

# WRITERS VOICE



[fawnsw.org.au](http://fawnsw.org.au)

## Short Story

### The Sound of Silence

*Peter Gibson, Blue Mountains FAW*

I DON'T want to go into too much detail here but just recently, in order to prolong my life, a very skilled colorectal surgeon performed a 'laparoscopic ultra-low anterior resection with loop ileostomy' on me, which left me with a large chunk of my insides missing and provided me with a stoma - a hole in my abdomen through which ...

Look, I said I didn't want to go into too much detail, didn't I? But summarising, together with 55,000 other Australians, I am now wearing a pouch over the stoma, which needs to be managed regularly. While it's inconvenient, it is not as difficult to live with as one would imagine. Many people have lived normal and productive lives for decades while dealing with this situation. Some well-known stomates were Dwight D. Eisenhower, Frank Sinatra, Pope John Paul II and Napoleon Bonaparte. Celebrities, football players, surfers, movie stars, even wrestlers are in the club. And now me.

But, as always, there is a cow on the line. I have quite a bulge under my stoma, and apparently if I am not careful, this parastomal hernia could lead to some very serious complications.

My stomal therapist advised me to avoid too much exertion and to support the stoma when exercising, coughing or just living. She said there are unobtrusive

support belts you can buy which help prevent such complications developing and suggested I consider this option. Of course! But she mentioned offhand that she had a client who bought a Boob Tube, which was a good go-to while we waited for the belt to arrive. I wasn't quite sure what a Boob Tube was, but when she described it I recalled seeing some of my older granddaughters wearing them. A strapless gravity-defying top attached to a tight-fitting bodice. So, for her client the bodice provided a firmness around the middle, which supported his stoma. This sounded like a good idea to me and being keen to start supporting my bulge as soon as possible I immediately hightailed it to the Big K department store where I would surely be able to buy a Boob Tube to use while I waited for a belt to arrive.

Not being sure where I might find one, I went to the Service Desk to be pointed in the right direction. There were a lot of people being attended to and when it was my turn I fronted up to a middle-aged assistant who looked frazzled and not particularly in love with her job. I said cheerily, "Hello there. Can you tell me where I might buy a Boob Tube?"

She looked at me, quizzically at first and then disdainfully. She then picked up a microphone from the desk, and slowly and deliberately announced to the whole store:

## The Inaugural Ernestine Hill Memorial Short Story Award Luncheon

will be held  
immediately following the  
**ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING**  
on Saturday 2nd May

– see page 5.

Buy your  
**Luncheon tickets**  
online at [fawnsw.org.au](http://fawnsw.org.au)

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## Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc.



ABN 59 557 152 715  
Incorporation Number Y12630-47

### General correspondence:

Hon. Secretary, FAW NSW Inc.

Liz Shaw, [honsecretary@fawns.org.au](mailto:honsecretary@fawns.org.au)

Annette Pearce, Membership Registrar.  
PO Box 432, Picton NSW, 2571

### Patron:

Ms Patti Miller BA, MA

### State President:

Colleen Parker – (02) 9548 1614

### Vice President and Competition Convener:

Cate Plink – 0492 833 522

### Hon. Secretary / Publicity Officer:

Liz Shaw – 0407 017 562

Email: [honsecretary@fawns.org.au](mailto:honsecretary@fawns.org.au)

### Hon. Treasurer

Rick Watkins – 0414 658 411  
PO Box 690, Bowral NSW 2576

### Membership Registrar:

Annette Pearce – 0432 857 236

### General Committee:

Kath Berryman – 0403 836 591  
Jackie Laing – 0413 285 431

### Isolated Writers Convener:

Philippa Yelland - 0449 651 190

### Webmaster:

Ken Driver – (02) 4314 5062

### Writers Voice Editor:

Craig Cooper – 0437 144 607

TO CONTACT ANY MEMBER OF THE FAW NSW STATE COMMITTEE (LISTED ABOVE) BY EMAIL, PLEASE USE THE 'CONTACT US' FORM AT [FAWSW.ORG.AU/CONTACT-US](http://FAWSW.ORG.AU/CONTACT-US)

## WRITERS VOICE ISSN 0817-0746

The official Bulletin of the Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc is published quarterly. Opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the FAW or the editor. The editor reserves the right to edit or delete submissions for length, content, or policy. All advertisements and items are accepted in good faith but the FAW NSW Inc cannot accept responsibility for misrepresentation by advertisers nor does inclusion of any item imply endorsement by FAW NSW Inc.

