

New England
WRITERS
CENTRE
For people who love writing and reading

Newsletter
October-November



**Celebrating History & Identity
in New England**

History Week, an annual statewide celebration of history, is an initiative of the History Council of NSW. Armidale once again features prominently in the program of events, a number of which will be presented by the Writers' Centre, Australian History at UNE, and the Aboriginal Cultural Centre & Keeping Place, and will feature Henry Reynolds, Roger McDonald, David Roberts and Julian Croft.

About the events

***Drawing the Global Colour Line**

A public seminar with Henry Reynolds, discussing the findings in the new book he has co-written with Marilyn Lake. This ambitious project explores how white intellectuals and politicians in Australia, South Africa, the United States and Great Britain embraced the concept of a racial hierarchy in order to maintain white-privileges and to counter demands for racial equality.

Time: Friday, September 21, 9.30 am

Venue: University of New England, Armidale - Arts Building, Lecture Theatre A2

Cost: free event, everyone welcome to attend.

***Aboriginal Massacres across the New England Region**

A discussion between Henry Reynolds and Aboriginal elders

Times: Friday, September 21, 2.00 pm to 3.30

Venue: The Aboriginal Cultural Centre &

Keeping Place, Kentucky St, Armidale (near Marsh St corner)

Cost: \$5 including afternoon tea

***The importance of national identity to Australian writing**

A panel discussion, to be followed by audience questions, with Roger McDonald, Henry Reynolds and David Roberts, chaired by Julian Croft. Debate will range across issues such as the crossover between history and identity, what does un-Australian really mean, how necessary a sense of national identity is to Australian fiction, and whose identity. This event will be opened by Richard Torbay, MLA.

Times: Friday, September 21, 5.30 pm (finger food) for 6 pm start

Venue: New England Regional Art Museum, Kentucky St Armidale (near Marsh St corner). Enter via NERAM Café.

Cost: \$15 including finger food, phone 6772 7210 to book.

***Making Fiction Work in History**

A workshop, in which Roger McDonald will share his experience of writing historical fiction. He will explore themes such as research – how much, and at what stage - and creating the voice, mood and atmosphere of period and people. A chance too for participants to get feedback about their own projects.

Times: Saturday, September 22, 1.30 pm to 4

Venue: NEWC

Cost: \$40/ \$30 members, bookings essential.

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WORKSHOPS COMING UP

***Manuscript Consultations October 4-6**

Director of Varuna – The Writers' House, **Peter Bishop** will be with us soon to give one-hour manuscript consultations. Cost: \$25 (members only). Just a few places left, so book soon. Send about 20 pages (double-spaced) of material, plus a brief description of yourself as a writer, what you hope for and fear, to NEWC by September 28.

***Polishing for Publication with Wendy James**

Saturday, November 3, 10am to 4pm. \$50/\$45.

This one-day workshop with **Wendy James** will help you get your work polished, edited, ready for publication. If you're not quite at that stage, the workshop will help to get you thinking in the right directions.

END OF YEAR GET TOGETHER

WHEN: Friday, December 7
WHERE: The Imperial Hotel
TIME: 6.30 pm

ALL WELCOME
Drinks may be purchased at the bar.

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

Susan Mitchell workshop

Fifteen people with different writing aspirations and experiences spent five hours with Susan Mitchell on Sunday 19th August. We were there to learn about writing biography and, to be honest, I didn't think there was going to be enough time for the task, particularly as we spent the first two hours explaining who we were and why we were there. But by the end of these first two hours I had pages of notes and ideas! By questioning us further as we each talked, Susan managed to give us loads of information about writing in this genre. She worked with our needs and queries rather than covering any prepared workshop notes and she delivered what we wanted to know. We even had time to have a bit of a practise interview and writing at the end. So 'thank you Susan'. For me anyway, it was well worth the trip to Armidale.

Su Dorland.

Error! Contact not defined. **and Susan Mitchell Workshops**

I am writing a social history on my experiences on the Berkley Tablelands – as things were as opposed to what they are now. Initially, I felt very much that I was the new kid on the block but I need not have worried – the workshops were fantastic. Wendy was very helpful and gave me lots of pointers. The thing that stuck in my mind from Susan's workshop was "The first sentence must grab the reader". I don't feel quite so isolated now and am looking forward to History week and Henry Reynolds.

