

New England WRITERS CENTRE

For people who love writing and reading

March-June 2014

EVENTS COMING UP!

There will be many exciting events in our program for 2014:

- The Skype Sessions – Creative Writing Online, featuring Peter FitzSimons, Marele Day, Jill Jones, and more.
- Speedtest Your Novel – author clinic with Kate Forsyth.
- The New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crimewriting – in its second exciting year.
- Youth Online – workshops for primary schools.
- Booked In – children’s and young adult literature festival with visiting writers and illustrators.

As always members are given preference in booking for the first two weeks after events are announced. Details of workshops will also be on the website end of March.

Welcoming The New Board

A new governing board was elected at New England Writers Centre Annual General Meeting on March 7. Welcome new members, **Trish Donald** and **Nickie Murcell**. See the full Board list on page 8, and our profiles on **Jim Belshaw** and **Beattie Alvarez**.

Thank You Brian and Liz!

The Board thanks outgoing treasurer, **Brian Neville**, and outgoing deputy chair, **Liz Horne** for their service to NEWC. Brian has been treasurer for many years and did our auditing before that. We are very grateful to him, and to Liz who organised a sponsorship last year for our promotional materials and had input into many other areas.



The Art Of Non-Fiction ... a Skype Sessions workshop with the biggest-selling Australian non-fiction writer for the last decade, **Peter FitzSimons**. See page 7 for details.

SPEEDTEST YOUR NOVEL

Are you writing a novel, or planning to write a novel? Want expert advice? Come to our author clinic and speedtest your novel or your ideas with **Kate Forsyth**.

This award-winning, bestselling author of 26 books published in 15 countries, was voted one of Australia’s Favourite 25 Novelists this year. The one-on-one author clinic offers you the opportunity to quiz an experienced novelist about any writing issue that is troubling you.

There will be only 7 sessions, so book soon!

DATE: Saturday May 10, from 10am to noon

VENUE: Armidale Library

COST: \$15 members, \$20 non-members.

Each session runs for 15 minutes, so to make the best use of the time, you should email a 300-word synopsis of your work to admin@newc.org.au before April 26, and we will forward it to Kate.

As this workshop has such limited places and Kate needs to read the synopsis before the workshop, we will not be able to offer refunds after April 26, as

we won't be able to just slot someone into your place at the last minute.



Kate Forsyth wrote her first novel at the age of seven. Her books include *The Wild Girl*, which tells the story of star-crossed lovers Wilhelm Grimm and Dortchen Wild, who told him many of the most world's most famous fairy-tales. *Bitter Greens*, her retelling of 'Rapunzel', was called 'the best fairy tale retelling since Angela Carter'. Kate's books for children include *The Gypsy Crown* and *The Puzzle Ring*, lauded as 'a richly told erful storyteller.' Kate has spoken at conferences and festivals around the world, including at Oxford University, and has taught writing in the UK, the US, Fiji, Greece, Singapore and Australia. She recently finished her doctorate of creative arts in fairytale retellings. Her website is www.kateforsyth.com.au

Q&A – with KATE FORSYTH

Newsletter editor, **Janene Carey**, asked Kate some questions about the process and value of an author clinic, and also about her other reason for being in Armidale: the launch of her new children's picture book, *Two Selkie Stories from Scotland*, the latest

from local independent publishing house, Christmas Press.

Kate, can you explain how the Speedtest Your Novel session will work?

The session will be a high-speed, high-intensity face-to-face meeting, where I will do my darndest to help the students identify key flaws in their manuscript and answer their questions. The aim is to help the students as much as possible, and I'll be very open to going wherever the students most need help – whether it be advice on publishing, tips on writing better, or close examination of the submitted work.

Will you cater for a wide range of genres and writing issues?

Indeed I will.

What can aspiring authors expect to gain from a 15 minute session with you, and what should they do in advance by way of preparation, apart from sending you their 300 word synopsis?

Firstly, they should get their piece of work into the best possible shape. I'd be horrified to see manuscripts with spelling mistakes, for example. Then they should prepare a list of questions they'd like to ask me, and identify their own key problems that they'd like help with; for example, how to get into a better writing routine. They should come prepared for a frank, open, honest discussion about their manuscript and be open to new ideas and new strategies.

