner. We write, usually, to have others read our writings. But as writers we need to read. Stephen King has said, "If you haven't got time to read you haven't got time to write."

"Reading—the good and the bad—inspires you. It develops your palate for all the tricks that writers have invented over the years. You can learn from textbooks about the writing craft, but there's no substitute for discovering for yourself how a writer pulls off a trick. Then that becomes part of your experience." Writer Roz Morris.

So here is a call for all of us to read more! As writers we appreciate the written word, we love the sounds of words but do we read enough words of other people. We need to read the newspaper (print or online) for what is going on in the world and books, and more books. Often we are not sure what to choose. Use your library – ask a librarian. Read the weekend newspapers, for example, the

Sydney Morning Herald weekend *Spectrum* section which has book reviews. Keep up to date with the latest winners of the literary competitions. Look at the library's lists of books you might like if you prefer a particular author or genre (sheets on the end of each row of shelves). Join a book club. The Library has sponsored book clubs with book club books borrowed from the library each month which are in multiple copies and have folders of questions for the book club leader. Set up a book exchange with a couple of friends and lend books. Buy a Kindle and add books to your collection for a fraction of the price of a new book or scour the second hand book shops. No excuse! *Leonie*

What's on in May/June?

Wednesday 4 May, 10.00 am – 12.00 pm Monthly Meeting Coffs Harbour Writers' Group
Cavanbah Centre, 191 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour followed by lunch in the Chill Out Café in the Community Village next door. *Email the Social Secretary with apologies for meetings.*

Thursday, 19 May, 10.00 pm – 12 noon Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Social Morning, at Supply Café, 15 Orlando Street near the harbour side of the Jetty Village shopping centre.

Friday, 20 May – Sunday 22 May Live and Local at the Jetty Theatre, Live streaming of sessions from the Sydney Writers' Festival. Tickets at the Jetty Theatre, \$5 a session, bookings recommended.

Wednesday 25 May, 5. 30 pm. Author talk at the Library Jenn J McLeod (*more details below*)

Wednesday 1 June, 10.00 am – 12.00 pm Monthly Meeting Coffs Harbour Writers' Group
Cavanbah Centre, 191 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour followed by lunch in the Chill Out Café in the Community Village next door. *Email the Social Secretary with apologies for meetings.*

Wednesday 1 June, Workshop with Margaret Penhall- Jones, Creating Compelling Characters
Workshop, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm, Cavanbah Centre

Thursday 9 June 5.30 pm Author talk at the Library Graham Potts (*more details below*)

Friday 10 June – Monday 13 June Bellingen Writers and Readers Festival
bellingenwritersfestival.com.au

President's Report

30th Year Anthology Book Progress:

I am delighted to say that we have received 19 contributions towards our 30th year anthology book. These stories and or poems were forwarded to Stephanie Ney who has edited and suggested some recommendations for improvement, which I will forward to the members for comment and sign off. As soon as these are signed off they will be ready for formatting into print layout.

Inaugural World Cafe Session:

Thanks to the some inventive discussions occurring between Yvonne Kachel and myself, our April social coffee morning took on a whole new concept of discussions based on three questions, which were facilitated by Leonie, Yvonne and myself. The overall plan was to tease out areas of improvement for our members by way of suggestions for targeted future workshop ideas.

Creative Industries Forum 24th May

The creative industry generates more than \$6 billion to the Australian economy and employs just over 5% of the workforce; making is one of the fastest-growing, most dynamic segments of the national economy.

With such a large creative industry market, especially here in the Mid North Coast, Enterprise and Training Company (ETC) in conjunction with industry, local councils and sponsors have planned the first Creative Industries Forum to be held at the new Slim Dusty Centre in Kempsey on 24th May.

As a representative of the writing sector, I have been invited to participate in the 'Peer Panel and Q&A Session' representing our writers' group as one of the panelists.

The forum's program has been uploaded onto our website's homepage. Concession price is \$55, excellent value for a whole day of knowledge, entertainment and networking opportunities.

Creating Compelling Characters Workshop

Make Your Readers Care!

