

New England WRITERS CENTRE

For people who love writing and reading

Newsletter
October - December 2008

NEW WORKSHOP

Getting Started – Making Stories - with Wendy James



Our Getting Started–Making Stories workshop with **Wendy James** (pictured) earlier in the year was booked out and there have been many requests for another one. So, book early to secure a place.

For new members who haven't done this workshop before, it is a great way to get started with creative writing. Sometimes, even for experienced writers, getting started is the hardest part.

In this workshop you'll learn a great range of skills that will help with building confidence. It will also save you a lot of time reinventing the wheel when it comes to basic technique.

Award-winning novelist, Wendy, is now working on her third novel and has a book of short stories being published next year.

DATE: Saturday, November 15, 10-4pm.
VENUE: NEWC
COST: \$65/\$50 for members. Must be paid a week before the workshop.

OCTOBER EVENTS

Hooks & Anchors, one-day workshop with top crime writer **Marele Day**, on Saturday, October 11. 10am to 4pm. \$75/\$65. This workshop is almost full.

Reading and talk, by Marele, on Friday October 10, at Armidale Library, 4pm.

Punctuating Poetry with **Michael Sharkey**, Saturday October 4, 2-4.30pm. \$25/\$17.50.

MARKET BOOKSTALL

In October, we'll be holding a secondhand books stall at Armidale Sunday market. If you want to contribute books for this fundraising event for NEWC, please bring them on the day to the stall (as soon after 8am as possible).

NOVEMBER: HEADS FOR TALES - how to write for young readers

There are a few places left for this one-day workshop with award-winning author of many books for children and young adults, **John Heffernan**.

The workshop will deal with various aspects of writing for young readers, particularly in relation to John's own works, with hands-on exercises.

DATE: Saturday November 1. 10am to 4pm.
VENUE: NEWC.
COST: \$65/\$50 for members. Must be paid a week before the workshop.

What We Did This Year

It helps us to serve members better if we know what you want, and what you're doing. Please let us know by end of November in a couple of paragraphs what you did writing-wise this year. Did you attend workshops? Publish anything? Win competitions? Did your writing improve? And what were the two best books you read this year (fiction, non-fiction, poetry)?

Please email this to us with 'what we did this year' in the subject line, at newc@northnet.com.au

Also, in a separate email, with 'events next year' in the subject line, let us know what sort of workshops you want next year.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.northnet.com.au/~newc

Thanks to **Ingrid Kalf** for her generous and creative work in maintaining the site.

Thanks to: Arts NSW, Armidale City Library, Dymocks of Armidale, New England Credit Union, Telstra Countrywide, CASP – Regional Arts NSW, for sponsorship of the program.



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Phone: 132 067
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Michael Sharkey's book *The Sweeping Plain*, has been published by Five Islands Press Melbourne. Michael, who is Chairman of the Board of NEWC, provided us with this poem from it:

THE PARADISE FLICK

How do we know Eve and Adam were happy, deprived, as they were, of a childhood?

Eve never knew, unlike Adam, a world that was free of the chatter of others.

How did she cope? And how could she choose, if she'd wanted, to live by herself?

What did the man eat that made him hear
voices,
while Eve was inventing frustration?

Where could she go for a break from the sound
of Himself, in his skin suit, like Tarzan,

assuring the bush that he'd just given birth to a
woman?

Did she smile at the fool, or remind him that he
was

asleep when she turned up and found him?
Where could she go to be shot of his need for a
mother?

(A pity she woke him.)
Life for them both was a training film shown in
real time,

on the zen of zoo-keeping.
When the encyclopedia seller arrived, who
could blame her for buying?

No exit pollster asked how she felt
when she left at the end of the movie.

Michael Sharkey

*Youth Online is sponsored, Arts NSW, New
England Credit Union, with Bigpond
ADSL provided by Telstra Countrywide.*



**DOUBLE HONOUR FOR
BETTE GUY**

Former member, Bette Guy, has had one of her poems accepted for the New England Poetzinc Anthology 2008. Her one act play with music, *Delicious Delusions*, is also being performed at the Launceston Drama Festival this month.