Could you tell me a little about your Christmas Press book, and why as an established author you decided to become involved in this indie venture?

Sophie Masson (the publisher at Christmas Press) and I are old friends who share a love of fairy and folk tales and beautiful objects of art. Last time I came up to Armidale to teach at NEWC I stayed with Sophie and we stayed up late talking about all the wonderful old stories that are not as well-known as we'd like. She had just come back from Russia and was full of enthusiasm for the beautiful Russian folk art and tales she had discovered there. A while later, she told me about her idea to establish a publishing house to bring some of these stories to life and I was an enthusiastic supporter of the first book. We talked about the boundless possibilities of such a project, and I suggested a few of the old Scottish tales that I had heard and loved as a child. Then it was just a matter of choosing two. I know

hundreds so this was the hardest part of the whole process! Otherwise, it's been a complete joy.

I ended up choosing two old Selkie tales. My grandmother's grandmother was born on the Black Isle in the Highlands of Scotland, where such tales have always been popular. Indeed, as I found out later, her mother (my great-great-great-grandmother) is one of the McPhee clan who are said to be descended from selkies, so that may explain why I've always been so fascinated by these beautiful old tales.

NEW ENGLAND THUNDERBOLT PRIZE FOR CRIME WRITING

Thunderbolt rides again in 2014! And once again the New England Writers' Centre has secured excellent support from local sponsors for our lucrative range of crime writing awards. And this year there is an extra award, the Emerging Authors prize, as well as our established categories of Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry, and the New England Award for best local entry.

An impressive line-up of judges has been arranged, all of a very high calibre, with a strong national profile as well as connection with New England.

Fiction judge is novelist **Wendy James**, the author of six books, including *The Mistake* (2012) and *Out of the Silence*, which won the 2006 Ned Kelly Award for Best First Crime fiction. Her latest novel is *The Lost Girls*, about the consequences in a family of a long-ago murder. A former resident of New England, Wendy now lives in Newcastle with her family.

Non-Fiction judge is **Carol Baxter**. Dubbed the 'history detective, Carol is the internationally-acclaimed, award-winning author of such 'true-crime thrillers' as *An Irresistible Temptation*, *Breaking the Bank*, *Captain Thunderbolt and his Lady*, and *The Peculiar Case of the Electric Constable*. She is also a Fellow of the Society of Australian Genealogists and an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of New England.

Poetry judge is long-term New England resident **Yve Louis**, award-winning poet who has published poetry collections with Friendly Street/Wakefield, Kardoorair Press, Five Islands Press and Blue Tongue. There have been six titles in all, including *Lilith's Mirror*, *The Yellow Dress*, and most

recently, *A Door in the Forest* for which she won first prize in the Society of Women Writers biennial book awards (poetry) in 2013. Also in 2013, Yve was the winner of the New England Award in the inaugural New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Writing. Yve was the editor of *New England Review* for several years, and is the founding editor and publisher of the Matilda Poets Series, a chapbook project set up in 2010 to feature women poets of New England.

Entries for the 2014 Thunderbolt Prize will open on March 24 and close on August 1, and there will be a \$10 fee per entry. Winners will be announced on September 12.

1. New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Fiction

First Prize: \$500 for a story of up to 2,500 words.

2. New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Non-Fiction

First Prize: \$500 for an article of up to 2,500 words.

3. New England Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Poetry

First Prize: \$500 for a poem of up to 60 lines.

4. Plus... an extra prize of \$300 will be awarded to a **resident of the New England region** entering in any category.

5. But wait, there's more... the **New England Thunderbolt Emerging Author Prize for Crime Writing** of \$200 will be awarded to the best unpublished writer in any category. Here, unpublished means not having had any of your work previously published in traditional form in a commercially produced book or short story collection, or more than twice in commercial magazines, whether in print form or online. You may have had work self-published or in free online journals.

Please note that all stories, articles and poems submitted for any category of the Thunderbolt Prize must be unpublished, in any medium, whether print or online.

Our generous sponsors include the School of Arts, UNE; The Armidale Express; the Armidale Dumaresq Library; Reader's Companion, Armidale; Chaucer on Bridge Street Gallery Uralla and Friends of Tamworth Libraries.

