

# WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

17.2

May, 2017

Welcome to the May edition of the Wordsmiths' newsletter for 2017.

It's that time again in Melbourne when the days cling to warmth, the nights and mornings are crisp, and leaves are changing into their gowns of red and gold. There's something very calming about Autumn – I always think of it as a very gentle season; a mature season for writing sensitive, reflective poetry. I can be mesmerised by watching leaves fall, or entranced by sitting in dappled sunlight looking on as birds and insects go about the daily business of existence. Autumn for me is the tartness of cumquats, pinkness of quince jelly, sweetness of grapes, or the mushiness of fleshy figs picked fresh from the tree. There's a stillness about Autumn – days of brilliant sunshine with no hint of a breeze. Once Autumn arrives, I feel secure in the knowledge of winter rains to come, the smell of woodsmoke and the pleasure of hot soup and scones for Sunday night tea.

Autumn is the winding down season; the last of the Summer light season; the get ready to batten down for Winter season; the sit, take stock and contemplate season. Melbourne, in Autumn, can't be matched – it's just a beautiful, serene place to be.

I'm planning yet another stroll through one of Melbourne's many public gardens, or taking some time out for a walk along the mighty Yarra, or just spending half an hour sitting in glorious Autumn sunshine, somewhere like Fed Square, watching the world go by. Must remember to take a notepad with me though. It is Autumn after all, and I never know when the muse might suddenly catch me unawares, settle softly on my shoulder, and insist that I write a Haiku – at least a Haiku!!

Leigh

## PAST MEETINGS

**Jean Sietzema** led the meeting in **February** and began with a prayer from Dorothy McCrae-McMahon.

Jean also read works from Gerard Manley Hopkins – her favourite poet. She gave the group some background on Hopkins and his work which was not published in his lifetime as he was a Jesuit and as such, his poetry was disallowed for publication. Jean also

read a poem by John O'Donohue, Irish poet, author, priest, and Hegelian philosopher. A native Irish speaker, and author, O'Donohue was best known for popularising Celtic spirituality.

**Don Helmore** led the **March** meeting. He began with a prayer by Michel Quoist from the book *Prayers of life* – which included all the things we do in our daily living. Don then read from a book named *Poems that make grown men cry*. Those he read had been chosen by well-known men – Hugh Bonneville of Downton Abbey fame chose *The Soldier* by Rupert Brooke; Barry Humphreys chose *Everyone Sang* by Seigfried Sassoon; and Nick Cave, musician, chose *The Widower in the Country* by Les Murray. Don then asked Greg Burns to read the following poems from another book – *You are Old Father William* by Lewis Carroll and an extract from *Under Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas.

**Janette Fernando** led the **April** meeting, attended by eleven members of Wordsmiths. Janette read a few 'autumn' inspired poems by a variety of poets from the booklet given at the WellSpring Poetry Day the Tuesday before. Poems included *To be of the Earth* by John Soos, *Wind and Window* by Luci Shaw, *Calling* by Nancy Shaffer and part of the 6<sup>th</sup> stanza of *Six Recognitions of the Lord* by Mary Oliver.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

At the February meeting, Wordsmiths welcomed Florence Lisner and Percy Shoji. Lucia Di Fiore was welcomed as a new member in March.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

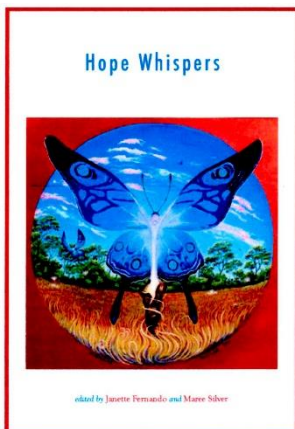
Unless otherwise notified, all meetings for 2017 will be held at 8 Woodhouse Rd, Doncaster East, from 2-5 pm. The following is a yearly roster of poets to lead the monthly meeting, and also share afternoon tea duty. If you cannot make it on the date shown, please organise with another member of Wordsmiths to take your place. **Peter Bakowski** will be giving a workshop on **May 13th**, (2-3.30pm) prior to our usual workshopping of each other's poems. (Please bring short poems this time!) Cost \$10 for the workshop.

