

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

14.4

November, 2014

Welcome to the November edition of the Wordsmiths' newsletter – the last for 2014.

It's hard to believe that the year is drawing to a close. Where does time go?

I like Emily Dickinson's take on life and time : *"To live is so startling it leaves little time for anything else."* Life is certainly startling if we take time out to appreciate, wonder, discover, meander and enjoy. Unfortunately though, and all too often, we are so caught up with the busyness of living that living is anything but startling. It can become a continuous round of 'same old, same old'.

Drafting a poem however can be startling. We can discover, dream, imagine and create, and we get to play with our favourite toys...words. Making and taking time to write a poem can be exceptionally startling – we may not recognise where we're going or know what we're going to end up with!! (I speak for myself of course).

So why not draft a poem today – before time does a runner and another startling day of living passes us by.

In this edition :

A write up of the inaugural SparkLit Australian Christian Publishers' Forum held in August; news on the Christian Writers' Conference in Bacchus March in October; and following on from Joan Ray's story in our last edition about a book coming home to roost, Don Helmore shares a similar experience.

Leigh Hay

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our next meeting on November 8th is not to be missed as we are having **Earl Livings** to present a **poetry workshop** to us for the first half of the meeting. For only \$10 per person, you can be inspired to write poetry, with dreams and myths potentially playing a role.

As usual, for our final meeting of the year we'd like to meet an hour earlier, at 1 pm, to share lunch together. Please bring a plate of food to share.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea duty
Nov 8th	Poetry Workshop - Earl Livings	Sue, Leigh, David, Sharlee
Dec 6th	Maree S	BYO lunch to share

PAST MEETINGS

At the August Wordsmiths, **Carolyn Vimpani** spoke on the Scottish poet Robbie Burns, and read snippets from his poems – not an easy thing to do if you're not a native Scot. **Leigh Hay** led in September with poetry from the WW1 poets Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, and at the October meeting, **Greg Burns** talked more about the poets of WW1 and read 'Marching Song' by Rev GA Studdert-Kennedy (Woodbine Willie) and also 'Little Giffen', a poignant poem from the American War of Independence by Francis Orray Ticknor.

SparkLit Australian Christian Publishers' Forum



On Friday 15 August, over 30 people (including five members of Wordsmiths) attended an inaugural publishing forum organised by Michael Collie, the National Director of *SparkLit.org : Igniting Christian Writing* (formerly the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia and the Australian Christian Literature Society). Facilitated discussions and chosen speakers focussed on

writing and publishing for both Christian and secular readerships. Speakers included experts in public engagement, demographics, bookselling and public relations, and topics ranged from engaging an audience to selling more books. The forum followed the SparkLit Book of the Year Awards held the previous evening, where Cameron Semmens' *Love is the New Black (3rd Ed)* had been shortlisted. Cameron was also invited to open and close the SparkLit forum with performances of his poetry.

REPORT ON BOX HILL LIBRARY READINGS.

The September reading featured

Maree Silver, on the theme of poetry of the Australian landscape.

Maree lived in the small West Wimmera town of Dimboola bordered by the Little Desert and the Wimmera River until, as a teenager, she moved to Melbourne to complete her studies.

A china painter, bush walker and amateur photographer, Maree's poetry responds to visual imagery and many of the poems read at the library, reflected this.

Other readers included Jean Sietzema-Dickson, Leigh Hay and Joan Ray.

The next reading will be held on **Friday, November 7th**, 6.30-7.30 pm, and will feature **Marlene Marburg**, who has a new book of poems out called *Grace Undone - Love*, and **Peter White**. If you'd like to be part of the Open reading, please contact Leigh at leigh@leighhay.com.au

CHRISTIAN WRITERS' CONFERENCE

On Saturday, 25th of October, I attended this Conference, held at Bacchus Marsh. It gave me an insight into the Christian Publishing world here in Australia, as well as tips on marketing and writing freelance articles. I also thoroughly enjoyed Cameron Semmens' workshop on the Mighty Metaphor.

Janette Fernando

COMING HOME TO ROOST

At the July meeting of Wordsmiths, I introduced the poetry of Rev Studdert-Kennedy (Woodbine Willie) and his WWI poetry in *Rough Rhymes of a*



Padre. At the meeting, I had to admit that my copy of *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* had been loaned to a friend and not returned.