**Editor:** Craig Cooper. *Submission should be sent to:*

Email: [wveditor@fawns.org.au](mailto:wveditor@fawns.org.au) (preferred), or:

The Editor, Writers' Voice

PO Box 93, Dapto, NSW, 2530

Mobile: 0437 144 607 (leave message)

### QUARTERLY COPY DEADLINES:

15 MAY, 15 AUGUST, 15 NOVEMBER, and 15 FEBRUARY

For June, September, December, and March 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: [fawns.org.au/membership/writing-fellows/](http://fawns.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@fawns.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 [fawns.org.au/about-us/distinguished-service-awards/](http://fawns.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@fawns.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@fawns.org.au](mailto:honsecretary@fawns.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@fawns.org.au](mailto:honsecretary@fawns.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.

## WRITERS VOICE

Autumn Edition No. 291 Mar. 2026 – Page 3

# State Council News

## From the desk of the State President

**H**APPY New year Everybody!  
Though the weather has been a bit 'iffy' to deal with, from roaring temperatures and bushfires to the south of me here in Sydney where I now reside and torrential downpours of rain to the north of me, it sure brings home to us, Dorothea Mackellar's words – a land of droughts and flooding rains'.

Sadly I have another sad mention ... Carolyn Cash's beloved mother passed away recently. Carolyn is currently in our Isolated Writers branch but she began back in the 1990s in Sutherland branch, which is where we became friends. I was the President of that branch and Carolyn was my Hon. Secretary, and an efficient one at that. We both moved north to country towns but have kept in close contact always with visits to each other's homes. Losing a family member leaves a huge hole in our hearts so I know I can offer Carolyn our sympathy and best wishes for a successful writing future to keep her motivation strong.

It has been an extremely busy quarter for the end of 2025 when we covered many topics and raced right into 2026 leaving January behind us in our wake!.

Our Constitution was circulated to all branches and a few responses were received thank you. The Exec of President, Hon. Treasurer and Membership Co-Ordinator again met in Bowral for the second time and updated that Version sent it back to the Solicitor for approval. It is currently being viewed by us for the final time after which we plan to table it at the AGM in May. That will be followed by our Awards Luncheon which this year will be in York Street again. Plans are developing and the details settled and will be promoted elsewhere in this bulletin.

Seniors Card Story Stories competition is 'on again'. Although it is a lot of work, our Project Team are getting used to it now and look forward to it every year. The theme was presented to us this year: Neighbours, Strangers and those in Between. We have 6 workshops planned so will be assisting attendees to be creative with the concept and write us some doozey stories to read.

The Will bequest search is ongoing for family members of the Deceased, however our credentials have been positively accepted so we just need to wait for more information.



Colleen Parker

Elections will be held immediately after the AGM where all positions are vacant each year. Written nominations take precedence and the blank forms will be on the reverse of the Mailing Sheet of the Writers Voice in March. Fill that in with a Nominator and Secunder and send it off to the Hon. Secretary who will give it to the Returning Officer at the Meeting.

We have increased the Hilarie Lindsay competitions by 2 categories and created each grouping of just 2 calendar years in line with the schooling curriculum and adjusted the prize monies to reflect both the times and the era.

Thank you everyone for all your work and support of each other.

*Colleen Parker, President*

## Is your writing alive?

*Pamela Waugh, Southern Highlands FAW*

**W**HEN I saw my first play performed, I was amazed. I not only saw the characters I have portrayed in print, I saw my readers' reactions to my story. It encouraged me to try new ways of writing, and gave me the confidence to write what I really care about.