LOCAL WRITERS - NEWS

NEWC member Tim Marshall, with main author Dr Bernard Doube, will be launching their book *Dung Beetles Down Under* later this month. Tim has some articles in the current issue of ABC

Organic Gardener Magazine, in the 'Soil Special' section, and has stories coming up in farming journals. He will soon be launching a crowd funding project to fund his next book.

Former Armidale resident and NEWC member **Dr Michael Sharkey** has been appointed editor of the *Australian Poetry Journal* for 2014-2016, and wishes to advise that poetry submissions for the mid-2014 issue will be open from March 1 until April 30. Submissions can be sent via the 'Submittable' portal on the Australian Poetry website.

INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Born in Armidale, **Jim Belshaw** attended the Misses Coopers' Kindergarten, Armidale Demonstration School, The Armidale School and the University of New England, where he graduated with Honours in History.

Joining the Commonwealth Public Service as an Administrative trainee, Jim worked in the Commonwealth Treasury and then the Commonwealth Industry Department, including almost eight years as a member of the Senior Executive Service. During this time, he completed a Masters in Economics at the Australian National University.

Jim then returned to Armidale to establish a national information consulting and training practice specialising in the electronics, aerospace and information industries. Moving to Sydney for family reasons, Jim worked as a strategic consultant and trainer, as CEO of a national consulting network and as CEO of the Royal Australian (now Australian and New Zealand) College of Ophthalmologists. Over the last few years, he has concentrated on contract work to give him more time for and to support his writing addiction.

Jim has published a number of articles in economics, management and history, including chapters in several books. He has been an active blogger since April 2006, a regular columnist in the *Armidale Express* since December 2008. His major

writing project at the present time is the completion of the first full history of northern New South Wales, the broader New State New England. He sometimes wonders if he will ever complete the bloody thing, for there is always more to know and write about.



Beattie Alvarez is a reader. She reads anything and everything and when her dad wouldn't let her read a book at breakfast time she read (and memorised) the back of the Nutri-Grain packet, although she has come to the

conclusion that it was fiction she was reading, as she is still waiting to turn into an iron man.

She has only lived in Armidale for three years, needing a tree change after spending close to a decade working for an events management company, then as a freelance makeup artist and penning two novels that are yet to be finished to her satisfaction.

In her short time in the area, Beattie has become a member of NEWC, an editor for local publishing company Christmas Press Picture Books and runs a toyshop in Uralla, Granny Fi's Toy Cupboard. She spends her days at the office (any out-of-the-way café that serves good coffee) with her computer editing stories and working on her own four novels: a grisly murder, a fluffy YA, a story about time travel and her long time baby – Queen of the Universe which she swears is fiction and not fact! Her nights are spent at home with her children and cats, working out the best way to attach fluff to dragons.

Beattie has met many new friends through the NEWC and is part of a writers' group that meets weekly to discuss their work.

Youth Online Workshops -with John Heffernan

Two 45-minute workshops for primary schools with the much loved children's author, John Heffernan:

1. Making your Characters Come to Life

DESCRIPTION: Using key aspects of writing such

as description, suspense, action and dialogue to create effective characters.

AGE GROUP: **Senior Primary**

DATE: Wednesday, June 11, 10.30am. 45min

2. Capturing your Reader

DESCRIPTION: Five key ways to keep a reader interested in your story.

AGE GROUP: **Junior Primary School**

DATE: Wednesday, June 11, 9.30am

THE SKYPE SESSIONS

New England Writers Centre is presenting 10 great online workshops this year on a large screen via Skype.

The tutors will give a half-hour talk, and then there will be time for questions relevant to your own work or arising from the tutor's talk, and also time for discussion.

These one-hour workshops will be held at Armidale Dumaresq Council War Memorial Library, 122 Faulkner St, Armidale. They will either be 11am to noon on Saturday mornings or 4.30 to 5.30pm on a week night.

The project has been funded by CAL (Copyright Agency Ltd), and New England Community Mutual Groups, and we also thank The Armidale Library for providing the venue and internet for this project.

Cost is \$15 members, \$20 non-members per session.

There will be limited places, so don't just turn up on the day. Must be booked with New England Writers Centre (not through the Library), and must be paid 2 weeks in advance of the workshop to hold your booking.

