

# WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

14.1

January, 2014

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

I do hope you all had a blessed Christmas. Thanks to all who sent me cards which I have not acknowledged. I hope that you are facing the New Year with a renewed sense of purpose. As usual this holiday period is an opportunity for reading. I am currently reading a wonderful book by Madeleine L'Engle, *A Severed Wasp* and also

*On the Trail of Ghengis Kahn* by Tim Cope - a Melbournian - a journey that took him three years to experience. Also *Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World* by John O'Donohue from whom I quote here:

*Poetry is the place where language in its silence is most beautifully articulated.*

*Poetry is the language of silence.*

*If you look at a page of prose, it is crowded with words. If you look at a page of poetry the slim word shapes are couched in the empty whiteness of the page. The page is a place of silence where the contour of the word is edged and the expression is heightened in an intimate way. It is interesting to look at your language and the words that you tend to use to see if you can hear a stillness or a silence. One way to invigorate and renew your language is to expose yourself to poetry. In poetry your language will find cleansing illumination and sensuous renewal. (pp. 94-95) and on p.99:*

*Poets are people who become utterly dedicated to the threshold where silence and language meet...It takes a long time to sift through the more superficial voices of your own gift in order to enter into the deep signature and tonality of your Otherness. When you speak from that deep, inner voice, you are really speaking from the unique tabernacle of your own presence. There is a voice within you which no-one, not even you, has ever heard. Give yourself the opportunity of silence to begin to develop your listening in order to hear, deep within yourself, the music of your own spirit.* And in 'The Age' I found John Cleese uttering these words of wisdom:

*The creative part of the mind is like a tortoise. It is a nervous little creature that needs an enclosure*

*before it can come out. So to create, we need to make our own tortoise enclosure, with boundaries of space and time. The most dangerous thing is to be interrupted, because we can take a long time to get back into that creative state and ideas won't come if we're rushing round all day. I am reminded of my father, a mathematician, who worked in a room separated from the rest of the house by a covered walkway. Woe betide anyone who interrupted him without knocking and waiting for permission to enter!*

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our first meeting for the year will be on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of February** at 2pm, at the home of Carolyn & Stan Vimpani, for whose gracious hospitality we are grateful. In **March we meet on the 8<sup>th</sup>** and in April we hope to have our annual Poetry Camp.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea duty
Feb. 8th	Cath	Jean, Maree N, Sue
Mar. 8th	Cecily	Greg, Sandra, Leigh
Apr. 5, 6th	Poetry camp	

## LAUNCH OF 'EXPLORING THE DEPTHS'

The launch of *Exploring the Depths* was held at the Lutheran Church in Box Hill, a venue we have found very comfortable to use.

A good crowd turned up to enjoy socialising before and after, listening attentively to the poems being read during the launch. Lyn Hatherly, in launching the book, encouraged us as publishers by talking about the value of small publishing houses.





Janette & Jean with the book

Musicians Tim Fernando and Peter Williams regaled us with a feast, Peter playing on an exceedingly versatile instrument known as a wind synthesiser, and Tim playing some pieces on piano without music!

#### UPCOMING LAUNCH OF 'MEMORY WEAVING'

One of our Wordsmiths, Carolyn Vimpani, has been working very hard on an anthology of poems about Dementia. Poetica Christi Press is delighted to be publishing this book and invites you to the launch at 2.00 pm on Sunday March 2<sup>nd</sup>



It will be held at MC<sup>2</sup> Doncaster & Templestowe Rooms, 2nd Floor, 687 Doncaster Road, Doncaster, adjacent to the Manningham Council Offices (see flyer)

#### WINNERS OF THE 2013 POETICA CHRISTI PRESS POETRY COMPETITION

**First prize:** **STEPHEN SMITHYMAN** – *Waiting at the Sydenham Rail Crossing*

**Second prize:** **JOHN BRINNAND** – *Descent from Murray Gap*

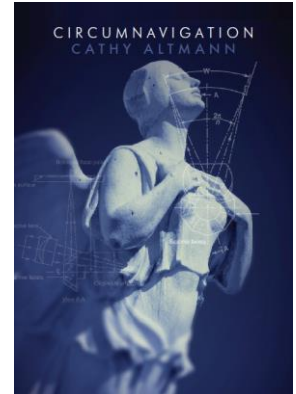
Wordsmith winners among the first 25 are **Don Helmore** and **Rebecca Maxwell**. Also known to us are Wendy Fleming, and Jennifer Chrystie. We offer our congratulations to them all!

