

WRITERS VOICE



fawnsw.org.au

Article

Australian Culture

Debra Widdicombe

Eastwood/Hills FAW

YOU MAY wonder what a ‘Cultural Cringe’ is and why we Australians may have induced one in the past. I came across this term while reading the book *Dream at a Graveside* (The History of the Fellowship of Australian Writers 1928-1988) edited by Len Fox. This book is a precursor to the FAW NSW & ACT Centenary Book, due to be published in 2028. Since I’m on the Steering Committee planning for the Centenary, it feels a little like preparing for the Paris Olympics so many years in advance, with many parallel activities taking place to deliver the final book and events, which we hope will be read and enjoyed by those interested in Australian history. However, I must agree that the Olympics does require far more planning over four years than our localized events!

In the previous book covering the first 60 years, I was interested to read Chapter 6 covering the ‘Cultural Cringe’. This meant that Australians considered books, plays, operas, films, and TV shows better if they came from overseas. The attitude implied that Australian culture must be inherently inferior to overseas culture, that we must accept this inferiority, adopt an ‘imitativeness which stifles initiatives’, and do ‘dutifully and dully, whatsoever England (and Europe) had done ten years earlier’. This wasn’t suggesting that Australians should have a boastful

superiority but advocated confidence in ourselves. We should have mature confidence rather than a cringe – and pride without boastfulness in our traditions and culture. Our children should be studying Australian books as well as international books. If our children grow up with a full knowledge of Australian history, our people and their traditions, our art, drama, literature, music, and other forms of cultural expression.

In other words, without denying the importance of overseas contacts and the need to learn from other countries, to have Australians live, think, and act as Australians fully and proudly conscious of their environment – not as though they were exiles from some other continent, living in an alien land.

There are many rich ideas on how to do this. However, it takes a long time to break off from one tradition and decide to supersede it with another newer tradition.

When Australian stories are told, they become a large common heritage, like the seed reserve on the Australian earth. Australians have invented new words such as ‘billy’ and ‘swag’ or adapted existing words to tell stories. People can find unity in the sense of something shared, loved, and understood by all of us.

Early Australian literature showed these qualities of ‘sound learning, rebelliousness, ardent faith in the common man, and an even more ardent faith in the Australian

future’. This inspired respect for democratic conditions and the struggle to improve the lives of our people. It is important to be aware of it, think about it, and discuss it since the past influences the present, and the present can help to meld the future. The cultural awakening continues to lift Australia in matters of the intellect and the arts.

The cringe may have lessened over the years in some ways but in some of its other faces, it remains, and on some fronts, the danger may have increased. For example, we need our public libraries to ensure they acquire and share copies of all new significant Australian books and literature. Another example is the reduced Australian content on streaming services such as Apple TV+, Binge, Disney+, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Foxtel, Stan, Paramount+, BritBox and others, too numerous to mention.

The growing integration of the Australian economy into the world

Continued on Page 4 ...

IN THIS ISSUE...

State Council News	3
AGM Election Results	4
Ernestine Hill Award Luncheon	5
Branch Reports	6
Competition Results	11
Writing Competitions	17
Poet’s Voice	19
Literary Achievements	20
FAW Members’ Bookshelf	22
Branch Meetings & Contacts	23
About the FAW	24

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PLEASE USE THE 'CONTACT US' FORM AT
FAWNSW.ORG.AU/CONTACT-US**

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QUARTERLY COPY DEADLINES:

15 AUGUST, 15 NOVEMBER, 15 FEBRUARY, and 15 MAY
For September, December, March, and June issues respectively.

FAW NSW Inc. State Council Delegates Meetings

The Executive Committee and Branch Delegates meet four times per year. The next meeting is **February**, and the AGM is **May** each year. Next is **August** and **November**. Exact dates and venues are advised prior to each meeting, and advised by the Hon. Secretary with the agenda.

General Membership and Subscriptions

Membership is open to anyone who has a love for writing—writers, whether amateur or professional—or anyone interested in promoting Australian literature.

AFFILIATION FEES – \$40 pa Full Membership (\$20 U21/Youth Rate)—due by 31 DEC. each year and *paid to the Branch Treasurer where a member attends meetings*. **Online banking preferred**, or cheques/money orders payable to Fellowship of Aust Writers.

Each Branch sets its own ANNUAL FEE from which the \$40 (or \$20 U21) affiliation fees are forwarded to FAW State Council for costs involved with printing and mailing *Writers Voice*, public liability insurance and administration.

PAYMENTS VIA ONLINE BANKING:

BSB: 082-936 Account: 172389833 Account name: Fellowship of Australian Writers. Please include your name as identification for payment.

ISOLATED WRITERS – \$40 pa (\$51 overseas, \$20 Youth U18)—see back page. Online banking preferred – **BSB 082-936, Account: 172389833**. If a cheque/money order is used, please make it payable to 'Fellowship of Aust Writers' and mail to **FAW State Treasurer, Rick Watkins, PO Box 690, Bowral NSW 2576**.

Writing Fellows

FAW Writing Fellows are listed here: fawnsw.org.au/membership/writing-fellows/.

The broad criteria for this class of membership, are that the applicant should have had a substantial body of work published and should normally have been a member of the FAW for at least two years. A committee of the State Council adjudicates on each application, which should be forwarded to the Registrar of Writing Fellows, FAW State Council, **Liz Shaw (honsecretary@fawnsw.org.au)** and **Annette Pearce, PO Box 432, Picton, NSW 2571**. The application should:

a) include \$50 fee preferably paid online **BSB 082-936, Account 172389833**, receipt for which should accompany the application; or be accompanied by a \$50.00 cheque, payable to 'Fellowship of Aust. Writers', which should be forwarded to the Registrar of Writing, mailed to the address above by 30 June each year.

b) indicate the Branch where the applicant is currently a member and the number of years of FAW membership.

c) have attached a list of published, performed or broadcast works, with dates and details of publication. Also list any literary prizes awarded, although such works may be unpublished. Unpaid contributions to newspapers etc. and self-published works (unless widely sold and acclaimed) should not be included.

The one-time fee of \$50.00 will be used to cover costs of administration and cost of certificate. Excess funds will be used to further the work of the FAW. If the application is unsuccessful, the cheque will be returned, perhaps with a suggestion to re-submit an application when a greater body of work has been published.

Distinguished Service Award

This annual award recognises FAW members confidentially recommended by their Branch Committees and approved by the DSA Assessment Committee. DSA members will be honoured in the following way: successful candidates will be presented with certificates acknowledging their outstanding service at the Annual Awards Luncheon and in addition, a permanent Honour Roll in *Writers' Voice* lists the names of recipients, as well as on the website fawnsw.org.au/about-us/distinguished-service-awards/.

Guidelines for assessing recommendations for Distinguished Service Awards:

1. Recommendations must be the unanimous decision of a current Branch Committee.
2. Qualifications to include the following features:
 - (a) Length of service as a current financial member to be at least ten (10) years.
 - (b) Required to have a regular attendance record at Branch Meetings.
 - (c) Required to have participated in activities organised by the Branch Committee on a regular basis – or to have served on the Branch Committee – for at least eight years.
3. All recommendations to be submitted, preferably online, to the DSA Assessment Committee c/- **Liz Shaw, honsecretary@fawnsw.org.au** or mailed to **Annette Pearce, PO Box 432, Picton, NSW 2571** by 30 June each year.
4. A committee comprising the State President, the Vice President, the Secretary and the Treasurer will assess recommendations. The DSA Committee's decision is final.

ISBN

A FREE ISBN (one number per publication) is available to members—contact the FAW Hon. Secretary Liz Shaw honsecretary@fawnsw.org.au.

Public Fund

Donations of \$2.00 and over to this account are tax deductible. When there are sufficient funds, Branches may approach State Council for an amount for a specific purpose. Without donations FAW cannot grow and achieve this aim. When a member makes a donation, a note of his/her Branch is made.

FAW Manuscript Assessment Service

Critical reading with general criticism, editing including interpolation of articles, short stories and novels. A fee applies of \$50 (\$60 non-members) for a sample assessment of two chapters up to 7,000 words; \$25 (\$30 non-members) for one or two poems of no more than 60 lines each. To commence the manuscript assessment process please, **firstly**, contact the State Secretary Liz Shaw honsecretary@fawnsw.org.au or phone 0407 017 562 – **please do not forward your manuscript at this stage**. The Secretary will provide you with the contact details to enable you to forward the manuscript directly to the assessor.

State Council News

From the desk of the State President

OUR 2025 AGM is concluded along with my second year in this Role. I appreciate all the support and work that has been done by the State and Branch Committees.

Vice President, Cate Plink, has had her hands full with all the competitions but also the bulk of the Seniors Stories workshops this year including a new innovation (for us) a Powerpoint workshop in the Sydney Library with well over 50 attendees and ably assisted by Sandi Boyd, Lake Macquarie.

The AGM was attended by 19 members who all participated well and spoke up with their opinions on topics. The Election of Office Bearers was conducted at the conclusion of the Meeting with all the Committee being returned except for Jackie Laing who did not nominate due to family changes. Thank you Jackie for the years you served both in your Port Macquarie branch for so long, as well as your term on the State Committee. I will miss Jackie, but we are fortunate to have her judging one of the Country Press competition categories and handling the entries for us. Jackie's loyalty is very much appreciated. Meanwhile we have a vacancy on our General Committee which we would like to fill, enquiries are welcome through the Contact Page of the website www.fawns.org.au. Discussions confidential until the time of appointment.

My other huge announcement is; that the Updated Constitution has been forwarded to all branches. We would like a response from EVERY branch as confirmation that you have read it so that we can present a final Draft to the Lawyer. The subjects included are to be set in concrete, while we will create a document to sit beside it which will have the areas in which the Executive hold the Powers to make new rules and amend or update current rules ... e.g., annual subscription rate, regularity of meetings, use of zoom for meetings and appointing replacement members on committees for the remainder of the year and confirming sub-committees for separate projects eg Seniors Card, Country Press and all Events: e.g.; 2028 etc. I have an enormous appreciation of Hon. Treasurer, Rick Watkins' and Membership Registrar's thorough work on clarifying the items in the Constitution, in particular in simplifying the various levels where committees are involved. Many 'generalised names' have been bandied around for decades, completely confusing us all as to exactly who we are referring to; particularly when we hear "State Committee" or "State



Colleen Parker

Council." These references are now clear to identify the various levels of responsibility.

Wishing everyone a happy continuation of successful writing and the enjoyment of mixing with like-minded friends and colleagues in support of each other regarding our writing goals.

Colleen Parker

News from the Secretary's Desk

IT'S BEEN a busy time as newly voted in Hon Secretary and Publicity Officer with FAW NSW.

The Awards luncheon for Ernestine Hill was in May 2025, the event was held at the Sydney Royal Automobile Club Australia, a wonderful luncheon in the ISC room. Patti Miller attended and spoke on the day. She is an amazing author, teacher and very talented. We included this year Distinguished Service Awards, Rae Cerhan and Jean Stone. This year included an open mic, a little fun time at the end of the day.

Senior Stories is our next main competition for the members to compete in 2025, please submit asap.

A busy time attending meetings, events and organising for FAW NSW.

Due to some members aging we have had a couple of Branches close and looking for new ideas for more members. Increasing social media will help younger members and online meetings. We are looking at this now.

