



Words Out West

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Central West Writers' Centre Newsletter Autumn 2009

The Central West Writers' Centre is dedicated to fostering the creative development of writers in our region and promoting all aspects of reading and writing through an exciting partnership with Central West Libraries.

Recent events include visiting children's author Michael Panckridge, Summer Read picnic and display of rare books on longitude by curator of the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Paul Brunton, monthly drop-in day for writers and call for entries in the 2009 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards.

Coming up we are looking for beginner writers keen to get started, welcome an insight into Australian cookbooks, detail writing competitions and more.

The Central West Writers Centre is located upstairs at the Orange City Library, Byng Street, Orange. Please phone 6393 8125 or check out our **website blog** for the latest news at www.wordsoutwest.com.au.

Greetings

It is just me.... or is this year getting way from you too? I've received lots of calls and emails from writers who have completed projects, been published, entered competitions for the first time, started new fields of study, purchased journals and conquered self doubt to get writing. So it looks like all systems are go for this being the year to **make it happen**. Put thoughts of the recession behind you and get into writing. Don't forget to visit some of the resources on writing in your local library – check out the “800s” section. And even if you only take one piece of advice from a whole book – it might be the bit that sparks your inner writing flame. See the inspiring quote I found by author John Marsden at the end of the newsletter....

Jasmine Vidler
Coordinator
Central West Writers' Centre

News

Inaugural LitLink/Northern Rivers Writers' Centre unpublished Manuscript Award

LitLink is a state wide literary network, linking the nine Writers' Centres across NSW, supporting and promoting regional writers and developing audiences for Australian literature. Entries to the first LitLink/ Northern Rivers Writers' Centre Award are open to all **writers resident in regional NSW**, outside the Sydney metropolitan region.

Manuscripts may be fiction or narrative non fiction, and must be completed to a final draft stage. Sections of manuscripts or incomplete works will not be accepted. Unfortunately, picture books, poetry and performance pieces are not eligible for consideration. It is essential that no more than 10% of works submitted have been previously published in any form on a commercial basis. Deadline for entries, to be sent to the NRWC, is **5pm Monday 30 March, 2009**. Each entry must be accompanied by the authorised entry form, available online at www.nrwc.org.au or from the Centre, Level 1, 69 Jonson St, Byron Bay. There is an entry fee of \$35 per manuscript, to assist with administration and adjudicating. A shortlist of four will be announced by Friday 29 May. The shortlisted writers will appear at the Byron Bay Writers Festival 2009, where the winner will be announced in a dedicated session. The shortlisted manuscripts will each be read and considered by Annette Barlow of Allen and Unwin, and the ultimate winner will receive a prize, details of which to be confirmed shortly.

Call for entries in the 2009 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards

Central West Writers' Centre in conjunction with Central West Libraries, *The Central Western Daily* and ABC Central West Radio announce the call for entries to the Banjo Paterson Writing Awards. Since established in 1991 these awards aim to honour Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson (1864 – 1941), a great Australian writer and favourite son of Orange, with a competition to foster writing of prose or poetry with Australian content. There are four categories:

Prose or Short Story (Category 1)

Open Poetry (Category 2)

Bush Poetry (Category 3) and

ABC Central West Radio Children's Writing Awards.

Entries in category 1 and 2 and the Children's Writing Awards do not have to be written in the same style as the work of Banjo Paterson or in 'bush style' as the awards are aimed at promoting all forms of Australian writing and all writers. The only requirement is for Australian content – be it theme or style.

First prize is \$1,000, 2nd \$400 and 3rd \$200 in each of the Prose and Open Poetry categories. Bush Poetry has prizes of \$500 for 1st, \$200 for 2nd and \$100 for third. Entry is \$10. The prizes for the Children's Writing Awards are 1st prize \$200, 2nd and 3rd \$100 each. Entry is \$5 for the Children's Writing Awards and entries must be the unaided work of the entrant to age 16 years on Friday 17 April 2009. The competition **closes on Friday 17 April 2009** and winners will be contacted by phone on Monday 15 June 2009. The winning prose entry will be published in *The Central Western Daily* and winning entries will also be published on the Central West Libraries website www.cwl.nsw.gov.au and Central West Writers' Centre website www.wordsoutwest.com.au. This year the Banjo Paterson Children's Writing Awards are being supported by ABC Central West Radio. Entry forms are available from Orange City Library, by phoning 6393 8120, email: library@orange.nsw.gov.au or go to the website www.cwl.nsw.gov.au

Positive US Reading Trends

For the first time in more than 25 years, **American adults are reading more literature**, according to a new study by the National Endowment for the Arts. Reading on the Rise documents a definitive increase in rates and numbers of American adults who read literature, with the biggest increases among young adults, ages 18-24. This new growth reverses two decades of downward trends cited previously in NEA reports such as Reading at Risk and To Read or Not To Read. The report is available for download from: <http://www.nea.gov/news/news09/ReadingonRise.html>

