

Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Inc.

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Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre

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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 6658 8859 jstainsh@bigpond.com
Social Secretaries:	Yvonne Kachel Yvonne.kachel@bigpond.com
Newsletter Editor and Publicity:	Leonie Henschke 0412668315 leonie@henschke.net.au

Greetings

April has started with a very catchy opening line – the Grassroots Writers' Weekend hosted by Nambucca Valley Writers' Group and held at the Valla Tourist Park. Wow! It was fabulous. Great workshops, panels, conversations, and, most importantly, time to mingle and make new friends and reacquaint with old ones. And the best part is that you are among like-minded people who understand your foibles as a writer! Excellent organisation from Nambucca so congratulations to all the team. A great effort. The baton now passes to the Port Macquarie Writers' Group so a good excuse to plan a sojourn in picturesque Port for a date in April next year.

The deadline has now passed for submitting stories for the Anthology but Lorraine is a very kind person and says 'just bring a story along to the next meeting'. Pull something out of the cupboard and polish it up or select a self-contained chapter from a longer piece you are writing. We do want representation from as many members as possible. *Leonie*

What's on in April?

Wednesday 6 April, 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. *We plan to run a session at this meeting on feedback from the Grassroots Writers' Weekend and ideas for more in-house workshops. Email the Social Secretary with apologies for meetings.*

Thursday, 21 April, 10.00 pm – 12 noon Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Social Morning, at a private home. Please ring 66533256 to register your attendance and for address details.

President's Report

Grassroots Writers' Weekend Wrap Up

We anticipate holding a 'GWW 2016 wrap up discussion' during April's meeting in an effort to encourage some suggestions for future workshop events.

Another sad bon voyage:

Our resident entertaining poet Sally Ross has now departed Coffs bound for the bright lights of Brisbane. It is sad to know that she won't be entertaining us with her wonderful array of poems, especially during our Christmas party event.

We wish her and John all the very best for the future and that she is always welcome to submit her poems to be read out during our monthly meetings.

Annual General Meeting to be held again

As we are now incorporated as an association we must hold our AGM within six months of the end of our financial year. In our submission to be incorporated we have advised our end of financial year is 30th June. This mean we must hold another AGM before December 2016.

The suggestion is to hold the AGM at our 3rd August meeting. We will be following the new guidelines as set out by NSW Fair Trading for incorporated associations.

Invitation to present books to Coffs Harbour Public School

I was recently contacted by 'Books in Homes' to present a few hundred books to young students from ages 5 through to 8 at their assembly on 7th April. These books were donated via a grant to underprivileged schools in the effort to encourage more reading at home.

ETC Creative Industries Forum 24th May

A few months ago I had a meeting with one of ETC's Business Managers regarding the possibility of holding a Creative Industries Forum at the new Slim Dusty Centre in Kempsey.

This is now a reality with local participation, especially six local Councils onboard. It will be held on 24th May. More detailed information to follow. (A carpool can be organised for transport to this important event.)

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 Coffs Harbour Writers' Group, Romance Writers of Australia and Romance Writers of America and a contest judge for Romance Writers of Australia.

Some writing tips from <http://www.iuniverse>.

"Introduce your main characters and themes in the first third of your novel. If you are writing a plot-driven genre novel make sure all your major themes/plot elements are introduced in the first third, which you can call the introduction. Develop your themes and characters in your second third, the development. Resolve your themes, mysteries and so on in the final third, the resolution." —

Michael Moorcock

"In the planning stage of a book, don't plan the ending. It has to be earned by all that will go before it." — **Rose Tremain**

"Always carry a note-book. And I mean always. The short-term memory only retains information for three minutes; unless it is committed to paper you can lose an idea for ever." — **Will Self**

"Work on a computer that is disconnected from the internet." — **Zadie Smith**

"Interesting verbs are seldom very interesting." — **Jonathan Franzen**

"Read it aloud to yourself because that's the only way to be sure the rhythms of the sentences are OK (prose rhythms are too complex and subtle to be thought out—they can be got right only by ear)." — **Diana Athill**

"Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass." — **Anton Chekhov**

Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival **10 -13 June 2016**

The theme of this year's festival is "PAGE, STAGE AND SCREEN", and well-known and emerging names in these fields have been invited to discuss their art and craft in front of the usual large and appreciative audiences. More information bellingenwritersfestival.com.au

Competitions and 'broadcast' opportunities

Ongoing submissions: Writers Edit <http://www.writersedit.com/submissions/>

Writer's Edit select one short story and one poem each month to publish on the Writer's Edit website. Stories up to 4000 words and poems up to 4 pages are accepted. The chosen writers will be extensively involved in the editing process as well as having their work published and promoted across social media channels to thousands of followers.

Ongoing submissions: The Australia Times Fiction <http://www.theaustraliatimes.org/contributors/>

The Australia Times is a free, magazine-based, non-aligned, grassroots, national online publication. They wish to inspire minds through creating independent media, and are looking for volunteer writers who want to contribute to *The Australia Times Fiction* and *Unearthed Fiction* magazines.

22 April: Style File Illustrator submissions <http://thestylefile.com/apply>

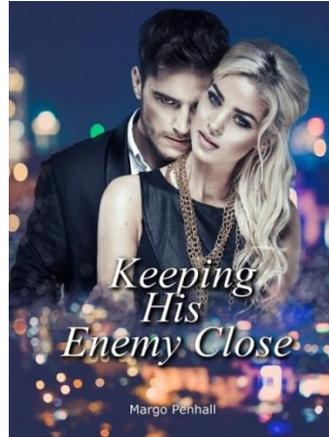
The Style File is a website that features the work of some of Australia's most talented illustrators and is used by publishers, agents and others to find illustrators to commission for work. If you're an illustrator, having your work featured on The Style File is a fantastic way to bring your work to the attention of the Australian industry. Artists may submit eight images to be considered for inclusion by our selectors. Illustrators must be ASA members and must pay an annual fee of \$96 if their work is accepted.

Success stories from our Members

From Margaret Penhall-Jones

My first romance is indie published (self-published) on Amazon Kindle.

Keeping His Enemy Close by Margo Penhall



From Ion Corcos and Lisa Reily

In December, 2015, Ion Corcos was nominated for the Pushcart Prize by [Ishaan Literary Review](#). The [Pushcart Prize](#) is an American literary prize which honours the best poetry, short fiction and essays published in small presses around the world. Ion's poem, 'Faceless Women', was published in Ishaan Literary Review earlier in the year and was subsequently nominated. Here is a link to the poem on Ion's website: [Faceless Women](#).

Lisa ended 2015 with her second feature screenplay, 'The Curse', making it to the quarter finals of the 2015 Aura Screenwriter Awards. This was its fourth competition success for the year. A mythological drama, 'The Curse' is based on the ancient Greek myth of the Minotaur.

Meanwhile, fed up with attempts at her third feature, Lisa tried her hand at some other forms of writing - with more good news! Her short horror story, 'The Groomer', was recently selected as a finalist in the [Create50: Twisted50](#) writing competition. The final fifty best twisted tales from this UK competition will be published in paperback and online. Fingers crossed!

In January, Lisa's 16-word flash fiction piece, 'A Child's Cruel Game', was selected as a Runner Up in the 2016 [Haunted Waters Press](#) Penny Fiction Competition. It will be published in the Fall edition of 'From the Depths', their annual literary journal. This is Lisa's first ever attempt at flash fiction.

Keep communicating those successes, great inspiration and encouragement for our members. That's all for now. Don't forget, contributions please. Your own stories, book or film reviews, writing exercises...whatever takes your fancy. LH