

# Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Inc.



*Established September 1986*

*Affiliated with the Byron Bay Writers' Festival (Northern Rivers Writers' Centre)*

*July 2017 Newsletter No 302*

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

## Committee Members

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<b>Acting President:</b>	Annette Arthur <a href="mailto:annettearthur53@gmail.com">annettearthur53@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Kim Shepherd <a href="mailto:akimbomakes@gmail.com">akimbomakes@gmail.com</a>
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*Please note: A new committee will be elected at the AGM in August so some positions are acting because of changes.*

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## Greetings

Another wintry month but the whales are still cavorting and we live in one of the most beautiful parts of the world with supportive friends, neighbours and, for the lucky ones, family. Groups like our writers' one also provide camaraderie and support, an outing to look forward to every couple of weeks and a chance to get to know other people outside of formal get-togethers.

Take the opportunity to talk to people at the meetings, organise a cup of coffee on another day and reach out. And reach out into your Club because the AGM is coming up in August. I jumped the gun in last month's newsletter and said it was July (just getting you prepared!) but it definitely is the August meeting. All the committee will be standing down as is the requirement and all positions are vacant. Some people will seek re-election. Please have a go at a position. It is a simple club; it is not running BHP. It doesn't take much time or effort and to use yet another cliché, it is not rocket science. So please nominate yourself or

someone else for a position (with their approval, of course). Don't be shy. Clubs need people to do the organising and it doesn't take a lot of effort. If you have ideas act on them and help your fellow members. Act!

While we are on the subject of friendship, our very dear friend, past President of the Coffs Harbour Writers' Group for many years and accomplished writer, Ninette van Zyl, is heading north to be closer to her daughter. Nina has been suffering ill health for a number of years but she has battled on and tried to attend as many meetings as possible. We will celebrate her contribution and farewell her with due pomp and ceremony at our next Social Morning at Lorraine's home on 20 July. Please bring a plate (with something on it!) *Regards Leonie*

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## **What's on in July?**

**1.30 pm – 3.30 pm Wednesday 5 July 2017 Community Village. Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Monthly meeting preceded by lunch (see below). PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME AND VENUE BECAUSE OF CAVANBAH CENTRE MAINTENANCE**

**12.30 pm – 1.30 pm Wednesday 5 July 2017 Writers' Group Lunch in Chill Out café, Community Village (next to Cavanbah Centre).**

**5.30 pm – 7.30 pm Tuesday 11 July Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Workshop Make your characters come alive! Coffs Harbour Library with Dr Lisa Milner. (see details below)**

**10.00 am – 12.30 pm Thursday 20 July Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Social Morning Lorraine's home, Boambee East. Special farewell for our past President Ninette van Zyl. More details from any of the committee numbers.**

**4 – 6 August 2017 Byron Writers Festival. More details at [byronwritersfestival.com/festival-2017/](http://byronwritersfestival.com/festival-2017/) Our membership number is 26921154 for members wishing to register and gain a discount.**

**Next workshop! Don't miss it and bring along your friends!**

**Make your characters come alive!**

**Coffs Harbour Writers' Group Workshop with Dr Lisa Milner**

**Coffs Harbour Library 5.30 pm (registration) 6 pm start Tuesday 11 July**

**Cost: \$7.50 Coffs Harbour Writers' Group members and \$15 for non-members**

**In this workshop Dr Lisa Milner will teach the tools of effective characterisation, how to draw characters from a range of sources, make them real people, and work them into your writing realistically and successfully. Lisa has recently returned from a study and speaking tour in New York and Seattle and has a wealth of experience in non-fiction and fiction to share. This is a must for everyone from dabblers to the polished professional authors. More information on 0412668315**

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**Members Write!** ...(after a challenge from Annette at our June meeting to write about something good!)

### **Lorraine Penn: Life is Good**

Being part of someone's life for near 20 years and finding out that part of your life is over can be difficult to pick yourself up and start over again, but I did!

As difficult the decision appeared to be at that time, it was the right decision. The wonderful array of family and friends gave me the salvation required.

Being of a strong determined personality there wasn't any choice as there weren't any options other than to move on in my life.

