



Words Out West

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Central West Writers' Centre Newsletter Winter 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 included a book launch for Russell Moor for his book *Woolsheds The Anvils that Forged a Nation* and the announcement of the 2009 Banjo Paterson Writing Award winners.

Coming up we have an Australian Poetry Slam Regional Heat at Cowra, author Catherine Jinks will visit to talk about her research for *The Dark Mountain* – a family saga with connections to Orange and we invite you to a Poetry Workshop with the experienced poet Les Wicks.

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

Hello and winter is well and truly here. I have been reading witty and amusing writing from nonsense poems to some clever literary sayings (check out the Inspirations) from the likes of Mark Twain and Oscar Wilde. I hope you find them as inspiring and amusing as I do. So the idea this winter is to use the cooler weather to your benefit: stay warm, keep writing and most of all write what you want to write. I hope you keep your sense of humour through it all - even by reading the comics, watching a funny movie or put your writing to the test and get that humour down on paper (computer, pencil, notepad, whatever) you know the drill. So what are you waiting for? Get to it. There are workshops, author visits and competitions to enter. And have a laugh.

Jasmine Vidler
Coordinator
Central West Writers' Centre

News

2009 Banjo Paterson Writing Award Winners

Environment and relationship themes emerged across all the sections during the judging process of the 2009 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards. The environment theme is not surprising as the competition aims to honour Banjo Paterson and foster writing with Australian content. Entries in the Open Poetry had topics ranging from bushfires to trees, nature, animals, landscape, sky as well as a sense of community with recollections, family and life experiences. The Children's Writing entries also reflected the nature theme with **bushfires, frost, dogs, ducks, stars and outback adventures** as topics. The judges' comment was that "as a collective they encapsulate the richness and diversity of Australian life, exploring characters as diverse as rodeo cowboys, sponge cake judges and reflecting on timeless themes of love, friendship and betrayal." The Awards recognise Orange's literary history and further encouraged writers to develop their craft. Congratulations to all the entrants and we announce the following winners:

Prose: Peter W. Bishop, of Scone, NSW for "Lukey"

Panagiotis Papathanasiou, of Hackett, ACT, for "The Lure"

Sarah Michell from Lithgow, NSW for "Going Without"

Open Poetry: Judy Johnson, Cardiff, NSW for "The Bushranger's Bible"

Mark Miller, of Shoalhaven Heads, NSW for "Small-Town Journal"

Jo Mills, of Darlington, WA for "Ledge Beach"

Bush Poetry: Ron Stevens, of Dubbo for "The Shame of Staying Put"

Ellis Campbell, of Dubbo, NSW, for "Eulogy of Crows"

Kristen Martin, of West Beach SA, for "Memories by the Murray"

Children's Writing Awards: Isaac Bath, of Duramana NSW for his poem "Bushfire"

Samuel Bath, of Duramana, NSW for his poem "Ducks of the Wild" and Rebekah Ritchie, of Forest Reefs, NSW for her story "The Climbing Experts". The Yvonne Zola Encouragement Award goes to Lachlan Fenemor, Orange for his story "Doggie Adventure". The winning entries in each category can be read on the Central West Libraries website Reading and Writing page www.cwl.nsw.gov.au

Central West Writer heads to Masterclass – Congratulations to..

Central West writer **Debbie Johansson** has been selected to attend a Masterclass with writer Debra Adelaide (author of the *Household Guide to Dying* and *The Hotel Albatross*) next month as part of The Write Around the Murray Festival held at Albury each year. The program is designed for experienced writers who already have a substantial work in progress, fiction or non-fiction, and are keen to explore ways to develop or complete their work. For more information about the Murray Festival go to <http://www.writearoundthemurray.org.au/>

Red Dog imprint to be launched

Melbourne children's book publishers, Black Dog Books, are set to launch an adult imprint, Red Dog in July. Check out their website www.bdb.com.au for updates, news and **submission guidelines**. Black dog books currently publish books for everybody, but especially for children. The sort of books kids will want to pick up and read — and pick up and read again. They are passionate about giving children the right books, and fuelling their enthusiasm for reading.