Jeanne Wilson



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DROP-IN WORKSHOP

January to November

On the last Thursday of each month from 1.30 – 3.30 pm at NEWC. You can drop in to read your work in progress and get feedback, or listen to and support others. Any style of writing is welcome – poetry, prose, drama – literary or genre. This event is free to members, \$5 per visit to non-members

WHAT WE DID THIS YEAR

Please email or snailmail a paragraph about what writing you did this year, published or not. Tell us about competitions you have entered; your favourite book, fiction or non-fiction; and/or poem. Mark to the attention of Pam Summers.

Celebrating History & Identity in New England

About the participants

HENRY REYNOLDS is ARC Senior Research Fellow, School of History & Classics, at the University of Tasmania. His research interests include Aboriginal-European relations, racial thought, frontier societies, and early colonial settlement.



Much of his work has focused on the frontier conflict between European settlement of Australia and indigenous Australians. His books include *Frontier: Aborigines, settlers and land* (1987, 1997), *Dispossession* (1989), *With the White People* (1990), *Fate of a Free People* (1995), *Why Weren't We Told* (2000), and *Black Pioneers* (2000).

He has received numerous awards, including in 1988 the Human Rights Commission Award for Literature for *The Law of the Land* (1987, 1992), and in 1996 the Australian Book Council Award: the Banjo Award for non-fiction.

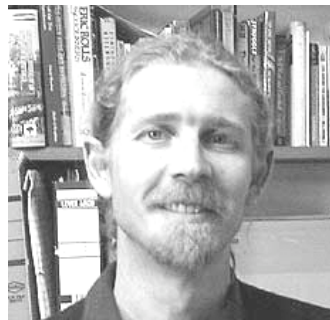


ROGER MCDONALD is a poet, essayist and scriptwriter, but is perhaps best known as a novelist. His novels include *1915* (1979) turned into the acclaimed ABC TV series,

Slipstream (1982), *Rough Wallaby* (1989), *Water Man* (1993), *The Slap*, *Mr Darwin's Shooter* (1998), and *The Ballad of Desmond Kale* (2006). The internationally acclaimed bestseller *Mr Darwin's Shooter* was awarded the New South Wales, Victorian, and South Australian Premiers' Literary Awards, and won the National Fiction Award at the 2000 Adelaide Writers' Week.

DAVID ROBERTS is a lecturer in Australian history at UNE and editor of the Journal of

Australian Colonial History.



His research interests include Australia's early colonial history, nineteenth century rural and frontier history, and Aboriginal rock paintings. His publications include *Ancient*

Ochres: The Aboriginal Rock Paintings of Mount Borradaile (2003, with Adrian Parker), *Carl Warburton's Buffaloes: Adventures in Arnhem Land*, and he was co-editor of the recently released *Great Mistakes of Australian History*.

JULIAN CROFT is a poet, novelist, and lecturer in literature. He is Emeritus Professor in English at UNE, and has written and edited eight books, the most recent of which is a study of the Australian novelist Joseph Furphy, which won the McCrae Russell prize in 1991. He is currently working on a history of Australian poetry in the twentieth century.



He is also a poet and a novelist, and his first collection, *Breakfasts in Shanghai* (1984), was the Asia/Pacific winner of the Commonwealth Poetry Prize. His books include *Their Solitary Way* (novel, 1985), and *After a War (any war)* (poems, 2002).

ASA SLAMS PAY TO DISPLAY

The Australian Society of Authors has condemned Angus & Robertson booksellers for its proposed imposition of a 'pay to display' fee on some 70 percent of the membership of the Australian Publishers Association.

"This is an outrageous insult to Australian authors," executive director, Dr Jeremy Fisher, said. "Only yesterday the Australia Council highlighted the parlous state of Australian literature in education. Now, the private-equity owners of Angus & Robertson, Pacific Equity Partners, are trying to bully their smaller suppliers into paying

for the ‘privilege’ of shelf space in Angus & Robertson-owned stores. They are hurting not only these publishers but also their authors. Angus & Robertson is stealing money from Australian authors, whose average income is only \$11,000. That amount is probably even less than the *daily* income of the directors of Pacific Equity Partners!”