Living with someone who hadn't assimilated to this country, even after forty years and having an extremely complex personality, is something that I found too difficult to deal with, especially having to constantly compromise to make life bearable.

A good relationship grows over time beyond the original physical attraction and deepens into emotional relationship as you grow as a couple, something completely void in our marriage.

Three years on I am totally at peace with the decision and looking forward to my life's journey, which includes writing my memoirs, contributing to my own life's journey '*a compilation of my life's happenings*' in my own blog. Mentoring others in business to achieve their full potential and most importantly a community contributor.

Being able to do the things that please me without any restraints or hindrances from a partner who expected me to be by his side 24 x 7 is without a doubt the most pleasurable personal achievement of all.

Life is good now for this lady.

### **Margaret Penhall-Jones reviews...**

#### **A Tale for the Time Being** Ruth Ozeki 2013

What can Nao, a marginalised 16-year old Japanese school-girl and Ruth, a middle-aged novelist semi-retired to an isolated island off the Canadian coast have in common? It might seem nothing except the great Pacific Ocean gyre which, post-tsunami, brings Nao's diary to the island shore.

This award-winning novel is a fascinating and thought-provoking read. The author's sympathetic style allows us to experience the cultures of modern and traditional Japan, filtered through Ruth's perspective. It plays with concepts which both separate and connect people; time, space and culture. We are asked to confront human brutality; bullying in schools, arms manufacturing, war. Oseki subtly shows us the cost of refusing violence, but also the immense moral courage in doing so.

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## Writing tips for fiction from www.wikihow.com

**Don't start too slowly.** While some writers do start very slowly and let their stories build up dramatic tension over time, this requires a level of practice and skill that most beginning writers just haven't developed yet. Fiction depends on conflict, and that needs to be set up as early as possible. Famous short story writer Kurt Vonnegut once gave this tip: "To heck with suspense. Readers should have such complete understand of what is going on, where and why, that they could finish the story themselves, should cockroaches eat the last few pages. Hopefully, cockroaches won't eat your story, but if you have several initial chapters of ordinary people doing ordinary things without any challenges or problems present, readers may not see why they're supposed to care.

- For example, in the first chapter of Stephenie Meyer's massively popular novel *Twilight*, all of the basic conflicts are established: Bella Swan, the heroine, has moved to a new place where she doesn't feel comfortable or know anyone, and she meets the mysterious hero, Edward Cullen, who makes her uncomfortable but whom she also feels drawn to. This conflict, that she's interested in a person she's also confused by, sets the rest of the action in motion.<sup>[3]</sup>
- One of the inspirations for *Twilight*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, also sets up a central problem within the first chapter: a new, eligible bachelor has moved into town and the heroine's mother is desperate to set up one of her daughters with him because the family is poor and needs to marry off the daughters for them to have a hope of comfort in their later lives. The problem of to find husbands for these women will form a major part of the novel, as will the challenge of the mother's troublesome meddling.

## Competitions from Margaret Penhall-Jones (Click on the Competition title to follow link)

### [14 July: Venie Holmgren Environmental Poetry Prize](#)

Open to unpublished poems up to 80 lines with an environmental theme by Australian and New Zealand citizens and permanent residents. First prize: \$1000. Entry fee: \$10.

### [16 July: The Stringybark 'Dog Eat Dog' Award](#)

This competition is looking for stories up to 1500 words that have a cliché as their title and include one reference to that cliché somewhere in the story. First prize: \$450 and publication. Entry fee: \$12.

### [26 July: Albury City Short Story Award](#)

Open to unpublished short stories up to 3000 words with the theme 'shadows'. First prize: \$1000. Entry fee: \$10.

### [31 July: Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program](#)

[Childrens Book Council of Australia. Prize includes mentoring sessions with Harper Collins](#)

### [3 July: ACU Prize for Poetry](#)

### [3 July: Richell Prize for Emerging Writers](#)

### [14 July: Rockingham Short Fiction Awards](#)

### [28 July: Ipswich Poetry Festival International Writing Competition](#)

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*That's all for now. Don't forget, contributions please. We are a **writing group** – we meet to improve our writing and practise! Send your own stories, book or film reviews, writing exercises, please, to the Newsletter Editor. Don't wait to be asked! Leonie*