

# Coffs Harbour Writers' Group



Inc.  
*Established September 1986*

**Affiliated with the Northern Rivers Writers Centre**

**July 2016 Newsletter No 292**

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

## **Committee Members**

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## **Greetings**

We've had raging floodwaters and cyclonic winds, visiting whales breaching on sunlit calm seas and lovely surfing dolphins. A smorgasbord of weather! Through all the challenges of wind and water we had the beautiful Coramba Music Festival in the historic Coramba Hall, the thought-provoking Bellingen Writers and Readers Festival (with a definite political twist), survived a cliff hanger of an election and a long, long political campaign...and we have much discussion in the Coffs Harbour community on the new Gallery and Library and the new cultural plan. There is a fabulous new exhibition of paintings and fabrics at the Regional Gallery and 'Upstairs Downstairs Victoriana' at the Museum and new Cartoon exhibition at the Bunker. It is all happening. Get involved and be inspired. So much to think and write about. One of our members, Roger Harris, will stimulate us to discussion with his presentation this month on 'Vietnam – what you didn't know'. Words and photographs on Vietnam to challenge our thinking – just what we need from travel writing.

*Regards Leonie*

## What's on in July/August?

Wednesday 6 July, 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. Fascinating presentation from our member, Roger Harris, on *Vietnam - what you didn't know!* Email the Social Secretary with apologies for the meeting. Don't forget time for membership renewals.

Tuesday, 12 July, 6.00 pm Council Community Forum to discuss cultural plan for Coffs Harbour, Jetty Theatre. All welcome. Come with your questions and views.

Thursday, 21 July, 10.00 pm – 12 noon Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Social Morning. Coffs Harbour Yacht Club YKnot restaurant *Bookings to the Social Secretary.*

Friday, 29 July, 7.00 pm – 9 pm, Latitude 30, port area of Coffs Harbour near the Fish Co-Op. '555 Authors on their way to Byron Bay Writers' Festival'. The authors: Kate Forsyth, Jesse Blackadder, Luke Carman, Gabriel Stroud and Miles Merrill, the spoken work artist, will entertain and entrance you. This is a book your own table event and you can order a meal and drinks.

Wednesday, 3 August, 10.00 am – 12.00 pm Monthly Meeting and **Annual General 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 the meeting.*

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## President's Report

*The President's Report will be tabled at the meeting as Lorraine has illness in her family.*

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## **Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Inc. Annual General Meeting 10.00 am Wednesday 3 August, Cavanbah Centre, Coffs Harbour**

Our incorporation has required another AGM to be held so due notice is given. Members are to please ensure they have renewed their membership (\$20) for 2016/2017 for the pleasure of contributing to the Group but also because only financial members are eligible to vote. Nomination forms for committee positions will be available at the meeting or contact the Secretary. Support your Club!

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## **The Rotary Cartoon Awards Presentation Saturday July 16, 6.30 pm**

### **Bunker Cartoon Gallery**

The annual Awards event will be held on **Saturday July 16 from 6.30 pm** at the Bunker Cartoon Gallery and the emcee and entertainment for the night will be none other than local funny man – Errol Gray – 'The Backyard Balladeer' and many of the cartoonists will be with there on the night.

Entries again this year are described as of a very high standard, funny and topical. Judging was carried out last week at the Brisbane City Hall with a team from the media and cartooning industry.

The Awards competition is now 28 years young and the Coffs Cartoon Collection is now a whopping 21,000 cartoon strong – it's one of the largest in the Southern Hemisphere.

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## **FIVE WRITERS ROAD TRIP**

From author, Zachary Jane

### **Word warriors hit the road again – Byron Writers Festival 2016**

According to numerologists the number five is the most dynamic and energetic of all single digit numbers. That is undoubtedly why the **2016 Byron Writers Festival** is again hosting the **Five Writers Road Trip**. Five writers will head to five towns in five days, talking writing and reading at pubs, clubs, cafes, galleries, schools, libraries, service stations, bus stops...wherever there are readers, the fearless **555** will go.

This year's Fab Five are Luke Carman, Kate Forsyth, GJ Stroud, Jesse Blackadder and Miles Merrill, captained by evil genius and holder of an unblemished van license, Zachary Jane.

'Word has spread since last year's fantastic 'Five Writers' tour, sparking requests from readers throughout northern NSW for the 555 creative crew to visit their town. The Fab Five have a full coastal itinerary planned "that's bound to enthrall and entertain," said Festival Director, Edwina Johnson.

"The 555 tour is tasked with carrying good books and fine writers to places no writers' festival has ever gone before."

This year's **Five Writers' Road Trip** is supported by the Australia Council for the Arts and the Byron Writers Festival. They will be beaming in to Coffs Harbour, Mullumbimby, Ballina, Brunswick and Lennox Head.