Book by email (admin@newc.org.au) or at the office in our open hours, or by phone (6772 7210).

Session 1: GOING DOWN IN HISTORY

History is one place where you can plunder true stories, rework them as you like, and be safe from the repercussions. Or can you?

If you're interested in writing historic fiction, author **Jesse Blackadder** will take you on an enjoyable jaunt through the trials and travails of working with history. Jesse will discuss

1. history as a rich source of stories
2. the perils and rewards of using real characters, events and settings
3. how 'truth' and fiction can mingle and enrich each other
4. how language can be used to create a sense of time and place.

DATE: Monday, April 14, 4.30-5.30pm



Going Down In History ... with Jesse Blackadder.

Session 2: SCREENWRITING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

This session with **Charlie de Salis** will explore the contemporary screenwriting landscape, the core principles of compelling screenwriting, and the different options available for screenwriters seeking to bring their stories to the screen.

With the extraordinary proliferation of screen mediums, we have more avenues for telling stories than ever before. Cinema and broadcast television (both free to air and subscriber platforms) remain at the heart of screen storytelling, but increasingly writers and filmmakers are turning to the internet to

find their audience via computers, phones and tablets. Digital video has made it possible to shoot HD quality images on cameras as small and cheap as Go Pros. Films are being made on phones. Never in our history has filmmaking been so accessible. Games, too, offer intriguing possibilities for interactive screen storytelling with the exponential rise in computing power. Whether the material is derived from fact or fiction - whether it is delivered in a cinema, via a computer, through a phone or tablet, or via a blue ray disk to a home television – the purpose of stories remain the same: to entertain us while exploring the dilemmas and issues that surround us. Love, death, friendship, family, illness, war, climate change, racism, gender wars, ethical conflicts – stories help us make sense of our lives. With their visceral combination of moving sound and image, screen stories can deliver an emotional punch beyond any other medium. Just as the purpose of stories remains the same over time, so do the principles of storytelling. To tell a good story, a writer needs good craft skills – and in writing for the screen that means control of theme, character and structure. Certainly, there are the scenes, dialogue, and description, but none of these have any value if the fundamentals of theme, character and structure aren't working. Talent without craft is potential, nothing more.

DATE: Saturday, April 26, 11am to noon.

Session 3: THE ROLE OF THE LITERARY AGENT

When do you need an agent? How do you approach an agent? What does an agent do for a writer? What does an agent want you to do (apart from write a good book), in terms of promotion, and maintaining a good relationship with the agent? Does an agent represent you worldwide if you are being published in other countries too?

Literary agent for Cameron Creswell Agency, **Sophie Hamley**, will answer these questions and many more in this workshop.

DATE: Wednesday, April 30. 4.30 to 5.30pm.

Session 4: BLOGGING FOR WRITERS

Blogging – what is it, why do it, and how? **Zena Shapter** introduces you to the world of blogging with a focus on how to do it right. What should you blog about? How do you attract and engage an audience? How should you build a blog, and what factors do you need to consider before starting? From what makes a good blog post to which other

social media channels you can use as part of your online strategy, this workshop will show you what blogging can do for you, and arm you with the knowledge and tips to get started straight away!

DATE: Saturday, May 3, 11am-noon.

Session 5: CRIMINAL INTENT

Marele Day, award-winning novelist and editor of *How to Write Crime*, will reveal her secrets to successful crime-writing and how to transform the seed of an idea into a compelling narrative that keeps the reader hooked.

- hidden benefits of research
- 'rules' of crime writing
- crafting the story – what happens in each draft
- hooking the reader – suspense and intrigue

DATE: Saturday, May 17, 11am to noon.

Session 6: WRITING PLACES

'Lay down these words
Before your mind like rocks.
placed solid, by hands
In choice of place, set
Before the body of the mind
in space and time: ...'
- Gary Snyder, *Riprap*

Writing Places with **Jill Jones** will explore writing about locales, regions, climates and environments. It will investigate how poets write place, and will to focus on both the non-urban and urban, as well as personal interiors – rooms, houses, yards. It will encompass, therefore, ideas about time, the body, memory and journey.

The workshop will also consider ecopoetic and psychogeographic writing as ways of thinking creatively in language.

DATE: Saturday, May 31, 11am to noon.