In a proforma letter to its suppliers, Angus & Robertson makes the extraordinary statement that “over 40 percent of our supplier agreements fall below our requirements in terms of profit earned”. It seems they only want to stock books from publishers (and authors) with guaranteed saleability. If this is their attitude, the ASA calls on all book-buyers to boycott Angus & Robertson-owned stores because their proposed policy is such an insult to Australian authors.

Note: Angus & Robertson franchisees are not subject to the company policy. The ASA does not call for a boycott on Angus & Robertson franchisees.

WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO ASA SLAMS PAY TO DISPLAY? WE WILL PRINT THE BEST LETTER IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

NEWS FROM PETER BISHOP

The second LitLink week is in full swing as I write this. One of the great features of the week has been lunch with literary agent Sophie Hamley, of Cameron Cresswell, Jessie Cole (Northern Rivers), Susanna Freymark (Northern Rivers), Joanna Baker (Booranga), Lisa Walker (Northern Rivers), **Nancy Christie (New England)**.

Now this one's important, and exciting: The Penguin/Varuna Scholarship! Penguin Publisher Ben Ball was so excited and curious about the writers and the work coming to light through the Macquarie Bank Foundation LongLines Program (the less populous states, the territories, and regional areas of NSW, Vic and Qld) and the NSW LitLink Program that he devised a plan with us to get some of these manuscripts onto the desks of Penguin's top editors. The Penguin/Varuna Scholarship is an award of \$5000 plus 30

hours of editorial time to further the development of a writer selected from the LitLink and Long Lines Programs. Varuna selects 8-10 manuscripts of fiction or narrative non-fiction at an advanced stage of development from both programs. This is an annual award – in other words, an annual opportunity to bring top quality manuscripts to the attention of Penguin editors! This is a marvellous pathway for LitLink and LongLines writers.

Every writer, of course, will want to be included in those ten manuscripts! Creative Director Peter Bishop, in selecting manuscripts each year, wants to emphasise the great range and quality of manuscripts being developed across Australia. There will always be more excellent manuscripts than there are available spaces, but Varuna is committed to the development of pathways for writers, particularly those working away from the metropolitan centres of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. So expect further pathways and opportunities! There is no application process for the Penguin/Varuna Scholarship. Selection is by invitation only. Selection has already been made for the 2007 Scholarship list, and the list will be available on the Varuna website, News and Diary section, early in October.

THE AUSTRALIAN SCREEN COUNCIL

FOREIGN OWNED MEDIA CONGLOMERATES WILL EXPLOIT PUBLIC SUBSIDIES – INDUSTRY TO SUFFER

Media Release: Friday 10 August 2007:

The Australian Screen Council (ASC) today responded to Arts Minister Brandis' announcements setting out the details of the Government's film and television package announced in the May Budget. The Minister's recent letter to the industry indicates he has consulted widely and listened to industry on many key issues. “However it will all mean nothing if Australian television broadcasters are able to exploit the rebate,” said Trish Lake, ASC Chair.

“Our great concern is that broadcasters will bow to pressure from their overseas owners and take production in house – displacing the Australian independent production industry and reducing the diversity and quality Australian audiences deserve.”

The intention of the legislation was to strengthen

local industry and attract more private investment to the sector. Australian free-to-air networks are, per capita, the most profitable in the world. This potential access by broadcasters is a clear distortion of the intent of the package.

“To access Australian airways, these broadcasters are obliged by law to show a certain amount of new Australian programs. Now the Government wants taxpayers to subsidise the meeting of these obligations. The goal of the film package was to grow Australian production business – not to subsidise profitable international media conglomerates and foreign venture capitalists.” The Australian Screen Council urges decision makers and parliamentarians from all sides of politics to act decisively to ensure the film and television package’s original intentions are delivered in the final legislation. The Australian Screen Council comprises the four peak organizations of the Australian film and television industry – the Australian Directors’ Guild (ADG), the Australian Writers’ Guild (AWG), the Media and Arts Alliance (MEAA), and the Screen Producers’ Association (SPAA). Further information: Australian Screen Council Chair, Trish Lake on 0412 189 977. For contact details of member organisations: Stephen Asher on 02 9281 1554.

MEMBER PROFILE

Helen Evans



How did it all begin?