HSC Online Guides – Belonging

A recent visit the Central West by State Library of NSW Online Guides experts included a session on the HSC. The online guides are a fantastic resource that brings together a large number of relevant resources in a logical way. These guides have been developed by Library staff, recently updated and are good starting point to help people access the most useful print, online and electronic resources. English teachers took the opportunity to learn how to navigate resources to **help students studying the current “HSC Belonging” theme. They also discovered handy writing resources and tips on language and style.** Presenter Josephine Hennock said the guides offered so much potential for librarians and teachers to assist students as well as helping them to work independently to find information for themselves. The State Library of NSW online guides can be accessed through the State Library of NSW website www.sl.nsw.gov.au research guides section and users must be NSW residents and registered with the State Library. Central West Libraries also offers access to a range of online databases through its website www.cwl.nsw.gov.au.

Heartening to read fiction nurtures the soul from a politician

You may have seen an article by Federal Assistant Treasurer Chris Bowen in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 11 March page 15 stating that “Fiction gives us an understanding of the motivations of people that is unmatched by any other art form. And that, of course is **the beauty of fiction: it exposes every situation imaginable. Fiction provides a window into the human heart and human mind.**” Bowen was inspired to write these thoughts after a federal politician recently boasted that he hadn’t read a fiction book since he left school. To read the article in full go to the SMH website: <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/fiction-nurtures-the-soul--a-must-for-even-hardhearted-politicians-20090310-8u3f.html>

Events Coming Up

Calling all beginner writers

If you are a beginner writer then this opportunity may help you get started. The Central West Writers’ Centre is keen to host a **series of classes for beginner writers** to meet and work with an experienced local writer. The aim is to work together one class per week, over 4 weeks. If you are committed to writing and want to know what to do next, then send an email to: writing@orange.nsw.gov.au .

Link up with Book Chains

Have you wanted to join a book club without physically attending a meeting? Now you can. Central West Libraries is starting a book chain in to run in May, June and July. We are calling for interested people to send an email to jvidler@orange.nsw.gov.au and then you will receive further details via your email in-box. It is going to be lots of fun. So send an email to find out more and be part of the book chain.

FOOD Week event at Orange: Books on the Menu

A rich tradition of Australian cookery books began in the mid-1860s and has continued to the present day. From the years of abundance to the austerity of the war years, there have been books to meet every need. Colonial era works, while retaining traditional British fare, contained creative new recipes which made use of the country's plentiful local produce. The rationing during World Wars I and II, large-scale immigration and health issues are among factors which have affected Australian cookery book production. Works promoting exotic cuisine from around the globe and special dietary needs all surged in demand. Technology has had an impact on cooking habits. The introduction of the microwave oven transformed cooking methods, while the twenty-first century has heralded an increase in online cookery books and magazines. **The innovative works of favourite cookery writers have become trusted friends in kitchens across Australia. This display, coming to Orange City Library, features reproductions of selected items from the State Library of NSW's vast cookery book collection.** Join State Library of NSW exhibition curator Pat Turner as she talks about the cookbook collection and traces their development. Local foodies will also be talking about their favourite cookbooks and recipes on Wednesday 22 April from 5.30pm – 7.30pm at Orange City Library. Please book by calling 6393 8132. This event is free. The Australian Cookbooks exhibition from the State Library of NSW will be on display at Orange City Library during FOOD Week 17 – 26 April 2009.

Events that Happened

Children's Author Michael Panckridge Visited the Central West in January 2009

Successful children's author Michael Panckridge visited Orange, Molong and Cowra in January to talk about his writing and why his books hold great appeal for children. Author of the acclaimed *Legends* and *Anniversary Legends* series as well as the *Toby Jones* series (his personal favourite), he is also a mad keen sports fanatic. Michael has written more than 30 books including adventure stories and mystery stories. He said he was a reluctant reader himself and was first inspired to write about sport when a child he was teaching said they only book they had read was the *Guinness Book of Records*. He said **a love of reading happens in the home** and that research shows the number of books in the home corresponds to how much enjoyment children will get out of reading. Children and parents were entertained by his engaging style and discussions about the writing process.

Drop-in Days at the Central West Writers' Centre

You are invited to join in our drop-in days usually held on the **last Friday of the month** at the Central West Writers Centre, located upstairs at Orange City Library from 2.30pm – 4.30pm. Meet other writers, talk about writing, or share your writing in a relaxed atmosphere. The next Drop-in Days will be held on **March 27, April 24 and May 29**. All ages and levels of writing experience welcome. The optional take home writing exercise for February was about openings and first lines. **Does your first line attract attention?** Try writing stories with these opening lines:

- "Me," she thought, "pick me."
- The room fell silent. Nobody breathed. Then one man started to applaud.
- Dear reader, you won't believe what happened next.

