

# WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

## 16.2 May, 2016

Welcome to the second edition of the Wordsmiths' newsletter for 2016.

Recently, a friend and I sat over dinner talking about books. We both collect old ones with leather covers, gold lettering and flowery designs. We agreed that we love the smell of old books, the feel of the soft leather covers, and more than anything, the inscription on the fly leaf.

I recently bought a copy of AA Milne's *Behind the Lines*, poetry written by Milne in the opening nine months of WWII. The book cost me next to nothing from The Brotherhood web site and is a total gem. But it's the inscription, penned in ink, that I like almost more than the poetry itself... 'Hope you enjoy this Macca. In case you want to know how much it cost – 5 shillings and P pence'. (Signed M).

Turn the page, and Milne also has a dedication, printed by the publisher in 1940: 'To my affinity C.R. Milne, Scholar of Trinity, and, by the time this appears, with any luck a private in the Royal Engineers'.

The appeal of inscriptions and dedications can often support your reasons for buying an old, second hand edition. Clearly 'M' had a playful mind and Milne dedicated his poetry to his C.R. (Christopher Robin), whom he may have thought at that time might not survive the war.

I always feel that when I buy an old book that has an inscription, I've gained two friends...the book and the person it was given to. No wonder I can't part with any of them!!

Leigh

### PAST MEETINGS

In February, **Jean Sietzema** led the group and read two poems from *Pro Rege*. The first, 'Crossing Barbwire Fences' by Howard Schaap, contained strong imagery and description, lending itself to metaphor. The second poem, 'His Holy Temples' by Dave Schelhaas, is a poem about the connection between God and God's tasking of us.

In March, **Joan Ray** led the group. She gave a brief outline on both a Villanelle and Pantoum and handed out an example of each, followed by discussion of the examples and poets' pre-knowledge.

**Cecily Falkingham** led the group in April, reading from 'Illustrated Australian Verse', a book she had found and purchased in the Venus Bay op shop. Cecily read John Manifold's poem 'The Bunyip and the Whistling Kettle' and gave some information on Manifold's background.

### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Unless otherwise notified, all meetings for 2016 will be held at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East, from 2-5 pm. At our next meeting we will have a special guest – **Cathy Altmann**, who will lead us in a Poetry Workshop with some writing exercises, so **please bring a pen, paper and \$10**. Cathy's book, *Circumnavigation*, was published by PCP, and won the Fellowship of Australian Writers Anne Elder award for first poetry book. She also has a Masters degree in writing.

The following is a yearly roster of poets to lead the monthly meeting, and also share afternoon tea duty (bring a plate and clean up afterwards.) If you cannot make it on the date shown, please organise a swap with another member of Wordsmiths, or let Janette know.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea duty
May	Cathy Altmann	Rebecca, Greg, Bron
June	Peter	Joan, June, Sharlee
July	Janette	Peter, Sunni, Cecily
August	Maree S	Don, Leigh, Maree N
Sept	Don	Jean, Maree S, Cath
Oct	Cath	Janette, David, Greg
Nov	Carolyn	Rebecca, Joan, Peter
Dec	Bron	Christmas meeting Everyone bring something to share

### FROM THE TREASURER

A reminder that membership payments of \$30.00 for the year 1 January 2016 -31 December 2016 are now due. Payment in cash preferred, correct money if possible to Maree Silver (Treasurer), or if paying by cheque, make the cheque out to Poetica Christi Press.

## LAUNCH OF *IMAGINE*



Pictured L to R: Maree, Blaise, Janette

On Sunday May 1, PCP's latest anthology *Imagine* was launched at All Saints Anglican, Mitcham. This is the first time that PCP has used the facilities at All Saints, and this location proved to be a very appropriate venue.

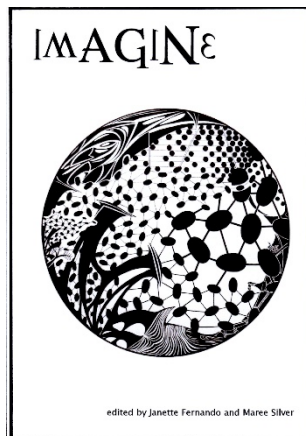
The anthology was launched by Blaise van Hecke co-owner and manager of Busybird Publishing in Montmorency. Blaise is also the current President of the Victorian Society of Women Writers.

The launch was well attended, and music was provided by Tim Fernando (keyboard), Susan Cloete (violin) and Hannah Arnold (ukulele) who played instrumental versions of two psalms by *Sons of Korah*.

Twenty five poets read their individual contributions to the anthology and those reading and attending stayed to enjoy a delicious afternoon tea.

*Imagine* is co-edited by Janette Fernando and Maree Silver, with cover design and layout by Cameron Semmens.