WORK SPACE

In response to our email for samples of members work, Craig Schneider sent us his

poem. To whet your appetite, the following is an extract:

HIS FAILING FLESH

The sun had set, but now it is risen
again, it climbs to heaven, but to wane.
I hear it faintly, tic tic, tic toc.
Do you hear the sound – stop!
– of my futility?

The tiny cogs are turning,
but they don't seem to keep the time
exactly any more;
they are
slowing,
and so I
need to wind
the clock up more and more.
A cog has slipped again,
one day it will be all
stripped and worn,
bald and strained.
Hear the clash
of metal and glass
thrown against the wall;
it is the sound of my frustration,
and the fervour of my gall.

- Craig Schneider

FEATURING: KRISTAL YEE

We caught up with member Kristal Yee to see what she had been up to recently and here's what she had to say:

“What am I up to: Hmm... yes I am beginning work on project number 2 while project 1 (the book in question) is 'percolating' - it is not yet a wrap. I am at a point where I imagine many people arrive sooner or later. I'm 90 - 95% done. But I have to be sure that what is on the page will work for the reader (and the publisher who might take it, and the editor who might fight for it). I've been working on this novel continuously for about three and a half years now, and I need to create some distance from the work in order to see it objectively. It's been through a development process with critical readers who are readers and/or writers and an informal 'look' by a publishing house. I imagine, this is the time when, if I was going to toss it in (because of the wood and trees syndrome; the flailing about that happens when one struggles to maintain faith in a work), I would. But we writers don't cave in, do we? We love the process of creating something out of nothing - moulding that thing we express to

people we are unlikely to ever know. My ability to sustain the effort is definitely partly to do with a belief in the work. But I also have a great support network - people who encourage when the even the tough need a big leg-up. That's one of the great benefits of our writers' centres. They provide for community of those with a common interest. I noticed that a good representation of people from New England were successful in the last round of Varuna LongLines/ LitLink awards. I had the privilege of going back for 10 days earlier this year to work on the book and it was during that stay that I realised I wanted to look more closely at how the novel is working on a structural and thematic level. So it's a let-it-sit approach for the 1st book at present, because it needs to breathe.

Of the 2nd I can't say a lot right now. It's in its infancy. Again, something I am passionate about sits at the heart of the work, and again it is something specifically Australian with wider implications. It's at that marvelous, plump and juicy stage where it's full of possibilities and it could swing in any direction before it either splats on the ground or metamorphoses made into some sweet, sweet conserve!”

- Kristal Yee

FAVOURITE SHORTS

The very successful Favourite Shorts festival of short plays will again be happening in 2009. Production will be by the Armidale Playhouse with performances to be held over three weeks in mid/late March and early April 2009 at 'The Newie'.

The Armidale Playhouse is now calling for script submissions from interested and creative playwrights, whether novice or experienced, for next year's program. The cut-off date for receipt of scripts is October 25 so that a final selection of scripts can occur. The Armidale Playhouse production committee will review all scripts submitted and will make the final decision for the selection of scripts for the program that will run over the three weeks. Directors will then select from this final cut of scripts to work on. As general guidance, scripts can range for plays up to 30 minutes long though the average time for past productions has been around 10 minutes.

Themes or topics can be very broad but writers should be aware of limited capacity for large props and sets.

To be mindful of copyright, scripts should be original work although themes might be drawn from other sources. The script author will own

the copyright for their script and must give permission to the Playhouse to perform their piece. Any changes to a script selected for performance can only be made with the permission of the author. The script author also understands that no royalties are payable for the performance of their piece.

Successful script authors will have the option of two free tickets to a performance night that includes their play and they have the option to decide whether or not their play is recorded as part of a DVD of the season. The author will be able to purchase a copy of the DVD at cost price. Scripts can be submitted to scripts@armidaleplayhouse.org.au or Armidale Playhouse, PO Box 368, ARMIDALE NSW 2350. **Contact:** Diana Helmrich, (02) 6773 5051 or go to www.armidaleplayhouse.org.au

NEWS & INFORMATION

Schedule for October *Poetica*, Saturday, 3.00 pm repeated Thursday 3.05 pm: ABC Radio National: 4th Robert Lowell – selected poems including archival readings by the poet himself; 11th *An Ear on my Heart* – poems of motherhood by Kathryn Lomer and Esther Ottaway; 18th *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* – the poetry of D.H. LAWRENCE; 25th, *Slammin' and Jammin'*, a feature of the phenomenon of the “poetry slam” and its vogue in Australia.

