

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

11.4. November 2011

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

I'm wondering whether this winter will ever conclude! We get freezing days followed by temperatures in the high 20s or even over 30 and then down again to icy winds.

I'm sure it is all tied up with the Climate Change and that we need to brace ourselves for more extreme weather. A group from our church are doing a study of *Darwin, Divinity and the Dance of the Cosmos* by Bruce Sanguin. I am finding it fascinating as, although he admits the problem, he is really hopeful that we can come out of the ecological mess we are in. Each person in our group is selecting a local endangered species to research and be concerned about. A small thing but the best things and ideas start small.

I have also thoroughly enjoyed reading Catherine Bateson's collection of poetry called *Marriage for Beginners*. Catherine led a most instructive and challenging workshop for us at the October meeting and tells me she also enjoyed it and will be happy to come again. We appreciate her generosity.

PAST MEETINGS AND EVENTS

This has been a busy three months. Twelve attended the August 13th, Wordsmiths meeting led by **Maree Silver** who used a selection from the Australian poets Colin Thiele, Dorothea McKellar, Bruce Dawe and Judith Wright to introduce the session. On September 10th, attended by 14, **Sue Donnelly** led, reading poems from *Hugs to Comfort* by John William Smith, G.A. Myers and LeAnn Weif about being in the now and being grateful for that.

Our October workshop led by **Catherine Bateson** was attended by 16 people, including new member **Jenny Liu**.

Catherine worked us hard doing a series of interesting exercises -

1. write an ode using a word and try to compare it with its opposite.
2. write a poem about a poem/s
3. take a word and break it down into its components and construct a poem
e.g. compassionate = compassion, passion, passionate, ate, compass. Try to use each word in the poem.

She then gave us a lot of ideas on how to get past those "blank" page days and begin to write.

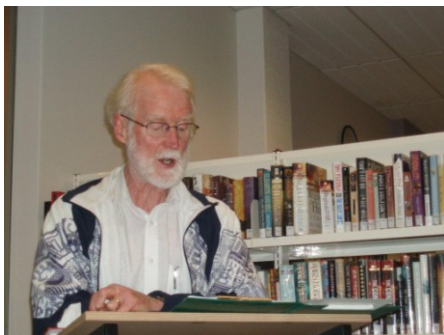
In August several of us joined **Kathryn and Conrad Hamann** as Conrad led us on an **Architecture tour** in the city. Starting at St Patrick's Cathedral, we surveyed the European style of its layout with small chapels half circling the altar end and reveled in the glow of ambient light from the windows. In contrast St Peter's Eastern Hill seemed very dark. We gradually processed down via Collins St, learning to look up more than usual to notice architectural details as Conrad pointed them out, to St Paul's Cathedral, ending at Collected Works Bookshop briefly before going on to



Federation Square for the FAW Reading in which Kathryn was a Featured Reader.

In September too, we had another **Reading at the Library in Box Hill**. This was not so well attended as the weather was bleak and I did not have time for my usual phone calls. (I am wondering if there is someone in the group who would be prepared to do this sort of publicity for these regular readings?) Those who came had a treat as our guest

reader was **David Campbell** (below) who writes both bush (rhyming) poetry and unrhyming. He also reads very well giving due weight to his words and the result is a most enjoyable experience.



In **September and October** (as Barbara Rautman was unable to do it this year) I led **poetry days at Wellspring**. Though the group was small we all found it an enjoyable and profitable day as we listened to poetry and each others' responses to it. Though I collected all the poems for the first day I asked people to forward me their choices for the second day and this gave us a broader range of poems to share.

In October too, we had a **reading at Collected Works Bookshop** in the city. It was disappointing that we had such a small audience but those there thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Kris put on wine and nibbles to make us welcome and most of us splurged on books from this most fascinating of bookshops. If we do it again we might settle for an evening during the week.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our last two meetings for the year will be on November 12th and December 10th at the home of Carolyn & Stan Vimpani, 8 Woodhouse Rd East Doncaster.

Joan Ray has agreed to lead us on November 12th, so it should be a fruitful time for those who can go.

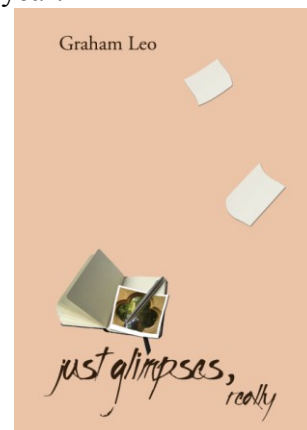
For the December 10th meeting, to be led by **Cath Barnard**, you might like to come at 1pm with some food to share, to have a pre-Christmas celebration.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea
Nov. 12th	Joan	Don, Cecily, Sharlee
Dec. 10th	Cath B	Everyone bring a plate

POETICA CHRISTI PRESS NEWS

As our Managing Editor, Janette, has had to spend several weeks in Brisbane looking after her brother, closely followed by some weeks in Central Australia with the Year Tens from Mt Evelyn Christian School, the committee has suggested holding over the release of the next anthology **HORIZONS** until February/March next year.

Meanwhile, Leigh, Maree and Janette have been editing a collection by **Graham Leo**, Principal of Emmanuel Christian College on the Gold Coast, due out in time for Christmas. It's called **Just glimpses, really** and



is full of marvellous poems. You'll be able to order your copy around mid December.

YOU WILL NOTICE YOU'VE BEEN SENT A CATALOGUE OF ALL OUR BOOKS, WHICH WE HOPE YOU WILL USE TO ORDER SOME OF OUR BOOKS, WHICH WOULD MAKE LOVELY CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

MEMBER NEWS

We are very sad to report the **death of Nel Lewis**, one of our early members. She and Marj Kosky joined in 1990 when we published our first book. Nel had been a Social Worker and wrote very strong feisty poems about people. She lived in Mirboo North for a number of years but we had kept in touch and she was still thinking poems right up to the end (see Poets Corner where you will also find the short poem I wrote as a tribute which was read at her funeral). We extend our condolences to her family in particular her daughter Margaret.

Our prayers are with **Sue Donnelly** and her husband who are working very hard to render their house habitable again after a fire! We wish them renewal of strength for this massive task.