Session 7: THE DREAM AUTHOR

So, you've got the publishing deal, but what next? Managing Editor of Pan Macmillan Australia, **Emma Rafferty**, will talk you through the steps and skills that you'll need as part of being published. From whether submitting cover ideas is a good idea, to whether you should retain your own international rights, what legal considerations you need to keep in mind, to permissions issues all the

way to publicity photos, Emma can let you know what to expect when you're expecting to be published.

As well as general advice on the whole process, Emma will talk in detail about how an author should approach an edit and their editor in order to get the most positive outcome – for you, for your book, for the publisher, and for your sales.

DATE: Saturday, June 7. 11am to noon.

Session 8: THE ART OF NON-FICTION

Australia's bestselling non-fiction writer for the last decade, **Peter FitzSimons** will introduce you to the art and craft of writing non-fiction.

DATE: Saturday, June 14, 11am to noon.



Session 9: TRANSLATING THE UNSAYABLE WORLD

- a poetry workshop with **Mark Tredinnick** (pictured above).

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare has Theseus say that a poet "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a form." It translates what is unsayable.

A poem is a sculpture of voice, an architecture of utterance. It's what a poet's heart says to her mind, and her voice finds a body for. Each good poem is shapely god; keeping its own secrets, it tells us our own.

"Why write poems," writes Gregory Orr, "If not because grief or joy/ Has seized you?" With Rumi and the mystics, Orr would add that each poem is not just a complex, oblique, emotional cry to the Beloved—a yearning for the rest of who, and where, you thought you were. Each poem *is*, somehow, the Beloved—returned and embodied, in

all his or her manifold and maddening contradiction. A poem "should always replace a yearning," writes Don Paterson. "A poem must take the shape of a woman, a man, a god, or a ghost, or else it is probably no poem at all."

Form and voice, then, are a big deal in a poem. By forcing hard linguistic choices on a poet, line after line, poetic form frees language (forces it, perhaps) to do the other work we need language to do (beyond its functional duties in the market and the kitchen and the story): the work of recasting life's exquisite spell, transfiguring pain, naming injustice, unseating banality, throwing soft bombs, making semantic jazz, hymning, translating what is normally unsayable in one's life and in the world beyond one's self...that kind of thing.

By asking more of language than we normally ask, by letting it invoke as well as evoke, sing as well as say, be as well as mean, poetry divines the world within the world we know and gives it form: an architecture of utterance. another world within the one that meets one's everyday eyes.

Talking through some matters of form, prosody and poetic practice; walking through the drafts of one or two of his own poems and speaking of his own creative practice; reading closely a poem or two by great twentieth-century poets, **Mark Tredinnick**—one of Australia's leading poets and the winner of the Montreal (2011), Cardiff (2012), Newcastle (2007, 2011), Blake (2008) and other poetry prizes—explores the nature and manufacture of poetry and the notion that it translates the unsayable world.

A practical and inspiring workshop on the disciplines of beauty entailed in fashioning a poem. Among many things Mark covers in this introduction to the nature and uses and practice of poetry, Mark will explore:

- Poetic forms, conventions and architectures
- The nature of a line and the uses of enjambment
- Speech music, rhythm and rhyme
- Tone, voice, attitude, person, point of view
- The necessary opacity and difficulty of a poem—how to keep your secrets, but tell your reader hers; how to tell all the truth, but tell it slant
- Showing and telling and indirection
- Devices for getting out of your own way and letting the poem find you and speak itself in your voice
- Poetic modes and sensibilities: lyric, confessional, declamatory, ironical, casual,

formal, conversational, operatic, oracular, academical, comical.

DATE: Saturday, June 21, 11am to noon.

Session 10: DIGITAL PUBLISHING 101

Ever felt that pressure to understand technology and publishing from the inside out and engage with every fledgling social media network and writing platform ever conceived because it's just something you suddenly have to do? What's it all for? And will you ever be able to just write?

This session presented by **Emily Craven** from if:book Australia explores and unpacks the issues and challenges of writing in a networked world faced by all writers, from aspiring to mid-career. It focuses on broad knowledge and skills with plenty of tips and pointers for acquiring any further know-how in your own time. if:book Australia explores new forms of digital literature and investigates the changing connections between writers and readers. Since its inception in 2010, if:book has published tens of thousands of words from some of the nation's best writers and thinkers on book futures, created real-world story adventures, and took a complete book from concept to print in twenty-four hours.