Do not forget that now is the time to send any further submissions you want to make for *A Lightness of Being* to Janette Fernando at 42 Hawkins Rd, Montrose 3765 or by email to

[janettefernando@iprimus.com.au](mailto:janettefernando@iprimus.com.au). The limit is 50 lines, including spaces, and no more than 3 poems.

#### MORE POETICA CHRISTI PRESS NEWS

It's turning out to be quite a year for publishing books. As well as *Memory Weaving*, In April or May we will have the launch of *Circumnavigation* by Cathy Altmann and in June the launch of *A Lightness of Being*, our newest anthology. We're also hoping to publish books by Marlene Marburg and Joy Chellew this year.



**With all these books coming out we need to think about how we can sell them** at other venues than just the launch.

We would like all of you to **contact your own churches** and ask whether some poems could be read as part of the service or inserted in the church bulletins or uploaded onto websites.

We would also like you to ask whether your church be interested in having **an evening of fine words and music**. This has worked well in various venues in the past. You could suggest it as a fund-raiser for missions.

#### MEMBER NEWS

**Kathryn Hamann** has another book out, *Lady in Waiting* which will be launched on April 26<sup>th</sup> at the East Doncaster Baptist Church, 47-53 Tunstall Road, Doncaster East 3109 Melways: 48 D3 At 3.00 pm for a 3.30 pm start. She has also had one of the poems from her forthcoming book published in *A Stinging Fly* (Ir)

Congratulations to **Don Helmore** and **Rebecca Maxwell** for winning places in the 25 poems selected by the judge in *A Lightness of Being* and to **Jean Sietzema-Dickson** for being one of 13 winners in the recent Studio competition and for a poem appearing in *Zadok* magazine last year.

## ANNUAL POETRY RETREAT

Last year we missed out on our annual Poetry ReTreat (it always *is* a treat!) because our host Robin Pryor was very ill. As reported in the last newsletter, he died later in the year, but Bron is still happy for us to come and share her lovely home and maze at St Andrews with us for a retreat this year. The dates are April 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and will include a Quiet day led by **Bron Pryor** on the Saturday and a Poetry Workshop led by **Cameron Semmens** on the Sunday. You can come for both days, or just one day and the cost depends on how many people come, but is usually around \$100 for the two days. Please let Janette or myself know if you are interested in coming. We'll have an enrolment form available next month.

## BOX HILL LIBRARY READINGS.

At the Box Hill Library the November reading was a duo act with **Cameron Semmens** reading some poems from his wonderful new book, *The Poetry of Home*, and **Leigh Hay** several poems from her delightful collection, *Capturing Clouds*, ringing the changes between serious poems and others more light hearted. They were supported by a good collection of Wordsmiths and a few others who are becoming regulars at these events.

The next reading is on Friday, **March 14<sup>th</sup>** and features **Wendy Fleming** and **Sue Donnelly** as guest readers, while **on May 2<sup>nd</sup>**, the guest readers will be **Marion Lemin, Sunni Sun and Greg Burns**.

## OTHER INTERESTING EVENTS

Some of you may be interested in a Workshop being led by Anne Carson at South Melbourne on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. This seems like a combination of meditation and workshop so I'd love to go. See attached flyer.

