

New England WRITERS CENTRE

For people who love writing and reading

Newsletter
February – April 2008

Welcome to our 2008 program! Some events later in the year are still to be confirmed depending on funding outcomes. But we expect to be bringing major writers of fiction and non-fiction, and in June a children's writer to do workshops and talks at libraries. When events are announced with full details, members are given preference in bookings for two weeks. All events must be booked (by phone or email) and paid in advance (at least two weeks before the event).

Events confirmed and now open for booking:

APRIL: Poetry Workshop with **David Hallett**. Slam Poetry contest, judged by David. See details page 3. NEWC is co-sponsoring the workshop with Poetzinc, and we're putting up \$100 prize money for the open poetry slam. For information and bookings contact Maxine on 6778 5038.



APRIL: Getting Started – one-day creative writing workshop with **Wendy James** (pictured above). Knowing where to begin is often the hardest part of writing, but at the end of this class you'll have characters, a plot, and plenty of inspiration. You'll be ready to start making stories. Award-winning novelist, Wendy, is now working on her third novel. If you're having trouble starting your first (novel, short story or any creative writing) this is the place to get going.

DATE: APRIL 19 (Saturday), 10am to 4pm.
VENUE: NEWC
COST: \$50 members/\$65 non-members



MAY: Freelancing – writing for profit, a one-day workshop with freelance journalist, **Lesley Sly** (pictured). Details page 2.

MAY: Writing Gym – a one-day workshop with Wendy James for writers at all stages. Exercises to limber up the imagination. Bring plenty of paper – and a towel!
DATE: May 24 (Saturday) 10am to 4pm.
VENUE: NEWC
COST: \$50 members/\$65 non-members.

JUNE: Children's writer, details next newsletter.

JULY: Manuscript assessments with Peter Bishop, director of Varuna – The Writers House.

AUGUST: Writing Romance – what is that exactly?
An exciting workshop coming up with Bronwyn Parry, a writer who is rewriting what many people think the romance genre is. Next newsletter, Bronwyn will discuss this in an article. For workshop details see page 2. If participants of the first workshop want to go to a more advanced stage, we'll run another workshop in November.

SEPTEMBER: Major author visit.

OCTOBER: Polishing for Publication, one-day workshop with Wendy James. Ready to polish the final draft, or start the final draft, or just want to know what's involved in polishing your work for publication? Not just major publication, such as a novel, but for smaller works too. It's becoming more and more crucial that writers can polish their work, as publishers offer less and less in the way of editing.
DATE: October 18, 10am to 4pm.
VENUE: NEWC
COST: \$50 members, \$65 non-members

FREELANCE WORKSHOP -writing for profit

Learn how to turn your interests/knowledge into profitable writing for newspapers and general and specialist magazines. Learn interview/research/writing skills, how to analyse publications/readership, write in style suitable for general and specialist publications, pitch stories, syndicate your work, and run a profitable freelance writing business. Lesley Sly has worked as an editor (newspapers/magazines), reporter for print and radio, senior sub editor for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Financial Review*, columnist for *Rolling Stone*, travel writer for *BBC Radio* and various UK newspapers. As a freelance her work has appeared in *The Bulletin*, *Good Weekend*, *HQ*, *Limelight*, and many other national and overseas magazines. She also wrote a 400-page book, *The Power & The Passion, a guide to the Australian music industry*, based on 150 interviews.

DATE: May 10 (Saturday). 10am to 4pm.

VENUE: NEWC.

COST: \$65 non-members/\$50 members.

LOVING WRITING

- an introduction to writing romantic fiction, with Bronwyn Parry

Contrary to the myths, writing romance isn't easy. There's no formula, and no easy path to success in what is now a large, diverse, and highly competitive industry. This one-day workshop will provide an overview of the genre, its markets and readership, and will explore, through practical exercises, examples, and discussion, some of the key skills for aspiring writers in the genre:

- developing a strong premise for a romance novel
- creating complex, empathetic characters
- crafting emotional journeys and character arcs
- using text and texture effectively
- pacing, structure, and plot development
- finding good resources for romance writers.

Participants will find the exercises most beneficial if they have at least some ideas about a novel they'd like to write.

* Bronwyn Parry's first novel, *As Darkness Falls*, will be published in September 2008 by Hachette Australia, with a second book contracted for publication in 2009.

Combining the emotion of a romance with the intensity of a suspense plot, *As Darkness Falls* follows two detectives searching for an abducted child in a traumatised town on the edge of the outback.

Prior to signing with Hachette, Bronwyn's unpublished manuscripts won a number of awards and contests, including a prestigious Golden Heart Award from the Romance Writers of America, and the Valerie Parv Award and Single (Title) and Loving It contest from the Romance Writers of Australia. Bronwyn's interests in the romance genre go beyond writing it; she is also doing a PhD project exploring romance readers' and writers' internet communities and their perspectives on the genre.

DATE: August 16, 10am to 4pm.

VENUE: NEWC.

COST: \$65 non-members/\$50 members/

LONGLINES & LITLINK:

Creating real pathways for writers

Writers of prose, poetry and drama living away from the metropolitan centres of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne are invited to send in applications for the Macquarie Group Foundation LongLines Varuna Workshops and Residencies.

Writers from regional NSW applying for the LongLines Program will also be applying for the LitLink Varuna Residencies – 10 one-week residencies at Varuna during the weeks July 28-August 3 and September 8-14.

For each state and territory, one two-week LongLines Varuna residency is awarded. There are 5 places in the prose workshop, 4 in the poetry, and 3 in the drama. Plus there are 15 non-residential readings and consultations – your chance for a considered reading of your whole work plus an hour long conversation with one of Varuna's experienced team of writing consultants. 35 valuable places in all. But read on!

From 2008, the LongLines Poetry Workshop will be presented in partnership with the Australian Poetry Centre, with additional funding from the Myer Foundation, and the four poets selected will be the four poets to be published in the annual New Poets program – the program that has grown from the annual Five Islands Press New Poets Program. Yes, you read that right – being selected for the LongLines Poetry Workshop means a publication!

For prose writers there's the new annual Penguin/Varuna Scholarship. Penguin has generously provided a \$5000 scholarship, plus 20 hours editorial guidance from Penguin, exclusively for a LongLines writer. Each year, Varuna's Creative Director Peter Bishop selects up to 15 vibrant and viable manuscripts to present to Penguin – that's 15 LongLines manuscripts being read and considered by one of Australia's most distinguished publishing houses. In 2007, 10 of the 18 manuscripts submitted were from LitLink writers. The Penguin/Varuna Scholarship winner will be announced in early April.

A LongLines application can make a lot of things happen!

For more information go to www.varuna.com.au. Phone 02 4782 5674. All applications must be accompanied by an application form with a \$25 application fee. All applications must be postmarked no later than April 30.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Kristal Yee for making the shortlist of the inaugural Penguin/Varuna Scholarship with *Branches on the Wind*, a book about her grandmother, who was an ancestor-worshipping Chinese woman who lived through the twentieth century in the small New England town of Bundarra. Kristal tells this story, with beautiful daring, through the voice of the ancestor.