

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

12.1 February, 2012

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

I can't believe it's another New Year already! I hope you all found the Christmas break from routine as refreshing as I did. By the end of the year I was exhausted, so for three days before Christmas, Piet and I went down to Jindivick Gardens to stay with Charles and Carol Brodley who offer a three night stay with bed breakfast and dinner for a very reasonable price. The huge sitting dining room looks out over a rose garden to trees and hills beyond and I find it a most relaxing place to stay. I even managed to write a poem about the ornamental lake they have in the garden. For the rest of the holidays I have enjoyed reading the biography of Steve Jobs. He is a complex and fascinating character, who was still grateful that he had taken LSD, thinking it had helped unleash his creativity. I'd prefer to ask God to unleash mine! I have also enjoyed a book of sayings of Rudyard Kipling. I know he is out of fashion, but I still think he was a marvellous writer with a deep understanding of human nature and his poetry is so varied in rhythm and style that to read his work is a poetic education, if you want to learn about these aspects of poetry. I love the *Harp Song of the Dane Women* from *Puck of Pook's Hill*. (See *Poets' Corner* for a bit of this)

MEETINGS

Our first meeting this year will be on Saturday **February 11th at 2 pm** at the home of Carolyn Vimpani at 8 Woodhouse St Doncaster East. We greatly appreciate Carolyn and Stan's hospitality for our Wordsmiths meetings. The Editorial Committee will be meeting at 1.30 pm for a time of prayer for Wordsmiths and Poetica Christi Press beforehand. (You are welcome to join us in this.)

As the Wordsmiths will celebrate 25 years of meeting in September this year, the committee has drawn up a document (included with this newsletter) detailing our history and setting out our purpose and function. We plan to read this together at our first meeting. Our March meeting, on **March 10th**, will also be at Doncaster East.

Instead of our usual 2nd Saturday of the month meeting in April, this **meeting will be delayed until the weekend of 21-22 of April** when we plan to have our annual **Poetry retreat** at the

home of Robin & Bronwyn Pryor at 60 Bass Meadows Boulevard, St Andrew's Beach.



Robin will lead a Quiet Day on the Saturday and **Kristin Henry** will lead a poetry workshop on the Sunday. Bring at least two poems you particularly appreciate to share on the Saturday night. As the accommodation is limited, please let us know ASAP via the return slip or via email: poetica@iprimus.com.au if you'd like to book in for this weekend. Day visitors are also welcome. Later in the year, on Saturday 7th of July, also at Robin and Bronwyn's home, those who love Mary Oliver's poetry might like to go down for a day of her poetry there. See flyer for more detail. Here's the roster for leading and afternoon tea duty:

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea
Feb. 11th	Jean	Janette, Maree N, Sue
March 10th	Leigh	Jean, Rebecca, Peter
April 21-22		<i>Poetry Weekend</i>

As we've had to take out Insurance to cover our meetings, the committee has decided that the **membership fees** need to go up (for the first time in six years) to **\$30 a year** and the casual rate \$5 a meeting (or \$3 concession). However, we are offering an Early bird special: **if you pay your annual membership by March 31st, it will still be only \$25.**

PAST MEETINGS

The November and December meetings were well attended, the first being led by Joan Ray. It was great to welcome **Janet Howie** to this meeting. As usual we gathered together earlier to share lunch

in December and ventured across the back fence to support a garage sale for REAL (a group for intellectually disabled people, which meets in Carolyn and Stan's home.) Cath Barnard led the group, sharing some poems by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) and giving us all a copy of her *Community Rain Song* to take home. It was lovely to see **Cecily Falkingham** back in the group after her knee reconstruction and travel had kept her away this year. Also at this meeting, Janette shared some tips from the Word Writers Fair she had attended in Brisbane in November.

WRITING TIPS from Rosie Boom's session on *Finding the Inspiration to Write* at the Word Writers Fair in Brisbane:

1. Cry out to God for inspiration and creativity or else we are like pens without ink.
2. Keep your eyes open. Keep a notebook and jot down things you see that may trigger a poem. Apply your heart to what you see.
3. Keep your ears open for interesting anecdotes. Listen completely.
4. Record what you see and hear straight away together with any thoughts that come to your mind.
5. Read, Read, Read...other poets' work, family history, old diaries...
6. Start writing. There's never a perfect time. Just do it.
7. Enjoy your writing - have fun with it. Find something that touches you or makes you smile.