Don't forget to send poems to Sharlee for possible inclusion in *Zadok* magazine

## COMPETITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

**Blue Giraffe 13:** Closing 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014  
Guest Editor Pete Hay. Maximum of 5 poems which have not been in print or electronic media and are not on offer elsewhere. Subscriptions: \$20 for 2 issues posted in Australia. Cash or

cheque made out to Peter Macrow and sent to him at 6/16 Osborne Street, Sandy Bay, TAS 7005  
**Prospect #4.** Guest Editor Lyn Reeves. Submission window 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 to 31 March 2014. Maximum of 5 poems which have not been in print or electronic media and are not on offer elsewhere. Subscriptions: \$20 for 2 issues posted in Australia. Cash or cheque made out to Peter Macrow and sent to him at 6/16 Osborne Street, Sandy Bay, TAS

**Azuria**, Geelong's new, independent literary magazine is seeking submissions from Australian & overseas writers of essays, poetry (especially in languages other than English & their translations) and short prose. For further details contact the editor, Dr. E. Reilly, at [geelongwriters@gmail.com](mailto:geelongwriters@gmail.com)  
**Poetry Matters** – established 2006 – accepting submissions. Send 3-5 unpublished poems. Responses – within two weeks. Payment is one copy of issue in which work appears. For complimentary copy of current or previous issue send stamped (\$1-20) self-addressed C5 envelope to Cheryl Howard, 61 Palmer Crescent, Newham Vic 3442. Winners of 2013 Competition were Yvonne Adami, Vivien de Jong and Edith Speers.  
[cherylhoward@tpg.com.au](mailto:cherylhoward@tpg.com.au)  
<http://www.poetrymattersjournal.blogspot.com>

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>: 2-5pm:** Wordsmiths Meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East.

**Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2 pm: Launch of *Memory Weaving*** to be launched by Jenny Sinclair at MC<sup>2</sup>, Doncaster & Templestowe rooms, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 687 Doncaster Road, Doncaster, adjacent to the Manningham Council Offices.

**Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>: 2-5pm:** Wordsmiths meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, East Doncaster.

**Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 6.30-7.30 pm:** Poetry reading at Box Hill Library, Meeting room 1, with Wendy Fleming and Sue Donnelly as guest readers.

**Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>- Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>:** Poetry Weekend – details to follow. (Note that there will be no Wordsmiths meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>.)

**Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> : 6.30-7.30 pm:** Poetry reading at Box Hill Library, Meeting room 1, with Greg Burns, Marion Lemin and Sunni Sun as guest readers.

**\* Please note that membership dues of \$30 are now due (see Response slip)**

## POETS' CORNER



### **Tears of Rain...**

(Philippines, Nov 2013)

tears of rain  
hang necklaces  
on my clothesline.

In Tacloban  
there is nothing left  
to hang onto...

© *Jean Sietzema-Dickson*  
(published in *Studio* 2014)

### **alzheimer's**

Memories of you  
warm and alive  
eyes like summer skies  
embracing me  
and I pliable  
yielding  
wanting you.  
Now unseeing eyes  
look right through me  
your feet drag  
where once you ran  
to catch me  
I grab your arms  
place them around me  
you hang  
like a rag doll.  
I'm crying  
I'm dying  
Lost and alone  
In this empty room  
of my own body  
with only the memories  
aching  
for the life  
and the love  
we once shared.

© *Janny Brouwer*

### **crossed words**

Was a time  
when you'd ring and say  
*got 10 across yet?*  
and I'd reply (emphatically)  
no...but clearly you have!  
Peels of laughter louder  
than the chimes of a grandfather clock –  
you'd hang up in my ear  
then it would be my turn.  
Not much now  
your mind can manage  
phone answering  
a forgotten art.  
Today's cryptic  
is an all-time doozie  
but pointless asking  
if you've got 10 across –  
these days  
you don't have a clue.

© *Leigh Hay*

### **ambiguity of memory**

Mystical magical memories  
of times long past  
flow through my mind  
effortlessly.

Comforting, captivating,  
valued, yet valueless  
if everyday essentials  
elude me.

© *Sandra Topp*

### **grief**

Present by my absence  
sacrifice and love forgot  
reason's clothes abandoned  
over unmown lawns  
where heart of love  
diminishes  
'til residue  
is grief

© *Greg Burns*