Presented by Margaret Penhall-Jones

When: 1st June, 2016

Time: 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Where: Cavanbah Centre, Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour

Cost: \$7.50 for members and \$15.00 for non-members

Characters drive your story. Creating real characters makes your reader turn the page. This interactive workshop, for the aspiring or emerging writer of fiction or memoir, looks at techniques for creating characters that will live on in your readers' minds after they close the book. Margaret will use some basic psychological insights to discover how you can create memorable characters that leap off the page and hook your readers from the beginning. She will draw on examples from modern fiction, memoir and film to see how the experts did it!

Facilitator: Margaret Penhall-Jones is a local writer and freelance editor, who is passionate about creating opportunities for people to develop their skills in writing craft, enabling creative ideas to come to life. She enjoys writing herself, especially romances and memoirs. Margaret is also an active member in the community with critique and memoir writing groups. She is also a member of our Coffs Harbour Writers' Group, Romance Writers of Australia and Romance Writers of America and a contest judge for Romance Writers of Australia.

Author events at the Library 25 May and 9 June 5.30 pm

- **Jenn McLeod Wednesday, 25 May 2016 - 5:30pm**

Australian author and local Jenn McLeod is returning to town to promote the fourth book in her SEASONS COLLECTION, 'The Other Side of the Season'. The SEASONS COLLECTION stories are standalone, life-affirming novels of small town life and the country roots that run deep.

- **Graham Potts Thursday, 9 June 2016 - 5:30pm**

Bellingen Readers & Writers Festival Director, Irina Dunn, will "interrogate" Renaissance man Graham Potts, a classically trained, serving member of the Australian Air Force who writes thrillers. His action-packed style throws you into international conflicts closer to home than you think. Graham has a fondness for literature and appetite for intrigue. He tells stories that captivate, thrill and touch on the truth. Graham is author of *No Free Man*, a fast-paced and gripping spy thriller that will hold you riveted until the last page.

After the success of its inaugural Live & Local program in 2015, Sydney Writers' Festival returns to Coffs Harbour in 2016!

One of Australia's best-loved forums for literature, ideas and storytelling, Sydney Writers' Festival will stream its headline events from Roslyn Packer Theatre in Walsh Bay direct to Coffs Harbour on May 20. Prepare to be stimulated and engaged by conversations, debates and discussions, as the Festival brings the world's finest authors to Coffs Harbour in real time. As well as hearing new ideas from great thinkers, audiences have the opportunity to participate in Q&A sessions at each event, sending questions direct to the Sydney stage.

Be part of *Live & Local*, streamed live by Sydney Writers' Festival and delivered locally by the Jetty Memorial Theatre.

Friday 20 May

10am-William Boyd and Julian Barnes: History and Fiction

11:30am-Jonathan Franzen: My Reading Life

1:30pm-Let Nature Be Your Teacher

3pm-Inside the New Yorker

4:30pm-Andrew Denton: Better off Dead

Saturday 21 May 10am-Why Women Should Rule the World

Sunday 22 May 10am-Kerry O'Brien: Living with Keating

Ticket Price:\$5 -Festival Pass (all 7 sessions): \$30 Each session 1 hour

Writer's tip for the month: "Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass." – Anton Chekhov

Members write...

Rosalie Skinner Brumby Run

The sound of frantic motors came from every direction. He ran swerving, avoiding the violent wind from the hovering machine. His hooves churned the dirt, his blood pounded through his veins. Speed should carry him clear of pursuit, but his nostrils burned with the scent of acrid fumes.

Desperate, he scrambled down the cliff path toward the dunes. Behind him three motors raged, each moment brought the angry screams closer.

The dunes offered little protection. The soft sand mocked his efforts, grasping, gripping, giving way when he needed firm ground. He struggled upward, through the pig-face and coarse grass, into the open and toward the expanse of calm blue ocean.

Behind him the motors revved. The dunes slowed the bike's progress. The stallion reached the hard beach sand and again stretched into a desperate gallop.

The far headland offered crevasses, caves and places he might avoid the humans.

