



Words Out West

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Central West Writers' Centre Newsletter

Spring 2008

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 projects have included an author visit by Mike Keenan, writing workshop by Deb Westbury and Books Alive visit by authors Michael Robotham and Leah Giarratano. Coming up we have an Australian Poetry Slam 08 heat on 18 September and Poets on Wheels rolling into town for Wine Week on October 21 as well as our Writers' Centre Drop-in Days.

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

Greetings

Spring is in air....everywhere I look around, no that's another song. Anyway, you catch my drift... Inspiration is for writing is all around and a workshop with Deb Westbury proved it with some time taken to just talk about names. This topic provided continuous prompts for stories: Where did your name come from? How did your parents choose your name? Are you happy with your name? What would they have called you if you were a boy/girl? What about your nicknames? What would you rather be called?

When I was growing up Jasmine was rather exotic and quite unique but all I wanted to be called was Alison like three other girls in my class. Time changes and I'm now happy to be Jasmine even it is still means gifts of tea, perfume and rice. Then there is the classic nickname of all time – "weed"...Like I said the ideas for stories goes on and on.

Jasmine Vidler
Coordinator
Central West Writers' Centre

Books Alive 2008 begins with author lunch in Orange

Guests enjoyed lunch at Kelly's Rugby Hotel, Orange with Books Alive 2008 Ambassador crime author Michael Robotham and fellow author Leah Gerratano. It was one of the first events on the Books Alive 2008 event calendar. The event was supported by Angus & Robertson and Central West Libraries and guests heard how both writers began their careers. Author of *Vodka Doesn't Freeze* and her August 2008 release *Voodoo Doll*, Dr Leah Giarratano, has had a long career as a clinical psychologist. An expert in psychological trauma, she has had many years experience working with victims and **psychopaths**. Her insights have led to realistic (and scary) characters in her novels. Look out for more novels by Leah.

Michael Robotham, author of *The Suspect*, *Night Ferry*, *Shatter* and *Bombproof*, spoke about his past roles of journalist and ghostwriter. He worked on *The Sun* on police rounds and received tip-offs from the notorious "**Postcard Bandit**" who taunted the police. Robotham also spent several years reporting on conflict, crime, heartbreak and tragedy around the world. He was among the first people to view the letters and diaries of Czar Nicholas, Princess Alexandra and their children, which were unearthed in the Moscow State Archives in 1991. In 1993 he quit journalism to become a freelance writer. In the following ten years he ghostwrote fifteen autobiographies – twelve of them *Sunday Times* best-sellers, with combined sales of over two million. This involved collaborating with the likes of Rolf Harris, Geri Halliwell, Lulu, Tony Bullimore and Ricky Tomlinson to put their stories on the page. He has now turned to crime fiction although he still has a great idea for a novel about a rogue Pope.

Mike Keenan Author Talk and Book Launch *The Shadows of Horses*

Mike Keenan entertained a large audience at the launch his latest book *The Shadows of Horses* at Orange City Library, on Friday 4 July. Through his memoir of growing up on the family property, *Myall Plains*, and later running it, he explored many aspects of the Australia bush, telling some **terrific bush yarns** as well as hair-raising anecdotes from his years on the bush racing circuit. Some of his stories were hilarious about racing days in Orange and an impromptu visit to the cemetery which involved a sleeping person and a visit from the police, all told with great black Irish Catholic humour.

Deb Westbury workshop

Poet and educator Deb Westbury hosted a writing workshop at Orange about Writing from the Senses in July. Her poetry has been widely anthologised, including the Oxford Anthology of Women's Verse and her latest book of verse is called "*The View From Here*" which includes new works and selected poems from her collection. Deb had everyone at the workshop writing in no time. Discussions began with favourite words and names to **how to use the senses to write on any topic** and improve your writing. Workshop participants left with enthusiasm for their writing and skills to tackle any writing project. It was also amazing to see Deb's writing notebooks which were crammed with not only words, but drawings, images, pictures from brochures and collected items such as leaves and learn how she uses these treasures in her writing. Truly inspiring.