I would like to hear any ideas you have that we can promote FAW to the community. Ideas your branch may have already completed, and you enjoyed. Ideas you would like in your Branch, but no one has suggested.

I highly recommend the manuscript service. Great price for our members.

Stay safe in 2025.

Liz Shaw, Hon. Sec. FAW NSW and Publicity Officer

From the Editor

IN OUR last Issue, Hon. Secretary, Liz Shaw, explained that our archives are stored at the NSW Writers' Centre in Rozelle. This will be where the research material from the Centenary Book to be published in 2028 will be stored for our use if there is a need after its launch. Except for personal publications or material 'loaned' to Kath Berryman for the records. Liz will share the details of searching the cabinets or adding your branch paperwork to it when necessary. It is stored in the basement a delightfully intriguing area in the dungeon, where the paper is safe from the weather and stays a controlled temperature.

State Council News

Continued from front page

market, into the grip of multinationals, tends to produce new forms of cringe, both in the publishing world and in the world of films, with a danger that books and movies may be tailor-made to suit the overseas market and that in the process, there may be a distortion of the Australian reality and a stifling of imaginative thinking.

This important point was made a few years ago by an Australian Publishing Co.:

‘The continued reading of the American viewpoint, the use of American settings and slang, depicting of events which are possible in America, but not in Australia, the accent on crime, the loose attitude to spending big money, the emphasis on physical violence, and the ever-present attitudes of luxury on the Hollywood scale, all contribute in providing elements which impress Americanism so much on the Australian mind that they induce contempt for Australian things.’

Instead, we should be proud of Australia as a country, Australian people, and Australian culture and prepare for a positive future in The Lucky Country. In Donald Horne’s 1964 book of the same name, he took complacency to task, suggesting that Australia developed wealth and power as a result of luck rather than strategy, with an over-reliance on its climate and abundant natural resources. Now is the time for us to develop a better strategy for Australia to remain ‘lucky’ for all its people and to proudly embrace its own culture for future generations.

Help for Writers

José F Nodar, a member of the Isolated Writers branch of FAW NSW, is a published author with a lot of experience in all matters relating to the written word. José offers a comprehensive range of services to writers through his extensive business network, including...

- Camden Books: Promote your novel on Facebook, LinkedIn and NextDoor Australia, each month
- World Book Reviews: A cost-effective book review service
- Quick Story Tales: A quick and easy way to get paid for your short stories or poetry and get them published (and receive a free e-book at the end of the year!)
- Writer Services: Services at reasonable costs for authors, from mock-ups to videos and the rest.
- Northport Booksellers: A free service to newbie authors, with a request to consider a donation if the individual is happy with advice or service received.

For more information, visit José’s website
<https://linktr.ee/jfnodar>.

Annual General Meeting Election Results

The AGM was held prior to the Luncheon after which was the Election of Office Bearers. All current members were returned but with one vacancy.

President	Colleen Parker	Port Macquarie
Vice President	Cate Plink	Lake Macquarie
Honorary Secretary	Liz Shaw	Eastwood Hills
Honorary Treasurer	Rick Watkins	Southern Highlands
Membership Registrar	Annette Pearce	Wollondilly
General Committee	Kath Berryman	Eastwood Hills
General Committee	Vacant	

We would like to hear from any members who might be keen to join us on our general committee as an extra ‘pair of hands’. Please contact the Hon. Secretary with your interest.

Note: The State Committee must consist of at least 5 different branches *.

The Ernestine Hill Award Luncheon

OUR SECOND Ernestine Hill Award Luncheon was held again in the delightful Royal Automobile Club in Macquarie Street, not far from Circular Quay wharf and the magnificent Sydney Harbour. Of course it was only fitting for the holding of our Annual Award and I thank both of our Committee members; Liz Shaw and Rick Watkins for arranging not only the event but with liaising with our webmaster, Ken Driver, enabling us to have such easy access to purchase our admission tickets.

Liz, as our MC, kicked things off with her Introduction and Welcome to everyone beginning with me who shared the reason of why we were there and introducing who Ernestine Hill is and why she is so important to our association. We will be forever grateful to Rae Cerhan's bequest to make all things possible for us these days.



Winners of the Ernestine Hill Awards

Left to right: Catherine Plink, Judge Pippa Kay, winners Andie Cassey, Linda Atkins, and Patrick Eades

There were five writers short-listed for the Ernestine Hill Award, three of whom attended and are pictured along with the judge, Pippa Kay, and our Competition Convenor, Cate Plink. The Rae Cerhan competitions results were announced with certificates awarded for the five poets and the judge, Brian Tolagson, travelled from Port Macquarie to be with us which was so appreciated. Thirdly we awarded the Jean Stone Open Poetry winner, our FAW sponsored competition which was judged by Rick Watkins. All were applauded and the two winning poems were read to us.

Also in attendance we welcomed three Branch Distinguished Award winners who are all from Lake Macquarie. Branch President Sandy Boyd, read the scrolls of reasons why these wonderful and loyal members were so honoured and Vice President, Cate Plink did the presentations.

We all had delicious lunches, mains and sweets, followed by coffee and then a Walk Up Mic session.



Winners of the Distinguished Service Award

Left to right: Sandi Boyd, winners Alison Ferguson, Pam Garfoot, and George Graves, with Catherine Plink



President Colleen Parker giving details about Ernestine Hill

First to chat to us was Greg McFarland from Isolated Writers branch who is also the Leader and shaker of the Country Newspaper competition project we are judging this year. We were also blessed to have one of the Jean Stone placegetters, who travelled from Tasmania, read her poem.

It was such a lovely celebration and I, for one am already looking forward to 2026 Award Luncheon.

Colleen Parker, *President FAW NSW*

Branch Reports

BLUE MOUNTAINS FAW

WITH THE dust settled after another Federal Election, it's worth celebrating how lucky we are to have the chance to exercise our voice, and how our choices reflect our lived experiences and values.

Recognising the importance of our life stories, we were honoured to have FAW Patron Patti Miller share her lifetime's experience at our March meeting. We had an overwhelming response to our workshop and that was rewarded by Patti's extensive knowledge and unique way of delving into our memories. We were also pleased to welcome new members and those from other FAW branches.

Thanks to Pat Allen who led us in a warm-up exercise at our April meeting which produced a wide variety of responses. Next, we invited members to read draft entries for the Seniors' Stories competition. Using our checklist, which we've developed over a number of years, we offered feedback on specific points to give the writers a sense of how their stories were received and ideas on

possible changes. Many thanks go to those who were brave enough to share their early drafts and listen to different opinions.

In May, Cheryl Anderson led the warm-up exercise with a wide selection of thought provoking black and white photographs. This led to stories as diverse and interesting as the pictures themselves. Deborah Harris discussed 'Point of View' and the pros and cons associated with each of these, using examples from well-known stories and authors. After discussing the extracts, we were invited to revise our warm-up exercise and consider the point of view we had chosen, perhaps change it, and rewrite the story in 100 words, as per the extract we had discussed from *The Family Law* by Benjamin Law. A challenge which resulted in great stories.

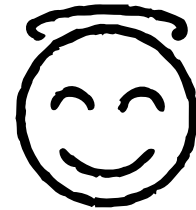
And so, having downed our 'democracy sausages' and spoken, we can see the importance of having a voice and the opportunity to express our 'Point of View'.

**Jeanette Temesvary and
Rosemary Baldry**



Deborah Harris leads Blue Mountains Writers

VACANCY FOR GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER FAW NSW 2025



As a committee member, you will help us plan new events and promote writing across the state.

CANBERRA FAW

IN 2024 our time was spent finding a new location for our meetings as the Friend's Meeting Room at the National Library of Australia was closed in July 2024 for refurbishing. Our new venue is the hall located at the O'Connor Uniting Church located on the corner of Scrivener and Brigalow St, O'Connor ACT 2602. It has free parking and easy access to the venue for people with disabilities.

In October 2024, one of our members, Trish Jean died after a long illness. Trish was a seasoned writer, gifted artist and photographer. Trish had relocated to Canberra from Sydney and was an active member of the Auburn Poets and Writers Group in Sydney before she joined our FAW ACT & Region Group in 2024. Her Wordpress blog site is called 'Pengenie' and is still active so you can see and read some of her work.

In December 2024 we celebrated the book launch of 'Love's Voice' by our treasurer Lesley Irvine. Her first published book is full of inspirational poetry that records her

Cont. next page...

Branch Reports

faith journey into her life from the dark confusing place she found herself in as a young woman to where she is today, full of hope. A true labour of love and commitment. Members of FAW Canberra have willingly supported her book launch and journey to publication.

In the year 2025 Canberra FAW members are writing poetry, prose and short stories that are being considered for a publication proposed that will be published in 2026. All steps in the process will be shared at our monthly meetings. The title has not been finalised. The project will be led, collated and edited by our current Secretary Kerrie Walker with the support of the members. This is how we learn and grow together.

In May 2025 the final of a series of 6 Canberra Christian Writers' Group Annual Anthologies was published and can be accessed via the Canberra Christian Writers' Group web site. FAW members contributed to this publication, which commends writers they reach join FAW to help them develop their skills as writers in the Canberra Region. A link to information on FAW ACT & Region can be found there.

Our group is collating material for our 2026 Anthology called "Dances With Words". The Editor and person in charge of this publication is our secretary, Kerrie Walker, who has decided to take on the challenge of leading this publication with the support of the other ACT & Region members interested in this project.

Members who have been involved with editing previous works published by our group have found this task enormously beneficial to the development of their own writing skills so everyone has been encouraged to be involved

with the editing process for this planned publication.

At our meeting on Sunday June 8th, member Michael Porter is sharing his "Confessions of a Cruciverbalist". If you don't know what a cruciverbalist is come to the meeting and learn all about it. Being a cruciverbalist enhances your writing skills he assures us. This meeting has been made open to the public.

On Sunday July 13th we have a presentation by author Linda Peek who is sharing information on her book called "Malta" a *childhood under siege*. This talk has also been made open to the public.

Moving forward to the first week in September and FAW ACT & Region is hosting a writers' retreat at Wilmslow House in Goulburn over two days for FAW members only. For us this will be a first time event so lots of logistical things to learn and a sincere hope to connect with members of FAW in Goulburn.

Dianne Porter

EASTWOOD HILLS FAW

WE STARTED the year with a Travel Writing workshop led by Liz Shaw. Liz (a travel writer herself) provided insight into all aspects of this genre – including blogs, articles and postcards. Liz enticed us to 'travel in our minds,' select a location that has relevance to us and write a short piece featuring elements such as culture, cuisine, landmarks, events, history and festivals. A fascinating array of locations emerged.

Our March workshop 'Bringing Characters to Life' was led by Vera Zegarac. This fascinating workshop focused on the key steps in establishing a character's identity, personality, back story and role. Elements such as emotions, habits and appearance were explored. Vera provided some excellent

examples of 'round' and 'flat' characters. The writing exercises saw us consider ideas about the secret life of a character and how setting can also become a character.