I also met other playwrights directing their own work, which gave me ideas of writing scripts for stage, radio and screen, all very different ways of script writing.

I felt very comfortable in my role of playwright, until that avenue to directing my plays took a different turn. That was when I tried writing a radio play, and finding other ways to have my plays performed, or published. Other playwrights also changed course, so I did not have their feedback or ideas and companionship.

So I am looking for a band of playwrights, and intending or apprentice playwrights, with whom I can exchange ideas, read their plays and talk about having them performed, whether that be through reading scripts, live performance, or through a podcast. I like the idea of a Playhouse Podcast, because that means learning a new digital process of combining a radio type script with publishing in a podcast.

Alternatively, FAW NSW playwrights could meet somewhere on a monthly basis, or use an Isolated Writers method of having their work heard or read.

Whatcha think, FAW playwrights?

Who are you? Where are you? How many are we? Enough to have an occasional night/afternoon of plays performed? Or can we meet over the internet?

Can I ask interested playwrights to contact me, Pamela Waugh, put [pwau@bigpond.com](mailto:pwau@bigpond.com) or Colleen Parker, [parkerpattinson2@bigpond.com](mailto:parkerpattinson2@bigpond.com) to show your interest.

## Vale Rina Robinson

### 1924 – 2026



**R**INA ROBINSON was a member of FAWNSW for several decades. She joined the Manly Branch while living at Church Point on the Northern Beaches of Sydney and later was prominent in setting up LMFAW in Toronto.

She was always a feisty, artistic lady, travelling on her own in her early twenties from London to Brisbane to settle in Australia where it was warm. She hated the cold of England and never returned there to live, visiting her family only a few times over all the years. She married an Englishman in Brisbane and they had one son. Later, they adopted a daughter.

In 1996, she and her husband retired to Rathmines in Lake Macquarie to a house looking out over the water. There, she continued her creative activities: dancing at clubs with her adult sized puppets (husband Denis played the music), painting in her studio, entering the local Dobell art competitions, writing both poetry and prose, and in her sewing room, knitting, sewing and quilt making. She also played the organ and liked to sing.

At first, Rina attended the Newcastle branch of FAW at Hamilton, but in 2000, she and a couple of other members decided to start a branch of FAW in Toronto. Ten people came to the inaugural meeting. That branch is still thriving. LMFAW had its twenty fifth anniversary party last year in September.

When I joined LMFAW in February 2007, Rina was active on the committee. She was writing short stories and publishing haiku and tanka poetry. She was also writing fantasy for teenage girls. Before long, our group started learning about self-publishing through Amazon and in 2011, several of us, including Rina, published our first full length books. Subsequently, Rina published

several books, including one of her poetry, which she illustrated with her own paintings.

As a group, we were determined that if we were going to publish our work, it had to be the best we could produce, so another activity our group started was to hold separate critique meetings. Rina was always keen to take part and offered her home for monthly poetry critique.

We honoured Rina in 2020 by making her a life member of our group. By the time she reached 90, her eyesight was fading from AMD and she was finding it harder to read what was on her computer screen. Gradually, she was succumbing to age related symptoms, but her spirit was still strong. As a neighbour, we frequently saw each other and when she gave up driving her car, I took her to our meetings. However, by the time she reached 99, she could no longer see her friends nor hear what was being said at a meeting, even with the use of a microphone. I think it was that year that her little dog died and her spirit died too.

Rina loved the home she had helped design when it was renovated about 25 years before. She hated the thought of a nursing home, but eventually, after several falls, last year, there was no option. We had failed to find someone acceptable to her to live with her in her home, so her son put her into a nursing home at Wyee. Whenever I visited, she never failed to mention that she wanted to go home. Finally, the end came on early Saturday morning, 7th February, a month after her 102nd birthday.