Date	Leader	Afternoon tea duty
May	Poetry workshop by Peter Bakowski	Joan, Florence, Cecily
June	Peter	Maree N, Don, Sharlee
July	Carolyn	Maree S, Greg, Leigh
August	Cath	Jean, Peter, Lucia
Sept	David	Cath, Rebecca, Janette
Oct	Cecily	David, Florence, Joan
Nov	Maree S	Maree N, Cecily, Greg
Dec	Joan	Christmas meeting Everyone bring something to share

### FROM THE TREASURER

Membership payments of \$30.00 for the year 1 January 2017 -31 December 2017 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 HOPE WHISPERS



On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August, the new anthology *Hope Whispers*, published by Poetica Christi Press (PCP), and edited by Janette Fernando and Maree Silver, was launched at All Saints Anglican Church, Mitcham. It was launched by **Anne Carson**, a Melbourne-based writer and visual artist. Jean Sietzema-Dickson, Director of PCP,

introduced Anne and talked briefly of the work she has been doing in developing her writing, studying technique and experimenting with various poetic and other literary forms. Peter White was MC for the proceedings and singer/songwriter Jade Ingvarson-Favretto (aka Jade Alice) was a superb choice for musical interludes. Jade sang two songs by US artist Joni Mitchell, and also performed one of her own songs, titled *I learn my life*. Jade also read a poem written by her grandmother, Carolyn Ingvarson, which had been accepted for inclusion in *Hope Whispers*.



Janette Fernando, Managing Editor of PCP, introduced the anthology and talked of the high standard of entries. Fourteen of the 63 poets whose work had been accepted for the anthology then read their poems, and



the launch, which had been attended by close to fifty people, concluded with afternoon tea and a chance for people to catch up, share their work, and make new acquaintances. Copies of *Hope Whispers* are available through PCP's website <http://poeticachristi.org.au> RRP \$20 + \$3 p&h

Maree Silver, Anne Carson and Janette Fernando at the launch of *Hope Whispers*

### THREE DAY SYMPOSIUM

The Carmelite Centre and Carmelite Library invite you to be part of a three-day Symposium on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 May 2017, with a retreat on Saturday. The Symposium in May 2017 on the Way of the Spirit, takes as its lead the words in Matthew's Gospel, "a teacher brings forth out of his treasure things new and old." 2017 is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the European Reformation. The Symposium is an opportunity to think about the current sense of need for renewal and reformation today, in the churches and in the world. The spiritual life is necessarily at the centre of such change and is the main subject of the papers given at the Symposium.

<http://thecarmelitecentremelbourne.org/events/symposium-the-way-of-the-spirit/>

### DADIRRI LAYBRINTH REFLECTION DAYS 2017

This year, the Dadirri Labyrinth Reflection Days at St Andrews Beach on the Mornington Peninsula will focus on "The case for the Missing Intervening God".

Reflection Days include :

*Visions of Angels* (27 May)

*Scientifically Verified Supernatural Physical Healings* (July 22)

*Jesus and the Christ* (September 9)

*Significant Dreams* (November 11)

*A Quiet New Year's Eve Covenant Meditation* (31 Dec)

There will also be a Silent Retreat in October involving the Labyrinth at Pallotti College Retreat Centre, Millgrove. Leader: Bronwyn Pryor, date TBC. For more information : email Bronwyn Pryor

[robron@pryor.org.au](mailto:robron@pryor.org.au) or go to-  
<http://dadirri.pryor.org.au>

## QUIET DAY AT HEART OF LIFE

**Writing from the God-Place:** Saturday 3 June from 10 until 3.30. A quiet and prayerful day in which Marlene Marburg will inspire your creative capacity in a supportive environment. Please bring a notebook and pen. There are 12 places available for this day. Cost: \$55. For bookings phone: 98901101  
<http://www.heartoflife.melbourne/wp-content/uploads/Heart-of-Life-2017-Program.pdf>

## MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to **Marlene Marburg** and Bernadette Miles on the announcement that Kardia's Heart Wisdom Program has been formally recognised by the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction as a formation program for spiritual directors. Heart Wisdom is a two-year integrated program for formation in the art of spiritual direction and giving the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. More info :  
<http://www.kardia.com.au>

**Maree Silver** has had her poem *Bay of fires* published in the Society of Women Writers first issue of *Sparx*, which was launched on April 20 by Hazel Edwards.

**Cynthia Hill** has had her poem *Gar* and a short story *My mysterious leg*, published in a book called *Recollections 2016*.

Members of Wordsmiths were saddened to hear of the death of **Connie Barber**, who passed away on Sunday 19 February. Connie will be remembered as a skilled poet and visual artist, who contributed to anthologies published by Poetica Christi Press, in particular *Reflecting on Melbourne*.

**Gina Sabto**, whose book *White on White* was published by Poetica Christi Press last year, also died recently. We extend our condolences to her husband Les, who was very grateful to PCP for publishing Gina's book.

## COMPETITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 2017 Poetica Christi Press Poetry Competition

2017 theme is '*Wonderment*' – a topic that lends itself to poems about awe, admiration, amazement, astonishment, surprise, wonder, reverence, veneration, curiosity, interest, fascination, enlightenment, enthrallment, excitement, praise, adoration, mystery, mystique. Entries close **31st May**. For more information and entry forms :  
[www.poeticachristi.org.au](http://www.poeticachristi.org.au) or from PCP Competition Coordinator, PO Box 110, Greensborough, VIC 3088.

### The Mozzie Poetry Prize

The Mozzie is an independent poetry magazine publishing over 400 poems a year. No need for entry forms. All poems received by post during 2017 are eligible. Send contributions to The Mozzie, 28 Baynes Street, Highgate Hill, Qld. 4101. **Closes December 31**.  
<http://www.australianpoetry.org/competitions/the-mozzie-poetry-prizes/>

### The 11<sup>th</sup> Aesthetica Creative Writing Award

The Aesthetica Creative Writing Award is an international literary prize that celebrates excellence in Poetry and Short Fiction. The prize is now in its 11th year, hosted by the international art and culture publication, Aesthetica Magazine.

With the aim to support and nurture new writing talent, it awards publication within an inspiring anthology to a shortlist of 60 writers, including a winner from each category. Entries close **31 August**.  
<http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/creative-writing-award/>

### 2017 Henry Lawson National Literary Awards

The closing date for submissions to the Henry Lawson National Literary Awards has been extended to **30 June**. Categories include Poetry (traditional rhyming verse 60 lines); Poetry (free verse 60 lines); and Short Story (max 1000 words). Entry forms available at  
<http://henrylawsonsociety.org/poetry-competition/>

### Hunter Writers Centre presents two writing

competitions for poets. Both close in June. Grieve writing competition calls for poems up to 36 lines – closes June 9; the Newcastle Poetry Prize calls for poems up to 200 lines – closes June 30. For more information: [www.hunterwriterscentre.org](http://www.hunterwriterscentre.org)

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2-5pm:** Meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Road, Doncaster East with Poetry workshop presenter **Peter Bakowski**. Cost \$10

**Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10-3.30 pm.** *Writing from the God place* reflection day at Heart of Life, 96 Albion Rd, Box Hill. To book phone 9890 1101. Cost: \$55

**Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2-5 pm:** Meeting of Wordsmiths. 8 Woodhouse Road, Doncaster East.

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

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## POETS' CORNER

The following poems by Wordsmiths members are reprinted from PCP's 2016 Anthology 'Hope Whispers'

### Ocean memory

Their valour's gold drawn down as billet's wire  
who priceless rest within seclusion deep  
away from battle sound and distant fire  
but rest in memory of youthful sleep

Their courage will not ever be forgot  
by those of us whose lives they sought to save  
and ocean swells commemorate the spot  
remembering their sacred water grave.

Above the waves now sing a lullaby  
while corals sway with movement deep below  
and heaven is the hope where now they fly  
that we can only dream one day we'll know.  
Because we silently acknowledge debt  
each year we pause and stop lest we forget.

© Greg Burns

### Search for freedom

Confined within the country they call home,  
lost people dream of places far away,  
believe they can escape to search and roam  
until they find their freedom, night and day.

In time they take a chance, embark, explore,  
discover hope and fear in alien seas,  
defy the storms that bar their way to shore  
and in a new land wait for certainties.

Bewildered, lost again, they look around  
at wilderness, and listen for a voice  
to follow. Then at last they hear the sound  
of greeting, friendship. Now they can rejoice.

Love is the resolution, free and clear,  
calling to everyone, *Your home is here.*

© Marguerite Varday

### Fungi

The stage is set  
for the emergence  
of a miracle

water oozes, trickles, gushes  
a cornucopia  
of colour

soil soaked, enriched  
re-activates  
its treasures

thrusting  
from earth's  
dark recesses

heaving its way  
upwards  
to salvation

lighting our way  
to the joys  
of Autumn

And a bright new day.

© Cecily Falkingham

### To be whole

I give myself permission  
to touch his robe  
to feel forgiven  
to have hope  
to have faith  
to have grace  
to feel good  
to feel love  
to feel whole

© Maree Nikolaou

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To send any news for the August newsletter, email [leighhay@optusnet.com.au](mailto:leighhay@optusnet.com.au) by July 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Newsletter edited by Leigh Hay and Janette Fernando.