Anne Howard presented the April workshop, titled 'Concise Writing.' She covered points such as grammar, use of consistent viewpoint, use of simple language, plotting and controlling dialogue. Members enjoyed collaborating on four writing exercises. The sessions concluded with published examples of "how not to write," followed by members reading examples of "purple prose" openings for the Bulwer-Lytton Contest - a contest inspired by the work of Victorian author Baron Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who gave us the notorious opening line: "It was dark and stormy night." These readings resulted in much laughter and hilarity.

At our May meeting 'The Five Commandments of Story Telling' (with a focus on novel writing) was presented by Elizabeth Collins. Elizabeth encouraged us to delve into what constitutes an inciting incident, progressive complications, the crisis, the climax and the resolution. We looked at cause and coincidence as ways of launching a story through an inciting incident. There was robust discussion in small groups when we selected examples from novels we have read. We then applied these elements to our own stories, concluding with a discussion centred on the overarching values that our stories feature.

Linda King

LAMBING FLAT YOUNG FAW

OUR PUBLICITY team of Susan (print media) and Andrea (radio) have been working hard. Together they

Cont. next page...

Branch Reports

have raised the group's visibility within the community. This has been reflected in general community comments of the presence of the group as well as enquiries, visitors and new members. Well done.

Our 43rd Writing Competition will be launched by our local member the Hon. Steph Cooke on June 10, 2025. This year it will be held in conjunction with the 75th Cherry Festival. In response to feedback from judges and teachers there will be some minor, but positive, changes. (See notice in this edition of *Writers Voice*)

Our meetings this quarter have seen a writing exercise often 10 minutes free writing to a specified topic together with a 'writers' profile'. This is where a member informs the group of their writing journey. The story seeds assigned each month have produced many and varied outlooks on the topic. Members have benefited from positive appraisals.

At our May meeting we found most members were working on a book, research or travelling through the minefield that is publishing. All members were encouraged by this activity.

Jennifer Haynes

LAKE MACQUARIE FAW

WE WERE delighted to welcome local writer and engaging personality, Natalie Murray, to our March meeting. As the author of a best-selling romantic comedy, *Love, just in*, Natalie had a lot to tell us about writing romance – something a lot more demanding than many think. Natalie set a writing exercise where we were asked to write scenes featuring characters who might clash. In particular she prompted us to include character flaws, which is a key aspect of creating believable characters with lots to get over on the

path to establishing lasting relationships. It was a great session.

Our April meeting was devoted to a run-through of the panel presentation that members would be giving at the annual Write Here Festival held by the Lake Macquarie Libraries in May. The focus this year is on our group's 25th anniversary and on writing history.

Several members travelled to Sydney in early May to attend the FAW(NSW) Annual General Meeting and then the Annual Awards Luncheon. It was totally unexpected for three of us to be honoured with Distinguished Service Awards at the luncheon: Pam Garfoot, Alison Ferguson and George Graves.

Pam Garfoot

MACARTHUR FAW

ON MARCH 7 - at the request of State President, Colleen Parker - Victoria Chie conducted a free two-hour short-story workshop at the H J Daley Library in Campbelltown. This event, sponsored jointly by the Department of Communities and Justice and the Fellowship of Australian Writers, was designed to assist entrants in the Seniors Card Holder Short Story Competition. Participants would have benefited greatly from Victoria's wide experience in the field.

On May 5 we received a report from Victoria on the AGM and Lunch which she and Eric Esber had attended on May 3. We are grateful to Victoria not only for keeping us unformed, but also for putting forward some of our Macarthur members' ideas.

Our writing exercises continue to produce interesting (and often humorous) results. Starting with a complete blank, I sometimes find myself racing to finish in the time, a common experience no doubt. It is not unusual for a member's efforts

to end up in print. Recent topics have been 'Overwhelming News' and 'Assembling the Perfect Gift'.

'Novelisation': I came across this term the other day, along with the Wikipedia definition: 'a derivative novel that adopts the story of a work created for another medium, such as a film, TV series, stage play, comic book or video game.' I was surprised to read that novels like *Star Wars* or *Dead Poets Society* were spawned by the film of the same name, not the other way around. Some novelisations, it seems, fall short of the mark, while others take the opportunity to further develop the plot or the characters. When I see a title like *Halloween* or *Gone with the Wind* in future, I will no longer presume that it is in its original form.

Bernard Smith

MUDGE

WE CONTINUE to enjoy having our meetings in our homes. We celebrated our 39th birthday this year.

We have a couple of events planned for later this year if we are lucky enough to get Grants. We hope to have a workshop on Memoir writing and also to produce a book highlighting this beautiful town we live in with its history and wealth of local stories from days past and also present.

Jill Baggett

PORT MACQUARIE FAW

THE YEAR now in full swing we welcomed new and old members to the leadership positions in our group during the February Annual General Meeting and they have since started work in their respective positions. First order of the day was tackling the declining membership that we've been confronted with in the last few months. We plan to

Cont. next page...

Branch Reports

continue going to the local markets to advertise the group and find creative ways to attract other like-minded writers through our social media pages.

Considering the lull experienced after the holidays, our first presentation for the year was on 'writer's block.' Our vice president Brian Tolagson led the presentation providing us with tips on how to escape the block, including a short wander around the Dementia Australia Gardens where we met, to draw inspiration from the burst of colours, textures, lush plants, sweet scent of lavender planted in the garden, and the chirping sounds of the small birds going about their day while adding to the vibrant tapestry of the space with their uniquely patterned feathers.

Sadly, we will not be going back to the Dementia Australia Building again for our meetings. We are therefore on a hunt for new accommodation which could impact on the usual date that we have our meetings. But whatever the case we continue to brace for the changes coming ahead.

In June, the Port Macquarie Hastings library has graciously given us an opportunity to have a talk and share what our fellowship does, and President Ian Keast will be presenting on *The Story behind the Storyteller*. "Why write and promote FAW" flyers are currently being distributed, and we are all looking forward to the event.

We enjoyed another powerful presentation from Brian on Australian Literature and we all shared our favourite Australian stories which was very interesting and nostalgic as some went as far back as the books they enjoyed in their early years. We all came out with recommendations of books we hadn't read before. Mine was *My*

Brilliant Career by Miles Franklin and it was such a delightful read for me. We concluded the day with a homework to write a GADSBY YARN of about 500 words!

Like last year we are keen to hear from local authors and we plan to do so in the coming months especially as we prepare for the publication of our annual showcase.

Pinado Waba

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS FAW

ATTEENDANCES AT our meetings in Welby Hall, Mittagong, continue to attract 15-18 members, with the occasional visitor coming along to see what we are doing. We have been grateful for the few that have stayed and become new members over the past three months. Since our AGM in March, our financial membership has increased to 25, keeping our new secretary, Jennie Mickle, busy.

Our February meeting focussed on prose with readings by Greg Baker from his work-in-progress novel, *Crossfire*, and by retired paediatrician Joe Maloney with a piece from his memoirs titled *Wild Boys*. These were balanced by Brian Haydon reading his poem, *Man and His Imagination*.

The Quote of the Month for March was selected by Jennie Mickle, from *Wuthering Heights*, and most of us missed it, except for Gail. We heard the presentation of a poem by Greg Tome, *A Paen to Pills*, which was followed by the members' comments and discussion. We also heard short stories from Jan Murray and new member, Janet Waterlow. Janet's piece, titled *The Water Tree*, originally appeared in the Robertson Newsletter and we all appreciated the poignancy of Janet's writing. The 10-minute writing exercise was prompted by the phrase, "*The last time I spoke to him was at Redfern*

railway station."

Poetry featured again at our April meeting with Rick leading discussion on his poem, *Lament for a Lemur*, which was a personal reminiscence of a recent visit to Taronga Zoo. The meeting continued with our usual activities, Quote of the Month, 50 Word Dribble, and Rick's Rant. We are always eager to hear Greg Tome's answers to the Etymology homework he sets for us each month. The meetings are constantly filled with humour and useful contributions and suggestions from our members.

Rick Watkins

STROUD FAW

HOW QUICKLY the past three months have flown by, finding me, thanks to a reminder from Liz Shaw, racing to get our Stroud Writers report completed in time for the winter edition of *Writers Voice*.

At the moment we are getting used to our new regime where we meet, as many other Branches do, on the third Thursday of each month instead of every fortnight. I thought that would allow us more time to write and be extra creative in between meetings. But the danger is, at least as far as I am concerned, that the opposite seems to happen and the extra time, without the stimulation of a meeting, can be squandered in the belief that there is plenty of it available. Then, all of a sudden, a month has vanished.

During our last meeting we decided to abandon our circulating story as it was becoming a little unwieldy. We were up to the fourteenth segment and had not been paying enough attention to what had gone before in terms of places, dates, names etc. This gave

Cont. next page...

Branch Reports

rise to an entertaining discussion on the subject. Nettie, who had done some research on how to keep track of who is who etc, said we needed a Story Board which is something most authors would use as a means of avoiding errors. It's very important to make sure the right person is buried! With that in mind, and wiser after our first attempt, we have launched ourselves into a new story. Who knows where it will lead us!

We are still working on items for our Anthology and, hopefully, some of us will enter the annual *Seniors' Stories Volume 11* Writing Competition.

Stroud will be holding its bicentenary celebrations in November next year and our Writers Group is looking forward to being involved in this very special occasion. Community meetings are already underway.

Hilary Heanly

SUTHERLAND FAW

OUR STORIES are currently being submitted to our editor Helen Armstrong. So, we are well underway in the process of having our anthology produced this year. The title is *Living Dangerously* with most of our members submitting a story to it.

For our February meeting Jude Chapman presented a workshop on crime writing. She articulated the place and setting upon the character and how it affects them. This followed on with some exercises.

In March our members were able to present their own work with an open microphone session. It was good to hear such a diverse range of genres and styles. At our April meeting we had Margaret McKay present. She spoke on dialogue and showed us how to make it seamless

in line of the character's voices.

Julianne Miles-Brown

WOLLONDILLY FAW

OUR BRANCH is travelling along nicely having a good roll up of members for each meeting. Towards last year we had put together a number of themes, one for each month to go into our monthly Scribblings magazine. Members can use the theme or write something of their choosing. Entries in Scribblings are read out by members each month and they are discussed and suggestions given if requested.

In April, a group of us read our stories or poems to an audience at an Open Mike get together for seniors for put on by Wollondilly Library. It was great having practice reading out our work, especially to those who enjoy hearing them. We hope that we may have picked up a couple of interested people to attend one of our meetings.

Annette, Jean, Gaynor and Narelle attended the FAW AGM and Presentation Awards Luncheon in Sydney early in May and it was great catching up with members from other branches and hearing news of what is happening.

At present we are working on our 4 yearly anthology and members have generously given us plenty of their work to enter. We hope to see it in print in the next coming months.

Narelle Noppert

WYONG FAW

WYONG WRITERS continues to be an active and vibrant writers group with 21 members. Our Poetry competition was completed in Nov 2024 and Lorraine Munt was judged as Winner with her entry, *007* (included in *Poet's Voice*).

Mei Ling Venning was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by

FAW. Mei-Ling has also published her book *Outside Edge* available from The Oak's Press (www.theoakspress.com).

Elizabeth McVie had a short story *Strength and Kindness* published in the Autumn Edition of FAW newsletter. Our Prose competition 2025 concluded on 26th April 2024 with winner to be announced at our May meeting. The theme was *I was there when...*

At our January meeting, we had a Scribblers demo meeting as we have two Scribblers Groups and are attempting to form a third one to accelerate writing growth. Member Val Derry led an excellent educational on *Developing Complications* at our March meeting.

