



Words Out West

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Central West Writers' Centre Newsletter Summer 2010

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.

Upcoming events include the 2010 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards supported by ABC Central West Radio, Central West Libraries and *The Central Western Daily*, a book launch of *The Bark Cutters* by Nicole Alexander and visit by author/photographer Trisha Dixon to explain Slow Gardening.

Along with its LitLink counterparts across the State, the Writers' Centre was a recipient in the 2010 Arts NSW Funding Program. Arts NSW is the NSW Government's arts policy and funding body and is a part of the new Communities NSW.

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

Okay, we are a couple of weeks into the New Year so dare I ask how are the New Year's resolutions going? I've decided to be much more relaxed about things this year – writing that is. My “lightbulb” thought is that writing should be part of your everyday life. Like my other New Year's resolutions I make every year – they have all turned out to be THE SAME. So new thinking is the order of the day. I can get the eating bit right – only putting in the good stuff (and chocolate and red wine counts you know), then there's exercise bit – well I just go to the gym and that's done, so that just leaves writing. A little bit every day. That is just how its going to be. They say a journey begins with the first step and a poem, story, novel, play begins with the first word. So if you are not on your way to achieving your New Year's resolutions they need modifying now. So you can achieve them, of course.

Jasmine Vidler
Coordinator
Central West Writers' Centre

News – Books continue to be big business

ABC Radio National reported on *The Book Show* that the book business is now bigger than the music industry and on equal footing with film. According to University of Melbourne researchers, annual book sales are worth about \$1.7 billion. Of that, the top ten publishers earn about 60 per cent of the revenue. And if you average out the figures, it means Australians are buying almost ten books a year.

Events Coming Up - Slow Gardening with Trisha Dixon

You may have heard of slow food, now it's time to learn about slow gardening during a special event with author – photographer Trisha Dixon on Friday 5 February at Borrodell on the Mount during Slow Summer celebrations. Trisha will be the guest speaker at lunch from 12pm supported by Orange City Council and the Central West Writers' Centre. Tickets are \$35 and include lunch and a glass of wine on arrival. For bookings call Orange City Council on 6393 8170 or purchase your ticket from Orange City Library. **The slow gardening concept is simply like the slow food one - as life gets crazier and busier, the garden needs to be a place of solace and relaxation, not another 'chore' to be done on the run and ticked off** explains guest speaker, Trisha Dixon. "I'm wanting to establish a movement that is tied in with enjoying your garden for what it is - an outer sanctum to retreat to and one that is tune with the rhythm of the seasons. It is akin to gardening the way our grandparents and those before them gardened - growing fresh organic produce, not using a lot of noisy power equipment, encouraging birds, gardening sustainably," Trisha said. "Gardening is about relaxation and life enhancement and not a stress related activity. Life has a lot of pressures – don't bring these with you to gardening. Gardening needs to be our metaphorical 'time out' – from the children, the bookwork, the housework, the stresses of life. Sometimes we go out with our mental 'to do' list – first pruning, then seeding, then finishing the rock wall – putting the garden instantly into the 'chore' category. Rather than focus on what needs to be achieved or completed, think about how beautiful it is – perhaps take your camera out as that makes you look for beauty. Garden for the senses – fragrance, food and sound of leaves, the light at different times of day, the seed heads as decoration and encourage birds to your garden with water bowls. It is a call for gardeners to relax, take their time and follow seasonal rhythms – a philosophy – to follow your own instincts as opposed to what you think you have to do as a gardener," Trisha said. Trisha has travelled extensively throughout Australia photographing and documenting historic gardens and has consulted on several significant gardens. She is the author of a number of garden books, including two on the plans and gardens of Edna Walling, and is columnist for *Gardening Australia* and *Outback* magazines.

