



WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

12.3 August, 2012

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

The next meeting will be held on Saturday **August 11th** at the home of Carolyn Vimpani, 8 Woodhouse Rd. Doncaster East. Please remember to bring about ten copies of one of your own original poems to be workshopped so that we can both see and hear your work. Also email a copy to Rebecca: beckybrl@vicnet.net.au and Mary: oshannessy@villamaria.com.au

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea
Aug 11th	Cath	Janette, Sue, Cynthia
Sept 8th	Janette	Rebecca, Jean, Peter
Oct 13th	Don	Leigh, Don, Marcia

PAST MEETINGS

Three good workshops have been held since I last wrote. The first was led by **Leigh Hay**, who read poems from three of our poets who have passed away in recent years – Mary Macdonald, Marie-Louise Stephens and Vera Urban, giving us a welcome reminder that these poets still live in their writing. **Carolyn Vimpani** led the next meeting, and spoke about dementia and a project for a book of poetry on that topic which she is planning with Kathryn Hamann. **Sue Donnelly** started by reading us Portia's speech about mercy from *The Merchant of Venice* and we appreciated both the language and the sentiments therein. I have found it such a blessing to have so many others able and willing to lead the group so that I can come and just enjoy the meeting or even, as happened in June, miss the meeting without feeling there would be any serious disruption.

MEMBER NEWS

The day after our last meeting a few of us were able to attend St George's Anglican Church in Ascot Vale for the launch of a book by **Kathryn Hamann** entitled *Sentenced to*

Transportation. This book is a departure from the norm in that it is a joint venture with her friend Penne Gillies, whose cartoons about public transport are hilarious.



A goodly crowd turned up to hear Kathryn's husband Conrad give us a brief history of Flinders St Station and then listen to Mary Keating, editor of the *Flemington Kensington News*, launch the book. Monique Lisbon, the publisher, sang *Parking Space* and we saw projections of some of the cartoons from the book while Kathryn regaled us with poetry. The result of the raffle was very gratifying for Kathryn as the still unfinished figure of Sven (Penne's creation) was won by her god-daughter. Penne has now completed the work and Sven has a note book in his back pack for Miranda to record their adventures. Kathryn is now working on another book, this one about cats, with illustrations by Conrad which are truly delightful. She has also had poems published in *The Mozzie* and one accepted for *Etchings* (Ilura Press) for their special issue on Music.



Janette and her husband Roger are back from a very full and enjoyable trip to Great Britain,

Holland, various other parts of Europe and Sri Lanka – ten weeks away in all. They met up with many relatives in England, Holland and Sri Lanka. We trust the refreshment of this trip will give her renewed energy for the task ahead as she gets back to editing and publishing.



Janette in Sri Lanka

Don Helmore had a more adventurous time in Europe than he had bargained for. In Oslo he fell over and recovered quite well but after a second fall in Italy he came home and found he had broken ribs and had damaged a leg. Next time he comes to Wordsmiths, we'd better bring some cotton wool in which to wrap him!

Cameron Semmens has a new book out, based on his World Vision trip to India.

Titled *Random Cow*, it is available in:

e-Book – 2 formats: MOBI for Kindle and EPUB for iBook and other e-Book readers. \$5.99

Book – bound A5 mini-book (50 pages) \$7.99 plus postage.

Soundtrack – 3 original instrumental songs by Rod Gear (*Sons of Korah*) in MP3 format.