An inside View from Varuna – The Writers’ House

Bathurst Writing Group member Tracey Sorensen was awarded a Varuna fellowship to work on her fiction project and here is her contribution about the experience:

“I’ve just returned from three glorious weeks at the Varuna Writers’ Centre in Katoomba. Varuna - a big yellow house on rambling grounds - was the home of Eleanor Dark, author of *The Timeless Land*. Her son, Mick Dark, generously gave away his inheritance for the benefit of writers all over Australia and beyond. I slept in the tiny Maid’s Room at the back of the house. Every morning, I’d take a tea-tray out to Eleanor’s studio, a sturdy brick building with large windows and a fireplace. And then, without distractions of any kind, there was nothing for it but to write. It was touching to look up from time to time and see Rod Dark, Eleanor’s grandson, pottering around the gardens. Over the three weeks, I almost finished a complete second draft of my novel, which now goes by the title *The Lucky Galah*. I could never have done it without the luxury of time and freedom from distraction that Varuna provides.”

Events Coming Up

Poets on Wheels on Tuesday 21 October at 6.30pm

Enjoy rhyme, rhythm and wine when Poets on Wheels roll into Orange to present their contemporary works at this **public poetry reading** supported by the Poets Union. Meet the poets, be in the audience or take part in the open section to unearth and encourage home-grown poets to bare their art and soul for a prize on the night. It all begins at 6.30pm with Poetry Reading by David Brooks, Mark O’Flynn and Marvis Sofield at Orange City Library, Byng Street, Orange. Your gold coin donation will assist the Poets Union. The event is also part of Wine Week and includes wine tasting on the night. Visiting Poets on Wheels read for 15 minutes, there is a break followed by an open mic session for local poets. Poets on Wheels will award the best local poem \$40 and prize certificate and a highly commended certificate will also be awarded.

Poets on Wheels Poetry Workshop, Wednesday, 22 October from 12pm - 3pm

Come along to the **Poets on Wheels poetry workshop for adults** to be held in the West Room, Orange Regional Gallery, next to Orange City Library on Wednesday 22 October from 12pm – 3pm with visiting poets David Brooks, Mark O’Flynn and Marvis Sofield. The cost is \$10. Participants should bring around ten copies of one of their poems plus pen and paper. For bookings contact the Central West Writers’ Centre on 6393 8125.

Introducing the Poets on Wheels:

David Brooks – His poetry and fiction have both won and been shortlisted for many awards. *The Cold Front* (1983) was short-listed for the NSW Premier’s Prize and won the Anne Elder Award. *The Book of Sei* (1985) was heralded as the most impressive debut in Australian short fiction since Peter Carey’s *The Fat Man in History*. *The House of Balthus* (1995), was short-listed for the National Book Award, *The Fern Tattoo*, was short-listed for the 2008 Miles Franklin Award. Returning to poetry after a long interval, he has published three further collections, *Walking to Point Clear* (2005; short-listed for the Adelaide Festival Prize), *Urban Elegies* (2007), and *The Balcony* (2008). He teaches at the University of Sydney.

Mark O'Flynn has had seven plays professionally produced, including *Paterson's Curse*, published in 1988. He has also published a novella, *Captain Cook*, (1987) and three collections of poetry, *The Too Bright Sun*, (1996), *The Good Oil*, (2000) and *What Can Be Proven* (2007). His fiction, reviews, essays and poetry have been published in a wide variety of journals and magazines both in Australia and overseas. His play *Eleanor & Eve* was produced at Railway Street Theatre in 2003 to popular and critical acclaim. A novel, *Grassdogs*, was published by Harper/Collins (2006).

Marvis Sofield was born in New York City. Marvis has been an arts administrator, a public librarian and a writer for most of her adult life. She established the Broken Hill Regional Writers Centre, the annual Broken Hill Poetry Festival and has won four Local Government Cultural Awards for her programs and projects. Her first collection of poems *Interstitial Journeys* was published in 2008.

Australian Poetry Slam returns to the Central West

Get ready to **have your say** and welcome spoken word artist Miles Merrill to Orange for the Australian Poetry Slam 08 competition. There will be two heats in the Central West:

Macquarie Regional Library, Dubbo
Saturday 13 September at 2.30pm

Orange City Library
Thursday 18 September at 6.30pm

It is an electric live event where poets, hip hop artists, storytellers and other outspoken wordsmiths get to speak, scream, howl or whisper or sing their original poem, rap, story, monologue or whatever.

Performers, a limit of 20 per heat, can sign up from 30 mins before the start and have 2 minutes at the microphone to impress the judges. It must be your original work and no props to be used. Be in the audience to have a chance of picked as a judge (tip: catch the frisbee). Two winners from the Orange heat will win Sydney flights and accommodation courtesy of **Orange Regional Arts Foundation** to be able to attend the State Final at the State Library of NSW on Friday 21 November. Come along to watch the fun or be part of it. For more information call the Central West Writers' Centre on 6393 8125.

