

# Coffs Harbour Writers' Group



*Established September 1986*

Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre

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**NEWSLETTER**

**October**

## Announcements

**Meeting:** Thursday 3rd October at 10.30 am till 12.30 pm at the Cex Club, Vernon Street, Coffs.

**Last Social:** Held at the Buddha Bounty Cafe in the Plant Nursery, Toomina on Thursday 19th September. Eleven members were in attendance with four apologies. Good readings and discussion in beautiful weather.

**Next Social:** This will be held at Janice and Alastair's home, commencing at 10 am to 12noon, contact 6652 1542

**Next Workshop:** Leonie Henschke will present her workshop 'Scoping and Structuring Your Plot' on Thursday 7th November at the Cex Club, Vernon Street. 1pm for a 1.30pm start. Plot is basically the sequence of events and/or choices that make up the action of the narrative. The plot is more than a chronicle or list of the events, however. It asserts connections. It provides structure to the unfolding of the events. Learn how to establish a beginning, middle and an end. Decisions must be made about where to begin telling the story and where to end the telling. That is the fun and creativity of writing. Charge: \$5 members; \$10 non-members.

**CHATS Short Story Slam:** This will be held on Saturday 2nd November. Rules: must be own work, must be complete story, can be read, not necessary to memorise, must be 5-8 minutes in length, memoirs and recounts are allowed. Everyone in the audience will award points. Judging criteria is based on the performance, not the story itself.

- Voice and Dialogue
- Body Language
- Audience Contact

Please call Penny on 0407 396 038 for more information.

## **Brief Reports on Two Workshops by Karolyn Gibson**

Last week was filled with wonderful opportunity.

First came the amazing workshop 'Character Development and Dialogue' presented by the very talented Leonie Henschke. This was by special request from many who missed out on the original July workshop, and I might say we weren't disappointed. We discussed our characters, truth and variation. We learnt the best way to begin our story. We discussed the importance of and the best way to deliver the back-story and prepared our exercises with the help of prompts. The creativity in the room was inspiring.

Secondly, two days later on Thursday 5th September I found myself sitting with Coffs Harbour Writers Group members on Thursday 5th September watching 'powerful' PowerPoint delivery on the Why, What, When and How of Poetry, and once again being inspired this time by presenter Ron Pike, and among other things, poet, performer, adjudicator, debater and public speaker.

Ron spoke about the music; the rhythm in poetry and offered ideas of how this form of communication could be best delivered. He discussed the type of language to use and encouraged us to think about our listeners.

He compared various poets' works and encouraged us to speak our thoughts. He spoke of the importance of the design and delivery of our work and also gave us tips on how to engage our audience.

I cannot put my pen down. I haven't stopped pumping the key board since ... I am reading more and writing more and speaking to my dear patient husband in rhythms and rhyme that sends him into a twirl ... Hmmm? But I'm smiling and he is smiling and the air is light and filled with life.

Do I think it was worth the effort? You bet I do and would do it all over again and will as soon as I can encourage them back again to take the floor.

Thank you, Leonie and Ron, for the incredible time, effort and knowledge you have given us once again. You have encouraged us to believe in our cause, our ability and ourselves.

### **Workshop at the Bunker Gallery**

Today I found myself at the Bunker Gallery with my buddy and other folk. What a great place to lose yourself in creative artwork amongst friendly staff and like-minded visitors.

I was registered to attend a workshop on 'Writing for Children', and young adults presented by award winning author, Sophie Masson. Sophie proved to be an interesting lady. First, she gave us a look into her own childhood as a French-born child living with her grandparents while her parents travelled all around the world for work. From around 5 years of age Sophie moved to Australia with her parents and siblings, spending much of those years getting to know and understand her parents. Sophie escaped any hardships or difficulties she experienced as a child by reading.

Reading, she explained, gave her the freedom she desired and by the age of sixteen was writing and writing well. To date she has written over fifty novels for young adults of various genres, including fantasy, historical, family saga, graphic and romantic thrillers and comedy.

Sophie offered a couple of her own beliefs that helped her get pen to paper to make writing novels easier to draw the reader into the world she had created. She discussed and compared various authors' styles and abilities in doing this and compared her own books. She also discussed the role and importance of editors, marketing and agents.

During the workshop Sophie offered two exercises for us to try. The results were quite entertaining and made opportunity for future thought in their development toward short stories or even novels for the aspiring writers.

I left the Bunker Gallery with it in mind to search for the titles mentioned from Sophie's list of books and to follow on Sophie via her website [www.sophiemasson.org](http://www.sophiemasson.org)

So if you don't see me out and about for a while, don't worry I will be safely tucked up with a book or three experiencing a new and exciting world ready to lift from the pages and into my hungry mind. Wishing you happy reading till next time. — Karolyn Gibson.

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URL address is [www.coffharbourwriter.com](http://www.coffharbourwriter.com) and follow the prompts.

## Letters by *Marjorie Fisher*

Private letters from prominent people are historically important, such as those recently discovered by a Devonport woman behind the mantelpiece in her home. Written by Tasmania's most notable politician Joseph Lyons to his wife Enid during his absence in war service, they gave valuable insight into his character and genuine affection for his wife, and the hardship of separation.