POETICA CHRISTI PRESS NEWS

The latest book published by PCP was *Just Glimpses, really* by Graham Leo, principal of Emmanuel College on the Gold Coast. It was out just in time for Christmas and this is part of what Leigh Hay said about it: *Graham's empathy for the people who share his life, is evident. His compassion for humanity and God's world, is manifest. He is in love with words and has an eloquent turn of phrase. This collection of poetry will capture your heart and stir your soul.* If you would like your copy of this book for only \$16, please use the return slip to order it.



Launch of HORIZONS

We are hoping Graham will launch our latest

anthology, from the 2010 Poetry Competition, titled *Horizons*. This should take place on **March 24th** at 7.30 pm at the Lutheran Hall, 711 Station St, Box Hill. If you'd like to pre-order a copy at the launch price of \$18, please use the response slip. Free copy of *Water of Life* with every copy!

Winners of the 2011 PCP Poetry Competition

The judge of this competition, Philip Harvey, who is Poetry Editor of *Eureka Street*, has just given us the names of the winners:

1st Prize: *Yesterday a raven, a dragonfly today* by **James Hughes**

2nd Prize: *Flight of the Falling* by **Bronwyn Lovell**

Francis Webb Award for the poem which best describes a spiritual journey: *Climbing* by **Tru Dowling**.

Several of our Wordsmiths also had poems selected in the top 25, to go into the anthology:

Maree Silver for *Flight of Fancy*

Janny Brouwer for *Migrants*

Rebecca Maxwell for *Eyebrow Thoughts*

Sondy Ward for *Garnet Dreaming*

READINGS

We have asked Christina Davidson if we can continue our regular quarterly readings at the Box Hill Library. Hopefully these will be in March (16th or 31st) June, and September (for Poetry Week.) We have been asked if anyone would like to be at the library to read poetry about 'love' on **February 14th - St Valentine's Day**. Kathryn Hamann has said she could come and depending on my babysitting duties I may be able to be there for a while. This is very casual so please come along even if it is at the last minute. Phone the library on 9890 1002 for details.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to **Kathryn Hamann**, whose book *A slight fuzzing of perspective* was joint winner of the CALEB prize in the Poetry section!

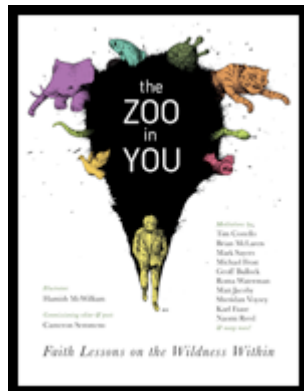
We welcome back **Sister Mary O'Shannessy**, who has been in the UK for her sabbatical in the past year.

Congratulations to **Marlene Marburg** who has been long-listed in the Doire Press (Ireland) International Poetry Chapbook competition and

has a poem 'Anointing' in *Journey by Busybird* being launched in late February.

Marlene is also running a seminar on journaling, called *Come away to journal* - this workshop offers a silent prayerful environment, with guidance to explore ways in which journaling can enhance self-awareness and creativity in relation to God. It's on **Sat, 17th of March** from 9.30am - 3.30 pm at the Campion Centre of Ignation Spirituality, 99 Studley Park Rd, Kew. It costs \$75. To book phone 9854 8110

Cameron Semmens' new book *THE ZOO IN YOU*, in which he has his poems alongside contributions from many well known Australians, has been selling very well. You can check it out and/or order it on his website



www.webcameron.com. He is going on tour with it, so you may be able to get to one of these venues:

Sun Feb 19 – Red Church, 245 Middleborough Rd, Box Hill South, 4:30pm

Tue Feb 21 – Solace “Tuesday Stuff”, 751 Heidelberg Rd, Alphington, 6:30pm

Tue Mar 6 – Café Church, Baden Powell Hotel, 61-65 Victoria Pde, Collingwood, 6:45-9:15pm

Sun Mar 18 – New Community Church, 32 Greenwood Ave, Ringwood, 10am

COMPETITIONS

Only Words Apart Press

Seeking submissions and will be producing two different poetry magazines this year. It is currently looking for submissions of poetry, 50 lines or less, with a limit of 5 poems for each magazine. To find out more about each magazine, email owapress@hotmail.com

Blue Giraffe - Closing dates February and August annually. Selection is ongoing. Up to 5 poems not previously in print or electronic media and not under offer petermacrow@hotmail.com or, with SSAE or email contact for reply, to Peter Macrow, 6/16 Osborne Street, Sandy Bay, TAS 7005

Poetry Matters invites submissions. Send 4-6 poems and s.s.a.e. for prompt reply. Payment is one copy of issue in which work appears. Send to

Cheryl Howard, 61 Palmer Crescent, Newham Vic 3442. poetrymatters@optusnet.com.au

Symmetry Pebbles - Issue 4 Open Now, online Seeking poetry. Theme: Open <http://symmetrypebbles.wordpress.com/submissions/>

Blemish Books - Closes: 1st March 2012

Triptych Poets Series: “The concept is simple – three poets: one book.”