Book Club Buzz

Summer time and the reading iswell easy. Ease back into reading this Summer with a relaxed chat about favourite books, including books to film, from local Book Clubs. Come along to Orange City Library and **tell other book clubbers what "read" created the most buzz at your meetings**. If you wish to come along and tell others what was the most talked about book at your group, please call Orange City Library on 6393 8132. Other members of your book club are most welcome to attend the event that will be "buzzing" with conversations about books. This will also be the first meeting of the year for Central West Libraries Pageturners Book Club. For our Pageturners group at Orange City Library *The Slap* by Christos Tsiolkas was the most controversial. We'll compile a list of Orange's favourite Book Club reads. Refreshments will be served and it all happens on Wednesday 10 February 2010 from 5.30pm - 7.30pm at Orange City Library, Byng Street, Orange. Please RSVP to 6393 8132.

Nicole Alexander launches *The Bark Cutters*

The Bark Cutters is an Australian family saga that centres around a family property. Past and present interweave in a story that traces four generations of the Gordon family from the arrival of Scottish immigrant Hamish Gordon to the life of his great granddaughter, Sarah. **Full of action, romance, tragedy, family secrets** and misunderstandings this novel has something for everyone. Nicole has been writing for 18 years and has previously released a highly regarded collection of poetry and comedic dating book for men. Following a glamorous career in Australia and Singapore Nicole returned to her family's property in the later 1990s. A fourth generation grazier, Nicole works full time on the property northwest of Moree in northern New South Wales and is currently completing the sequel to *The Bark Cutters*. Meet Nicole Alexander at Orange City Library, Byng Street, Orange on Thursday 29 April at 10.30am.

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. The next Drop-in Days will be held on **Friday 26 February and Friday 26 March**. All ages and levels of writing experience welcome. Most recently we welcomed writers from Parkes (and they have some interesting projects going on), had some lively conversations about hot book topics, how to get started writing, and how to make time to write.

Opportunities – 2010 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards

Poet, solicitor, journalist, war correspondent and ballad writer Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson (1864 – 1941) was born on February 17 and to celebrate his birthday the 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 Banjo Paterson, a great Australian writer and favourite son of Orange, with a competition to foster writing of prose or poetry with Australian content. Banjo is most famous for writing the ballad *Waltzing Matilda* and the poem *The Man From Snowy River*. 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 categories 1 and 2. The third category is bush poetry with 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 these awards and entries must be the unaided work of the entrant to age 16 years on Friday 16 April 2010. The competition **closes on Friday 16 April 2010** and winners will be contacted by phone on Monday 21 June 2010. 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 and entry conditions 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

Mick Dark Watermark Fellowship for Emerging Nature and Environmental Writers

Applications for the Mick Dark Watermark Fellowship for Emerging Nature and Environmental writers is now open. A partnership has formed between Varuna, the Writers' House and The Watermark Literary Society. Varuna's partnership with the Watermark Literary Society and the Mick Dark Watermark Fellowship will replace the original Mick Dark Writing Fellowship for Environmental Writing. This fellowship will be offered once every two years, starting from 2010. Mick Dark, son of Eleanor Dark and Dr Eric Dark, made a gift of their Blue Mountains family home, Varuna, to Australian literature in memory of his parents. Entry fee is \$30 – cheque or money order payable to Watermark Literary Society.

Eligibility:

Literary merit will be the over-riding criterion

Publication of a novel length work of fiction or collection of short fiction, memoir or biography or other work of non-fiction

Publication of a significant extract of a novel-length work or work-in-progress

Publication of least 3 short stories in major newspapers or literary journals

Publication of 3 articles of at least 1000 words each in major newspapers or literary journals or collections of essays

Publication of an individual poetry collection or at least 10 poems in major newspapers or literary journals or anthologies

2 long pieces (20 minutes) or 4 short pieces (5 minutes) broadcast by a recognised radio station

A play workshopped or performed by a recognised theatre company

Residency and Mentorship

The Fellowship offers 3 weeks residency in the Camden Haven on the mid north coast of NSW with mentorship from Ian Templeman AM, poet, editor and publisher, and 3 weeks writing residency at Varuna, the Writers' House in the Blue Mountains. The two periods may be consecutive, subject to availability of accommodation at Varuna, but must be taken no more than six months apart. The Fellow will be one of the writers invited to attend the 2011 Watermark Muster to read from work completed or in progress. Travel and accommodation will be paid.