Happenings

Successful Launch of *A Country Childhood* by Leone Healy at Neville

Leone Healy's social and political history, *A Country Childhood*, was launched by Frances Press, Senior Lecturer, Early Childhood, School of Teacher Education, Charles Sturt University, on Saturday, May 16 in the local hall of Neville, near Blayney. The book was very warmly received by the 50-60 attendees. As guests arrived they were serenaded with nostalgic music by a charming Ukulele band. Special guests included the Mayor of Blayney Shire Council, Cr Bruce Kingham and he officially opened the launch and welcomed guests, while relating to his audience how important publications like *A Country Childhood* are to our **future generations**. Ms Press launched the book, speaking warmly of her relationship with Leone and memories from her own childhood. Then followed Mrs Healy reading from her book and sharing amusing anecdotes from her early life in Carcoar. Leone is a proud left-leaning grandmother of six, and dedicates *A Country Childhood* to her grandchildren. "I want to show them who we are and the effects of economic fundamentalism viewed through my social scientist's eyes". Leone is also the author of the award winning memoir "UP!- a mother's journey to freedom with her deaf son". *A Country Childhood* details Leone's life growing up on an isolated farm in Central Western New South Wales from 1937 until 1955 and her life as a nurse, mother, social scientist, public servant and advocate for deaf children.

***Poetry on the Boards* at the Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts**

The *Poetry on the Boards* event was organised by poet Carly Brown as part of the Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts held on the June long weekend. Here is her report:

The Poet, eager to share his chosen verse.

Gathers racing thoughts and gumption.

To atop the Boards.

Now to stand amongst his peers, and deliver

with passion, rhythmic rhyme and meter.

Soothing ears. Enriching the soul.

The poet retires from the telling of tales.

Joining the crowd once more.

High on poetry. Affected by his moment in the sun.

He reflects. Gathers racing thoughts.

Unwittingly the Poet, has just taken part

in his next Greatest work.

The Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts is pleased to announce the new venue for *Poetry on the Boards* at the Historical Grenfell Railway Station was a huge success. The morning opened with a musical set by the wonderful Grenfell Town and District Band, and proved to be an **artistic springboard** for a whole host of poetic imagery. Many thanks go out to the magicians of verse that came to atop the Boards and share their spoken craft, to delightfully captivate the audience. Seated on wool bales Grenfell and its many visitors were taken on a journey from the humorous to the touching, and were privy to the nostalgic coal fire and Grenfell Rail History presentation.

The apt combination of poetry and rail history have opened the door for *Poetry on the Boards* to expand the connections of our own Henry Lawson, and revisit the many rail references in his stories and verse. We can be sure that Henry would be more than pleased with the way The **Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts** is continuing to nurture “*Poetry on the Boards*” and the continued celebration of the spoken verse on the Saturday morning of the June long weekend. So mark it in your dairies for 2010 and we’ll see you all again for Henry’s birthday. To view the great photography from Poetry on the Boards 2009 go to www.grenfell.org.au/henrylawsonfestival

Rural historian Russell Moor launches Wool Sheds book

Author Russell Moor launched his book on Wool Sheds *The Anvils that Forged A Nation* with an event at Orange City Library in June. Agri-politician Harold Balcombe spoke eloquently at the launch commending Russell on his writing efforts and keeping rural history alive. His book also includes a **photographic collection** of significant wool sheds that still stand in one of the earliest settled areas west of the mountains. The book was made possible by the resources and assistance of the Marsden Memorial Rural History Research Centre and the Royal Australian Historical Society. It is available from all local bookstores.

Competitions and Opportunities

Newcastle Poetry Prize

Two sections: Open (\$11 000) and New Media (\$2 000) with a local award (\$500) for the highest placed poem in the Open Section from a poet residing in the Hunter Valley. Entry fee \$20 plus GST. For details visit www.newcastlepoetryprize.com. Closes 10 July.

Mudgee Valley Writers 12th Biennial Competition

You have until Friday 31 July to get you entries in for this Writing Competition.

The sections are:

Open Theme: Short Story - Adult - 2000 words maximum, Short Story - Junior 11-16 - 1000 maximum, Short Story - Junior under 11 - 1000 words maximum.

Poetry (Rhyming) - Adult - 60 lines maximum, Poetry - Junior 11-16 , Poetry - Junior under 11.

Novice Categories: Short Story by an author who has not previously won a prize, (monetary or commendation at time of entry) 2000 words max.

Poetry (Rhyming) by author who has not previously won a prize (monetary or commendation at time of entry) 60 lines max..

For adult entries please send a cheque or money order - \$5 per entry or \$12 for three entries. Junior section entries are free.

