

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

10.2 May, 2010

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

It's almost May already as I write! Time has a habit of slipping away faster each year. I suppose this is because we are more and more aware of our mortality. I find the odd poems I write often hint at this awareness.

Last week Maree Silver, Julien Winspear, and I were part of a group of 16 who revelled in a **Poetry Day at Wellspring**. Led by Barbara Rautman these days are a feast. Barbara collects the most marvellous poetry and reads one to us. Each poem is then reread by a member of the assembled circle and we then comment on what appeals to us, before Barbara reads another one and the process is repeated. We have a two hour lunch break in which we can socialise or be solitary and write. And I come home holding in my hand a sheaf of poems which I find a wonderful aid to my Quiet Times and singing with joy.

On 13th April Leigh Hay, Sue Donnelly & I went to hear a performance poet, Telia Neville as part of the Comedy Festival. She presented her poetry telling about her travels and using slides, some of which gave a very humorous slant to the poetry. Altogether we found her highly entertaining.

I have just finished reading an extraordinary story, *God's Call Girl* by Carla van Raay. The daughter of Dutch migrants, she was educated at a convent and decided to become a nun to escape the frequent sexual abuse she suffered from her father. Having done her final vows and worked as a teacher (in the same order (FCJ) that an early member of the Wordsmiths Elizabeth von Leven belonged to) she decided to leave the order, got married and had a child. When the marriage broke up the only means of support she could think of was to run an escort service! You will be glad to know that she finally came to her senses and began to live a more normal life.

Sales of *Reflecting on Melbourne* go on quietly and we keep hearing appreciative comments. We sold four at Wellspring and one the next day when four of the editorial committee, including our new member Sue Donnelly, went to a luncheon to hear Chrissy Sharpe from the Wheeler Centre for Books, Learning and Ideas. Altogether, we must have sold over 850 copies by now.

MEETINGS SO FAR THIS YEAR

Meetings this year held at Carolyn Vimpani's place in East Doncaster have been well attended. At the February meeting when we had 15 people, including Nancy Moyle and Marcia de Groot. Janette, who was leading, shared an article from the *Age* and poems by P Barson.

In March Sue Donnelly was leading and read a poem, *The Owl Critic*, from a children's book, 12 attended including Jonathan Ennis-king.

In April 17 attended the meeting led by me and I shared Kathryn's Sunrise poem and one by J.Cowley, *We are standing on sacred ground*. I shared my first attempt at a villanelle, which you can read in the Poets Corner.

POETRY WEEKEND

Note that there is no May Wordsmiths meeting in Doncaster.

Instead, May 8-9th will be our Poetry Weekend at St Andrew's Beach at the home of Robin and Bronwyn Pryor. Bronwyn will lead us in a Quiet Day on the Saturday and Joan Ackland will lead a workshop for us on Sunday afternoon from 1-3pm



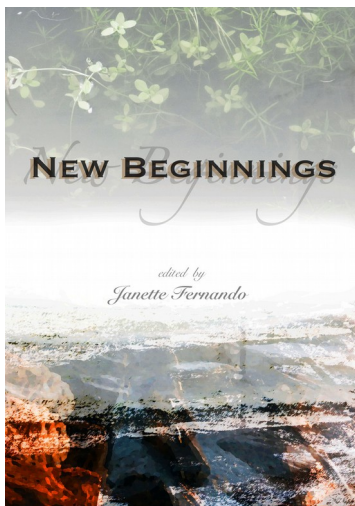
This means we should have plenty of time to also just sit and be quiet or write as the spirit moves us. We start on the Saturday morning at 9.30am, so we will all be there ready for a good start to the Quiet Day. That evening I think we should continue what we started last year— an evening of reading poetry, either

our own or others' to each other. We all found that a rich experience last year.

There are still a couple of places left if you'd still like to go, or you might like to attend as a day visitor. See Response slip.

LAUNCH OF NEW BEGINNINGS

On June 4th Judith Rodriguez will be launching our latest anthology, edited by **Janette Fernando**, *New Beginnings* at the Box Hill Town Hall in the context of a **Gala Night of Fine words and Music, with an exhibition which will include artwork and photos from *New Beginnings* and from *Reflecting on Melbourne***. We will need to charge an entry fee for the evening as we need to cover the cost of hiring this beautiful old building, which was recently refurbished. (see accompanying invitation and encourage all your friends and relatives to attend this special event).



Cover design by Will Hamann, son of Kathryn

We will follow this the next week with a **reading at Box Hill Library 6.30-8.00pm on June 11th**. For this we have asked our member **Marguerite Varday** to be our guest reader. If you'd like to read some of your poems as well, please let us know via the Response slip.