*Jan Mitchel, Lake Macquarie FAW*

## FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS

# NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### MEETING DETAILS

- Date:** Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2026
- Time:** 10 AM Sharp
- Venue:** York Events — Room TBA  
Club York 95 - 99, York Street  
Sydney, NSW
- Voting Rights:** State Committee and Delegates only  
Please advise delegate's name and branch on registration
- Agenda:** Will be distributed by the Hon. Secretary via email

### ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS DETAILS

Nominations to be sent to Hon. Secretary by Friday 11th April 2026. (Nomination forms will be on the back of the Mailing slip of the March WV)

#### State Committee Positions

- |                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. State President | 5. Membership Registrar     |
| 2. Vice President  | 6. Publicity Officer        |
| 3. Hon. Secretary  | 7. General Committee member |
| 4. Hon. Treasurer  |                             |

*Continued from Front Page*

“Attention Charlotte! Attention Charlotte! Would you come to the Service Desk please? There is an old bloke here who wants to buy a Boob Tube. Please come and escort him to Active Woman’s where he can select a nice garment. He is standing here wearing jeans and a blue sloppy Joe. He’s probably an XXL.”

Suddenly I was engulfed by the deafening Sound of Silence. There was no ambient music; no children crying; no clatter of trolleys. Only the sound of a thousand eyes staring at me. It seemed everything had come to a complete halt and nothing was moving except a young shop assistant sporting two armfuls of tattoos hurrying down the aisle towards me. Charlotte.

Breaking the silence she said in a loud voice, “Are you the dude who wants to buy a Boob Tube? Follow me. We have a great selection. You’re sure to find one that fits.”

Wading through a tsunami of tut-tuts and disapproving looks, I followed Charlotte to the Active Woman’s Department, trying desperately – but failing – to look nonchalant.

Well, I did find one. It seemed a comfortable firm fit. Passion pink. And I was indeed XXL. But in actual fact I only wore it a few times. It turned out to be quite uncomfortable. My man boobs were too droopy to



### ANNUAL AWARDS LUNCHEON 2ND MAY 2026

#### ERNESTINE HILL AWARD, AND RAY CERHAN BALLAD COMPETITION 2026

The Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc., invites members and their guest to our Annual Awards luncheon.

- Date:** Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2026
- Time:** Following AGM; arrive 11:30 for Noon start.
- Venue:** York Events — Room TBA  
Club York 95 - 99, York Street  
Sydney, NSW
- Price:** TBA

support the bra part, which kept falling down. Additionally, the blokes at the Bowling Club spied me hitching it under my shirt and asked me what I was doing. I lied. Something about a rash. I could hardly tell them I was hitching my Boob Tube, could I?

So, having ordered a purpose-built support belt, I eagerly await its arrival. But I will avoid Big K for the next few months, until Frazzled and Charlotte have forgotten me.

The silence of recognition would be just too painful to bear.

### Room to Breathe

*Mei-Ling Venning, Wyong FAW*

I HAVEN’T always spent my days in my bathroom. There was a time when I lived like any normal person, using the entire house.

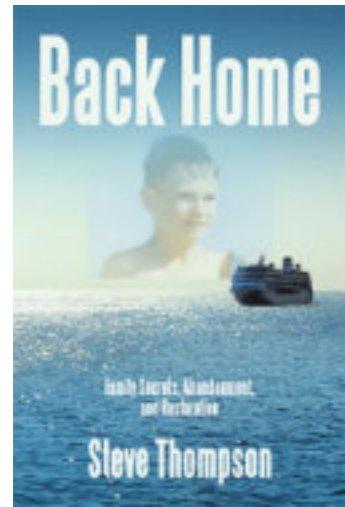
I have difficulty letting go. That’s why my world has shrunk. I said we needed more space. That is, when there was a ‘we’. My wife, Cassie, had been waging a war against my tendency to collect newspapers. Eventually she laid down an ultimatum. She defined some of my collections which had to go. Failing that, she would leave.

I spent anxious weeks trying to decide which of my various belongings I could live without. I walked around

*Cont. Next Page ...*

## Article

### LAMBING FLAT FAW CELEBRATES DEBUT BOOK LAUNCH



IN FEBRUARY the Lambing Flat branch celebrated the book launch of member Steve Thompson for his work *Back Home: Family Secrets, Abandonment and Restoration*.