Our Anthology is well underway with a theme of *Moonlight can play tricks on your eyes*, and will conclude on 30th June 2025. Several of our members have chosen to have their stories critiqued in advance of the compilation.

Glenn D'Cruz

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2025



Please encourage new memberships.
We need to build up membership
to keep generations coming
through FAW NSW.

Competition Results

Ernestine Hill

Short Story Competition 2024 Winner

WINNER:

Long Shadows, Keren Heenan

SHORT LISTED:

Into the Dust, *Andie Casey*

Rounders, *M. E. Glascott*

Elbers Knoll, *Linda Aitkins*

Well Past Milking Hour, *Patrick Eades*

Long Shadows

by *Keren Heenan*

IF IT wasn't for the honey he wouldn't even be out of bed this morning. He's not sure whether to be thankful for that or burdened by it. In front of him now the wheelbarrow is bouncing along, gentle enough so as not to clink the glass jars together and shatter them. Every day he pushes the wheelbarrow with the jars of honey out to the roadside. Sits a while if the weather invites him, then leaves the honesty tin in the barrow and heads back to the house for tea and toast.

This morning the weather doesn't invite him; cold nips at his ankles, the wind blows what's left of his hair into his eyes and he's forgotten his hat. This morning the old vinyl chair is harder and colder than usual through his trousers. Everything feels wrong. He knows it's because he's had the dream again. It sits in the back of his mind like a shadow over the morning – don't forget I am here, and if you forget, I am still here – making everything he does feel heavy and stagnant. Perhaps it's the wind too. He's never liked the wind. Matilda had been one for walking in the wind, no hat, no scarf, just the wind in her face, the roaring in her ears. But not Albert. He'd always preferred the stillness of a warm room if the wind was raging outside.

It had been windy that day too. He knows that's why he's had the dream; the wind blowing up last night before he'd managed to block it out with pillows and grab some stuttering sleep. The dream exhausted him. Running over vast fields in bare feet, dry yellow stalks underfoot, sharp as skewers. He stamps his feet to drive away the memory of the needle-sharp stalks.

This morning when Albert woke, every joint ached, making him want to stay in bed, covers pulled high. Forget the honey, the long sit in the sun. Forget breakfast, the tea, radio, crossword. He puts his hands on his knees, braces himself to rise. Movement across the road, through the trees, catches his attention. He blinks a few times to clear his vision, adjusts his glasses

and leans forward but can't see anything. Pushes himself to his feet, takes another look and thinks he sees a flash of blue, maybe a bird. He turns away. Walks back down the track with a hitch in his right hip until the continued movement straightens it out.

A sudden gust of wind catches him off guard, out in the unprotected area near the culvert. He teeters precariously, almost slipping into the drain, hands reaching out for the post as his foot skids on the gravel. For a moment he's back there, down on his knees, wind pushing his hair over his face, frantic, calling into the mine-shaft. 'Edward, Eddie. E-ddie!' Not certain but knowing all the same. Thoughts whirling so fast he couldn't see them, but could hear the roar of them like a shout – forever, for ever.

He grips the post, looking down into the drain, glasses slipping to the end of his nose. Despite the coolness he's sweating and his breath comes in ragged bursts. A tear squeezes from one eye and rolls down the side of his nose. 'E-ddie,' a choked whisper, and he braces one hand on the post, pushing his glasses up along his nose. Both palms on the post again, he heaves himself up and onto the track as the sun bursts from behind a cloud. In front of him his shadow, long and thin and solitary on the red gravel. The house is in view now, behind the grove of wattles, promising warmth, tea, calm out of the wind. Perhaps he'll even get back into bed – hope not to sleep. He should inspect the hive but it's too windy, too cool now despite the sun. He'll wait, there's blue behind the gathering cumulus.

He doesn't go back to bed. It's enough just to be inside out of the wind, warm roundness of the teapot in front of him, newspaper open, crossword puzzle, and butter disappearing into the toast.

In the garden shed, later, when the wind has died down, he dons his white coveralls, bee veil and gloves. He pushes the paper strips into the bee-smoker, pumps the bellows and gets it going to a nice even smoke, adds some pine needles, works the bellows again, puffing audibly as he moves about. He lifts the top and sends a puff of smoke over the hive to drive the bees down. Lifts the first frame and knows from the weight of it that it's heavily capped. The buzzing warms his ears, their busy activity comforts him, filling the hollows in his chest, in his day. He goes through the frames carefully, cleans up some spilled honey and rests his hands on the lid. The surge of activity and warmth beneath his fingers make the day light and new again.

Later when he walks down the track to retrieve the wheelbarrow, he sees one jar is gone, but there's no money in the tin. He stands for a moment, lid in his

Cont. next page...

Competition Results

hand, head nodding slowly. It doesn't happen often, but it's a risk he takes. A trust he gives. He puts the lid back on the empty tin, wheels the barrow back across the cattle grate and down the track. The morning's wind has died down, clouds shaken up and strung out like rags across the sky. The jars of honey clunk together softly. He likes this time of evening – birds flying home calling to each other, muted colours falling into soft shadows, distant cars passing on the highway. It doesn't matter to him to be alone at dusk. It's the glare of the morning that shouts at him – you are alone and will always be, now.

Two years since Matilda's death and he can't get used to the silence. Corrects himself. Absence. It's her absence he can't get used to. She'd always been a quiet woman. But after that day – after the wind and the running, the calling and shouting into the dark cavern of the mine-shaft – she rarely spoke. Not to Albert anyway. He was never able to make her see. That one moment's pursuit of a strange looking tree fungus was all it took for a small boy to move out of sight. She'd shifted into Eddie's room, continued to cook meals, wash his clothes, breathe, speak occasionally, and once he heard her singing. In Edward's room, behind the closed door, an old Welsh lullaby. He heard the rustle and slide of fabric and a soft thud as if she'd been leaning on the door and slid quietly to the floor. He held his breath, fingers on the door handle. Wanted to go to her, take her in his arms and say; it was only for a moment, one very small moment, I looked away. But he knew, she would not have looked away. She'd have kept that small hand in hers, tight.

During the night the wind blows up again, banging shutters and lifting the corner of iron off the old shed. Albert dreams. Something there by the trees, behind the stagnant pond. Something black and treacherous, skulking heavily but it won't show itself. And then he's running, shadows on all sides keeping pace, over cut cane fields, over broken glass, shifting sands and hills so high his lungs are bursting, but he can't get to him – that small figure on the horizon, always on the horizon no matter how far or fast he's run.

In the morning, he thinks he may not take the barrow to the roadside. Lies in bed that little bit longer, staring up at the ceiling, cracks spreading like parched earth. But he thinks of the hive, their busy industry, all pitching in. He can't let them down.

He pushes the barrow down the track, over the grate and parks it near the chair. Today there is sun, and he leans back, closes his eyes, watches the shadows drifting across his eyelids. A rustle and crunch brings his

eyes open – a small animal? footstep? Flicker of movement across the road again. This time he sees, someone has ducked in behind a tree. Someone short. A child perhaps. He closes his eyes again, opening them just a slit, looking through the feather of his lashes. A head emerges around the side of the tree, then a blue tee-shirt, then the whole figure. A boy, maybe ten or twelve, maybe younger, he's no good at guessing children's ages.

'I can see ya lookin'.'

Albert opens his eyes. 'Can you now? Why were you hiding?'

The boy shrugs, rubs the back of one hand across his nose, sniffs. He looks down, shuffles his feet in the dirt. He's wearing runners, laces undone and trailing, socks all bunched up and loose above the runners. 'Took some honey yesterday,' he says, still looking at the ground.

'Ah, it was you then.'

One shoe scrapes the dirt. 'Me mum said I had ta, you know, come and tell ya.' He looks up. 'But ... we haven't got no money to give ya. Not till next week.' And he looks at Albert long and hard. 'I woulda bought it back but, I ate some. Like, a big bit.' Looks away then back to Albert. 'So ...' shrugs his shoulders.

Albert nods. 'Well, thanks for coming back.' He looks up as a car slows around the bend. Pushes himself off the chair as the car stops.

The driver leans over and speaks out the passenger window. 'This your own honey?'

'Yep, it's mine.' He takes a jar from the barrow and passes it to the driver.

The man turns the jar around in his hands. 'Good colour,' he says, as if he's swirling red wine in a glass.

Albert nods. The man takes a note from his wallet, gives Albert a thumbs up and drives off. Albert puts the money in the tin, glances across the road, the boy's still there, leaning against a tree, poking a stick into the ground.

'What if someone takes the money?' he asks, without looking up.

'I don't think many people around here would do that.' Albert puts the tin back in the barrow.

The boy flicks the stick back and forwards, picks up a leaf on the end of it, studies the leaf. 'I could look after it for ya. Cost ya though,' he glances across at Albert.

'Won't your mum be expecting you home?'

'Nuh. She's gone ta work.'

'Why aren't you at school today?'

'School holidays.'

'Ah,' Albert nods, doesn't know whether the boy is telling the truth or not. Can't remember the dates, not

Cont. next page...

Competition Results

even the months. Doesn't know today's date anyway. 'Better ask your mum first, eh?'

The boy shrugs, pushing his bottom lip out. 'Okay,' throws the stick and turns to leave.

'What's your name? Mine's Albert.'

'Will,' and the boy spins on one foot and races off through the trees.

Albert watches him go. Thinks he's probably a little younger than ten, and wonders what sort of mother leaves a young boy at home while she goes off to work. Remembers. The sort of mother who makes him return and admit to stealing honey. He presses his lips together, leans back in the sun again. Out of nowhere a memory: he's crouched beneath the table watching his mother's stockings feet moving from bench to table, and beyond that his father in his suit. Back from work, seated in the big chair, shaking out the newspaper, his eyes small and tight behind his round wire frames. A feeling of longing and long-ago loss swells in Albert's chest. Some moments are full of possibility, if only something were not so.

He wonders if the boy will return, thinks maybe he won't. Or possibly he will, just to take the money he knows is in the tin. He looks back to the barrow, then turns away, walks back down the track to the house.

Later that day when he returns to bring in the barrow, he stops himself from checking the money first. The wheels creak and the old barrow bounces along in front of him. There's another jar missing as well as the one he'd sold this morning. A sense of hope swells through him. That he will open the tin and two notes will be inside. Doesn't check yet. Keeps the hope alive.

Back at the shed he pauses before looking in the tin. Inside, two notes curl against each other. He closes his eyes, smiles.

In the kitchen, he checks on the roast lamb. Turns the vegetables and spoons some of the roasting juices over them. He's not one for big dinners usually, but the leg of lamb had been in the freezer, waiting for an occasion. An occasion hadn't exactly presented itself but the warmth of the afternoon, the healthy hives, and the brief chatter with the boy, the customer early on, made the day feel lighter, brighter somehow. His mouth fills with saliva as he smells the lamb, the pumpkin and potatoes all softening in their fragrant bath. He'd rubbed honey and garlic onto the meat, thrown in sprigs of rosemary and thyme from the garden. He thinks he ought to do this more often. Cook. Thinks he might be pretty good at it. He'd learnt a lot from watching his mother but when he tried to watch Matilda cooking she'd shoo him out of the way with a flap of the tea-

towel. Edward would follow her around in the kitchen; climbing up onto the stool to lick the bowl, handing her a plate or spoon, squatting down waiting for current buns or fruit loaves to rise.