Happenings, Competitions and Opportunities

Macquarie Group Foundation Longlines and NSW LitLink Program 2009

For the last year of the LongLines Program, Varuna, the Writers' House based at Katoomba, brings you a range of opportunities. **Deadline is April 30** (with the exception of The Australian Poetry Centre LongLines Workshop, which is June 30). Application fee is \$30, and residential fees of \$275 include all food and accommodation. Go to the website www.varuna.com.au for more details. These are the opportunities:

* **LongLines New Australian Film Stories Workshop.** How would your novel/story/book –published, unpublished, or just carefully worked out – work on the screen? We all know about the crisis in the Australian film industry – does your work tell a new Australian story? Five writers with a promising story with potential for the screen will have the opportunity to work with Blackheath firm Ink-to-Screen, to consider the special requirements of the screen story and to explore the processes of the journey from ink to screen. **Send us a pitch showing us the elements of your book/story that would give it a compelling presence on the screen**, plus either your published work or 5,000 words of projected work. This is a six night residential workshop, 5 places.

* **The Playlab LongLines Drama Workshop**, October 26-31. The partnership with Playlab and its links to the best dramaturgs in the industry offers an extraordinary opportunity for playwrights - **three playwrights** will be chosen to work at Varuna with two highly experienced dramaturgs. This is a six-night residential workshop, 3 places.

* **Australian Poetry Centre LongLines Workshop** is from October 5-11. The four poets selected for the Workshop will also be the four poets published in the 2009 New Poets Program. The poets from the 2008 workshop will be published in April 2009 and launched at the **Sydney Writers Festival in Katoomba May 17**. Thank you to the Myer Foundation for their generous support of this program. Deadline for this program only is June 30. This is a six-night residential workshop, 4 places.

* And for **prose writers and poets** –and **maybe illustrators or storytellers**– there is the Different Voices Workshop with Creative Director Peter Bishop, October 12-18. Peter is looking for those **voices that are telling stories** that may not always find a place in the world of commercial publishing. Regional Australia is full of those voices, and bringing them to the notice of publishers is one of the major achievements of the LongLines Program. This is a six night residential workshop, 5 places.

* **Writers with a publication or production record** may apply for LongLines Community Writing Week, to take place at Varuna, October 19-26. Five writers, across all genres, will be **selected for a week-long residency** at Varuna, with writers working during the day, and in the evenings there's conversation and the give and take of ideas about writing purpose and writing practice. During this week, up to ten writers from the Blue Mountains will have a working week, working independently during the day and joining the LongLines writers for three evenings of discussion as well as a Saturday afternoon reading. No workshops – just work practice! This is a seven night residency, 5 places.

Macquarie Group Foundation LongLines Non-Residential Writer Conversation Program

The Writer Conversation is a new Varuna program. You are invited into the company of friends who think and breathe – and above all talk – writing. There are five people – Peter Bishop, Helen Barnes-Bulley and Carol Major in the Blue Mountains, and Julie Gittus and Janet Galbraith in Central Victoria. Conversation isn't instruction or mentorship, and certainly it isn't evaluation, assessment or judgement. **From long experience we know that writing a book is an organic process, and that conversation and community are water and compost.** We know from each other the value of the perceptive word at the appropriate time – and we know that misguided feedback, however well intentioned, can be toxic. The LongLines Non-Residential Writer Conversation Program offers writers the opportunity to have their manuscript – as much as is available – read by one member of the Writer Conversation. The reader will discuss it with at least one other member before having an hour long conversation with you. This is a regular Varuna service (go to www.varuna.com.au), available to all writers at \$295, but only \$100 for the 10 writers selected for the LongLines Program. Enquiries and further information from the Director, Jeni Caffin, at 02 6685 5115 and jeni@nrwc.org.au jeni@nrwc.org.au

Chinese Writing Competition

Kaixin is pleased to announce the winner of the Dec 08 Competition. It is Pip Griffin from Australia for an extract from her Verse Novel, *Ani Lin: the journey of a Chinese Buddhist nun*. The standard of entries was high, and they thank all those who participated. It helps to broaden the experience of China which is what Kaixin is all about. The next competition **closes on 31 March** and for more information or to read winning entries go to the website: <http://kaixin.com.au/kaixin-writing-competition/>