Reading was my favourite pastime when I was a child and I dreamed of writing books but no one suggested a pathway. I was encouraged to train to be a teacher when I left school. After a short time teaching English and History in secondary school, I retrained to become a pre-school teacher. It was having children of my own and working in a pre-school that made me really interested in storytelling.

What then?

I worked in a pre-school for nearly sixteen years and then transferred to teaching at TAFE in the Child Studies Department. There I loved teaching students about quality books for children, language games and different methods of story telling while I was increasing my knowledge at the same time. Students were required to make simple books for use with children and I made one as a sample. It was a tactile book without words. I enjoyed making it and soon found myself making similar books for my grand children.

What came next?

After several tries to have a picture book manuscript accepted for publication, I gave up. I decided to write stories for my family and illustrate them with tactile pictures. At the same time, I began storytelling in some of the childcare centres I knew through supervision of TAFE students. There are so many wonderful picture books available that teachers read books every day to children but rarely tell stories. Listening to a told story is different from listening to a book. Children benefit from both. Now I go storytelling at a different local centre almost every day. Children and staff look forward to my visits. Here is the link to my storytelling website www.helenevans-storyteller.com

In 1999 I completed a Diploma of Professional Children’s Writing from the Australian College of Journalism. It was a correspondence course and just what I needed. I was encouraged to write for 8 to 12 year olds as those children read the most books. In 2004 I had my first book published (*Watch Out for Bunyips*) and another (*The Big Squeeze*), was published in 2006. This year *Simply Storytelling*, a book for adults, was published by Tertiary Press. You can read about my books on my website at www.helenevanswriter.com

Do you find you are more creative at particular times or in certain places?

I mainly write at the computer but I often get ideas early in the morning while I am trying to work up the courage to get out of bed and into the cold Armidale air.

Where do you find inspiration?

Inspiration comes from the children I talk to, from things that I hear on the news, from my own life, and sometimes ideas just seem to fall into my mind.

What's happening now?

At the moment I am writing a companion book to *Simply Storytelling*. It will contain stories especially for the 2 to 3 age group. I am still making tactile books and completed one this year. I also write an online parenting newsletter each month - www.help4everyparent.com

What of the future?

My goal is to have a picture book manuscript accepted.

Is there a small piece of your work we could put in the newsletter?

I was asked to make a tactile book for a small boy who lives near Moree. Here are the verses that accompanied the pictures.

Here is a House

Here is a house with bush all around
Is anyone home? I don't hear a sound.
The door flies open. Hamish looks out.
He's ready to play and run about.

Here is a tree standing tall.
Here is a nest and that's not all.
Inside the nest what do we see?
Magpie babies, 123.

Out on the plain the emus run.
Cotton and wheat grows tall in the sun.
The silver silos point to the sky
And flocks of birds swoop and cry.

Down by the river and under the trees
Children paddle and play in the breeze.
'Come and play, Hamish, the children call.
'There are stories and music and fun for all.'

Here is the school but there's no one about.
Where are the children? Why don't they shout?
Open the door. Open it wide.

There they are; They're singing inside.

On a soft summer night, the moon shines down
And millions of stars twinkle over the town.
There's a light in the window. Shh! Just peep.
Little Hamish is fast asleep.

NEWS & INFORMATION

Poets for Humanity www.poetsforhumanity.com are inviting submissions (poetry/short prose/music/short movie/art) related to Darfur genocide. The project is to create and maintain a multimedia website (www.writersalliance.net) addressing the genocide in Darfur with the mission of raising awareness about this brutal genocide which has already killed over half-a-million people, mostly women and children. Visit this website and submit creative work to editors@writersalliance.net.

Script Central describe themselves as '... Australia's leading independent script service.' They offer script assessment and script editing costing from \$330 - \$4,950 for five levels of services with level one 'Assessment' to level five 'Full Script Edit'. Contact: Script Central, PO Box 3067, Bundeena, NSW 2230 or (02) 9527 9450 or info@scriptcentral.com.au.

TAFE NSW – Open Training and Education Network (OTEN) is offering two writing for publication courses: Short Stories and Writing for Children. The courses are self-paced through distance learning. Contact OTEN English Teaching Section, 1300 369 or (02) 9715 8701 or oten.access@tafensw.edu.au.