They'd moved to the country for fresh air and wide spaces. A young child should be outside, not stuck indoors. So Albert had taken Edward mushroom hunting. The last thing Matilda said to him as they walked out the door with their baskets: 'Do be careful, Albert. Remember, he's only four. He only has little legs, so don't go rushing ahead.' Albert hadn't rushed ahead. Instead, he'd lagged behind. Saw an unusual orange and white fluted fungus on the trunk of a wattle tree. And when he turned back, Edward was not there.

Albert takes a wine glass, fills it from the opened bottle of Shiraz and stands looking out the window.

There are times when he thinks he could just take a breath and Eddie would be beside him again, grinning up at him, sandy hair combed back from his forehead, scatter of freckles over his nose. Then he remembers, Edward would be forty-nine now. Would likely have a wife and children of his own. Would have been here to bury his mother, and later would inherit the house, the hive and everything else once he'd buried his father as well. That is the way the world should work.

He sips the wine, turns on the radio and listens to the announcer's smooth voice swell and break like a wave, as the roast in the oven spits and crackles.

The boy is there again in the morning. He's sitting on the vinyl chair, legs swinging, stick in his hand. 'Heard ya comin',' he says.

'It's a noisy old thing. Couldn't creep up on you, could I now.' Albert turns his face to the sun. 'Lovely morning,' he says.

The boy, Will, looks up, shrugs, bottom lip pushed out. Nods in a half-hearted way. Albert looks down at the skinny little legs dangling from the chair, barely touching the ground. And the image he's tried hard to forget, flashes through his mind. The limp body of Edward carried from the mineshaft – the way his left arm and his legs hung, like sand in a sock, like a lifeless doll; how it had reminded him of those same little legs, so full of life and possibilities, when they'd hung from the knees down as Edward sat on a stool in the kitchen. Albert looks at the ground. A lorikeet shrieks from a nearby gum and he glances up though he knows he won't be able to see it.

'You got bees?' Will asks, looking up, one eye closed against the sun. 'Here's ya seat,' he adds standing up.

'Thanks. Yes, I do have bees.'

'My mum said you would. C'n I come 'n look at 'em?'

Cont. next page...

Competition Results

‘Did your mother say it was alright for you to come here?’

‘Yeah,’ he nods. Repeats, ‘Yeah, she did, true,’ his eyes widening with emphasis.

‘Okay. Well, we could take a look at them then. In a little while. I like to just sit here in the sun for a bit.’ He closes his eyes, hears the gravel beside him scuffed about and pictures the boy, head down, toe raking the ground. ‘How old are you, Will?’

‘Nine next week.’

‘Next week eh, happy birthday then.’ He glances at the boy who’s still scraping at the gravel, dark lock of hair over his face. When he thinks of Eddie he sees him in a golden glow, smiling up at him. Small and clean. Since Matilda’s death, the memories are more frequent, more vivid. Aloneness can do that to a man, he thinks. Make him remember all sorts of things.

Beside him now, Will is scruffy haired, dark marks on his backside where he’s wiped his hands, dried snot rimming one nostril and a smudge of dirt on his cheek. ‘Mum said she’d come ‘n see ya.’

‘Oh, did she now.’

‘Yeah, today, after work. She finishes before lunch time.’

Albert nods. ‘Righto then. Would she like to see the bees too?’

‘Nah. She dun’ like bees.’ He looks up at Albert and adds, ‘She likes honey though. D’ya sell much honey?’

‘Mainly on the weekends. We get a lot of city visitors then. I have my regulars too.’

‘D’ya reckon we could go and look at your bees now?’

Albert is happy sitting in the sun. Doesn’t really want his plans changed. He looks across at the boy waiting beside him, his face all naked expectation. He doesn’t want the boy to go away just yet either. ‘Alright then, let’s go.’ Albert stands a while stretching his back, then leads the way over the grate and down the track to the house. Will skips ahead now and then, turning and waiting for Albert after squatting and exploring the ground for beetles, ants or something small and unseen to Albert’s eyes.

‘You wear one o’ those white spaceman suits when ya look at the bees?’ Will asks.

Albert laughs. ‘Yes, we all do that.’

‘Why’s it always white? Why not blue, or red or somethin?’

‘Well, that’s because bees have this long and very old memory about black bears. They’re hive robbers, see. And you don’t want the bees to think you’re robbing their hive. So you have to wear white and move around the bees sort of slow and careful so as not to upset

them.’

Will’s brows are drawn together, his mouth open like he’s not sure whether Albert is telling the truth or a fanciful story. He closes his mouth suddenly and raises his eyebrows. As if he’s weighed up the odds and believes Albert’s words after all.

When they go through the gate and into the back yard, Will points to the hive. ‘There they are!’ he says, as if he’s the one showing Albert the bees. He runs, taking a jump at the bench near the rose garden, clipping his toe and crashing down onto the wood. He crumples to the ground, hands over his shin, eyes squeezed shut and teeth gritted.

Albert rushes over as quickly as old bones allow, and he sees the blood trickling out between Will’s fingers. Matilda’s words – ‘What have you done!’ – are etched in his mind, and he thinks of the boy’s mother. What will she think now of this silly old man her son’s been talking about? Letting a small boy take a tumble like that. ‘Wait, keep your hands pressed there and I’ll get something.’ He goes to the shed for a clean rag, some raw honey. Comes back and presses the cloth into Will’s hands. ‘Hold it there.’ He opens the jar and scoops up fingers full. Takes Will’s hands away and gently presses the honey to the gouged skin, smoothing it over the bloodied area. An image of the back of his mother’s head, the whorl of hair at the crown, as she bent over his leg, a knee or a foot, dabbing Mercurochrome or some sticky yellow ointment on the wound. Always gently, slow and careful, then she’d send him on his way again with a pat on the head. She always understood that he needed to run, to climb and fall and hurt, to cut and scrape his skin. Even break a limb, though he never did. She understood that he needed to do this and not be indoors playing chess with his father, doing his homework, safe and scrape-less.

Beside him Will isn’t crying but his face is tight and red and his lip is twitching. Albert tears the cleanest part of the cloth into strips and fastens them around Will’s leg. The boy’s face starts to relax and he opens his eyes. ‘Was that honey?’

Albert nods. ‘From the hive. I always keep some on hand for bad cuts and grazes. Can you stand up?’ Will lurches to his feet and leans forward to check out the bandage, honey and blood seeping out.

‘Do you know how many bees it takes to make one of these jars of honey?’

The boy straightens and squints up at him, his eyes darting around as if following some internal logic to the problem. Then he looks at Albert, ‘Nuh.’

‘About 1,150 bees visiting about 4 and a half million

Cont. next page...

Competition Results



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flowers between them.'

Will pulls an exaggerated face, mouth agape. 'No shit! I mean ... like, just for that jar?'

Albert nods. 'They're clever little fellows. Very busy.' His stomach rumbles, reminding him he hasn't eaten yet. 'Do you want some toast, or fruit or something?'

'Nuh, I'm okay.'

'I'm just going to make some toast. Straighten that leg out up here,' he pats the bench. 'Back soon.'

Inside he rushes the toast, settling for warmed bread, no spread. Tries to check on the boy through the kitchen window but he's out of range. He takes the plate outside and Will is just as he'd left him; arms wrapped around one bent leg, the sore one stretched out straight. They sit together on the bench, lorikeets chattering noisily above them. Albert's hearing is finely tuned to the bees, and what he knows is their steady hum from the hive. He wonders if Will's still keen to see the bees today.

A car motor slows, thuds over the cattle grate then hits the gravel. They both swing around, but the line of wattles temporarily obscures vision of the vehicle. 'This your mother?' Albert asks, when a small blue car pulls into view.

'Yeah.'

'Good heavens, what's she going to think?' Albert looks at the boy's wound seeping a sticky mess of blood and honey through the bandage.

Will shrugs. 'Not your fault.'

Albert pats Will's head. 'Stay here, I'll go and get your mum.' Will leans back, sore leg stretched out, both arms braced behind him on the wood.

Albert moves away. He turns as he nears the gate, sees Will sitting with both legs dangling in front of him now, feet almost to the ground, head down eyeing off his wrapped shin. The boy glances up at Albert and for a moment, in the sun, his dark hair is rendered pale, illuminated in a halo of light, and Albert's heart breaks gently for a moment and mends all at once.

Rae Alison Cerhan

Australian Ballad Competition 2024 Winner

FIRST:

Rivers I Knew, *David Judge*

SECOND:

When Angels Come, *Tom McIlveen*

THIRD:

The Race Napoleon Won, *Elizabeth Egan*

SHORT LISTED:

A Poet's Voice, *David Campbell*

Saga of an Irish Lass, *Jim Kent*

Rivers I Knew

by *David Judge*

In the summertime heat they were places to meet for relief from a sweltering day, when the sun would beat down on our small outback town as it searingly went on its way.

From the time it arose 'til that place where it goes when the stars and the moon reappear, it would send down its rays on those long summer days that we knew would come year after year.

The Macquarie I knew where the river gums grew had a rope that we hung from a tree, and although it was deep, the banks muddy and steep, it was fun we could all have for free.

And not too far downstream where the shallows would gleam on the ripples that ran to the shore, we would sit in a pool that was shaded and cool, to the sound of cicadas galore.

There were kids with their dogs, others just had their togs and a truck tube to go with the flow, with no rudder or keel, past the swamp hens and teal we would float to the rapids below.

For those up for a ride we would silently glide 'til the turbulence tumbled and spun, the old truck tube around to the rapturous sound of my mates and me having some fun.

And The Bogan I knew had an old bridge or two for the cars and the trucks and the trains, where the swallows would nest and the swaggies could rest as they wandered the far western plains.

And with 'No' on the sign we would throw in a line or be silly and jump in or dive, which in hindsight today we can give thanks and say that a miracle kept us alive.

When the river was low we'd all know where to go to find yabbies, a catfish or eel,

Cont. next page...

Competition Results

and with no place to hide they'd be flipped to the side
to be part of a riverside meal.

Over years we would learn that the rains would return
to replenish that bountiful force,
which meandered its way to a place far away
from the realms of its mountainous source.

Where the river was wide on the town's other side,
there were shanties of hessian and rust,
and the barefooted few of the dark kids I knew
had a story we never discussed.

They were magic at sport and they had our support
when we played against visiting teams,
but as mates in a game they were not quite the same
when it came to fulfilling their dreams.

With a darkening sky at the end of the dry
as the countryside soaked up the rain,
it brought welcome relief with a long-held belief
that the river would flow once again.

But as Hanrahan said in those words full of dread,
there were times when the rain never stops,
causing rivers to flood and the towns turn to mud
as the farmers were losing their crops.

On The Darling near Bourke where my dad went to work,
there were steamships with paddles astern,
and the holds were all full of their cargo of wool
and the timber they needed to burn.

When the river was low they had nowhere to go
in an era when fleeces were gold,
so they'd wait for the rain to return once again
when the clip could be shipped out and sold.