For \$19.99 you get the **book + e-Book + Soundtrack** with proceeds going towards a

real cow through World Vision Gifts. Exclusively available through his website: <http://www.webcameron.com/buy.php>

And to launch this new venture he has recorded a series of video podcasts, **Random Cow** — **Random Readings**, where he performs poems from the book in random locations... with random cows! Check it out if you'd like: <http://youtu.be/u456ecVHs0Y>



*We congratulate **Jean** on behalf of all at Wordsmiths and PCP, on the occasion of her **80th birthday, on August 8th**. This is not a misprint. We all know she has the energy of someone half that age, and give thanks to God for her vision, devotion and hard work for both the Wordsmiths and Poetica Christi Press for so many years.*

Marlene Marburg has had several works published: an article "The Courage to See, Feel and Act" and a poem "Kairos" in *The Anthology of Spiritual Direction* which is about to be launched by the Australian Ecumenical Council of Spiritual Directors. Her poem "A Way of Seeing" was accepted for *Listen*, a publication of Spiritual Directors' International. In March she had an article "Empowerment through Poetry in Giving and Receiving the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius" in *Presence* (Spiritual Directors International) which included nine poems.

Cathy Altmann was at *WordStorm* in Darwin (National poetry festival) in May and presented a workshop called 'You don't have to be a poet...to write poetry!' using the wonderful collection of boats at the Museum and Art Gallery of NT. She was also Guest reader at Box Hill Library – see below.

READINGS AT BOX HILL LIBRARY

On Friday 20th July we had another successful reading at the Box Hill Library. It was a delight to be able to meet upstairs away from the usual interruptive sounds of the open space downstairs. It was great to have **Cathy Altmann** as our featured reader sharing some of her deeply felt and beautifully crafted poems about her experiences of breast cancer. We had several people there for the first time including Carol Poustie who has been running the reading at Nunawading for several years. One person, who came last time, had the courage to read to us this time and we may have more people coming to Wordsmiths as a result. Supper time was a buzz of conversation. We were delighted to have some very positive comments emailed to us from one of the attendees.

We have two more readings at the library this year. On **September 7th**, we have **Jennifer Chrystie** as our featured reader, meeting

upstairs in the meeting room to start at 6.30 pm, and on **November 23rd** we will have a Wordsmiths reading on the theme of Christmas, in the Australiana Room at 6.30.

COMPETITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Our very own **Poetica Christi Press 2012 Poetry Competition**: Closing date October 31st. Poems up to 50 lines (inc.spaces) on the theme *Exploring the Depths*. 1st prize \$300, 2nd prize \$100, Francis Webb prize of \$75 for the poem that best describes a spiritual journey, top 25 poems to be published in an anthology. Entries \$5 each or 3 for \$12. Entry forms available at our website www.poeticachristi.org.au or from PCP Competition Coordinator, PO Box 5322, Mordialloc, VIC 3195.

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.

Glen Phillips' Poetry Prize

Entries are now open for the inaugural 2012 Glen Phillips' Poetry Prize. The competition has an open theme with up to 50 lines of poetry allowed per entry. See full guidelines at www.pcwc.org.au. Closing date: 31 August.

Australian Poetry Journal 2.2 - submissions open. As our flagship publication, the *Australian Poetry Journal* is of the highest quality. Featuring only the best contemporary Australian poetry and criticism, the journal reflects current priorities and trends in the poetry industry. The journal also includes a range of incisive critical reviews and articles highlighting the most interesting debates and discussion in Australian poetry today. The theme of the journal is not prescriptive and emerges organically depending on the content of our submissions. Contact admin@australianpoetry.org. Submissions close 30th August 2012

The Jean Stone Award is given on the even biennial year for a poem or group of poems up to 60 lines. Closing Date: 30 September. Go to www.fawns.org.au

Toolangi CJ Dennis Poetry competition.

Poems to 80 lines, prizes of \$250, \$150, \$100. Closing date September 7th. Info at www.toolangi.net/events/toolangi-poetry-competition

MELBOURNE WRITERS FESTIVAL

How to Read a Poem Friday 24 August 2012 at 5.30 pm, ACMI studio.

Why choose poetry? Is poetry still changing lives? Former UK Poet Laureate Sir Andrew Motion, poetry editor Gig Ryan (*The Age*) and Luka Lesson (Centre for Poetics and Justice) are poets, and also novelists, journalists and performers respectively. They talk with Ellen Koshland (The Poet's Voice) about poetry's ability to express ideas and sentiments, how to read a poem and why indeed you would.