Applications must be accompanied by an outline of the work to be undertaken (one double-spaced A4 page), an excerpt from a published work (not to exceed 1,000 words); a 300 word piece about yourself and where you live. The closing date 1st March 2010 and announced 9th April 2010. The Camden Haven Residency is available during June or July 2010. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entertained. Entry form downloadable from the website: <http://www.varuna.com.au/watermarkfellowship.html> Full details of the Mick Dark Watermark Fellowship can also be seen on the Watermark website: <http://www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/About/About-Fellowship.htm>

Byron Bay Writers Festival Litlink Unpublished Manuscript Award

First prize of a two-week residency at Varuna, The Writers' House, and manuscript consultations, with a follow-up recommendation by the Varuna team to publishers. Submissions need not be completed, but must be at significantly advanced stage of development. Application fee of \$55. Application forms and details are available at the Varuna website www.varuna.com and entries close on 30 March 2010.

Queensland Poetry Festival - Call for expressions of interest

The Queensland Poetry Festival, to be held 27-29 August 2010, is calling for expressions of interest. Looking for individuals and groups interested in performing at the festival. All performers remunerated, and interstate performers will have travel and accommodation expenses paid. Entries close 3 March 2010 and full details and application forms at www.queenslandpoetryfestival.com

4th Dungog Film Festival

Call for script entries for the Dungog Film Festival (to be held 27-30 May 2010). The Dungog Film Festival In The Raw live script read program is a key festival event, which has attracted an impressive list of writers including Fiona Seres (*Love My Way*) Dave Warner (*Garage Days*) and Julia Leigh (*The Hunter*). Leigh's 2008 In The Raw script *Sleeping Beauty* was recently financed by Screen Australia and is set for production in 2010. The 4th Dungog Film Festival In The Raw program is calling for submissions of unproduced feature, miniseries and TV series scripts by Australian nationals. Selected scripts will receive \$9,000 (approx.) in script development support to perform the script live for audiences at the 2010 Festival. Entries close on 1 March and details at the website at www.dungogfilmfestival.org

The Henry Kendall Poetry Award

This competition has been running since 1989 by the Central Coast Poets. There is an Open theme; max 32 lines; first prize \$500; entry fee \$7. Run biennially by the Central Coast Poets. This year's judge is Michael Sharkey. There is an anthology of the best poems published after the prizes are awarded. Details and entry forms from the website www.centralcoastpoets.com.au and entries close 12 March 2010.

Fish Poetry Prize

Fish Publishing runs this poetry competition each year, and publishes the winners in the annual Fish Anthology. This will be launched during the West Cork Literary Festival, July 2010. The UK-based poetry prize is open to international entrants with a €12 entry fee; €1000 first prize. The best ten poems will be published in the 2010 Fish Anthology. Entries close 30 March 2010 and entry details and forms available from the website: www.fishpublishing.com

And for something different – check out these reading and writing blogs:

Try Literary Gnat by author Wendy James;

www.sophiecunningham.com/blog/

www.tonyparkblog.blogspot.com/ for an insight into Africa.

www.tomcho.com

www.whisperinggums.wordpress.com

www.readingadventures.blogspot.com

www.scribepublications.com.au/blog

Your inspiration

"For me the chief advantage of writing is that it can be done anywhere. I recall writing almost the whole of a short story in *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* on a plane coming down from Cooktown. I've taken copious notes at a luncheon table in Santo, in small pub rooms in Charleville and Roma when I was on the Writers' Train. I've written in a convent bedroom on Palm Island, on the wharf at Magnetic [Island]". Australian novelist and short story writer Thea Astley (25 August 1925 – 17 August 2004) wrote this comment *Australian House & Garden* magazine, 1997.

Your words

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 to be listed on www.wordsoutwest.com.au or send an email with your feedback.

End Note

"Just the knowledge that a good book is awaiting one at the end of a long day makes that day happier" – novelist Kathleen Norris.



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 8pm weekdays. 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 the NSW Government through Arts NSW.