But those things we have done so The Darling won't run,
sees the balance of nature implode,
where the fish are found dead and the wildlife has fled
in their search for another abode.

But their search is in vain 'til the rains come again
to replenish those catchments I know,
where each habitat thrives when the flooding arrives
and those rivers again start to flow.

When we moved to the coast where the people would
boast
that the Hastings could never run dry,
with its fast tidal flows and the rains where it rose,
it was easy to understand why.

There were lakes and lagoons with their inlets and dunes
where the sea birds were graceful in flight,
as they followed a mast or a fisherman's cast,
to a bushy's unfettered delight.

It was upstream we knew what the Chinaman grew
that were ripening ready to eat,

and a fleet-footed team would float melons downstream
where the catchers would haul in the treat.

It was dangerous fun and the Chinaman's gun
had a load of saltpetre and lead,
that he'd use if he found there were poachers around,
causing panic and pain as we fled.

As the years wander by, I keep wondering why
we abuse those resources we need,
that the Earth has supplied to sustain and provide
for the billions we now need to feed.

For a country so vast that is changing so fast
with the climatic changes we see,
how we value the few of those rivers I knew
will decide what our future will be.

Jean Stone

Poetry Competition 2024 Winner

WINNER:

Lonely Mountains, Cecelia Scarthy

SHORT LISTED:

The Lichen Gate, Kim Nolan

Sunset in the Kitchen, Jake Dennis

Lonely Mountains

by Cecelia Scarthy

mountains appear so lonely
their summit cold
wind freezing and fawning at bones
isolation in ascension
and an alien like solace
when I stare at these Montenegrin mountains
today, these mountains made me think of you
you kissed my lips once
but you have kissed my mind a hundred times since
and lavished my soul with licks of poetic wetness
these Montenegrin mountains made me miss you
a future you
the death of you
after a lifetime of learning love
the sadness that seeps down from its ridges
trickles its way into the depths of me
and to the base of my open heart
missing someone before loving them
struck me as profound
the joy of learning to love you
married with the loneliness
that I will one day lose you
to these Montenegrin mountains

Writing Competitions



**Fellowship of Australian Writers
New South Wales Inc**

Closing 31 August 2025:

HILARIE LINDSAY SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2025

Entries are sought in the following categories:

SECTION 1: Years 10, 11 & 12	up to 2500 words	Prize \$150
SECTION 2: Years 7, 8 & 9	up to 2500 words	Prize \$125
SECTION 3: Years 5 & 6	up to 1500 words	Prize \$100
SECTION 4: Year 4 & under	up to 1500 words	Prize \$50

1. Entrant's name must appear on the entry form **ONLY**.
2. The entry fee is \$5.00 (please note that entries that do not include the fee will be disqualified)
3. The student's name should **NOT** appear on the entry. Entries should be made via the **ONLINE ENTRY FORM** which can be found at www.fawnsw.org.au
4. Payments are now made via the submission form. Any queries regarding the payment should be directed to the Competition Convenor
5. Should an online submission not be available, students may request an entry form from compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au. Such entries must be accompanied by a receipt of payment to the bank account.
6. Entries must be student's own work, unpublished and not having won any competition at time of entry. Normal Competition Conditions apply.
7. Please note that submissions must be a word document PDF's and JPEG's will be disqualified.
8. Closing date for the competition is 6pm 31st August 2025
9. Winners will be notified prior to 31st October 2025
10. Judges report and winners list will be available on our website in early November.
11. Prizes will be direct credited to the winners and the certificates sent to the schools for presentation. For any further information please contact the competition convenor at compconvenor@gmail.com or phone 0492 833 522

Closing 31 August, 2025:

MARJORIE BARNARD SHORT STORY AWARD 2025

1. The Award is for Short Stories up to 3000 words.
2. Entrants must be permanent residents of Australia.
3. Submitted entries must not have previously been published, nor be under consideration for publication. Entries may have been entered in other competitions but not won a monetary prize. Receipt of entry will not be acknowledged.
4. Multiple entries are permitted, a separate Entry Form must be submitted with each entry.
5. Entries are to be submitted via the online form available on the FAW website at fawnsw.org.au
6. Entry Fee is \$15.00 per entry. Payment of the Entry Fee is to be made online from within the Entry Form.
7. Entries must be in Word format, or they will be disqualified. *
8. For those unable to use the online form, a separate form will be forwarded by email from the compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au
9. The closing date is 6pm on 31st August 2025.
10. **The author's identity must appear on the Entry Form ONLY. The author's name must NOT appear on the manuscript.**
11. **Only page number and title of the entry is to appear on the manuscript.**
12. The author retains copyright to all work submitted, although prize-winning entries or a precis must be available for publication in the Fellowship's bulletin Writers Voice and on the FAW NSW website.
13. Entries must be original, creative and inspiring works which present to the audience an engaging work of literary excellence.
14. The judge's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. **There will be no individual appraisals.**
15. FAW NSW reserves the right not to award any prizes if, in the judge's estimation, no entries of sufficient merit are received.
16. **THE AWARD PRIZE: \$500**
THE WINNER and shortlisted entries will be notified via email after 31 October. The shortlisted competitors will be invited to attend the Awards Lunch to be held on the 4th May 2025 where the winner will be announced. Contact: compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au or Phone 0492 833 522.

Writing Competitions

Closing 19 September, 2025:

LAMBING FLAT YOUNG FAW NATIONAL CHERRY FESTIVAL WRITING COMPETITION FOR 2025

Entry Fee of \$5 per entry – all adult sections.
Entry form is required. Email for fillable form to
lambingflatfaw.competitions@gmail.com OR send SSAE
to address below.

Post entries to: LAMBING FLAT YOUNG FAW, PO BOX
498 YOUNG NSW 2594

ADULT OPEN SHORT STORY and POETRY SECTIONS

Word Limit 1,500 Short Story, Poems 50 Lines.

1st Place \$200, 2nd Place \$75, 3rd Place \$25, Highly
Commended
and Commended.

If you are entering both short story and poetry sections,
please

use a separate entry form for poetry and stories. No
names or pictures on adult entries for judging purposes.

SCHOOLS SECTIONS

Free entry for School Sections but only one child's entry
per section (up to 1 Story and 1 Poem per child)
School & Name, Class & Age on your entry please.
Parent or teacher to sign that it is the student's
own work.

Infants: Years 1-2

2 sections – Short Story and Poetry

Word Limit up to 250 words story or 15 lines poetry
1st Place \$30, 2nd Place \$15, Highly Commended and
Commended.

Junior primary: Years 3-4

2 sections – Short Story and Poetry

Word Limit up to 500 words story or 15 lines poetry
1st Place \$40, 2nd Place \$20, Highly Commended and
Commended.

Primary: Years 5-6

2 sections – Short Story and Poetry

Word Limit up to 750 words story or 25 lines poetry.
1st Place \$50, 2nd Place \$25, Highly Commended and
Commended.

Secondary: Years 7-8-9 and 10-11-12

Short Story and Poetry Sections

Word Limit up to 1,000 words story or 50 lines poetry.
1st \$100, 2nd \$30, Highly Commended and Commended
for each Secondary Group.

Enquiries Contact John Dwyer 0408-699-507 or Helen
Auld 0408-112-622

NORMAL COMPETITION CONDITIONS

*Unless stated otherwise, these conditions apply to
ALL WRITING COMPETITIONS*

- Entries should be submitted in English, using one side of A4 paper, typed double-spaced (except poetry) in a standard typeface (12 pt min.), using generous margins. No fancy fonts, clip art or decorations of any kind.
- NO names or addresses to appear on manuscripts. A separate COVER SHEET must be attached, containing the title of the entry, competition name, section category if applicable, word or line count, author's name, address, telephone number and email address (if available). Title and page number (ONLY) of the entry should appear on each page of the manuscript.
- Entries must be original work and must not have won a cash prize in any other competition nor been published in any form, as at the closing date of the competition.
- Entries may be entered in more than one competition at the time of entry HOWEVER the entry must be withdrawn from any subsequent competitions if the writer is advised prior to the closing dates that the entry was successful elsewhere with a cash prize.
- Cheques and/or money orders should be made payable to the organisers, unless otherwise stipulated. Multiple entries may be paid with one cheque or money order – do not send coins or stamps.
- Copyright remains with the author. Entries will not be returned and will be destroyed after the announcement of results.
- The judges' decisions will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- If you require a copy of the results mailed to you, please send a standard DL-sized stamped, self-addressed envelope (SSAE) with your entry.

These are general guidelines. For complete conditions relating to individual competitions, and to obtain entry forms (where required), contact the relevant competition organisers.

Short Story

Tommo's Telescope

HAVING HAD one too many malt bitters, Tommo began
searching the sky.

Backwards and forwards he scanned the telescope
picking out seagulls and terns and once even a
wandering albatross

But none of these seem to satisfy.

Finally he sank another pint from his small stash,
swaying back to the upright position.

This did the trick and he found it, the sun, beaming
from all that way away

For some time he stared at the magnificent image of
the sun then the inevitable happened.

The magnified image of the sun burnt a hole in the
back of his head. He fell over dead, forensic pathologists
mystified.

Greg Baker, Southern Highlands Branch

Poet's Voice

007

I speak of the secret agent, 007 James Bond.
Who of Martinis, we're told, was exceedingly fond.
Stirred and not shaken,
And preferably taken,
With his arm round a long-legged blonde.

Lorraine Munt, Wyong FAW

Departed

Time,
A hazy sky
Mists diffused in tones of grey
Caressing a restless, undeserving moon
As the night is still
And the air is strong
Life,
Like delicate webbing
Knit in a corner
Some spider's day's work

That can be destroyed by the slightest breath of wind

Departed, gone ... but not forgotten

Jenny England, FAW Isolated Writers

Night over Goulburn

The night falls over Goulburn
And I am awake in my dreams
I have come from far-off road
To greet thee Australia
in this summer day
Under millions lights being
burnt onto eternity
I like to write about your beauties
and reverence
O Down Under
To write about friendship, hospitality
and respect
That you show about thy sons
I'll remember this night for long
For the message ye bear
we are now healthy and gay
under your places Australia
Just like our Lord had liked
This night says to me that we'll take
our permanent stay permits soon
With Australia
This night bears its magic
That we'll escape from the misery
of Albania

Now the holy night has fallen
over ourselves and our hearts
This night and this summer
I'll never forget
Fur they bear the burden of our years
Filled with perseverance and duty
To our one destiny in this free land
Of Australia
We embraced that holy light to have
sent us toward eternity
A new world awaits us then.
That of free people into a free world.

Shuka Shpetim, Goulburn FAW

So there!

No lunch left-overs –
a pee wee struts a
loud opinion.
Once given,
a glance inside,
huffs then to next door.

Ian Keast, Port Macquarie-Hastings FAW

I Know a Valley

I know a valley
hugged by hills.
Sunlight pools in long paddocks
trees bow reflectively to creek water
grass blows in green-gold surges
lilies cluster
cattle graze ... forever graze ...
friends nod across the yards.
Birds flit, fluster chattering.
Come mid-day they rest sleepy-eyed.
As breezes fade and fall
the valley rests in silence so profound
that people hush
gripped by a mystery
they do not understand
but which they know
is good.

