

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

11.2.May 2011

Dear Wordsmiths and Friends,

As if the floods and cyclones at the beginning of the year were not enough to stop us in our tracks the news continues to be full of the woes of the world with the earthquake in Christchurch followed swiftly by the tsunami, earthquake and the continuing nuclear disaster in Japan. I find myself unable to know who or what to blame, though there will be heads rolling in Japan.

In spite of all this *The Wordsmiths of Melbourne* continues to flourish. Our February, March and April meetings (this last at St Andrew's Beach as part of our Poetry Weekend) were well attended. February is always a great time to catch up after the break in January. It was great to see **Louise Joy** visiting with her friend Daryl and we also welcomed **Janice Williams**, all the way from the Grampians!

In March **Kathryn Hamann** led us in an exciting workshop through which we all wrote interesting pieces and came away with fodder for future writing.

March also saw two reading events. The first at Box hill Library was quite low key but those who attended enjoyed hearing Lyn Hatherly reading a very interesting range of poems, including *Women, women, women, women, women* from our book *Reflecting on Melbourne*.

Our April meeting saw a group of us gather at the home of Robin and Bronwyn Pryor at St Andrews Beach. As always, we were made very welcome by our hosts. On Saturday Cathy Altmann led us very gently in a Quiet Day and we spent time reading, reflecting and writing.



L-R: Sharlee, Cathy, Janette & Jean

On the Sunday we enjoyed a free morning, walking, writing or reading and followed this after lunch by more writing in a workshop led by **Philton**, who focussed on rhythm in poetry. The shared food we brought left us very well fed and Saturday evening gave us a time to share poetry and play games. We all went home feeling wonderfully refreshed.



L-R: Robin, Cath Barnard, Ann

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

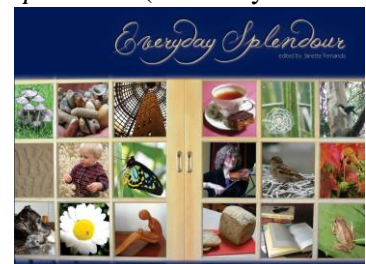
Our next Wordsmiths meeting is on this Saturday, **May 14th**, at 2pm. The next two will be on **June 11th and July 9th**. Here is the roster for leading the meeting and for dishes/afternoon tea duty:

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea
May 14th	Janette	Jean, Maree N, Joan
June 11th	Carolyn	Sharlee, Carolyn, Rebecca
July 9th	Leigh	Elaine, Cameron, Joy

PCP NEWS

Launch of Everyday Splendour

On March 25th, we had the launch of our latest anthology *Everyday Splendour* (edited by Janette Fernando.) This beautiful book of 116 pages, including 8 in colour, has 73 poems from 57 poets.





It was launched by Jim Stallard, from Christian Blind Mission Australia, at the Augustine Centre in Hawthorn. This venue is a very attractive place for a launch as there is always an art exhibition hung on the walls and the hall has great acoustics for music.

We were delighted by Roland Cropley's contribution on the organ and the harp playing of Lachlan Mc Call. Jim Stallard, who is a quadriplegic, had us in fits of laughter as he launched the book and we also enjoyed the reading of poems by a number of poets. The evening finished with a delicious supper. If you'd still like to buy a copy of *Everyday Splendour* for yourself or as a gift, please use the reply slip.

Poetica Christi Press is working on publishing a book of poetry by **Graham Leo**, Principal of Emmanuel Christian School on the Gold Coast and we're also hoping **Joy Chellew** will have her book *In Search of Peace* ready soon.