The next day I received an email from a fellow Wordsmith. She had been surfing the Internet looking for a copy of *Rough Rhymes*. Seems she'd discovered that the collected works of Studdert-Kennedy were fetching up to \$1700. She emailed to say, "hang on to your copy of *Rough Rhymes* Don – could be worth a fortune."

Well, that email stirred me up so I rang the person I thought I had loaned the book to about two years previously. He wasn't home but his daughter said she would have a look in her dad's bookcase. She rang back within the hour, saying she had rung her dad who was on holidays in the Cotswolds in the UK and he told her just where the book was. I raced straight up to their home a couple of suburbs away, collected my book, said thanks very much, and *Rough Rhymes* has now come home to roost. Of course I only did it for money!!

For anyone interested, the edition is titled *The Rhymes of G A Studdert-Kennedy*, printed by Hodder and Stoughton (1940). Last look on the Internet Amazon had two copies for \$7.50...but that was a couple of months ago!!

Don Helmore

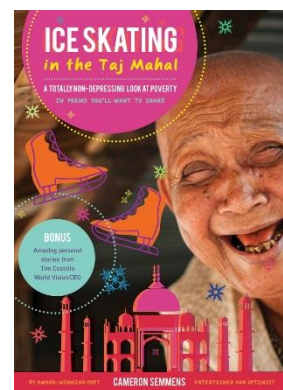
MEMBER NEWS

Kathryn Hamann's *Where Shadows Go, Exploring the Depths*, edited by **Janette Fernando** and **Cameron Semmens' The Poetry of Home** were all finalists in this year's CALEB awards. The winner was Cameron's book, so congratulations to him on a well-deserved win. He

has also just released his latest collection of poetry: ***Ice Skating in the Taj Mahal (A totally non-depressing look at poverty)***. Cam has

included laugh-making, thought-shaping poems, world photos, good-news stats and bonus inspiration stories from Tim Costello, World Vision Australia CEO. Copies are priced @ \$12.00 and available from Cam through <http://www.webcameron.com>.

Our well wishes and prayer go out to **Rebecca Maxwell**, who has had a knee replacement operation recently and to **Maree Silver**, who has broken her arm. Because Maree isn't able to drive and has been home most of the time, she's been

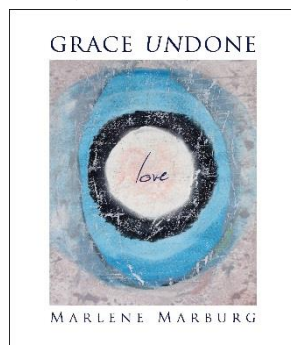


able to work on a collection of her poems and hopes to have it published by PCP early next year.

Lorraine McGuigan has a new published collection of her poetry. Titled **Blood Plums**, copies are available from Jean on 9890 5885. Cost \$20.

Alex Skovron will be launching his latest book on 30th November at 4pm at the Armadale Bowls Club Princes Park, 41 Sussex Rd, Sth Caulfield.

RSVP(essential) to Alex (9532 88697).



Marlene Marburg's Grace Undone : Love was launched on Sunday 26 October at Campion Centre of Ignatian Spirituality in Kew. Launched by Cameron Semmens, **Grace Undone : Love** is poetry from the four

seasons of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. 'Love' is the first of four volumes in the series titled **Grace Undone**. The other three volumes are titled *Presence*, *Faithfulness* and *Joy*.

Grace Undone : Love is a gift book of 93 poems, with colour cover and some B&W images throughout. Copies are available from Marlene at \$25 plus postage. To order, contact Marlene marlenemarburg@me.com or you can get a copy at the Box Hill Library reading on November 7th.

On November 30th an anthology, **Memory Byways**, is to be launched at the Bacchus Marsh library. This unique collection of poems is the result of the patience and skill of two Poetry Facilitators, including **Carolyn Vimpani**, who have created pathways to communication for people with dementia by providing interesting prompts and recording the conversations as poems. Photos were contributed by members of the Bacchus Marsh photography group. The project was funded under a Moorabool Shire Community Grant.



During November **David Dwyer** will be travelling to Nepal in support of Save the Children, during which time he will be volunteering in a remote Nepali community helping with school construction. As part of the trip, he will be fundraising for the project to help give village children the opportunity to go to school and also upgrade facilities at the Udaya Lower Secondary School. The project also aims at encouraging children to enrol in school, improve children's

retention rate, adopt child centred teaching and learning, train teachers, and educate the community about children's rights issues.