*Back Home* is a blend of memoir and family history, with rich historical detail. Steve weaves an authentic and deeply personal journey to find the truth of his family, his faith and himself through marriage breakdown, abandonment

and cultural conflict. It is a memoir of emotional endurance that maintains its honesty and hope on the path to belonging.

Steve was inspired to write his unique story, that of a young boy left feeling lost after an accident took his memories. A perpetual feeling that haunted him into adulthood when he uncovered a family secret; one that was the start of many.

The launch of *Back Home* attracted 28 attendees, and feedback indicates resounding success. Guest speakers spoke to core themes within Steve's work and the current impact these have on the local community. The launch had informative and engaging talks, valuable connection with the author and a celebratory air.

Steve has been a member of the Lambing Flat Writers' Group for nearly 2 years and shared in his speech how joining the group provided him with the accountability and companionship needed to see this book officially published.

The Lambing Flat branch are pleased to celebrate this fantastic achievement by Steve and look forward to the promised sequel.

Congratulations Steve!

Lauren Ludwig, Lambing Flats FAW

## Article

### Revesby Writers Bus 2025 Launch

Lyn Potts, Revesby FAW

ON THE 7th of February 2026 Revesby Workers Writers celebrated a book launch. The first one in 30 years. Our book- *Revesby Writers Bus 2025*- is a collection of stories written by members of the writing group.

We also introduced the talented June Colin-Thome one of our writers whose book is called *Memories of Sri Lanka*. The proceeds from her book is going to charity.

The day included a dance performance from Ileana Dance of Many Flavours. A wonderful show full of colour and music.

After the performance a smorgasbord of food brought in by our members and guests. An afternoon enjoyed by everyone.

I would like to thank everyone who gave their help and support in making this a successful day.

We would like to congratulate Eddy Schaap for his book being accepted and printed in the Seniors Story Competition.

*Cont. From Previous Page*

our tiny cottage, between the rows of piled up newspapers neatly tied with string according to their type, their month and year. I loved the reassuring smell of the stacked- up papers. The local ones weren't too bad. They only came out twice a week, but the nationals took up more space. The more I panicked about my need to be rid of them, the more I needed to buy. I started to read both the major Sunday newspapers. I loved to run my hands over the smooth glossy magazine section and contrast it with the boxy newsy sections I became sure I would miss some vital piece of news if I only bought one—even though the journalism sometimes sickened me. The pile grew exponentially.

Newspapers were not allowed in the bedroom, but Cassie deemed it all right to allow one in the bathroom. The small en-suite was out of the question. We had a slim magazine rack attached to the wall. This was the beginning of the end. I tried to sneak in extra copies. I thought I could hide a smaller one behind a larger one. She arrived in the bathroom with a screwdriver and a small pot of Gyprock filler, unscrewed the magazine rack and filled the holes.

I pleaded with Cassie to have just one newspaper in the bedroom, but she was firm.



## Short Stories

"You know it won't be just one. I think it's fair that I have a room free from your clutter, don't you?"

"But you do. The bathroom is a newspaper free zone, now."

"OK. I give up. You can have the bathroom. You can take a newspaper in there to read, but please take it out again. If even one gets left in there, I'm leaving."

Incredulously, I stared at her. Each threat to leave had increased my anxiety, and with the raised levels came a more urgent need to hoard—to cling onto what I had. I phoned the newsagent and ordered another daily newspaper to help reduce my fears.

Cassie came into the room as I guiltily put down the phone. "Honey," she said quietly. "You've just made it impossible for me to stay. I've lost sight of you amid these newspapers. I look at you and all I see is newsprint."

After Cassie left, I tried to remember all the things she had said to try to help me. I ordered groceries online. I had a clear newspaper free passage through the house. By now they were piled to the ceiling so it was rather dark, but I could get to the front door and bring the groceries in. I didn't really need anything else. The furniture had been piled in the garage to make room for the newspapers. When money ran low, I started to sell the furniture so I could pay for my food and daily papers. I didn't manage to keep the bedroom free of papers. I needed comfort with no Cassie in the other half of the bed and found it reassuring to lie in bed and read. I started to sleep on Cassie's side. I thought I was keeping it warm for her return.