Seeking Manuscripts of between 15-25 poems. <http://www.blemishbooks.com.au/triptych.shtml>

Ada Cambridge Prize for Poetry and Prose – Closing May 2nd 2012

The Williamstown Literary Festival (May 4-6) is now accepting entries for the Ada Cambridge prizes for prose and poetry (formerly Seagull’s poetry prize). The winners will receive \$1000 for prose and \$300 for poetry. Go to <http://www.willylitfest.org.au/> for terms and conditions.

Windfall: Australian Haiku is a small annual print publication which seeks to publish fine examples of contemporary Australian haiku. Published by Blue Giraffe Press. Submissions June 30th – July 31st each year. Guidelines from Beverley George, PO Box 37 Pearl Beach, 2256 or email to beverleygeorge@idx.com.au with ‘Windfall’ and your surname in the subject line

DIARY OF EVENTS

Saturday, February 11th; 2-5pm: Wordsmiths Meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd. East Doncaster

Saturday, March 10th, 2-5pm: Wordsmiths meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, East Doncaster.

Saturday, March 24th: Launch of Horizons at 7.30 pm at the Lutheran Hall, 711 Station St, Box Hill.

Saturday April 21st-Sunday, April 22nd: Note: No Wordsmiths meeting in Doncaster. Poetry Weekend at St Andrews Beach with Quiet Day led by Robin Pryor and Poetry Workshop led by Kristin Henry.

If you have any news for the Wordsmiths Newsletter, send it to The Editor, 493 Elgar Road, Mont Albert North, 3219 or email poetica@iprimus.com.au



POETS CORNER

To dream

When things were bad and life was sad
A very frightening dream I had.
I dreamed that all the flowers had died,
that all the streams and lakes had dried,
All the birds had lost their song
Trees, green fields and houses gone.

But I awoke to a fine spring day
With birds and butterflies at play,
Lush green grass at the riverside
Those trees so tall the sun they hide,
Spring flowers now are also here,
to wash away bad dreams and fear.

© Ashley Harris

Harp Song of the Dane Women

What is woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth fire and the home acre,
To go with the old grey widow maker?

She has no house to lay a guest in –
But one chill bed for all to rest in,
That the pale suns and stray bergs nest in. ...

Yet, when the signs of summer thicken,
And the ice breaks and the birch-buds quicken,
Yearly you turn from our side and sicken –

Sicken again for the shouts and the slaughters.
You steal away to the lapping waters
And look at your ship in her winter quarters.

Rudyard Kipling
(from *Puck of Pook's Hill*)

look-out over Silvan Dam

across the valley
mist hovers over ancient mountains
slowly
warm sun draws and gathers
the mist away
the child watches in silence
then points and asks
is this where God lives?

© coby hill

Stained art

jig-sawed light streams
through coloured glass pieces vaulting
into the arch of window

the image is shrouded
haloed head and upstretched arms
shine neon bright

at crossed feet
in muted darkness the woman weeps
angels attend

beguiled by its beauty
I am drawn deeper into the mystery
of your being

© Maree Silver

Trial By Fire

*The human body is the perfect picture
of the human soul*

Wittgenstein

How fast mud adheres to gold!

You see it in folds and creases
of the nugget formed in dirt
where burning liquid
cooled in fissures and folds.

A boiling of passion
leaves dents, scars.

Dirt plumbs the hollows
to leave its mark;
takes away the smooth and burnished gleam
of rounded edges, where light
flows and falls
inviting fingers to caress.

In the heat of the crucible I will be clean
But oh, between the fires,
the mud, the mud.

© Graham Leo

(from *Just glimpses, really*)

RESPONSE SLIP – send to PCP Treasurer, 12 Cypress Ave, Burwood, 3125

I have enclosed my yearly membership dues (\$30, or \$25 if paying by March 31st) as a Wordsmith/Friend of PCP.

I cannot afford \$30 but enclose a donation.

I would like to buy a copy of Graham Leo's book *Just glimpses, really* at \$16 (plus \$2 postage.)

I would like to pre-order a copy of *Horizons* at the launch price of \$18 (plus \$2 postage).

Please delete me from your mailing list.

Please email me the newsletter from now on.

Please make cheques out to Poetica Christi Press.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE : _____ **EMAIL:** _____