Prizes Adult Sections – First \$150, Second \$50 and Junior Sections - First \$50, Second \$25. Highly Commended and Commended Certificates awarded. For entry forms contact: Competition Secretary, Mudgee Valley Writers Inc, PO Box 356, Mudgee NSW 2850 or email jillb@winsoft.net.au

The Society of Women Writers National Poetry Competition

Entries close on 12 August 2009 for this one. There is an **open theme**; maximum of 40 lines; entry fee \$5; First prize \$300, second \$200, third \$100. Details and entry forms from the website www.womenwritersnsw.org/awards.html.

Mona Brand Award

The Central Coast Region of the Fellowship of Australian Writers runs this award. It is a **Short Story competition** closing on 31 August. Maximum word count 2,000 words; open theme; no entry form required. Entry fee \$5; first prize \$200. Full details at www.alexander.bigpondhosting.com/monabrand.htm. Call Helen Luidens on 02 4363 2627 for more information.

Bruce Dawe National Poetry Prize

The nationally acclaimed poet, Bruce Dawe has endowed a national poetry prize valued at \$1,500 per annum to be administered through the Faculty of Arts at the University of Southern Queensland to **encourage poets throughout Australia** and help recognise the important contribution they make to Australian culture. The closing date is 14 August 2009. Visit the website at www.usq.edu.au/daweprize for further information and copies of the conditions of entry and entry form or call (07) 4631 1065.

2009 Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards

These awards honour Rolf Boldrewood, the pen name of Thomas Browne, who during his time as a **police magistrate in Dubbo** wrote *Robbery Under Arms*, one of the first major Australian novels. The competition aims to foster the writing of prose and poetry with Australian content. There are sections for Prose – fiction, article or essay, (3,000 words). Poetry in any form or style (maximum 80 lines) on an Australian theme. An entry fee of \$10 must accompany each entry and entry form. Entries close on Friday 18 September 2009. Download an entry form from the Macquarie Regional Library website: <http://www.mrl.nsw.gov.au/>

2009 biennial GC O'Donnell essay prize

Submissions for the 2009 biennial GC O'Donnell essay prize are due by 30 September 2009. The prize is awarded to the **author of an unpublished essay** displaying original thinking on a topic of the author's choice regarding copyright and the protection of the interests of authors. The winning entry is likely to exhibit original ideas on issues of practical importance in copyright or on copyright theory. The competition is open to any interested persons, including authors, lawyers and students. The prize of AUD\$3,500 will be awarded at the 2009 Copyright Law and Practice Symposium in Sydney on 15 October 2009. Entries should be a minimum of 5,000 and a maximum of 10,000 words. For more information, click <http://www.copyright.org.au/essayprize>

Another way to build your writing profile

Something writers and publishers often mention is having a writers' platform: a place where other people can see your writing – whether it is your own website, blog or anywhere that **showcases your writing**. Here is a free and neutral service for writing letters called www.newspaperletters.com Writing prose to newspapers and magazines is, of course, just one form of writing but it is an easy way of getting a personal profile on the internet. In many ways it can be thought of as the world's easiest blogging platform ... or 'blogging for grown-ups'. Members use their platform to send letters to the editors of serious publications. The main advantage is that all letters (even those that don't appear in print) are placed on a user's home page automatically and therefore published on the internet. The platform is then a single point of reference for a user's letters.

For authors and writers the platform:

- 1) Is easy and fun to use and can provide light relief for writer's block.

- 2) Serves as another marketing channel, particularly for new and emerging writers.
 - 3) Provides examples of the writer's work (albeit generally prose) for prospective employers.
 - 4) Has many community aspects allowing like-minded letter writers to contact each other, form groups, comment on each other's submissions and so on.
 - 5) Is ideal for letter-writing campaigns addressing industry-specific concerns.
 - 6) Allows the 'as published' version of the letter to be uploaded and juxtaposed with and compared to the 'as written' original in the event of the original being edited.
- It takes about five minutes to join and there is online help and you can contact them via email if you need assistance. So get writing and have fun.

Events Coming Up in the Central West

Australian Poetry Slam 09 Regional Heat comes to Cowra

For a fun and entertaining night come along to Cowra Library on Friday 3 July from 5pm – for performers to sign up and 5.30pm for the event to start. Performers have 2 minutes to impress the judges, selected randomly from the audience, with their poetry, song, story or whatever. It can be **funny, serious, your own story** but it must be original. Remember no props and stick to the time limit. Two winners will go on to compete at the Australian Poetry Slam State Final to be held at the State Library of NSW on 13 November, with the winners from that Final going on to perform at the National Final at the Sydney Opera House on 3 December. So come along and be part of it and have your say.