The Necessary Poet on Sat. September 1st,

1pm. Iwaki Auditorium. Public memorials and ceremonies often rely on poetry to give the occasion an added, special dimension. So it seems poetry is indeed necessary. Come along and hear six remarkable individuals - Martha Nussbaum, Germaine Greer, John Wolseley, Omar Musa, Melissa Cranenburgh and a representative from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre - read and discuss the poetry necessary in their lives. Curated by Ellen Koshland (The Poet's Voice).

For more information go to www.mwf.com.au

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

Friday September 7th, 6.30 pm: Reading at Box Hill Library meeting room (upstairs) with Jennifer Chrystie as our guest reader to celebrate National Poetry Week.

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

Saturday, October 13th, 2-5pm: Wordsmiths meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, East Doncaster.

Saturday, November 10th 2-5 pm. Wordsmiths meeting with a workshop led by Kathryn Hamann & Carolyn Vimpani

Friday, November 23th 6.30 pm: Christmas Reading by the Wordsmiths at Box Hill Lib.

Newsletter produced by Jean Sietzema-Dickson and Janette Fernando. poetica@iprimus.com.au

POETS' CORNER



My mother taught me gently

making French Mayonnaise is touchy –
but don't worry,
just take it slowly, and gently.
you mash the cold boiled egg yolk with salt –
nice and smoothly powdery, no lumps.
now, keeping the fork flat to the bottom,
and still stirring gently in the same direction,
slowly mix in two raw egg yolks –
keep mixing gently until smooth.

now the oil: don't hurry –
one drop at a time –
dribble the oil in, little by little,
and meld it in to the creamy yolks.

gently, slowly, there is no hurry,
always stirring in the same direction –
let your fork feel the smooth cream thickening,
and add the next little drop of oil –
still mixing gently, firmly, evenly –
melding the oil in, until
the cream slowly thickens again;
and go on like that, drop by drop,
as much as you need, to increase your mixture.
taste a little and adjust the seasoning.

line your platter with fresh cooked seafood,
or slices of egg and slices of vegetable:
pour the mixture slowly, evenly,
all over the platter,
and leave it gently resting.

now eggs and oil with tender melding
have been transformed to French Mayonnaise.

© *Rebecca Ruby Maxwell*

Anti (biotics et al)

Here I'm stuck in the West Ward
sitting up in bed
waiting for my medicine
due after I was fed.

They gave me breakfast early,
then lunch time came – and went.

They're looking for a package
the pharmacy has sent.

But, no – they couldn't send it
because (as you must see)
the doc forgot to sign it off –
and now it's after THREE.

I've a special drip solution
tailored just for me –
lab tests showed it was the best
to get a cure, you see.

BUT the bugs are fighting back
while I'm sitting here bereft
because the doctor didn't sign a form
before he blooming left!

© *Joan Ray*

The Aphrodils

To be read alongside *The Daffodils* by William
Wordsworth

I floated only in my shroud
When drifting nigh a fish with gills,
Then all at once there came aloud,
A flock of fearsome aphrodils,
Billabong bound, and there to freeze
In tepid water to their knees.

Intending on that fish to dine
And wading in a gruesome way,
They crept along without a sign
Soft edges of the murky clay:
Dozens I saw, I saw them prance
Clapping their beaks, a hectic stance.

The swamp beside, sparkling and grey
Out-did the birds the colour of ghee:-
A shroud could but be limp or gay
Or hep and taut, loose and free!
I glared – and glared – but thought of naught
Till show was over and fish was caught.

Well, often to my cot I fly
In tense but lonely thoughts I brood,
The aphrodils stalk the fish and try
To clean their crops where gills are glued;
My ghostly shroud with nightmares fill
It's then I take my dementia pill.

© *Don Helmore* - *Don's doggerel*
(with apologies to William for the parody)