Australian Copyright Council new copyright guide for writers out now, also copyright information and advice, publications, training and conferences. Contact: The Australian Copyright Council, PO Box 1986, Strawberry Hills, NSW 2012, or (02) 8815 9777, fax (02) 8815 9799 or info@copyright.org.au or www.copyright.org.au.

Metro Screen is an organisation which offers a range of services to those interested in a career in that area. Contact: Metro Screen, PO Box 299 Paddington NSW 2021 or (02) 9356 1818 or Fax (02) 9361 5320, or go to enews@metro.screen.org.au

A novel in a month? Every Wednesday in November the NSW Writers' Centre will be hosting *write-ins* as part of National Novel Writing Month (NnoWriteMo). NnoWriMo is an international event offering online forums, homepages and podcasts as well as Facebook groups and youth programs for school students. Details <http://www.nanowrimo.org>

Buzz Words is a fortnightly emagazine. It is described as essential reading for people in the children's book industry. Contains up-to-date information, publisher profiles, markets, opportunities, courses, competitions, interviews, book reviews and much more. Go to www.buzzwordsmagazine.com

Playwright News is a regular newsletter full of competitions, awards and other opportunities. Go to www.ozscript.org

Theatre Record is a long-standing bi-monthly UK publication which reproduces reviews of all theatre productions nationally. PlayWriting Australia is currently considering publication of a similar Australian title and would like feedback to help plan the best possible publication. They have posted a short survey for your response on their web site www.pwa.org.au which will be online until October 31. Your contribution will remain entirely anonymous.

If you have any other comments about your experience of the UK *Theatre Record*, that you'd like to see in a local version or any other insights that might aid in the research, drop a line to info@pwa.org.au.

redhen.com.au is described as ‘a simple cost effective, independent, site for the sale of books and music. Perfect for self publishers. The key is credit card and direct debit payments on the internet.’ If you have a website you can offer the redhen payment option along with any other options you might already have. Details: redhen.com.au or 1300REDHEN.

Master of Arts (Creative Enterprise) Deakin University, a course for film producers, directors, creative photographers, novelists, performers or animators. Contact 1300 334 733 or enquire@deakin.edu.au or go to www.deakin.edu.au/postgrad.

Writers online, creative writing courses: Creative Writing 1 from Lifestyle Learning, a ten part course, delivered and returned online. Go to www.lifestylelearning.com

NSW Writers' Centre offers modular online courses paid for by the lesson or more traditional courses in fiction and copywriting. Go to www.nswwriterscentre.org.au

Studynow acts as an Australian broker on-selling courses from other providers. Go to www.studynow.com.au

Sydney Writers Centre offers five-week online courses in magazine writing and creative writing plus a mentoring program with author and journalist Valerie Khoo. Go to: www.sydneywriterscentre.com

The Writer's Studio; courses vary in price from \$345 to \$3495. Go to www.writerststudio.com.au

The Writing Workshop offers courses to children aged 10 and over including after school and holiday workshops. Go to www.writingworkshop.com.au.

Yahoo Writing Workshop directory; go to <http://tinyuri.com/6q5bsu>

COMPETITIONS

October 30: Science Fiction Writers of Earth short story competition for science fiction and fantasy. Prizes: 1st \$250 plus publication, 2nd \$150 and 3rd \$75. Contact: Australasian coordinator, Rob Riel, jandr@hunterlink.net.au or PO Box 853 Warners Bay, NSW 2282 or www.flash.net/~sfwoe

October 31: ArtVenture, Freedom to Create Prize. ArtVenture is described as a philanthropic organisation that seeks to harness the powers of the arts to improve the lives of people in the hardest communities of the world. The inaugural ArtVenture Freedom to Create prize carries a total value of US\$100,000 and is comprised of three different categories: the main prize, a youth prize and a prize to recognise imprisoned artists. Details: www.FreedomToCreatePrize.com

October 31: Scriptwriting (film, television and play) award. Prize money in excess of \$200,000. Categories: youth, indigenous and grey matter (aged over 60), regional and open. Details: www.inscription.com.au or contact Inscription director, Marcus West (02) 9590 3623.