DATE: Thursday, July 17, 4.30 to 5.30pm.

SKYPE TUTORS

Charlie de Salis is an experienced producer, writer, and director with credits in television drama, short films, short features, television documentaries, commercials, and corporate screen media. His short films have screened at numerous international festivals including Venice, Cannes, and Melbourne.

Emily Craven (pictured right) is an author of young adult fiction, with her latest comedy novels written [as though you're reading Facebook](#). She is the digital producer at Queensland Writers Centre, and blogs about ebooks and digital strategies for writers on her website <http://ebookrevolution.blogspot.com>. In 2013, Emily produced Brisbane Street Reads, an interactive, choose your own adventure locative literature event in Brisbane CBD. She has spoken on transmedia and ebooks for the Australian Society of Authors, national writers' centres, the Walkley Foundation, Brisbane Writers Festival and the World Fantasy Convention. In 2012 she completed

a one-year mentorship with Isobelle Carmody on her fantasy manuscript *Priori* and blogs about her experience at

<http://theoriginalfantasy.blogspot.com.au>.



Sophie Hamley abandoned a potentially fulfilling legal career before it even started and instead decided to work in publishing. She has worked in the print and online publishing industries as a bookseller, editor, writer, content producer, web and interactive TV producer. Sophie joined the Cameron Creswell Agency in 2006; as a literary agent she looks after a vibrant list of novelists, non-fiction writers and writers for children who are published in Australia and abroad. She is President of the Australian Literary Agents' Association; she was a member of the Book Industry Collaborative Council during its one-year term, and also produced and edited its blog, and is a founding member of the Book Industry Council of Australia. In her spare time Sophie runs a website dedicated to Australian country music and teaches yoga. She is passionately interested in Australian stories in all their forms (one of the reasons for liking country music), and is excited by the opportunities that digital publishing can bring to storytellers.

Emma Rafferty joined Pan Macmillan as a Senior Editor in 2008, a role which she performed for three years before moving into the position of Managing Editor. Before Pan, she worked for eight years in

various editorial roles for education and legal publishers LexisNexis Australia and CCH Australia Limited, starting in the entry-level position of Production Editor. In those companies Emma learnt the ‘trade of editing’, but her heart and her passion is in trade publishing – especially fiction! She has a BA (Media & Comm) from the University of New South Wales and a Postgraduate Diploma of Editing from Macquarie University.

Jill Jones won the Mary Gilmore Award for her first book of poetry, *The Mask and the Jagged Star*; her fourth book, *Screens, Jets, Heaven: New and Selected Poems*, won the 2003 Kenneth Slessor Poetry Prize. Her latest book is *The Beautiful Anxiety* (Puncher and Wattmann 2014). Her work has featured in a number of recent anthologies

including the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature* and *The Penguin Anthology of Australian Poetry*. She has been widely published in most leading literary periodicals in Australia as well as in print magazines in New Zealand, Canada, the USA, Britain, France, Czech Republic and India. In 2007 she was featured at the 23rd Festival International de la Poésie in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Canada, and in 2009 she took part in the Micro-Festival Poetry Series held in Prague and Brno, Czech Republic. She is a member of the J.M. Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice at the University of Adelaide, where she also teaches.

Jesse Blackadder really was born with that surname. When she finally had enough of people asking if she was related to Rowan Atkinson, she travelled to Scotland to find the origins of her surname. Her novel *The Raven’s Heart* (4th Estate, 2011) grew from there and won the Varuna HarperCollins Manuscript Development Award in 2009. Her most recent adult novel is *Chasing the Light* (4th Estate, 2013) about the first women to reach Antarctica. Jesse’s previous novel *After the Party* (Hardie Grant Books 2005) made the *Australian Book Review* list of all time favourite Australian novels in 2010. She has recently started writing junior fiction and her first two animal novels for 8-12 year olds were published recently. www.jesseblackadder.com

Peter FitzSimons is a journalist with The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald. He is also a regular TV commentator, a former radio presenter (very successfully, with Mike Carlton on Radio 2UE) and is also a former national representative rugby union player. Peter is the author of more than 20 books - including *Tobruk*, *Kokoda*, *Batavia*, *Mawson* and *the Ice Men of the Heroic Age* and biographies of *Nancy Wake*, *Kim Beazley*, *Nick*

Farr-Jones, *Les Darcy*, *Steve Waugh* and *John Eales*. Peter is Australia’s biggest-selling non-fiction author of the last 10 years.