As you've probably guessed, it didn't take that long before the bedroom, too, became an impossible place to be. First, I started stacking them on the floor—that bought me a bit more time. When all the space around the bed was taken, I started piling the papers on what used to be my side of the bed—it seemed a waste of space since it was empty. Then, one night, the newspapers toppled on top of me when I turned over. I thought the weight pressing against me was Cassie and I turned to hug her tight—only I woke with my head buried in hard dry paper instead of soft skin. My arms held a solid mass of newsprint. I couldn't bear the thought of that happening again so I toyed with the idea of getting rid of the bed and having a single one, but then decided that Cassie would never come back if I did that.

I phoned Cassie. Told her I'd moved into the bathroom because I didn't want to get rid of the bed. I wanted her to tell me I'd made the right decision, that she might come back—one day.

She didn't say that, though. She did tell me I had to pull out all my reserves of self-discipline and no matter what, keep the bathroom clear.

So, that's how I started to live in the bathroom. For a long time, I remembered Cassie saying that I mustn't let papers in there. Since then, I've taken great pride in keeping the bathroom pristine.

Once I'd made the decision, I knew I'd need bedding, so I heaved all the papers off the bed to reach the sheets, pillows and doona. I keep it all in the bath now. I can't pretend it's comfortable, but it's somewhere to lie down. Well sort of. It isn't a full-length bath, so my long legs have to bend. When I turn over, they bash against the opposite side of the bath. Most nights I do get some sleep, and then when I wake up there's the shower in front of me.

I have some difficulty getting at my clothes. They're still in a wardrobe in the bedroom along with the sheets and towels. I'm still managing to keep myself clean, along with my clothes. I have a narrow passageway leading to the wardrobe.

I negotiate my way to the washing machine. Once washed, everything must be dried outside though. There is absolutely no room inside. It is a bit of a problem if it rains for days on end. There's obviously no room in the laundry and for now the bathroom is kept clear of anything not absolutely essential. I've learned though, when there are days and days of rain, I just let the laundry pile up then wash non-stop when the sun comes out. It sort of works.

In summer, I can sit and read in the back yard, but I'm dreading winter.

It's the last day of autumn. It's also Cassie's birthday today. I phoned her to wish her 'Happy Birthday', but she didn't pick up the phone. It made me so sad, listening to the answerphone message every time, when all I wanted was to hear her voice. It's getting chilly too. Too cold to sit in the garden. I don't want to face winter.

I'll just take my paper into the bath and read there.

### Falling About

Lorraine James, Southern Highlands FAW

THE MORNING that Priscilla Preece fell down in her garden she lay on the lawn for quite a while trying to comprehend her predicament. Once the shock wore off a little it occurred to her that she might be in a bit of a pickle.

She started to assess her situation. She was lying on her left side and her left leg seemed to be tangled up with her right one. Whenever she tried to move, intense pain shot up from her hip and into her spine.

'Bugger'.

## Short Stories

This expletive was, considering the era she had been born, extreme to say the least.

She lay still for a while. Then, she did what she did when she first got into bed. She started repeating her nightly mantra –

‘Relaaax’. Relaaax’...

The grass that she lay on was badly in need of a mow and was spiking her cheek and intruding into her left earhole and she had the unpleasant sensation that something wriggly was moving in. That did it. More pain was definitely preferable to the possibility of a critter taking up permanent residence in the orifice of its choice.

She violently heaved her body over onto her back letting off a shriek of pain in the process. Success! Her legs were now lying straight together. Opening her eyes she was blinded by bright sunlight blazing in a gorgeous blue sky. She squinted. One black sock hung limply from the clothes line above her – the cause of her current dilemma.

‘I’m shrinking’ she muttered. That sock was definitely the culprit as the clothes-line was definitely not growing.

A splashing noise interrupted this train of thought. She turned her head to the right. Close by, perched on the birdbath, a crow was eyeing her off. Eventually she stared it out and it pretended to lose interest and resumed its ablutions, one eye still firmly fixed in her direction.