Then we'd like to have the anthology from last year's competition *Horizons* out by the end of the year. If you'd still like to submit some poems on that theme, please email them to Janette at poetica@iprimus.com.au

MEMBER NEWS

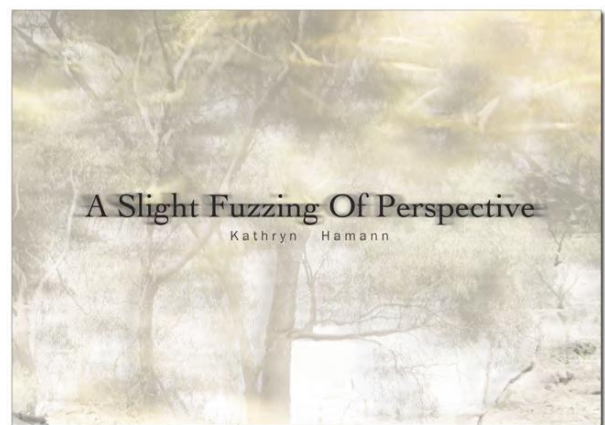
On the last day of April **Kathryn Hamann's** seventh book, *A Slight Fuzzing of Perspective*,



(published by Shardlight) was launched at Yarra Theological Union by Angelo O'Hagan. In a speech showing his facility with German and his understanding of the place of ducks in the cosmos he likened Kathryn's poetry to that of Rilke. Will Hamann showed his

technical expertise by managing two slide shows while we listened to his own compositions on the synthesizer.

Cassandra O'Brien talked about the editing process and Kathryn delighted us with a goodly selection of readings from her beautifully produced book. Full of photographs by Len O'Brien and paintings by Sue Watson, it features the ubiquitous duck on most pages as carriers of the most important page numbers. This book would make a lovely gift/coffee-table book, with its many colour pages of marvellous photography and art. If you'd like a copy at the very reasonable price of \$30 plus \$12 postage and handling, go to www.underthesun.net.au.



Joy Chellew is in hospital for surgery on her shoulder, which has been troubling her lately, so please pray for a speedy recovery. It was good to see **Elaine Foster** at both launches after a long time of hospitalization and recuperation. We congratulate **Kathryn Hamann** on her beautiful new book and on being a runner up in the James Kirkup competition. **Joan Ray** seems to be doing well with her cancer treatment we hope she will be well enough to join us again soon. I, **Jean S-D** managed to fall and break a small bone in my foot. It gave me an excuse to get Piet away to Jindivik for a few days as I really did not feel up to standing and cooking. In the beginning it was painful and now wearing a moon-boot is a nuisance, but much easier than having a plastered leg! Congratulations to **Cameron Semmens** and his wife Sonya, on the birth of Anamieka Rose, a dear little sister for Spencer!

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

The 2011 Emerging Writers' Festival. When: 26 May – 5 June. The Emerging Writers' Festival

celebrates writing in all its forms. In 2011 it offers professional development, networking and new audience engagement opportunities to writers at all stages of their career. For full details, go to www.emergingwritersfestival.org.au.

All Poetry 2011 Competition. Closing date: 30 June. For all genres of original, unpublished poetry between 14–40 lines. First prize \$150. Entry fee \$6 per poem. Conducted and judged by members of The Kitchen Table Poets of the Shoalhaven. artsrush.com.au/?p=1126.

Arts Queensland Val Vallis Award for Unpublished Poetry. Closing date: 7 July. Committed to encouraging emerging poets throughout Australia. Up to three poems per entry. Each entry must be accompanied by a separate entry form and a separate entry fee of \$20. First prize \$1,000 plus a week's stay at Varuna Writers' House. www.queenslandpoetryfestival.com.

Bruce Dawe National Poetry Prize 2011. Closing date: 31 July. An annual \$1500 award to encourage poets throughout Australia. Entrants may submit up to three poems, with an entry fee of \$6 per poem.

www.usq.edu.au/arts/community/poetryprize.

Writing Poetry for Children Australian Poetry workshop. When: 1–29 August. Lorraine Marwood will set a writing task each week to cover the variety of poems currently published in children's poetry in Australia. For more information see

www.australianpoetry.org/education/professional-development.