His headlong flight threw up salt laden sand. The air smelt sweeter, eddying waves matched the dapples on his body. The firm footing thrilled him. The wild stallion reveled in his strength and freedom. He led the men away from his mares.

Over his racing heartbeat and breathing, the stallion again heard the dull thud, thud, thud of the flying machine's wings. He drove himself to greater speed, but the machine flew above him, tracking his escape.

He must outrun the threat. He gathered himself for one last effort.

The machine dropped into his path, hovering, facing him, glass eyes watching him, daring him to continue. The blades hurled sand in all directions. The stallion slid to a halt.

He reared. Screamed at the machine, but it took no notice. Behind the stallion the machines carrying men closed in. They blocked the path to the dunes and the beach.

The stallion turned and lunged into the waves. Avoiding capture now his only goal.

Cold water welcomed him. Sand sucked at his hooves, reluctant to release him as he plunged deeper into the sea. The white crests beckoned. Spirit horses, wind blowing their manes rode the cresting waves. The stallion strode on, struggling against the pull of the eddying current. Behind him the sound of motors faded. The flying machine hovered overhead but didn't touch him.

He could no longer feel the sand beneath his hooves. The waves carried him, tossed him, accepted him. His fear escalated, but as his strength ebbed, calm overcame him. Whispered greetings woke memories of his birth. He envisioned his dam standing beside him on the beach, calling to the white capped waves and sharing her belief of how the crests belonged to the spirits of great horses, galloping free across the vast ocean.

His lungs filled with seawater. He stopped struggling, released his fear. His heart slowed. Sluggish blood spread surrender and banished the need for air, for flight, for fear. The stallion's eyes closed. His body trembled, grew still and slowly sank beneath the turbulence.

The brumby stallion joined windswept white horses and embraced spiritual freedom.

Competitions and 'broadcast' opportunities

27 May: Wigtown Poetry Competition

Scotland's international poetry prize, open to all writers, is celebrating its 10th birthday this year. Poems on any theme are welcomed, with a maximum length of 40 lines. <http://www.wigtownbookfestival.com/poetry-competition>

31 May: Big Issue Fiction Edition

Time to cook up your very best tales: entries are now open for the 2016 Big Issue Fiction Edition! All writers are welcome to submit, and there is an open theme. Stories must be 300-3000 words. <http://www.thebigissue.org.au/blog/2015/03/26/calling-all-fiction-writers/>

31 May: The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award

The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award is one of Australia's richest and the most prestigious award for an unpublished manuscript by a writer under the age of thirty-five. Offering publication by Allen & Unwin, with an advance against royalties plus prize money totalling \$20,000, The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award has launched the careers of some of Australia's most successful writers. <https://www.allenandunwin.com/being-a-writer/the-australian-vogel-s-literary-award>

31 May: Fellowship of Australian Writers Queensland Literary Awards

Writers are invited to submit entries in poetry, haiku, short story, flash fiction and article categories. First place prize of \$2000 in each category. <http://fawnsq.org.au/fawq-literary-awards-2016/>

31 May: Field of Words Competition

International competitions in the categories of short and flash fiction. The winners and runners-up in each category receive cash prizes.

31 May: AHWA Competition

The Australian Horror Writers Association wants your best horror story. All themes in horror will be accepted, from the supernatural classics (zombies, vampires, ghosts), to psychological roller-coaster rides, to the highly original.

1 June: The Richelle Prize for Emerging Writers

Now in its second year, The Richelle Prize was established by Hachette Australia to encourage emerging writers in Australia. Entries are open to unpublished writers of adult fiction and adult narrative non-fiction. The winner receives \$10,000 in prize money and a 12-month mentorship with one of Hachette's publishers.

3 June: Shoalhaven Literary Award 2016 for Poetry

Accepting poems of 60 lines maximum, with an open theme. First prize winner receives \$1000 and a two week residency in Nowra, other cash prizes also awarded.

6 June: ACU Prize for Poetry

The Australian Catholic University is once again holding its annual national Prize for Poetry. The theme for this year's prize is 'Loving Kindness'.

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