Wendell Watt, Moocooboola FAW

2025, The Unknown

This year two o two five
and guess what! We are still alive
The future shorter than the past,
no idea how long it will last
Resolutions are just fun,
gone before Feb. has begun.
Predicting the future, always a gamble,
as through the year we slowly amble
thrown into a world where AI is rife,
when will it take over our life
climate change is still in doubt,
will the Government pull us out
we're living longer that's our aim
try to forget the cancer and pain.
Is the world filled with doom
why do I feel this gloom
There are so many things in my life
that help me cope with all that strife.
I have a mate that I love dearly
and I know he loves me clearly
dementia has slowed him down
but at ninety he doesn't frown.
I have my dog, adorable and cute,
who says animals are mute.
I have friends who keep me sane
make me laugh through the rain
Family, though far away
Keep in touch every day
So when I think of tomorrow
And wallow in a bath of sorrow
I count my blessings, the recipe,
just to be in the world as me.

Jackie Laing, Port Macquarie-Hastings FAW

SUBMISSIONS TO POET'S VOICE:

Send your poem in the first instance to the Poetry Editor, **Brian Tolagson**:

brian.tolagson@gmail.com for review and inclusion in the next edition of Writers Voice. Deadlines are the beginning of February, May, August or November, for the following month's edition.

NB: Poems accepted for inclusion on this page will be deemed to have been published and therefore are not eligible for entry into FAW competitions. Members are reminded to include your name, membership number and FAW branch with all submissions to ensure that all works presented here are from financial members.

Copyright: Writers Voice does not retain copyright of any items contributed by members, including poems. Author copyright is taken as given by the very fact that the author has provided the poem for publication and that we always include the author's name with each poem. Copyright stays with the author, and if any reader wishes to use a poem from Writers Voice in any other way, they should contact the author for approval.

Literary Achievements

BLUE MOUNTAINS FAW

Rosemary Baldry

Flash Fiction, 'The Power of Seven', longlisted in the *Furious Fiction* competition, published by Australian Writers' Centre, 25th February 2025.

Rosemary Baldry, Pirie Klemmer and Jeanette Temesvary each had an untitled Tanka published in *Eucalypt: A Tanka Journal*, Issue 38, May 2025.

David Berger

Non-fiction article, 'Is morality objective or subjective?' Published in *Philosophy Now*, UK, April/May 2025.

Margaret Onus

Prose, 'Chasing the Dream.' *Must Be Dreamin'* competition. Published by Wattle Tree Press, announced February 2025.

Christine Stickley

Short Story, 'They Also Serve Who Stand Beside,' pp. 453 - 457, published by Family History ACT, The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc., in *Every Family has a Story, Short stories from the 2023 E. M Fletcher Writing Competition*, August 2024.

Short Story, 'They Took A Chance at Life,' pp.401 - 407, published by Family History ACT, The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc., in *Every Family has a Story, Short stories from the 2022 E. M Fletcher Writing Competition*, August 2023.

Short Story, 'My Year at Swanleigh Hostel, An Introduction to Boarding Life,' pp.489 - 494, published by Family History ACT, The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc., in *Every Family has a Story, Short stories from the 2021 E. M Fletcher Writing Competition*, August 2022.

History Article, 'Unexpected Connections,' pp.15 -20, *Journal of the Moruya District Historical Society Inc.*, Vol. 24, No. 4, December 2022.

Book, 'The Old Charm of Penrith,' self-published, First edition 1978, Second Edition, 1984.

EASTWOOD HILLS FAW

Erina Booker

Readings at Live Poets at Don Bank Museum: 'Pastoral' September 2024; 'Two Bears', October 2024; 'Sketch', November 2024; 'Cloud Catcher', January 2025.

A Tanka in Issue 36 *Eucalypt*

A tanka in issue 37 *Eucalypt*

Online Publishing for R Winkler Jewellery: 'Grief'; 'Out on a Limb'; 'The Cattail Pond'; 'Desert Tree 1'; 'Desert Tree 11'; 'Is it a Weed'.

Read *To Speak the Unspeakable* and *Japanese Wife in Australia* at Live Poets at Don Bank on March 26

Won *The Monologue Challenge* speech by M. Gandhi at Live Poets at Don Bank April 23

Read *Gift* and *Larceny* at Live Poets at Don Bank on April 23
Tanka accepted for *Eucalypt* #38

Two Bears and *After CP Cavafy's 'The God Abandons Antony'* accepted for the FAW Eastwood/ Hills Branch's Anthology

Beverly George

Haiku published in *Echidna Tracks* Issue 14 2025 3/4/25

Linda King

E/H FAW comp 'The Boy, the Stone and the Hole' – 1st place - Dark Fairy Tale, Feb. 2025

E/H FAW competition 'Finding History's Mysteries' - HC - Write a Postcard, March 2025

Margaret Longhurst

Eastwood/Hills FAW competition. [Short story] 'My Boy Runs.' First Place.

Eastwood/Hills FAW competition. Bringing Characters to Life, 2nd Place 'Spasmodic Call.'

Eastwood/Hills FAW competition. Travel Postcard, Highly Com.: Inverell, 'Sapphire City.'

Liz Shaw

Accepted for the Hunter Writers Lighthouse Residency in May 2025.

Julie Thorndyke

'Yesterday's squiggles' [tanka] *Ribbons* Spring/Summer 2025 (USA)

'Turning the Calendar' [tanka sequence] *International Tanka* #17 2025 (Japan)

'A rainbow' [tanka] *Laurels* #3 2025 [online] (USA)

'Seductive colours' and 'circling bees' [tanka] *Kokako* 42 (NZ)

'Childhood home' [tanka] *TSA Anthology* 2024 (USA)

'The resonant sound' [tanka] *TSA Tanka Hangout in Ribbons* Spring/Summer 2025 (USA)

Weidong Tian

One tanka *Ribbons*, Spring/Summer 2025 edition

E-book *Walking Closer to a Tree* (Chinese Edition) published on Amazon, April 2025.

Vera Zegarac

Novel *Beneath the Canvas*, self-published on Amazon.

Debra Widdicombe

"Commended" Travel Postcard "Cairns Performing Arts Centre" E/Hills FAW April 2025.

Story accepted for publication in 2024 E. M. Fletcher Writing Competition titled "The South African Legion Pilgrimage" in the 2024 Edition of "Every Family has a Story," with Author sign-off completed for printing in 2025.

ISOLATED WRITERS

Issy Jinarmo

[members Jill Baggett (Mudgee), Narelle Noppert (Wollondilly) and Maureen Kelly OAM, Isolated Writers]

Not Just Any Pet, MockingOwl Roost

Margaret Connects the Dots, DoubleSpeak

Film Set of Nightmares, Impulsive Walrus

Cont. next page...

Literary Achievements

LAKE MACQUARIE FAW

Alison Ferguson

Awarded Distinguished Service Award at FAW(NSW) AGM.

Irina Frolova

Awarded first place in the Australian Haiku Society 2025 Autumn Equinox Kukai Competition for her haiku.

Pam Garfoot

Awarded Distinguished Service Award at FAW(NSW) AGM.

George Graves

Awarded Distinguished Service Award at FAW(NSW) AGM.

Kristen Mair

Longlisted in the Queensland Writers Centre Adaptable Program 2025.

Cate Plink

Featured regarding Seniors Story Competition in the *Cobar Weekly* 4 March, article "Once upon a time ...".

Ned Stephenson

Winner of Local Award, in the 2024 Newcastle Short Story Competition, short story "Blood on the sand";

Shortlisted in the inaugural Bournemouth Journal competition (Bournemouth University), short story.

MUDGEY VALLEY FAW

Sue Pridmore

Story, *Journey to the Badger Ground, the land of Wombats*, in *Seniors Stories* Volume 10

Jill Baggett

Play, *Time For Dinner*, performed by Mudgee Performing Art Society

Play, *Hear That Wind*, performed by Armidale Favourite Shorts

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS FAW

Colleen Parker

Played the role of Mother in the Short Film; 'Where the Gold Tops Grow.' Won Best Comedy in Berlin (now showing) and nominated in 5 other International competitions; awards not yet announced.

Google: Colleen Parker on imdb.com

Short Story - 'A Brilliant Career' Winner of FAW FB promotion of inaugural 12 Stories Life Writing Competition. www.12stories.com.au

Ian Keast

Poem 'Hang glider meal' included in Port Macquarie Library Anthology from the Summer Poetry Competition, 'Around the World'

Book Review - Article, 'Poet-Storyteller' - the poetry of Valerie Volk published in *Studio #164*

Poem 'Almost blind (for a day)' published in *Studio #164*

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FAW

Cherie Corbett-Jones

Cherie has a new full-time role at Sutherland library and received positive feedback from Dinuka McKenzie for her recent book assessment.

Sal Gallaher

Sal was on the FAW bookshelf, has appeared on three podcasts (Talking Aussie Books, Writes4Women & Find a Debut (Substack podcast)). She has also featured on the Global Girls Online Bookclub Facebook page and is on display at the Newtown Better Read than Dead bookstore and Abbey's Bookstore.

Joe Green

Joe received a contemporary painting award at a recent Combined Arts Society show.

Cont. next page...

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD HONOUR ROLL



FAW NSW LIFE MEMBERS

Elaine Burton *
Maureen Kelly OAM
Trevar Langlands *
Dr. Hilarie Lindsay *
Colleen Parker
Jean Paddison *
Peter Pike
Cate Plink
Barbara Snel
Ron Stevens *

**Deceased*

Irene Acland*
Denise Aldridge
Carolyn Alfonzetti
Patricia Allen
Ellen Ash
Gavin Austin
Barbara Aylott
Eileen Backhus *
Jill Baggett
Rosemary Baldry
Margaret Barlow
Miriam Bates
Cyril Bentley *
Meryl Bentley *
Elaine Burton *
Ken Challenor *

Jan Dean
Beryl Dundas *
Joan Dwyer
Margaret Ekin
Alison Ferguson
Thelma Flower *
Pam Garfoot
Shirley Goodbar
George Graves
Eileen Gray
Pip Griffin
Mavis Gunter
Mavis Hayes *
Dr Anne Howard
Margaret Jackson
John Jacobs

Maureen Kelly OAM
Lyn Leerson
Pat Lindsay *
Helen Luidens *
Johan Luidens
Elizabeth McVie
Jan Mitchell
Vince Morrison
Esther Osborne
Rosemary Peters
Peter F Pike
Margaret Robinson *
Rina Robinson
Alan Russell *
Albert Scott *
Bridget Sharp

Dr John Sheppard
Margot Shugg
Barbara Snel
Yvonne Sorensen
Dorothe Squires-Cooper
Pat Strong *
Greg Tome
Frank Urban *
Carney Vaughan
Mei-Ling Venning
Linda Visman
Ted Webber
Margaret Wilkinson
Margaret Young *

Bookshelf

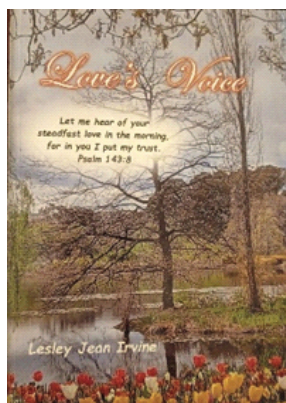
LESLEY JEAN IRVINE

Love's Voice

This is a poetic account of my search for meaning, to finding God's love, and my subsequent faith journey. God's voice especially speaks to me in the beauty, mystery and wonder of nature. The poems are enhanced by my photos and related scriptures.