Author of *The Dark Mountain* Catherine Jinks visits Orange

Meet Catherine Jinks, author of *The Dark Mountain* - the story of two fiercely strong women, mother and daughter, one determined never to explain her choices and the other equally as determined to dig deeply and unrelentingly for the truth. Based on a true story, this **astonishing tale features a memorable cast of characters**, including Australia's first female novelist and one of the country's earliest, most notorious serial killers. The tale is told through the eyes of Charlotte Elizabeth McNeilly who was born at Oldbury, Sutton Forest, NSW in 1828, the eldest child of James Atkinson and his wife Charlotte. Both her parents were writers and her mother was also an accomplished watercolour painter and amateur naturalist. Her sister Caroline Louisa Atkinson, known as Louisa, became well known as a botanist, writer and artist. Jinks confirms her reputation as a masterful storyteller with a meticulously researched exploration of public shame and private passion, set against the brooding backdrop of the Southern Highlands with links to Orange. Jinks undertook some of her research for the novel in Orange. Come along and hear more about this amazing family history and the research behind the story.

A Frost Fest and National Family History Week Event
History, fact and fiction with Catherine Jinks

Orange City Library
Byng Street, Orange
Saturday 8 August
12pm - 1.30pm
Free

All welcome, please RSVP to 6393 8132

Poetry Workshop with Les Wicks

This poetry workshop will have an emphasis on the nuts and bolts of establishing a poetry audience. A key component of the day will be traditional workshoping where participants' poems are discussed (don't worry, it's not intimidating, just working together to make a good thing a little better). But this won't be all that's covered. Participants will benefit greatly from applying insider's hints on how the poetry scene works. Poems are examined with a view to finding outlets that fit your style... all in addition to intensive editorial feedback. Other topics include running your own projects, taking up opportunities offered by the internet and, of course, getting your book published. Experience has shown this approach is highly effective... combining practical information with an artistic dialogue among peers. Everyone who so wishes will have their poems published in an established internet magazine. Les Wicks is widely published both in Australia and overseas, an accessible poet with 8 collections to his name. He's been involved in dozens of editing projects over his 30 years as a writer and has done his popular workshops from Hobart to Byron Bay to Perth.

Poetry Workshop with Les Wicks
Sunday 30 August from 1 - 5pm
West Room next door to Orange City Library
Byng Street, Orange
Cost \$20
Ph: 6393 8125 to reserve your place

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 **July 31, August 28 and 25 September**. All ages and levels of writing experience welcome. The optional take home writing exercise for June was about setting and creating a sense of place in your writing. Try placing one of your characters in these settings, how do you describe it? For example, if it is a Summer day do you write "it is hot?" Or does your character "wipe the sweat from their brow"? Try writing your character into these settings:

- A wedding reception
- Car park
- Shopping centre, a busy library, horror movie screening or posh restaurant.

Byron Bay Writers Festival 2009 runs from 7 – 9 August

The Byron Bay Writers Festival Program is now on line and tickets are on sale. You can purchase a 1, 2 or 3 day pass and tailor it to create your own Festival experience. View the program online and savour the fest of writing and ideas. For more details go to the website: <http://byronbaywritersfestival.com.au/v1/index.php>. And check out The Byron Bay Writers Festival marquee program is a smorgasbord of brain food, but why not pull up a chair at the banquet of Festival lunches and dinner to satisfy all your cravings? Start with Thursday 6 August's traditional long sporting lunch. *What a balls up: memorable sporting moments* is the springboard for point scoring opportunities with surf writer Sean Doherty, sports journalist Roy Masters and more sporting stars.

Your inspiration

Witty and paradoxical sayings have gained my attention this season. What are your favourites?

“I can resist everything but temptation” – Irish playwright Oscar Wilde (1854 – 1900)

“The more things change, the more they remain the same” - French writer Alphonse Karr (1808 – 1890)

“Real knowledge is to know the extent of one’s own ignorance” – Chinese philosopher - Confucius

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

“A successful book is not made of what is in it, but what is left out of it.”

– American author Mark Twain (1835 – 1910).



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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