**Our local event: Coffs Harbour, Friday 29 July, 7.00 pm – 9 pm, Latitude 30, port area of Coffs Harbour near the Fish Co-Op. '555 Authors on their way to Byron Bay Writers' Festival'. The authors: Kate Forsyth, Jesse Blackadder, Luke Carman, Gabriel Stroud and Miles Merrill, the spoken work artist, will entertain and entrance you. This is a book your own table event and you can order a meal and drinks.**

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### **Members write...**

#### **Roger Harris**

### **Hit the Chef**

He was still wearing that stupid chef's hat when he came into view. It was a damp, drizzly, dark night. The rear entrance of the TV studio was a stark and wet, almost chilling backdrop. I had him in my sights as he opened the rear door of his chauffeur driven Bentley, it was a good night for affirmative action.

This guy seemed to have four cooking shows a night on four different TV channels, and those that weren't running him were running re-runs.

I had a civic duty to perform, as I gently squeezed the trigger. Oops, might have over done it a bit with the ammo, it was a lousy colour to paint a Bentley anyway, metallic lime green, I ask you, the man had no taste. For a moment his body remained in its crouched position as he was about to enter the car, but just above his shoulders it was as though a water melon had exploded, puréed one might say.

The green Bentley was the perfect backdrop, it was like salad dressing, deli style, Italian herb maybe, and as the white chef's hat came fluttering down it was like a dollop of cream on top, poetry, sheer poetry. I'm an artist with an M85.

Well that's a few less cooking shows we have to endure, off to channel 9 now, the footy show is about to finish up. I've got a Kalashnikov for them. It's a dirty job I know, but be grateful there are those of us out there prepared to do our civic duty.

## **Margaret Penhall-Jones**

**Ernest Hemingway: A Moveable Feast (The Restored Edition). Arrow Books © 2009**

Reviewed by Margaret Penhall-Jones

I don't think Ernest 'Hem' Hemingway and I would ever have become great friends. He's so macho and I'm...well, a girl. Who lives in Paris and spends time losing all their money at the horse races? Only a bloke!

This memoir covers the time Hem is living in Paris in the 1920s. He's not a tourist, so he's immersed in the whole experience. Gertrude Stein, in the tradition of the Paris *salon*, is his mentor. He hangs at Shakespeare and Company bookstore and his peer group includes the likes of James Joyce, Zelda and F Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound and T S Elliot.

With those writers in your critique group, you have a head-start!

Hem and his wife have clear values; they eat lovingly-prepared French food at cafes, drink good wine, have like-minded companions and sleep on a mattress on the floor of a flat, the walls of which are hung with paintings by hopeful young artists. In hindsight and from the position of the great success Hemingway became, it's 'bohemian' and romantic.

It's not that I don't relate to any of that; my 'bohemian' mattress-on-the-floor stage was lived in 1970s Sydney in a cheap flat with a harbour view while I studied Philosophy at University. My student friends and I found all the cheap restaurants and free rock or classical music on offer every week-end. Looking back, it was good.

I strain to relate to Hem. I find his writing style too spare, although I am aware many disagree with me.

Yet, he offers aspiring writers important life-lessons.

Hem takes his writing seriously. He's up early every morning and writing before his wife is awake. He only feels good in the afternoon if he has achieved something. Writing is a profession, his *work* and he keeps his time as regularly as anyone in an office or factory. For Hem, there is nothing effete about writing. It is total engagement. There is nothing diletante about his lifestyle. He embraces it fully.

He surrounds himself with writers and *literati* who help and inspire him in his work. They support each other through economic and emotional crises. They encourage each other in their craft.

They challenge each other to do better. They come together to write, to create, to mentor and to critique. They never apologise for spending time being creative.

Could our writing group develop such a supportive community right here, in Coffs Harbour? It's possible. Would I bet all my money on it? No, I've told you, unlike Hem, I don't bet. Still...we could make this our goal.

© Margaret Penhall-Jones

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## **Competitions and 'broadcast' opportunities** *(from Margaret Penhall-Jones)*

### **20 July: AlburyCity Short Story Award**

Open for submissions of stories on the theme of 'memory', up to 3000 words. Winner receives a \$1,000 cash prize.

### **31 August: The 2016 NWF/Joanne Burns Award for Microlit**

Newcastle Writers' Festival and Spineless Wonders invite entries of microlit on the theme 'Landmarks'. 200 words max. National and local categories; cash prizes and potential publication.

### **1 September: Olga Masters Short Story Award**

Open for entries of stories between 2000-5000 words, about any aspect of Australian rural family life. Cash prizes.

### **24 September: New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Writing**

National award for unpublished short-form crime writing in three categories: fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Cash prizes.

### **30 November: Field of Words Writing Competition**

Writing website invites entries to Round Two of its 2016 writing competitions. Cash prizes for winners and runners-up. Monthly finalists published online.

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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*