Drop-in Days at the Central West Writers' Centre

Thank you to everyone who has already called in and plans to call in for our drop-in days 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. At the August meeting we heard poems, short stories, saw a finished project and discussed writing tips as well as undertaking writing exercises suggested by best selling crime fiction author Michael Robotham. The next Drop-in Days will be held on Friday 26 September, Friday 31 October and Friday 28 November. All ages and levels of writing experience welcome.

Happenings, Competitions and Opportunities

Gwen Harwood Poetry Prize for Angela Malone

Congratulations to Orange writer, artist and poet Angela Malone who has won the Gwen Harwood Poetry Prize at Tasmanian Writers' Week for her work *Drawing in the Birth Room*. The Prize was created in 1996 in memory of the much loved Tasmanian poet whose work was highly acclaimed throughout Australia. Judges Robyn Rowland and John Foulcher described the poem as "simple, unpretentious and without a stumble or jarring word". They said the poems they were looking for needed to leave the reader changed in some way – emotionally, intellectually or ideally both.

David Harold Tribe Poetry Award - 2008

The University of Sydney Department of English is proud to announce the David Harold Tribe Poetry Award for 2008. This award has been made possible by a generous gift to the university by David Harold Tribe, author and humanist, to promote the writing of poetry in Australia. Applications are now invited for this award to be made in the sum of \$11,000. Closing date: Friday 12 September 2008 at 4 pm. Entry is Free. For Terms of the Award and the Entry Form, see the Department of English website: www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/english/prizes/prizes.shtml or phone the Department of English on 9351 2349 or 9351 3251.

Write about China

Are you suffering from Olympic withdrawals? Why not enter writing competition on China. Prizemoney is \$250 and the word limit is 1,500 and fiction or non-fiction welcome. Kaixin (Happy Heart) is a site developed to bring a different perspective to China. It is run by Zhou Xiaosui and Graeme Mills. As keen writers, Xiaosui and Graeme wanted to encourage fellow writers to think about and write on the subject of China. Please visit the website for full details, entry is \$10. Find the website at kaixin.com.au/kaixin-writing-competition/ or for more information phone 03 6229 6752.

The Examiner Port Stephens Literature Awards 2008

Be in the running for \$1000 in prize money. Adults – short stories up to 2500 words on any theme and prizes are 1st \$400, 2nd \$200 and 3rd \$100 and \$100 for the Tanilba House Awards and four \$50 most highly commended prizes. Entry fee is \$5 per story. Please include a separate cover sheet with story title and author's contact details. Stories to be typed and double spaced. Address entries to: Literature Competition, 6 The Parkway North, Mallabula NSW 2319. Enquiries to Geoff Walker on 4982 4095 and the closing date is 26 September.

Travel Writing: Publishing your articles on a new Australian web site

Here is something new. planbooktravel.com.au is an Australian website dedicated to promoting Australian content. The site offers writers the opportunity to publish articles - fact, fiction, historic, stories, community, news, poems, yarns etc the only criteria is that the **article must be positive and related to an Australian location**. The benefits to writers include gaining exposure for your content and self, link your articles to your own site/blog and resources, publish under your own copyright or choose from Create Commons licenses and interact with other writers in the community. Go to the website planbooktravel.com.au for more details including editorial policy, the joining form, a user guide, examples and information about licensing your work.

Do you know about the ASA calendar?

The Australian Society of Author's calendar is regularly updated. Be the first to find details on awards, fellowships, prizes, **competitions**, residencies and special events. Go to the ASA website to check out the calendar: www.asauthors.org.

Watermarks online exhibition

Watermarks is an online exhibition that explores the pivotal role of water in the history, development, industry and culture of the Orange district. Water sustains land, life and the spirit. It is both abundant and a precious, finite resource. The careful use and management of water and water places is now preoccupying communities, councils and governments. Exploring the **water history of the district** helps us to recognise the vital place of water in every facet of life in the community, past and present. For further information go to the website: www.watermarks.com.au

Youth blogs, images, video podcast material wanted by Vibewire

Want to see your words in print? Keen to expose your work to likeminded people, and receive their comments and feedback? Then Vibewire.net wants your work. Vibewire.net is a project of **non-profit youth media** and arts organisation Vibewire Inc, and is designed to provide young Australians with a forum where they can comment on matters pertinent to their lives. The website is run for youth by youth and relies on your participation and active involvement to work. You can submit an article, write blogs, or provide them with images, video or podcast material. They are looking for engaging work from emerging and established playwrights, screenwriters, scriptwriters and anyone else putting together a piece of work that is made to be performed. No experience is necessary but you must be aged from 18-30 and able to finely craft a stage or screen script to publishable standard. All genres are accepted. If you have been working on a script that just isn't coming together and you feel that you need a bit of feedback Vibewire.net is more than **happy to workshop the piece with you**. This call for submissions is an open one; they accept work throughout the year. For submissions and questions please email scripts@vibewire.com.au or visit www.vibewire.net to find out more.