COMPETITIONS

September 21: Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards: Prose up to 3000 words and poetry up to 80 lines. 1st prize bronze Boldrewood bust by Brett Garling and \$600. Send SSAE to The Convenor, Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards, PO Box 1042 Dubbo NSW 2830 or go to <http://www.mrl.nsw.gov.au>.

September 25: The 2007 Marjorie Graber McInnes Short Story Award, stories from 1500-3000 words. Go to: <http://www.actwriters.org.au/competitions/short%20story%20award.htm>.

September 30: FAW NSW Marjorie Barnard Award for a short story up to 3000 words. Prize \$500. Entry fee \$10. Entrants must be permanent residents of Australia. Entries should be original, unpublished, and must not have won a prize at time of entry. Results to be published in *Writers Voice* and on FAW website. Contact: (02) 9810 1307. Entries PO Box 488, Rozelle, NSW 2039.

October 2: Gwen Harwood poetry prize for a single poem or linked suite of poems not longer than 100 lines. Judged by Jennifer Strauss and Mike Ladd. Entry fees \$15/\$10 Island subscribers and members of the Tasmanian Writers Centre. First prize \$1500.
Entry forms <http://www.islandmag.com>

October 19: GC O'Donnell essay prize, 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. Prize \$3500 to be awarded at the 2007 Law and Practice Symposium, Sydney, in November.
Details: www.copyright.org.au/essayprize

October 31: Gippsland Wattle Bush Poetry Award. Entry forms: Gippsland Bush Poets, PO Box 453, Vic. 3841.

November 2: *Overland* magazine Judith Wright prize, sponsored by the Malcolm Robertson Foundation, for poets who have not yet had a collection of their work commercially published. Prizes: \$2000, and two for \$250. A maximum of three unpublished poems per entrant, each entry to be accompanied by a \$5 administration fee. All submitted poems will also be considered for publication in *Overland*. Winners will be announced in *Overland* 191, March 2008.
Guidelines: http://www.overlandexpress.org/poetry_prize.html.

November 9: Shoalhaven FAW One Act play award conducted by the Fellowship of Australian Writers, Shoalhaven. Contact: PO Box 154, Nowra NSW 2541 or <http://www.fawnssoal.com.au>.

November 30: Short and Twisted, stories to 2000 words, super-short stories to 500 words and poems to 30 lines for a 2008 issue. Stories must have a twist!
Go to: <http://www.celanepress.com.au>.

December 31: Fellowship of Australian Writers Tom Collins Poetry competition. Prizes: \$1000,

\$400, four Highly Commended Prizes of \$150 and four Commended entries will receive certificates only. Entry form contact: FAWWA on (08) 9384 4771, or admin@fawwa.org.au or www.fawwa.org.au or Competition Secretary, Entry for TCPP, PO Box 312, Cottesloe WA 6911.

PUBLISHING/FELLOWSHIPS/ OPPORTUNITIES

Tasmania is the Island of Residencies in 2008. Applications are invited from published Australian writers. Writers living on islands are particularly encouraged to apply. Residencies are available between March and November 2008 who have published work on any subject, in any form including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, writing for children and/or young adults, and writing for the stage. Residency details and application forms are available at <http://www.tasmanianwriters.org/residencies>

Wet Ink is a quarterly magazine publishing fiction, poetry and non-fiction and all genres, by new and emerging writers. All published work receives payment. Go to: <http://www.wetink.com.au/submissions.htm>

CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/ FESTIVALS

Into the Blue creative walks: New Year in the Tarkine, two meditations over the new year and January; Meditations in the Tarkine – Gail Pisani; New Year in the Tarkine – Jan Cornell. Contact: Into the Blue, PO Box 123, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, or 0414 929 768 or www.intotheblue.com.au or info@intotheblue.com.au

Watermark Writing Workshop, September 29 – October 1, 8.30am-12.30pm, St Peter the Fisherman Church Hall, Ocean Drive, Laurieton. Cost: \$250 includes lunches. Also Watermark Literary Muster October 2 – October 6. Contact: Lyndal Coote (02) 6559 9953, or go to www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au or Watermark Literary Society, PO Box 284 Laurieton NSW Australia 2443, or phone (02) 6559 9953.