October: 31 Super Short Story competition. Open theme, maximum of 700 words, Prizes: 1st \$100, 2nd \$50. Contact: 9887 1257 or fawnorthshore@gmail.com

October 31: Super short story competition; open theme; maximum 700 words. Cash prizes and highly commended certificates. Contact: Fellowship of Australian Writers North Shore Regional or (02) 9887 1257 or fawnorthshore@gmail.com

October 31: 2008 NSW Writers' Centre Openbook prize for best fiction book, best non-fiction book and most innovative marketing plan. Go to www.nswwriterscentre.org.au

October 31: Mornington Peninsula FAW competitions: short story up to 3000 words and poem to 30 lines. The theme is open. Contact: Peninsula Group FAW, PO Box 574, Mornington, VIC 3931. or peninsulafaw@bigpond.com

November 7: Overland Judith Wright poetry prize for poets who have not yet had a collection of works published. Cash prizes and publication in *Overland*. Contact Overland, Judith Wright Poetry Prize, VU-Footscray Park, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC 8001 or www.overlandexpress.org.

November 30: The New Writer magazine prose and poetry prizes. International competition for short stories, novellas, single poems, poetry collections, essays and articles. More information: www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.

PUBLISHING/FELLOWSHIPS/ OPPORTUNITIES

ABC Radio commissions a range of works from experienced producers who live outside major capital cities. Go to www.abc.net.au/radio/rpf or leavitt.deborah@abc.net.au

Allen & Unwin invite submissions of crime, romance, thriller, history or fantasy. Send first chapter and synopsis to Louise Thurtell, louiset@allenandunwin.com on a Friday.

Text Publishing is accepting unsolicited manuscripts, including upper primary and young adult – not poetry or play scripts. Contact books@textpublishing.com.au or go to www.textpublishing.com.au

HarperCollins Varuna awards for manuscript development 2008/2009. HarperCollins Publishers and Varuna – The Writers' House have been partners in this program of recognition and development for new and emerging writers since 2000. Two new novels developed through this program will be launched early in 2009 – Tasmanian Katherine Johnson's thrilling novel of a sea-chase in the icy Southern Ocean, *Pescador's Wake*, and South Australian writer Siew Siang Tay's sensitive and beautifully sad

evocation of the world of the mail-order bride, *Handpicked*.

The essential feature of the program is that five senior HarperCollins editors select five projects and work with five writers in the supportive residential environment of Varuna – The Writers' House in the Blue Mountains of NSW. This is a wonderful opportunity for engagement and industry experience, and often for profound and unexpected development for both writer and editor. There's no guarantee of publication, but manuscripts are selected on the basis of their potential for publication.

If you're serious about a project of fiction or narrative non-fiction, and if it is developed to the point where an editor would have something solid and absorbing to work with, an application to the HarperCollins Varuna Awards for Manuscript Development is a valuable port of call. In the cases of Katherine Johnson and Siew Siang Tay it was the turning point in their writing careers. Applications for the 2008/2009 program are now open and full information, including guidelines and application forms, is available at www.varuna.com.au. **Closing:** October 30.

The Barbara Jefferis Award, valued at \$35,000, is offered annually for "the best novel written by an Australian author that depicts women and girls in a positive way or otherwise empowers the status of women and girls in society". The Award is paid from the Barbara Jefferis Literary Fund, which was established by a bequest from Barbara Jefferis's husband, ABC film critic John Hinde, who died in 2006. The Australian Society of Authors is Trustee of the Fund.

The judges are academic Bernadette Brennan, author Nadia Wheatley, and literary editor Susan Wyndham. Contact: Dr Jeremy Fisher, ASA Executive Director, (02) 9318 0877 or 0438 318 673. Official entry form go to: <http://tinyurl.com/5a4mw5>.

Closing: November 28 – except for novels published in December 2008 which have a closing date of January 9.