Katherine Susannah Prichard Short Fiction Award

The Katherine Susannah Prichard Foundation is dedicated to providing a Writers' Centre and related community activities at Katharine's Place, the former home of Katharine Susannah Prichard (1883-1969) the internationally celebrated author of *Coonardoo*, *Working Bullocks* and many other novels, stories and plays. The Short fiction entries must have a **minimum of 1000 and maximum of 3000 words**. The competition is in two sections: 1) Mundaring Community Bank Open Awards - First prize \$600; 2) Shire of Mundaring National Young Writers Awards (20 years and under) - First prize \$75. Send entries to: KSP Short Fiction Awards, 11 Old York Rd, Greenmount WA 6056. For more details, cost per entry, conditions etc... go to the Katherine Susannah Prichard Writers' Centre website <http://kspf.iinet.net.au/>. Entries close 26 September 2008.

Newcastle Young Writers Festival

27 Sept - 1 Oct. Check this out. Australia's premier event for emerging writers, publishers, performers and trouble-makers. Several thousand of the country's most challenging and original young minds will descend upon Newcastle for a five day **creative bender**. Go to www.youngwritersfestival.org for details.

Super Short Story Competition

The theme is open for this one and the maximum word count is 700 – so super short. Prizes are 1st \$100, 2nd \$50 and entry is \$5. For more details contact 9887 1257 or email: fawnorthshore@gmail.com . Closes 31 October.

The Mornington Peninsula Prize

The short story can be up to 3000 words and theme and genre are open. For the poetry up to 30 lines with an open theme and any style. Prizes for short story are 1st \$300, 2nd \$150 and 3rd \$50. For poetry 1st is \$150. To enter: Short Story \$7.50 and Poem \$5. For more information contact FAW Mornington Peninsula Region, PO Box 574, Mornington, VIC, 3931 or email peninsulafaw@bigpond.com.

Science Fiction Writers of Earth Short Story Competition

This competition accepts both science fiction and fantasy from 2,000 to 7,500 words. Competition is open to previously unpublished writers only. Prizes are 1st \$250 plus publication, 2nd \$150 and 3rd, \$75. Entry is \$5 per story. For more details contact Australasian Coordinator Rob Riel by email: jandr@hunterlink.net.au or by post at PO Box 853 Warners Bay NSW 2282 or visit www.flahs.net/~sfwoe.

Your inspiration

“A home without books is a body without soul.” Marcus Tullius Cicero Roman orator, statesman, philosopher and writer.

“People want to know why I do this, why I write such gross stuff. I like to tell them I have the heart of a small boy... and I keep it in a jar on my desk.” American author Stephen King.

“Feelings or emotions are the universal language and are to be honored. They are the authentic expression of who you are at your deepest place,” Australian poet and environmentalist Judith Wright.

Your words

Thank you to everyone who has contributed thoughts about our last edition.

If you are a member of a group that meets regularly to talk about all things writing send your details via email writing@orange.nsw.gov.au or call 6393 8125 during business hours.

End Note

Here is a great way to warm up to writing. “Read one page from a book you enjoy. Reading can put you in touch with the language part of your brain, and put you in the mood for writing. This warm-up can be especially effective if you write at the end of the day. It helps clear away the details brain, the list-making, duty performing, bill-paying, child rearing brain. Reading poetry is especially effective, allowing you to focus on image and rhythm and cadence.” *From The Writer’s Idea Book* by Jack Heffron.



Extra listening on poetry, books and reading

Listen to Poetica presented by Mike Ladd, Saturday at 3.05 pm, repeated 3.05pm Thursday. *Poetica* is dedicated to the performance of poetry and ranges freely among contemporary Australian and overseas work as well as drawing on ancient sources and from bilingual programs, live readings, studio-based poetry features and on location recordings. For more details go to the website: www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/poetica/

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. This daily program explores the many worlds in which we find readers and writers, publishers and booksellers, playwrights and lyricists, bloggers and journalists, book illustrators and type designers -- all working with words and the medium of language. And listen for First Person at 10.45am – it their serialised reading of a published autobiography. For more details visit the website: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/bookshow/>