Griffin Theatre Playwriting Award

Starting the year with a bang, Australia's new writing theatre, Griffin Theatre Company, announced a major increase in prize-money for its annual playwriting award. In 2009, the winning playwright will now receive \$10,000 in cash, representing a \$5000 increase on previous years, as well as a brand new laptop computer, thanks to the support of Griffin's Principal Sponsor, PKF Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers. Launching the call for entries, Artistic Director Nick Marchand said: "The Griffin Award has a fine tradition of introducing exciting new voices for the stage. With more than 100 submissions received from every state in 2008, we hope this fantastic prize will now attract even more entries this year!" Now in its 12th year, the **Griffin Award is offered for an outstanding new Australian play or performance text that displays an authentic, inventive and contemporary voice.** Plays or performance texts submitted may be original ideas or adaptations from other forms. Previous winners include Rick Viede (*Whore*, 2008), Damien Millar (*Emergency Sex and Other Desperate Measures*, 2007), Mary Rachel Brown (*Australian Gothic*, 2006), Ian Wilding (*The Carnivores*, 2005), Debra Oswald (*Mr Bailey's Minder*, 2004) and Brendan Cowell (*Rabbit*, 2003). The Griffin Literary Office will assess the entries and prepare a shortlist that will be submitted to a judging panel of industry leaders to select the winner. The winner will be announced in August. To enter go to <http://www.griffintheatre.com.au/Literary/griffin-award.cfm> to download an entry form or contact Griffin's Associate Director / Literary Advisor, Lee Lewis on 9332 1052 to be sent an entry form. **Entries close at 4pm, Friday 3 April, 2009.**

Help Prisoner Library Services

Use your creativity to design a poster, a slogan or write about prisoner experiences. The Australian Prison Foundation is a non-profit group dedicated to providing assistance to those touched by prison in Australia. They support and assist research into Australian prisons, provide information and support to prisoners and prisoner's families and form partnerships of support with other prison groups. This year their campaign focuses on prisoner library services. **The foundation will be producing posters and brochures for both prisoners and corrections staff on the importance of reading skills and access to library services.** So you can get involved by designing a poster, a slogan or has reading in prison changed your life. What difference does the prison library make to your prison experience – this can be your story or the story of another, but must be based on actual experience. There is also a competition for prisoner works of fiction – short story, poem or play. For details go to the [www.australianprison foundation.webs.com](http://www.australianprisonfoundation.webs.com) **Entries must be submitted by 20 April.**

Jessie Street National Women's Library Competition

The 'Weaving Women's Stories' competition is seeking the **life stories of Australian women whose names are not well known.** Write the story of your grandmother, your mother - or your own story. Entries close on 17 April 2009. For more details please call (02) 9265 9486 or email info@nationalwomenslibrary.com.au

Shoalhaven Literary Award

The Shoalhaven Literary Award for 2009 is now open. The first prize is \$1000 plus a two week artist's residency at the Arthur Boyd Centre at Bundanon (near Nowra). The judge this year is Dr Rae Luckie and the closing date for entries is 29th May 2009. For more information and an entry form please go to: [http://www.fawnswoalhaven.org.au/Our Compétitions.htm](http://www.fawnswoalhaven.org.au/Our_Compétitions.htm).

Melbourne Writing Festival: The Great Australian Text Message

The Melbourne Writer's Festival is looking for The Great Australian Text Message (TGATM) or **Gr8 Oz Txt Msg**. Here are some examples by US author Peter Hyman:

Mo B Dik

Call me.
-Ishml

Grps of Rath

Pa n Ma say its awfl dusty out on the rd.
Brng h2o plz. We wl b @ the Bowl.

Advtrs of HckFin

DQMONT but I thnk ant pol-e wnts 2 sivilize u.
Hd fer the Trtories. Tke the rft Jim dsnt wnt it 2day.

The rules are: No more than 100 characters (that includes spaces and punctuation), **entries have to be received by 5pm, April 30, 2009** and the text messages can be sent to 0400 3878 77 or email your message to louise@mwf.com.au. Don't forget to include your name and phone number (and tip: it is no good if your phone number appears as a private number). Try some great Australian classic novels and have fun.

Your inspiration

“Stories come from only two places: experience and imagination.” Australian author John Marsden from *Everything I know About Writing*.

Your words

Let us know what you are reading, and writing or what inspires your writing by sending an email to writing@orange.nsw.gov.au or call 6393 8125 during business hours and check out the **words out west website** www.wordsoutwest.com.au and subscribe to our blog for updates.

End Note

“Almost anyone can be an author; the business is to collect money and fame from this state of being.” English writer A.A Milne (1882 – 1956).



Extra listening on poetry, books and reading

Listen to *Poetica* presented by Mike Ladd, Saturday at 3.05 pm, repeated 3.05pm Thursday. Also tune into *The Book Show* on weekdays at 10am, repeated at midnight. It is ABC Radio National's home for the discussion of everything relating to the written word.

The Central West Writers' Centre is assisted by
Arts NSW, Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation



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