My Street project – ABC Radio National. Think about the street in which you live or another Australian street that you love, hate or are fascinated by. Then create a story about that street in words, pictures, video or sound. This is a multimedia project designed to be shared by everybody no matter where they are in Australia at abc.net.au/rn/mystreet. The best entry will win the chance to work with the Street Stories team to produce a radio documentary about your street or a mutually

agreed topic. Go to www.abc.net.au/rn/street-stories/features/mystreet/ **Closing:** November 7.

The Australian Writers' Guild (AWG) has extended the deadline for entries for the fourth biennial INSITE Competition for Unproduced Feature Screenplays which is presented by the AWG in association with the Adelaide Film Festival.

The winning screenplay will receive a rehearsed public reading during the National Screenwriters' Conference, to be held in conjunction with the 2009 Adelaide Film Festival. The winning writer will receive travel to Adelaide to participate in rehearsals and a cash prize of \$2,500. A shortlist of screenplays will also be sent to a number of Australian producers and distribution companies. The reading will be directed by a leading Australian director and cast with professional actors. Directors in previous years have included Tony Ayres (*Home Song Stories*) and Kriv Stenders (*Boxing Day*) and actors Aden Young, Rhys Muldoon, Ernie Dingo and Leanna Walsman. Entry to INSITE 2009 is open to all financial members of the AWG. Details: www.awg.com.au. **Closing: October 31**

Council for the Arts, is now responsible for administering a new travel fund for playwrights, the Playwright Travel and Promotion Fund. The fund replaces the playwright travel section of the Australia Council fund 'Playing the World'. It aims to eliminate one of the biggest barriers to international development for writers by supporting playwrights to travel overseas in order to create new opportunities for international productions of their work. Playwrights may apply for travel to an existing international production of their work, with a view to making contacts and attending meetings that have a strong likelihood of creating opportunities for future productions, or for a programme of international promotional activities, initiatives and meetings intended to create future opportunities for production. Applications are open year-round, until funds exhausted. For more information go to info@pwa.org.au

Inscription Awards described as the richest prize pools for film, television and play scripts. With a total prize value of \$200,000, it includes a trip to Los Angeles and the chance to work with international script developers. There are seven prize categories including: film, television, theatre, regional, grey matter, youth and indigenous. Contact: Marcus West, (02)

9386 5993 or marcus@inscription.com.au or go to www.inscription.com.au

Sketch, a new Australian literary and art journal invites short story, poetry and non-fiction submissions. Go to www.sketchmediahouse.wordpress.com

CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS FESTIVALS

PlayWriting Australia's National Play Festival, March 16 to April 5. The centrepiece of the Festival is a showcase season of staged readings of six of the best brand new Australian plays. Go to www.pwa.org.au or info@pwa.org.au

The Australian Society of Authors creative weekend for picture book writers and illustrators, November 7 – 11. Nunyara Conference Centre and Holiday Units, Belair, Adelaide. Emerging picture book illustrators who may lack the funds to attend this event are invited to contact the ASA on (02) 9318 0877 or jill@asauthors.org as there is a possibility that funding may be available through the Australia Cultural Fund, www.abaf.com.au.

Sydney PEN upcoming events: Melissa Lucashenko on Survival. Sydney: September 24, Sydney Grammar School - followed by a conversation with ABC presenter Fran Kelly. Canberra: September 25, Australian National Library - followed by a conversation with *Canberra Times* editor Jack Waterford. Anna Funder on Courage Sydney: November 12, Sydney Grammar School - followed by a conversation with world-renowned author, Thomas Keneally. Canberra: November 13, Australian National Library - followed by a conversation with ANU Professor Hilary Charlesworth. Contact: Sydney PEN (International PEN Sydney Centre Inc.), 14A Lonsdale Close, Lake Haven NSW 2263 or 1300 364 997 Fax: 02 4392 9410 or Email: sydney@pen.org.au or www.pen.org.au

Poetry Viva – October 11. Full program available online at www.vivalagongfestival.org 12noon - 4.30pm, The Fine Gallery, Level 2, Wollongong City Gallery, corner of Kembla and Burelli Streets Wollongong, NSW 2500 Contact: Ali Smith (02) 4228 0151 or email scwc@leath.net - free event

The International Conference on the Book October 25 – 27, Washington, DC, USA.