Online poetry workshop. When: 1–29 August. With Australian Poet Lorraine Marwood. "Poetry-How To Write It With Passion And Enjoyment." An online four weeks workshop through the Australian Poetry Organisation for poets writing poetry or wanting to write poetry for children.

www.australianpoetry.org/education/professional-development.

Dangerously Poetic National Poetry Prize.

Closing date: 15 June. Poets are invited to write up to 40 lines on the theme, "A passion for nature and our place in it." First Prize is \$500, a three-day pass to the Byron Bay Writer's Festival 2011, publication in Dangerously Poetic's upcoming anthology, a free copy of the anthology and chance to read the poem at the festival. \$10 first poem, \$5 for each additional.

dangerouslypoetic.com/2011/04/announcing-new-national-poetry-competition.

News from the Australian Poetry Centre: As you've heard, we are running a NATIONAL

POETRY SYMPOSIUM in Newcastle on October 1st. Our symposium coincides with a poetry conference run by Newcastle University, the 30th anniversary of the Newcastle Poetry Prize, as well as the *This is Not Art* Festival, so there'll be lots going on in Newcastle at this time. Please save the date. We encourage you to attend this day, so we can get Australia's key poetry heads together to discuss, debate and deconstruct the state of Australian poetry. Please plan to come. For more information email admin@australianpoetry.org Australian Poetry is proud to present a series of online and live poetry workshops. These workshops range in style, content and form, some live, some in regional areas of Australia, some online, for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests.

Featured online workshops include: **6 June – 4**

July: Felicity Plunkett – Creative Re-writing:

US poet/teacher Steve Kowitt said that "if there is a "secret" to writing it is rewriting, a process that can be every bit as exciting as getting the first draft down on paper".

Featured live workshops include: **15 May (2pm-**

4pm): Geoff Lemon – Guide to Getting

Published (*Geoff will show you how and when to submit what to who, and how to give yourself the best chance of getting published*) **15 June (6pm-**

8pm): Sandra Thibodeaux – Disturbing the

Poem (*the course will be encourage participants to 'disturb' their poems, through shifting*

perspective, place, chronology and voice. Such disturbances may unearth new levels to the poetry or may lead to the creation of new works)

DIARY OF EVENTS

Saturday, May 14th, 2-5pm: Wordsmiths Meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East.

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

Friday, July 8th, 6.30-8 pm : Poetry reading at Box Hill Library with Kathryn Hamann and Peter Hill as guest readers (to be confirmed.)

Saturday, July 9th, 2-5pm: Wordsmiths meeting at 8 Woodhouse Rd, East Doncaster.

POETS' CORNER



Osmanthus fragrans

The poet's house
is worn and sparse,
dusty flagstones
a thousand years cold.

Beams of oak
step curtained doors,
thwarting spirits
that would cross
the threshold – the house
of a learned man.
Watermarked sunshine
overlays dust,
quills and scrolls
lie weak in winter light.

In the grassless courtyard
a single shrub;
gnarled, stunted
in its prison of stone.
As fragrant clusters
await the summer
only memory perfumes
the poet's morning,

© Leigh Hay

You're standing too close to the edge

No

The edge has moved closer to where I'm standing

©Simply Sue

cradled in cobwebs
silvered by early sunlight
a water hydrant

©Jean Sietzema-Dickson

The Gift

heart deep
with a
butterfly flutter

your Spirit
speaks
of love

free from
my inner
chrysalis

wings pulse
uplift
take flight

© Maree Silver

By the Broken River

Ancient ones
first walked this land
barefoot
in touch with rock and sand
and creatures high and low
aware of the Now
knowing
a time to stay
a time to go

today
youngsters
jog on this path
rhythmically
fastened to headphones
their virtual world
knowing
this paradise
as space to exercise

I am a tortoise
old and slow
walking
not knowing

I lift my head
listening for the word
that has been said
so long ago

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