Marele Day’s four-book Claudia Valentine series won her a Ned Kelly Lifetime Achievement Award for crime writing. She is also the author of a collection of crime-comedy stories, *Mavis Levack*, *PI* and editor of *How to Write Crime*. Her bestselling literary novel, *Lambs of God*, was published to acclaim in Australia and overseas, with film rights optioned by Twentieth Century Fox. This was followed by *Mrs Cook: The Real and Imagined Life of the Captain’s Wife*, and most recently *The Sea Bed*.

Zena Shapter is a British-Australian author who has won seven national fiction writing competitions (all blind judging). She also founded and leads the Northern Beaches Writers’ Group, whose collaborative writing has also won multiple awards. She loves writing wild rides through the gulches of adventure that spit you out breathless, and close-to-reality books of the unexplained. Zena gives regular talks/tutorials on creative writing and social media (because, after all, she is part-cyber!), teaching through the NSW Writers’ Centre, the Society of Women Writers NSW, the Fellowship of Australian Writers, Conflux Conventions and elsewhere. Her stories have been published in anthologies such as “Award-Winning Australian Writing” (Melbourne Books, 2012) and magazines such as *Midnight Echo*.

Mark Tredinnick is a celebrated poet, nature writer and essayist. He lives and writes along the Wingecarribee River, southwest of Sydney, and he travels widely as a poet and teacher. The winner in 2011 of the Montreal Poetry Prize and in 2012 of the Cardiff Poetry Prize, Mark is the author most recently of *Bluwren Cantos* (Pitt Street Poetry, 2013) and the editor of *Australian Love Poems 2013*. His other books include *Fire Diary*, *The Blue Plateau*, *Australia’s Wild Weather*, and *The Little Red Writing Book*. Mark’s other honours include two Premier’s literary awards, the Blake and the Newcastle Poetry Prizes, the Calibre Essay Prize, and a shortlisting for the Prime Minister’s Literary Prize. His third poetry collection, *Body Copy*, will be out in 2014 from Pitt Street Poetry; he is at work on a fourth collection and a memoir, *Reading Slowly at the End of Time*.

One of our great poets of place—not just of geographic place, but of the spiritual and

*moral landscapes as well ... a
Whitmanesque Emily Dickinson.*

—Judy Beveridge

*In virtuosic syntax and with breathtaking
syntax, **he makes the landscape...flame
and sing.** And then there is the sheer
specific beauty of what's displayed and
contemplated in his work.*

—Sinéad Morrissey

*Tredinnick has a tenderly erotic way of
taking things. Every poem is a love poem.*

—Philip Gross

*This is a bold, big-thinking poetry, in which
ancient themes (especially the theme of our
human relationship with landscape) are
recast and rekindled.*

—Andrew Motion

BOOKED IN FESTIVAL

The Booked In! Children's and Young Adults' Literature Festival is back for its second fabulous year!

In collaboration with the New England and North West sub branch of CBC, UNE School of Arts, NEWC is excited to bring you this year's line up.

There will be visiting writers and illustrators including **Ian Irvine** - world-renowned author of fantasy and eco-thrillers – and **Duncan Ball**, author of the *Selby* series; major illustrator, **Anne Spudvilas**, and graphic novelist and animator, **Daniel Stanley**. There will be activities and workshops for kids, including a puppet making and play writing workshop for kids, including a performance of their work of course! Illustrating workshops for adults and children, manuscript assessments, panel discussions with a great lineup of local and visiting speakers, a workshop by **Sophie Masson** on how to use fairytales as a basis for children's fiction and much more!

Local publishing company Christmas Press Picture Books will be launching their third title *Two Tales of Twins from Ancient Greece and Rome* by **Ursula Dubosarsky** on the Saturday afternoon in Uralla.