For all of this to happen, David is hoping to raise \$4,000. Any money donated goes directly to the project. For more information : <http://nepal2014.gofundraise.com.au/page/DavidNepal2014>

COMPETITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Overland Judith Wright Poetry Prize for New and Emerging Poets. Poems must be unpublished (including online) and not under consideration by other publishers. Poems that have won or are under consideration in other competitions are not eligible. The 2014 major prize is \$6000, with a second prize of \$2000 and a third prize of \$1000. All three winning poems will also be published in Overland. Closes 15 November

Ron Pretty Poetry Prize

Entries are open for the inaugural Ron Petty Poetry Prize. \$5000 for a single poem of up to 30 lines. Entry Fee: \$20 for one poem; \$10 for each additional poem. A shortlist of four poems will be posted on the Five Islands Press website and the winner will be announced on 15 February 2015. www.fiveislandspress.com Closes 30 November

Peter Porter Poetry Prize. 'Australian Book Review' welcomes entries in the eleventh Peter Porter Poetry Prize. The Porter Prize is now worth a total of \$7,500. Poems must not exceed 75 lines. www.australianbookreview.com.au. Closes 15/12

Short and Twisted, an anthology of short stories and poetry with a twist at the end, is seeking submission of short stories, poetry and images for the 2015 issue. For submission guidelines :

go to www.celapenepress.com.au email shortandtwisted@celapenepress.com.au or send SSAE to 2 Bonview Court, Knoxfield, 3180. Submissions accepted to 31 December 2014.

Zadok Perspectives magazine is looking for submissions of poetry. www.ethos.org.au Email your poetry submissions to Sharlee @ zadokperspectives@gmail.com

2014 Rhonda Jankovic Poetry Award

Named in honour of the late Rhonda Jankovic, this writing competition is looking for poetry written to the theme of Social Justice. First prize is \$500 and a 3CR Vintage Sound-bit Cartridge. Second place receives \$200 and third place receives \$100. Entry fee is \$5. Closes 25 November.

<http://www.rhondajankovicliterarysociety.org/poetry-award.html>.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Friday, November 7th : 6.30-7.30 pm: Poetry reading at Box Hill Library. Featured poets will be Marlene Marburg and Peter White. If you wish to register to read in open mic, contact leigh@leighhay.com.au

Saturday, November 8th : 2-5pm: Wordsmiths Meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East. Workshop with Earl Livings, on dreams and myths. Cost \$10.

Saturday, December 6th : 1-5pm : Christmas breakup meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East, BYO lunch and poems to workshop.



POETS' CORNER

The Bucket List

A safari to Africa
Arnhem land one more time
Western Australia in springtime
again.....
no, my list is out of reach
beyond the realms of possibility

the warmth of my mother's smile
her gentle touch
the twinkle in Grandpa's eyes
his deep abiding love
the loyalty and affection
of my best friend
watching my children play
their hugs and laughter

my dreams make anything possible
and I bask in the warm glow
of remembrances.

© Cecily Falkingham

The confidant

The blinds are drawn. He sits
beside the bed, quite still.
The figure lying there
is drugged or fast asleep.
He reaches to the dog,
then finds a second chair.
Thankfully, I sit.
Boz, too, falls deep asleep

beside me on the floor.
"My wife," he says, then adds
"we've been together now
for more than forty years.
Three sons we have, all grown,
but they've their own lives now –
please don't get me wrong,
they always keep in touch –
but it's their mother there
who really makes our home.
They say she's got a day,
or two, at most, to live –
no hope of any cure,
the cancer's too advanced.
For her," he says, "I try
to keep my spirits up..."
The voice continues on.,,

When finally I leave,
more burdened than I came,
with no one else to tell,
throughout the journey home
in the quiet of the car
I pass the load along
to my dog.

© Joan Ray

Let go

Sink into God
Where there are few words
or none at all
where the angels encircle you
fanning the flame

Let God sink into you
Feel the work
Gentling your trust
The grace is for you

© Marlene Marburg (from *Grace Undone-Love*)

Dear Westerner

Have you ever smelt a Timor-Leste classroom?
It's more than earth and wood.
It's perfumed with potential,
the fragrance of popcorn questions,
the aroma of loving guidance,
and the sweet scent
of hope.

© Cameron Semmens
(from *Ice-skating on the Taj Mahal*)