Copies of the anthology are available through PCP's website [www.poeticachristi.org.au](http://www.poeticachristi.org.au) or by emailing Maree Silver direct : [gmsilver@optushome.com.au](mailto:gmsilver@optushome.com.au) RRP \$20 + \$3 p&h.



## MEMBER NEWS

Jean Sietzema-Dickson will be holding a **POETRY READING** at her home at 2 pm on June 5th. For those wishing to attend and/or read, Jean can be contacted by email [poeticachristi@netspace.net.au](mailto:poeticachristi@netspace.net.au) or phone 9890 5885.

Congratulations to **Philton** who was awarded a High Distinction by Monash for his Masters thesis which examines the use of hoaxes as means for literary

criticism - one of his three case studies being the Australian 1944 Ern Malley Hoax - and how this critical method relates to key phases of academia's "Literary Theory".

## VALE LYN HATHERLY (1945-2016)

On Thursday 24 March, the poetry world was saddened to learn of the death of Lyn Hatherly. A memorial service in celebration of Lyn's life was held in the Great Hall at Montsalvat on 7 April, and I was privileged to add to the eulogies given for Lyn.



I have known Lyn Hatherly since we met at Poetry Monash. Lyn published my first collection in the Medal Poets series, and we have been friends ever since. I loved her effervescence and her rumbustious enthusiasm for life.

Lyn has been a good friend to the Wordsmiths of Melbourne. She encouraged our publishing through Poetica Christi Press and has been published by us. There is a wonderful poem of hers in *Reflecting on Melbourne* called Women, Women, Women. She has launched books for us, written blurbs for our back covers and shared in our poetry readings at Box Hill Library. Always she was a positive influence in our midst and we will miss her greatly. It is good to know that Lyn is now free from the struggle of her illness. This short poem expresses how I think of her now.

*Were I a painter  
I would brush the sky onto my canvas  
setting pale grey streaks and wisps of cloud  
on a background of palest blue*

*Above the mountain range, visible again  
after days of obliterating cloud  
one small bird would fly  
to freedom...*

Jean Sietzema-Dickson

## DADIRRI LABYRINTH REFLECTION DAYS 2016

### 21st May: Making simple lifestyle choices (10.00am – 4pm)

"In solitude, we die not only to others but also to ourselves...In time we find that solitude gives us power not to win the rat race, but to ignore the rat race altogether. Slowly we find ourselves letting go of our inner compulsions to acquire more wealth than we need, look more youthful than we are, attain more status than is wise. In the stillness, our false, busy selves are unmasked and seen for the imposters they truly are."

**This day will be in silence after morning tea till love feast**



**Location:** 60 Bass Meadows Blvd, St Andrews Beach 3941.

**Lunch:** Please bring food to share; Morn/Aft tea provided.

**Cost:** \$10 [pension \$5]

**Booking:** please register by the previous Thursday evening. Contact Bronwyn Prior, Tel. 5988 5257; email [robron@pryor.org.au](mailto:robron@pryor.org.au) <http://dadirri.pryor.org.au>

## COMPETITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Poetica Christi Poetry Competition 2016.

Note that we are running our competition a little earlier this year, so the closing date is **July 31<sup>st</sup>**.

Poems up to 50 lines (incl.spaces) on the theme *Hope whispers*. 1<sup>st</sup> prize \$300, 2nd prize \$100, top 25 poems to be published in an anthology. Entries \$6 each or 3 for \$15. Entry forms available at [www.poeticachristi.org.au](http://www.poeticachristi.org.au) or from PCP Competition Coordinator, PO Box 110, Greensborough, VIC 3088.

### Shoalhaven Literary Award – Poetry 2015

This year the award is for poetry and the judge is Sydney poet and teacher Brook Emery. 1<sup>st</sup> prize: \$1000, 2<sup>nd</sup>: \$300, 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$100. <http://bit.ly/1pfiVII>

### Submit to ‘Southerly’

‘Southerly’ will be producing an issue on Writing and disability. Submissions include poetry, short fiction, essay, review and memoir. Both physical and psychological disability will be considered- visible and invisible – and disability will be interpreted widely in both these areas.

<http://southerlyjournal.com.au/2015/12/18/call-for-submissions-disabilities-issue/>

### Submit to ‘The best Australian Writing’

Submissions for Black Inc’s annual best Australian Essays, Stories and Poems are now open. Published and unpublished work will be considered. Previously published work must have been published after August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. Essay and stories receive \$400 and poems receive \$40.