Educators now realise excessive use of technology is detrimental to some children, as they are losing motor skills and not achieving keystone developmental milestones. Smart phones and computer keyboards have meant children are growing up without sufficient strength to hold a pen long enough to draw a picture or write a story. Their eye-hand coordination and craft creativity is also affected. Consequently more children need occupational therapy and fine motor skills exercise due to lack of strength and muscle coordination in their hands and arms.

What does this mean for the future of writing? With the common use of email and text messaging, will these children be capable of creating an interesting and informative letter when they grow up? Or will our current writing become extinct? Or will there be young people who appreciate this "old style" writing as another art form, like painting, music or calligraphy?

## Writing Competitions

**Positive Words Magazine End-of-Year Competition 2013.** Open them. Short stories up to 500 words; poems up to 32 lines. Entry fee is \$3.60. First prize is \$100, second prize a twelve-month (12 issues) subscription to *Positive Words Magazine*. All entries must be post-marked by 31 October 2013. Send entries to: The Editor, PO Box 798, Heathcote, Victoria 3523. For further information about the magazine or competitions email [positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au](mailto:positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au) **Closing date 31 October 2013.**

**Southern Cross Literary Competition.** Short stories of up to 3500 words are welcome from all writers. The competition is a biennial event by Ballarat Writers Inc. This year the prize money has increased to \$1500 for the winning entry. Entry fee is \$20 per story and there is no restriction on the number of entries each writer may submit. Results will be announced at the final Ballarat Writers reading night for the year on 5th December at the Ballarat Mechanics Institute. The full details and entry form are available from our website [www.ballaratwriters.com](http://www.ballaratwriters.com) **Closing date: 30 October 2013.**

**The Mornington Peninsula Prize 2013.** Poems up to 30 lines – open theme and genre. First Prize \$200, Highly Commended and Commended Certificates. Entry fee is \$5 per person. All enquiries should be directed to: Competition Coordinator, FAW Mornington Peninsula Prize, PO Box 574, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria 3931, or [penisulafaw@mail.com](mailto:penisulafaw@mail.com) **Closing date: 28 October 2013.**

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## Humour

Who said kids aren't smart. Well, some of them are! At a high school in Mildura a group of students played a prank on the school. They let three goats loose in the school grounds. Before they let them go they painted numbers 1, 2 and 4 on the sides of the goats. The school administrators' spent most of the day looking for number 3.

**Do you know** 'gotten' is in fact Middle English and comes from the old Norse *geta*. Its use was employed by William Shakespeare in *Henry VI, Part Three*, which was first printed in 1623, when Warwick says: 'You told not how Henry the Sixth hath lost all that which Henry the Fifth had gotten?'

*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Word Origins* tells us that the clipped form 'got' dates from 1600, though eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish Jonathan Swift and nineteenth-century Scottish author Sir Walter Scott both tended to use 'gotten'.

Though it might appear that 'begotten', 'forgotten' and 'ill-gotten' are relics from this time, they are compound words from the Germanic *geta*. They pre-date the Middle English 'gotten' and are classed as Old English. (From *The Pedant's Revolt* by Andrea Barham.

**END GAME? OR NEW HOPE?** *By Jan Marie Hytten (31 July 2013)*

Life indeed can take its toil, hope plunging to zero,  
Days of strength passing us by as our fourscore years are looming,  
And fear crowds in on every side.  
We long for peace – for the ‘good old days’  
When we were in control of our lives, or so we thought...  
Now everything seems so out of control.

Despair creeps in – does ANYONE care?  
Confusion overwhelms – what does life hold now?  
Youth is exalted; we've been put on the shelf,  
The world has no more use for us; our ‘use by date’ is exceeded.  
What hope is there left? What does life hold now?  
Is there any light left at the end of this long tunnel?

How desperate are we? Have we truly come to the end of our rope?  
If we believe we can fix it ourselves, we remain in delusion:  
Sometimes we have to really hit rock bottom to find the only way out is UP.  
How desperate are we? Are we willing to cry out for help?

There is ONE who waits to hear our cry, the God Who created us:  
He will not push in; He gives us free choice:  
He knows us all from the womb – knows all our every thought.  
He knows all our highs and lows, all our fears and joys,  
Every detail of our lives, and He loves each one of us.  
Ask Him to show you if He loves each of us.  
Ask him to show if He is Real – pour out your heart to Him...

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,  
but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*

His name is Jesus Christ; He died on a cruel Cross-for our sins.  
He rose again, and lives today:  
When we believe in Him, He lives in our hearts:  
He gives us new life, restores our HOPE and heals our broken lives.  
He gives us a REASON to LIVE.  
He promises never to leave us or forsake us,  
And He is FAITHFUL who promised.

He longs for us to truly seek Him – He will not turn us away.  
Are you ready for His help?  
Eternity is a long, long time – it is our choice WHERE we spend it.

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**Quote**

It is justice, not charity that is wanted in the world.  
— Mary Wolstoncraft Shelley