This year we are running a short story competition open to kids from 5-18 with prizes in each category. Full details of the festival will be in the July newsletter and will be on our website soon.

* *The festival has been funded by the Macquarie Foundation and the Small Steps Foundation.*

COMPETITIONS

Entries are now open for the **2014 ABR Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize**, worth a total of \$8000, with a first prize of \$5000 and supplementary prizes of \$2000 and \$1000. The Jolley will be judged by writer-academics Patrick Allington and Cassandra Atherton, and ABR Deputy Editor Amy Baillieu. Entries must be a single-authored short story of between 2000 and 5000 words, written in English. Stories must not have been previously published or be on offer to other prizes or publications for the duration of the Jolley Prize. Entries close at midnight May 1. Entry costs \$15 for current ABR subscribers or \$20 for non-subscribers. More information:

www.australianbookreview.com.au

Flash your best short writing to **The joanne burns (prose poem/microfiction) Award : FLASHING THE SQUARE** competition. They are looking for screen-sized literature, up to 200 words in no more than two paragraphs, open theme and in microfiction/prose poem form. All entries will be considered for publication in the anthology *Flashing the Square*. Selected entries will go on to be produced as videos to be screened at Federation Square during the Melbourne Writers Festival (August 21-31). Entries close March 31. Entry is \$7, first prize is \$300. For more details and competition guidelines, see <http://shortaustralianstories.com.au/submissions/prose-poetrymicrofiction>

The Hunter Writers' Centre is running a **Travel Writing Competition**. Send your 500 word story via <http://www.hunterwriterscentre.org/travel-writing-competition.html> First prize is two nights' accommodation for a family in a luxury two bedroom villa at the Crowne Plaza, Hunter Valley. Second prize is two Gortex jackets valued at \$500 each. Entries close March 7.

The University of Canberra has established an **International Poetry Prize** with a first prize of \$15,000 and a total prize pool of \$25,000. All poems entered for the prize should be single poems with a maximum length of 50 lines. Entry closes May 30; entry cost is \$20 with discounts for students. For more, see <http://www.canberra.edu.au/vcpoetryprize>

The **2014 Peter Cowan 600 Word Short Story Competition** is open for entries until April 11. This year the centre has introduced a new award category: the Julian Cowan Youth Award for youth ages 12-17 years, in addition to the open category prizes. Maximum 600 words per story, entry fee \$10. First prize \$200 (Open), \$100 (Youth). More

information

http://www.pcwc.org.au/index.php?p=1_32

The Stringybark Future Times Short Story Award 2014 gives you a chance to look into your crystal ball and contemplate events set after 2020. What will the future bring? How will we respond to climate change? What does the Higgs-Boson mean to you? Are robots more than vacuum cleaners? Will death be conquered? Let your mind speculate about our near or distant future. Writers have 1500 words to produce a short story that will delight and entertain the judges. International entries welcome. There is more than \$810 worth of prizes in cash and books available. Closing date for entries is April 13. Details <http://www.stringybarkstories.net>



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DROP-IN WORKSHOP

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 after the first visit.

Coordinator: Tom Penrose

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Areas/Interest

OUR WEBSITE

<http://www.newc.org.au>

New England Writers' Centre

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 \$30. For a couple - \$30 + \$15 for 2nd member, for tertiary students - \$20; for students under 18 - \$15.

Cheque or direct deposit in our account: New England Writers Centre, BSB 932000, Account No: 618658. Please include your name when you make an online deposit and drop us an email to let us know.

How to contact us: NEWC is situated in the Neighbourhood Centre, 129 Rusden St, Armidale (between the Council Building and the Town Hall). Best access via Cinders Lane car park.

Phone/Fax 02 6772 7210

Post: PO Box 1219, Armidale NSW 2350

Email: admin@newc.org.au

CENTRE OPENING HOURS

Tuesday: 1 pm – 4 pm

Wednesday: 10 am – noon

Thursday: noon - 4 pm

Director: Lesley Sly

Office Manager: Paul Prenter

The Board:

Chairman - Sophie Masson.

Deputy Chair – Beatriz Alvarez.

Treasurer – Tom Penrose.

Minutes Secretary - Paul Prenter.

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NEXT NEWSLETTER: June

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Trade & Investment Arts NSW

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