‘What is it about observing someone falling over that makes people laugh?’ she reflected. ‘After all, the most likely outcome is that the faller has hurt themselves. They could even have broken something. There could have been all kinds of even worse outcomes. They might even have died for heaven’s sake! And that’s definitely not amusing, except, I suppose, if the fallen one is extremely old and tired of life or fearful of their manner of death. A sudden fall into oblivion could be just the ticket’.

‘I haven’t been a person to fall about a lot. Although there was that time on an escalator...’

She was on company business with two associates, on their way to a meeting – all dressed up in smart corporate attire. As they were gliding upwards Priscilla turned her head to speak to her companions.

Then - SPLAT! She had reached the top of the escalator and was lying on her stomach on the metal grid – flat out – like a fish. She struggled to her feet, furtively looking around, embarrassed.

And they were laughing! They wouldn’t stop! They kept staggering about and slapping each other on the

arm they thought it was so hilarious. Never mind that she might have been hurt! Yes... that was definitely a good example of the mental point she was making.

And then there was that time, years earlier, in Hong Kong. She was boarding the Star Ferry to cross over to Kowloon, carrying a bunch of catalogues, clutching them to her chest and, as a result, wasn’t holding onto the gangplank rail. It was around 1970 and she was wearing a mini skirt – circular and flippy – and a pair of those hazardously fashionable shoes with the ridiculously thick cork soles. The tide was low and the gangplank steep. She tripped and down she went – spreadeagled – the magazines sliding down the slope, her skirt flipping up revealing an embarrassing view of her knickers. Stunned, face down, all she could see was a number of feet gathering around her as the kind people attached to them hauled her up.

This was surprising and extremely reassuring because it had always been her understanding that in Chinese culture, if someone had an accident, nobody would help them. This was because a superstition supposedly existed that the unfortunate victim would then become the rescuer’s responsibility.

Yes. Upon reflection she began to recall that there had been a number of other falls in her long life. Suddenly she could recall breaking a toe when she tripped on the verandah step. Her son, sitting in the sun, watched her gain momentum, hurtle past him and bang into the wall. He almost died laughing!

And then, remembering –

‘I laughed my head off when Dad, throwing out the anchor, didn’t let go of the chain and followed it head first, his legs in his white boating shoes disappearing over the bow of the boat. The family couldn’t stop laughing until he surfaced, treading water, and glared us into silence.’

She started giggling at that memory. It had been funny as really, all that had been hurt was his pride.

Then she was aware that the giggling was making all sorts of bits of her hurt like Hell.

‘Enough of this. You can’t lie here forever remembering. Where’s your phone? Ha! For once I remembered to put in in my pocket. Well done girl!’

She stabbed the screen three times.

‘O O O’

### Homecoming

*Vera Zegarac, Eastwood Hills FAW*

THE SHIP groaned as it docked at the port, its hull streaked with rust and salt. Ruby Bradford craned her neck, her breath catching as soldiers began to descend the gangway,

## Short Stories

their uniforms hanging loosely on gaunt frames. She scanned their faces—some weary, some jubilant—but Arthur was not among them. The crowd surged around her, voices rising in joy and grief, but Ruby stood frozen, uncertain whether to feel relief or the sharp sting of despair.

“Brides’ ship,” someone scoffed nearby. Ruby turned from the wharf, bought a copy of the local newspaper, and walked home. She read an article about Australian soldiers being popular with British, French, and Belgian women, with bigamy not uncommon. Ruby closed her eyes. Am I a widow or a waiting, abandoned wife? By night, she saw Arthur running for shelter from bombshells, wounded, his uniform bloodied, his boots caked with mud. Other nights, she saw him married to a woman who spoke a different language. She would wake up drenched in sweat and tears.

Every morning, she went to the Red Cross, scanning the lists of the dead, wounded, and missing. Arthur Bedford’s name was never among them.

She was nineteen when she married Arthur, her heart swelling with love and youthful hope. On the first of November 1916, she waved him off, watching until his tall, muscular frame disappeared among the volunteers boarding the ship.