[www.bestaustralianwriting.com.au/submissions](http://www.bestaustralianwriting.com.au/submissions)

**Scribes Writers Poetic Licence competition** - awards cash prizes for First and Second-place holders with certificates for Highly Commended and Commended submissions. Categories include Traditional Verse and

Free Verse. There is no set theme. Entry fee is \$7. **Closes 30 June.**

[www.scribeswriters.com/poetry.html](http://www.scribeswriters.com/poetry.html)

‘Offset’ is looking for creative pieces that celebrate and engage with the diverse cultures that enrich our communities. Selected submissions will be featured in the journal and also during Offset’s Arts Exhibition at MetroWest in October 2016. Word length is 350–2000 words. This includes fiction, non-fiction, autobiography, and poetry (poems no longer than 100 lines). **Closes 3 June.**

<https://offsetartsjournal.com/submitting-your-work/>

### Australian Lithuanian Festival Writing Competition

Writers are invited to submit in these four categories: Prose in Lithuanian or English (essay, short story or memoir) and poetry in Lithuanian or English (14 lines minimum, 500 words maximum). The subject matter needs to be related in some way to Lithuania. Submissions must be previously unpublished. A prize of \$100 is offered for each category. Email [writingALD2016@outlook.com](mailto:writingALD2016@outlook.com) for an entry form. **Closes 9 October.**

**The Suburban Review** is calling for submissions for AFTER DARK, an exploration of what came before light, and what happens after the lights go out, metaphorical and physical. They’re looking for flash fiction, creative nonfiction (up to 500 words), poems (up to 20 lines) and comics (up to 1 page) on the theme. Contributors are unpaid. **Closes 15 June.**

<https://thesuburbanreview.submittable.com/submit/58075>

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2-5pm:** Meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Road, Doncaster East. Poetry Workshop by Cathy Altmann. Cost: \$10.

**Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>: 10 am – 4 pm:** Quiet Reflection Day at 60 Bass Meadows Bvd, St Andrews Beach. Phone Bron Pryor: 5988 5257.

**Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>: 2 pm:** POETRY READING at Jean Sietzema’s home, 493 Elgar Rd, Mont Albert Nth. Ph: 9890 5885.

**Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2-5pm:** Meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Road, Doncaster East.

**Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2-5pm:** Meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Road, Doncaster East.

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*Newsletter prepared by Leigh Hay & Janette Fernando  
Send any news to [poetica@iprimus.com.au](mailto:poetica@iprimus.com.au)*



## POETS' CORNER

### The view from a balcony in Noosa

She has taken her old bones north  
to wait out winter in a warmer clime.

Nestled on a balcony chair she writes,  
eight postcards to friends left behind in wind and  
influenza.

Her voice – '*such wonderful warmth*' is light and airy,  
though she counts eight instances of the word *ache*.

While the unit she rents takes air, she ties up loose ends,  
dusts each one with the perfumed sadness of solitude.

In the jumble of memory, she forages for children lost.  
Osteo. has touched her spine.

Too crippled to descend the beach stairs, she hovers  
in the treetops burdening the sky, an old albatross

weighting the balcony with scuffed magazines,  
a ruminant of conversations from vanished afternoons.

The sea allows a distant glance

where once everything was a dance hall  
decked out in scenes

sweat, lights and cigarettes,  
harlequin colours of girls who weren't,  
their legs so broadly beautiful in the highest of heels.

The diamond man with his *alouette*.

Someone is calling her between  
banquets of eight courses and matching wines.

Her lunch time meal arrives on wheels.  
The young girl bends to clean.

© Avril Bradley (*Winning poem in IMAGINE*)

### Metamorphosis

Struck down by the elements,  
I could no longer fly.  
With heavy heart and broken wings,  
A sad butterfly.

On autopilot I performed.  
My life had no emotion.  
The black cloud had descended.  
I could barely function.

In time the black cloud lifted.  
Warm light shone through.  
Colour pulsed in wings again,  
As healing membranes grew.

Then... Up and up I flew.

© Maree Nikolaou

### The Tree

I  
Green tree,  
Branches arch with life  
And beauty.

Green tree,  
Cut, chopped, sawn,  
Planks so ugly.

Dead tree of shame,  
Forced beyond the city's wall.  
Forced upon the hill of *The Skull*.

II  
Dead tree of crime, stark outline  
Do we deride God's gift so dear  
With words of scorn and a crown of thorns?  
Have we fled in doubt and fear?

Do we come with true humility  
To see this death as Life,  
This Tree as evergreen,  
God's promise of eternity?

© June Close

### Prayer

To sit unmoving  
leaves the land of time  
behind and enters  
the kingdom of peace

Compassion rises  
from uncertain seas  
while solitude walks  
in bare feet to reach  
the sands of forgiveness

Human needs rise  
from where we've come,  
reefs worn down through  
ceaseless motion

Hope is a forest  
rising high  
overhead and drawing  
eyes and heart  
to heaven

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