Published December 2024, soft cover. A\$30 includes postage and handling within Australia.

Contact: email Lesley Irvine Lesley.irvine6@gmail.com



GREG MUTTON

Shanghaied

It has been said that our memories are what makes us who we are. So, who are we if we lose all our memories?

Two people wake up not knowing who they are, where they are or how they got there. The world they wake up to is also unknown. The vast majority of the human race is dead – entire countries are uninhabitable.

The cause? Human stupidity.

Two scientists developed what they believed would be the holy grail of vaccines; a binary virus/vaccine that would fight all disease, ending massive suffering. Politics and greed, however, got in their way. Their vision of a universal savior for humanity was transformed into a weapon of mass destruction, the likes never before imagined. If it didn't kill, it rendered the recipient sterile. Anyone left alive is now doomed to a long, slow death.

One man thinks he can fix the problem. Professor Reginald Denham finds a way to travel back in time and recruit healthy people for his dream of a human breeding program.

But ... the virus isn't finished. It fights back! Any child conceived either dies in the womb or is so horrendously mutated, it cannot survive.

In desperation, Denham returns to the past again, this time with a different agenda. Instead of "recruiting" more breeders, he subdues and "shanghaies" two people. When they regain consciousness, they have no memories and no idea of where, or even when they are.

This is their story.

Paperback and eBook from www.gregmutton.com and <https://books.by/greg-mutton-author>



WEIDONG TIAN

Walking Closer to a Tree

Walking Closer to a Tree is a collection of reflective essays on Australian trees, this book captures the author's everyday encounters and heartfelt insights into the flora that surrounds him. With a unique perspective and delicate prose, the writing brings poetry and a sense of distance to the reader, offering a refreshing and inspiring experience. The book

features over 90 essays, organized into four chapters: "The Romance of Spring," "The Brilliance of Summer," "The Tranquility of Autumn," and "The Evergreens of Winter." Each tree is accompanied by a hand-painted watercolor illustration, blending poetic charm with artistic beauty and radiating a rich cultural atmosphere.

The ebook can be purchased from Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com.au/Walking-Closer-Tree-Chinese-Weidong-ebook/dp/B0F3G3TTP6/>

JILL BAGGETT

Fun Tales

Fun Tales is a book of illustrated short stories for children aged about 5 to 8 years. Copies can be purchased for \$20 including postage. Contact Jill at j.baggett@bigpond.com



FAW members:

Send details of your recently published books to wveditor@fawns.org.au

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FAW (CONT'D)

Karina McDougall

is the new principal lawyer at the ASA law firm. They provide information and advice to authors and other creatives on contracts and agreements.

Karina has a publishing deal for her picture book: 'The Rainbow Roof.'

Christine Sykes

Christine's adaptation of her novel to play, 'Tap Cats of the Sunshine Coast' was performed to sell out audiences at Stanwell Park Theatre Group in late April.

Sylvia Vago

Sylvia Directed a play for Short & Sweet Drama Festival, 'Meet Alec.'

Branch Meetings and Contacts

We list on this page, our branches and their contact details for members, visitors and writers keen to meet with other writers for support, critique and to develop skills. New members are particularly welcome.

BLUE MOUNTAINS FAW

1st Sunday – 1.45 to 4.45 pm

Springwood Sports Club, 91 Buena Vista Rd, Winmalee 2777

Enquiries: Jeanette Temesvary
Phone: 0423 908 199

Email: temesvary.jns@gmail.com

Facebook page:

Blue Mountains Writers FAW

CANBERRA & REGION FAW

Second Sunday – 2:00 pm

O'Connor Uniting Church Hall, Cnr Bigalow St and Scriviner St, O'Connor, ACT 2602

Enquiries: Dianne Porter (Pres.)
Email: porter.32@bigpond.com

Phone: 0428 138 503

EASTWOOD/HILLS FAW

1st Saturday – 1.30 pm

Pennant Hills Community Centre, Cnr Yarrara & Ramsay Rds, Pennant Hills

Enquiries: Frances Moon (Pres.)

Email: riaraebeam@gmail.com

or Laura Davis (Sec.) *Email:*

lauracedee@yahoo.com.au

Web: hillsfaw.wordpress.com

GOULBURN FAW

Third Wednesday – 6:30 am to 8:30 pm

Meeting Room, Mulwaree Library 194 Bourke St, Goulburn.

Enquiries: Janice Jensen (Sec.)

Email: Goulburn.FAW@gmail.com

com

ISOLATED WRITERS FAW

This group of writers do not meet in person but keep in contact through Greg Mutton, their Convenor, either through the state FAW website fawns.org.au or isolatedwriters@fawns.org.au (See *Isolated Writers page (back cover)*)

LAKE MACQUARIE FAW

2nd Saturday – 2.30 to 4.30pm

Toronto Multi-Purpose Centre, 9 Thorne Street, Toronto.

Enquiries:

lakemacfaw2@gmail.com

Facebook: /LakeMacFAW

Web:

lakemacfaw2.wordpress.com

X formerly Twitter:

[@lakemacfaw2](https://twitter.com/lakemacfaw2)

Instagram: [#lakemacfaw2](https://www.instagram.com/lakemacfaw2)

LAMBING FLAT YOUNG FAW

2nd Monday – 5.30 to 7.30pm

(Except December and January)

The Young Services Club

Cloete Street, Young

Enquiries: Jennifer Haynes (Pres.)

Phone: 0457 903 240

Email: lambingflatbranchfaw@hotmail.com

@hotmail.com

MACARTHUR FAW

3rd Sunday – 1.00 pm

Campbelltown RSL Club (Jade Room), Carberry Lane.

Enquiries: Victoria Chie

4862 2771

Email: vchie46@bigpond.com

MOOCOBOOLA FAW

3rd Thursday – 1.30 pm

Gladesville Library Pittwater Road, Gladesville.

Enquiries: Robert Dickins

9713 8048

Paul Valis 0415 068 163

MUDGE VALLEY FAW

1st Monday – 1.00 to 3.00 pm

[Note change of date and time]

Enquiries: Jill Baggett

0409 609 869

Web: mudgevalleywriters.wordpress.com

wordpress.com

PARRAMATTA FAW

1st Saturday – 12.30 to 3.00pm

5 Phive, Parramatta Square, Parramatta

Enquiries: Cecilie McCarron

(Sec.)

Email: qsteps15@gmail.com

PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS FAW

Last Saturday – 1.00 to 4.00pm

Enquiries: Ian Keast (Pres.) 0437 006 202

PO Box 67 Port Macquarie 2444

Email: iankeast74@gmail.com

REVESBY WRITERS FAW

1st Saturday – 1.00 to 4.00pm

Macarthur Room,

Dixon Lane, Revesby

Enquiries: Shirley Galloway

9709 4117. *Email:*

revesbywriters@gmail.com

Web: revesbywriters.com

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

2nd Saturday – 10.00am to 1pm

(Except January)

Welby Hall, Welby.

Postal Address: Gail Leighton-

Daly, 2 Highlands Close, Moss

Vale 2577

Enquiries: Uta Purcell (Sec.)

02 4862 1793

Email: fawshnsw@hotmail.com

Web: fawsh.wordpress.com

STROUD WRITERS FAW

Fortnightly Thursdays

9.00 am to 12 noon

Stroud Library, Church Lane Stroud

Enquiries:

Hilary Heanly 0466 994 142

hilary.stroudwriters@gmail.com

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FAW

Last Saturday – 12.30 to 3.30pm

Sutherland Multi-purpose Centre

123 Flora Street, Sutherland

Enquiries: Sylvia Vago (Sec.)

0402 016 883

Email: sutherlandshirefaw@gmail.com

gmail.com

Web: www.writersunleashed.com.au/faw-meetings

com.au/faw-meetings

SYDNEY CITY FAW

3rd Friday – 4.00pm

Sydney Mechanics School of Arts,

1st Floor, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

(close to Town Hall Station,

light rail and buses).

Open to all writers, all genres.

Enquiries: John 0400 321 066

Email: sydcityfaw@gmail.com

WOLLONDILLY FAW

2nd Sunday – 1.00 pm

Enquiries: Annette Pearce (Pres.)
0432 857 236

wollondillybranch.faw@gmail.com

com

WYONG WRITERS FAW

4th Saturday – 1.30pm

Woodbury Park Community

Centre

1 Woolmers Cres. (off Woodbury

Park Drive), Mardi.

Enquiries: Glen D'Cruz (Publicity)

0413 291 129

glenndc@ozemail.com.au

Web: www.wyongwriters.org

FAW ISOLATED WRITERS BRANCH

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES:

Greg Mutton, Isolated Writers Convenor
Email: isolatedwriters@fawnsw.org.au
Mobile: 0459 997 399

ASSISTING THE CONVENOR:

Jill Schuler
Email: jillschuler9@gmail.com
Mobile: 0467 677 764.

MEMBERS' ACHIEVEMENTS:

The Editor, Writers Voice
PO Box 93
Dapto, NSW, 2530
Email: wveditor@fawnsw.org.au

AFFILIATION FEES:

FAW NSW Affiliation Fees are due
31 December yearly...
Isolated Writers: \$40.00 pa
Under 21/Youth Rate: \$20.00 pa
Overseas Members: \$51.00 pa

Mail subscriptions to the FAW State Treasurer
Rick Watkins (*see page 2 for address*).

Make cheques/money orders payable to
Fellowship of Australian Writers and enclose
SSAE for receipt if required.

At the same time, please advise the
Membership Registrar, Annette Pearce, that
you have paid. Email:
fawmembership@fawnsw.org.au. This will
ensure that you are included on the mailing list
to receive *Writers Voice*.

ELECTRONIC ROUND ROBIN (ERR):

The ERR is currently on hold, following the recent
passing of coordinator Brian Armour.

Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc.



ABN 59 557 152 715

General correspondence: Membership Registrar, FAW
NSW Inc., Annette Pearce, PO Box 432, Picton. NSW 2571
(PO Box 271, Woy Woy is closed)

Internet: www.fawnsw.org.au

ABOUT THE FAW

The aims of the FAW are:

- to foster and endorse the growth of Australian writing
- to promote excellence in writing
- to encourage writers, and those interested in writing, to join the Fellowship and enjoy the support, help and knowledge of members
- to expand the Fellowship across the State
- to provide an organisation to assist writers unable to attend Branch meetings
- to take the Fellowship into the 21st century and take advantage of technology and its new role in writing and publishing.

Branch Meetings

The branch fellowships hold regular meetings; conduct workshops and tutorials; hold writing competitions and publish anthologies of members' work. Visitors are most welcome to attend meetings or to contact the Fellowship through their respective branch (see previous page) or by contacting the FAW NSW State body (as above).

INTERSTATE BRANCHES

Tasmania:

Fellowship of Australian Writers (TAS) Inc.
PO Box 234, North Hobart TAS 7002
www.fawtas.org.au

Western Australia (FAWWA):

Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA) Inc.
PO Box 6180, Swanbourne WA 6910
www.fawwa.org

Queensland (FAWQ):

Fellowship of Australian Writers Queensland (FAWQ)
www.fawq.com.au



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