The next day, **June 12th will be our Wordsmiths meeting at Carolyn Vimpani's place. 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East 3109.**

Phone : 9842 4489 , email vimpani@bigpond.net.au
I'm sure we will all be looking forward to hearing some wonderful poetry from Carolyn and from Cath Barnard as a result of their trip overseas.

In July, we meet on **July 10th**, also at Carolyn's.

Here's the roster for the next few months.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea
May 8 th -9 th		Poetry Weekend
June 12 th	Leigh	Sondy, Maree N, Marcia
July 10 th	Joan	Maree S, Cam, Marlene

OTHER EVENTS

Poetry Salon at The Lane – St Lawrence Lane – off Main St in Eltham on Monday 10th May at 7pm (for 7.15 start) – 9.30pm

For those of you who missed Helen Lucas at the Red Chair in March, we are lucky to have her perform again at The Lane on Monday 10th May at 7pm for our third poetry session.

The next heat of **Poetry Idol** is at Box Hill, Saturday the **5th of June** at 1.30 pm. Free entry for the audience ,who get to vote for their favourite poets. Alcohol free event for this heat only.
1040 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill 3128
Bookings (03) 9896 4321

Bayside Literary Festival 2010. 21–28 May. Info: www.bayside.vic.gov.au/literary_festival_2010.htm.

Emerging Writers' Festival program launched!

To be held 21–30 May, the Emerging Writers' Festival launched its program last week. New programs this year include a Creative Writing Bootcamp, Write What You Know panels, Twitterfest and, a world-first, the Emerging Writers' Festival Zine Bus! Along with old favourites The First Word, Living Library, the Town Hall Program, 48-hour Play Generator and much more! Full details at www.emergingwritersfestival.org.au.

MEMBER NEWS

On March 7th we took part in an **Autumn Festival** at the Augustine Centre in Hawthorn. I led a workshop with only a few people who all enjoyed it enormously and wrote some good poetry. In the evening several Wordsmiths shared in a concert not well attended but enjoyed by all who were there.

We expect to be involved in more of these events as the year progresses, probably one sometime in June but the date has not yet been fixed.

Cath Barnard is travelling to Europe with **Carolyn and Stan Vimpani**.

Marlene Marburg will miss the launch as she'll be in Chicago.

Nick Costello is having an exhibition of his art at the Sherbrooke Gallery, 62 Monbulk Rd, Belgrave, from June 12th-20th.

Joy Chellew is loving her new life in Barwon Heads and is working on a sequel to *In Search of Joy*, published by PCP in 2006. It's to be called *In Search of Peace* and should be out next year. She recently

enjoyed a visit to Alice Springs for the wedding of her daughter Linda.

Kathryn Hamann is rejoicing that that her poem Resurrection has been accepted by eJournal of Theology and that her daughter, Judith is currently touring in Europe with her music group .

Our condolences to **Ros Aldersea**. Just back from 4 months overseas she has news of the tragic death of a 19 year old niece in Wales. We also extend sympathy to **Keith Wray**, who was unable to get to London to visit his dying father, due to the volcanic ash and was stranded in Hong Kong for a week.

Cameron Semmens, Janette Fernando, Marlene Marburg and I have all had poems accepted for *All Creation Sings*, the new book of Everyday Psalms published by Wombat books. **Marlene** also had a poem published in *Eureka Street* and **Janette** also had two poems in *Trowel and Sword* (national magazine for the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia.)

Congratulations to **Maree Nikalaou**, who recently celebrated her 70th birthday.

Welcome to new members **Marcia De Groot, Nancy Moyle and Jonathon Ennis-King**.

COMPETITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

The Art of Renewal - Calling all writer! Join us for a luncheon and a reading followed by workshopping opportunities. Everyone welcome. Sunday May 30th, 2010: 12pm-4pm St Andrews Hall Heidelberg-Kinglake Rd, St Andrews Melways ref 250 E11
WORKSHOP LEADERS: Jordie Albiston – Memory as Muse (poetry) Carmel Macdonald Grahame - Verbal Snapshot, Karen Throssell - Finding the Right Words. Write a new piece on the day or bring a piece for workshopping. For info and bookings email Fee Sievers on saidanddone@iprimus.com.au or phone 0417 358 280. Bookings by Sunday 23rd May please