Details: www.b08.cgpublisher.com

NSW Writers Centre Workshops: Writing for the Web with Marsha Durham (08WDURH1) Saturday October 11, 10am - 4pm, members \$85, members' concession \$70, non-members \$125

Publishing Poetry – Breaking Through with Rob Riel (08WRIEL3) Saturday October 11, 10am - 12.30pm. Members \$50, members' concession \$40, non-members \$60.

Writing for the Theatre with Carla Billingham (08WBill2) Sunday October 12, 10am - 4pm Members \$85, Members' Concession \$70, non-members \$125. **Contact:** info@nswwriterscentre.org.au

PoetryAlive/PoetryWild Weekend, Friday (evening) October 10-12: at Geebung, Braidwood, NSW. **Cost:** \$250 (conc \$220) which is all inclusive (meals and accommodation - single and shared rooms). **Contact:** Nicola Bowery or Harry Laing, 02 48461075 or geemonga@bigpond.com

Publishing forum: Varuna will be hosting a special one-day forum New Australian Writing: Pathways to Publication. The forum is being held on Monday, November 3, from 9-5 pm and the venue is the beautiful Carrington Hotel in Katoomba.

The day includes some of the best names in Australian publishing including Jane Palfreyman from Allen and Unwin, Linda Funnell from HarperCollins and Avivia Tuffield from Scribe.

The day is targeted at new and emerging writers in particular, but we are hoping that the session topics and speakers will also be relevant to writers who are more established in their practice. Contact: Madeleine Dignam, executive director, Varuna, The Writers' House, Eleanor Dark Foundation Ltd, 141 Cascade St, Katoomba NSW 2780, (02) 4782 5674/ (02) 4782 5761, Fax: (02) 4782 6220 madeleine@varuna.com.au or <http://www.varuna.com.au/publishingforum.html> Tickets (02) 4782 8900 ext. 5.

Ubud Writers Festival October 14 – 19 www.ubudwritersfestival.com/

Gold Coast Film Fantastic October 16 – 19 www.filmfantastic.com/welcome/page1.php

National Screenwriters' Conference: February 25 – 27, Barossa Valley, South Australia. Contact: comms@awg.com.au

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

I wish to become a member of the New England Writers' Centre (if you don't want to wreck your newsletter, send these details on paper):

Name.....

Address.....

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Email.....

Areas/Interest

.....

New England Writers' Centre - a member of LitLink NSW

Anyone can join. The NEWC is open to anyone of any age, new and established writers, and readers too! It is for people who love reading and writing. Full annual membership including GST is \$28.50, or \$8.00 for students under 18. Send cheque or money order to the New England Writers' Centre, PO Box 1219, Armidale NSW 2350.

CENTRE OPENING HOURS

Tuesday: 1 pm – 4 pm
Wednesday: 10 am – noon
Thursday: 1 pm - 4 pm

Director: Lesley Sly

Office Manager: Janice Burn

Board members: Chairman, Michael Sharkey; Deputy, Kaye Mill; Treasurer, Sue McMichael;

Minutes Secretary, Val Sherwell;

Committee: Steve Harris, Karla Meyer, Pam Summers.

Associates to the Board: Winifred Belmont (public officer).

Newsletter Editor: Pam Summers. Please mark all email and snail mail items to Pam's attention.

How to contact us:

The NEWC is situated in the Neighbourhood Centre, 129 Rusden St, Armidale (between the Council Building and the Town Hall). Access also via Cinders Lane car park.

Phone/Fax 02 6772 7210

Post: PO Box 1219, Armidale NSW 2350

Email: newc@northnet.com.au

Website: www.northnet.com.au/~newc

Next Newsletter: December

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT

<http://www.northnet.com.au/~newc>

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We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following organisations:

NSW Department of
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funding of the
Writers' Centre

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Provision of
accommodation by the
Armidale/Dumaresq
Council

CASP (Country Arts Support Program) for assistance in
funding our program.

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The Country Arts Support Program of Regional Arts NSW is funded by
the NSW Government through Arts NSW

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.