U3A Sunshine coast – Closing 11th June
Categories: Short Story (1000-1500 words), Rhyming Poetry (20 to 40 lines), Free Verse (Up to 40 lines) and Challenge: One Thing I Don't Want To Tell My Grandchildren (Fiction 1000 to 1500 words.)
Prizes: 1st \$150, 2nd \$75, 3rd \$25 in each category
Entry Fee: Single entry \$8 Two or more \$5 per entry
Open to members of any U3A and people who are retired or semi-retired and thus eligible to join U3A.
Info and entry from Jenny Riley, U3A. SC Inc. c/- University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore, DC Qld 4558

Page Seventeen - Closing 30th June
Page Seventeen is seeking general submissions for Issue 8. Send in up to three written pieces and up to five images. Open theme. Also taking submissions for **Page Seventeen Short Story and Poetry Competition**. Short story to 3000 words; poetry to 60 lines. 1st prize \$200, 2nd prize \$100 in each category. Entry fee \$5 or 3 for \$12. Open theme. For conditions and entry form, send SSAE to PO Box 566, Cockatoo, 3781, email enquire@pageseventeen.com.au or refer to www.pageseventeen.com.au

All Poetry Competition - Closing 30th June No entry form required
Original, unpublished poetry, 14-40 lines. First Prize: \$150 Second Prize: \$80 Third Prize: \$50. Entry Fee \$6 per poem. Send entries to All Poetry PO Box 3268 North Nowra 2541 More information: Irene 02 4421 8267, e-mail iwilkie@shoal.net.au. See website of ArtsRush Magazine Shoalhaven www.artsrush.com.au

Bruce Dawe National Poetry Prize 2010 – Closing 30th July

Contact Faculty of Arts at University of Southern Queensland Toowoomba Qld 4350 Original unpublished poem max 50 lines \$1500 prize – get guidelines and entry form from www.usq.edu.au/daweprize PH:(07) 4631 1065 E:daweprize@usq.edu.au

Toolangi Festival Poetry Competition. Closing: 23 October. Three adult categories: Open, Birds of the Singing Gardens, and Poems written by adults for children; and two junior categories: primary and secondary. Details at www.toolangi.net/events.html.

DIARY

Saturday May 8th-Sunday, May 9th: Note: No Wordsmiths meeting in Doncaster. Poetry Weekend at St Andrews Beach.

Friday, June 4th: Launch of *New beginnings* at our Gala Night of Fine Words, Music and Art, Box Hill Town Hall, 7.30pm. \$15 & \$10 (conc)

Friday, June 11th: Poetry Reading at Box Hill Library, 6.30-8pm, with Marguerite Varday as Guest Reader.

Saturday, June 12th: meeting of the Wordsmiths at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster, 2-5pm.

Saturday, July 10th: meeting of the Wordsmiths at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster, 2-5pm.

IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES YET, PLEASE PAY VIA THE RESPONSE SLIP.

Newsletter written by Jean Sietzema-Dickson and Janette Fernando

POETS' CORNER



Morning has broken

(Mary's words)

Lord
I'm empty.
Even the morning
can't break the darkness
in my barren
broken
soul.

Your body
lashed
bashed
nailed
failed

lies still,
waiting for
myrrh
to sweeten the smell
of death.

I long to
see you
one last time....

Lord,
it's empty !
The tomb
has given you up
and you have
risen!

You are
standing here
alive,
waiting
for me to
see you
ever lasting.

Now I too
am born again!

My mourning
is broken !

© Janette Fernando

Villanelle

I watched the feathered leaves of pepper tree
sway in the breeze and drip the falling rain
and as I looked they seemed to dance for me.

The sky still overcast it looked to be
worn weary as a person long in pain.
I watched the feathered leaves of pepper tree

their green enhanced by grey of cloudy sea,
now tendrils hanging peacefully again
but as I looked they seemed to dance for me.

I wondered whether they could feel or be
like persons, though without the sentient brain.
I watched the feathered leaves of pepper tree

while in the further distance I could see
the heavier clouds all pregnant now with rain
and as I looked they seemed to dance for me

until the wind died down, and there for me
was peace instead of endless pain.
I watched the feathered leaves of pepper tree
and as I looked they seemed to dance for me.

© Jean Sietzema-Dickson

Tree Hugging

I have never hugged a tree.
I am sitting under a gnarled and twisted cypress.
Three rough barked trunks
were fused in youth to one.
A magpie gargles music in the canopy.
The wafted scent of roses
calms my irritated mind.
Dappled shade gives a cool embrace.
I have never hugged a tree.
But this tree
this tree
is hugging me

© Nel Lewis

Before...

before a smile
ran across the earth

before laughter
chuckled in the valley

I loved you

© Sue Donnelly