The first letter arrived weeks later, filled with promises of love and dreams of returning home. Ruby clutched it to her chest and read it over and over. At first, the letters came frequently; then they grew sparse, with the handwriting becoming more hurried and smudged with dirt. He must have written them on his knees in the trenches. She kept them in a wooden box Arthur had made for her, pulling them out on lonely evenings with only Oscar, her cat, for company. She read them until her sorrow had drained her dry for the night, each word a painful reminder of the distance between them.

Then, the letters stopped.

Days blurred into one another. The mornings brought no letters, and the evenings brought no answers. Even Oscar, purring at her feet, couldn’t soothe the gnawing ache in her chest. One evening, while staring at the unopened box of Arthur’s letters, Ruby made a decision: she needed to claw her way out of this endless waiting. A job might save her from herself, she thought, as Arthur’s absence was a heavy shadow in her lonely life.

Before her marriage, she had worked as a secretary for John Barlow, the owner of a canning factory. She had left following her wedding, but now she returned, wondering if there would be a place for her. The elder Barlow had died in 1919, another victim of the Spanish

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**LET’S PUBLISH!**

flu, and his son, Thomas, had taken over the business. It so happened that his secretary, Mrs. Doyle, had also passed, and Ruby was fortunate to be given her position.

Working for Thomas Barlow required adjustment. Unlike his father, a warm man with a ready smile, Thomas was serious, his face unreadable. In his early forties, he stood tall with a noticeable limp, his fine brown hair peppered with gray at the temples. He spoke to her only to dictate letters or schedule meetings. She knew little about him beyond his inheritance of the factory—until one rainy August afternoon, when a veil of mystery seemed to shroud him.

Ruby was typing letters when Thomas emerged from his office, clutching his left leg, his face contorted in pain.

“Are you all right, Mr. Barlow?” she asked, glancing at his tense fingers pressed to his thigh.

“Fine,” he said through gritted teeth.

“You’re in pain. Should I call for a doctor?”

“No need.” His voice softened slightly. He rubbed his leg absently, his gaze distant. “Just an old wound. It has

## Short Stories

a habit of reminding me of the hell I crawled out of.”

Ruby hesitated. “The hell?”

His eyes snapped to hers, dark and unflinching.

“Gallipoli.”

She swallowed. “My husband was in France, in the trenches.”

Thomas exhaled, his expression unreadable. “Did he return to you whole, or broken and questioning the futility of it all?”

“He didn’t come back,” she whispered.

“Killed in action?”

“I don’t know. He never returned. The last letter came two years ago.”

Thomas was silent for a long moment. Then, as if to brush away the momentary crack in his composure, he straightened. “We have work to do, Mrs. Bedford.”

“Of course,” she murmured, returning her focus to the letters.

Over the following weeks, Ruby noticed Thomas watching her, his gaze hesitant, as if he wanted to say something but constantly changed his mind. She also found herself noticing things about him—his precise manner of speech, the way his voice conveyed a quiet authority, and the flicker of something softer in his eyes when he thought no one was looking.

Then one morning, a young woman arrived at the office.

“Your name, Miss?” Ruby asked.

“Just Blanche.”

Ruby noted the expensive cut of Blanche’s dress, the bold red lipstick, and the gleaming rings on her delicate hands. She stepped into Thomas’s office. “Miss Blanche, sir.”

His expression remained unreadable. “Oh, yes. My fiancée. Let her in.”

Fiancée.

Ruby felt her breath hitch, yet she maintained her composure. How foolish she had been, reading into glances and imagining there could be something more. She entered with the tea tray, her fingers steady.

“Enjoy,” she murmured.

“Thank you, Ruby,” Thomas said, his voice warm yet businesslike. For a moment, his gaze lingered on her, but she refused to meet it.

Blanche left soon after, her face red and her fury barely concealed. Ruby hardly had time to process this before Thomas reappeared, looking oddly relieved.

“Your fiancée was terribly upset, sir.”

“She’ll recover,” he said. “She wants a life of parties and fine dresses. I can’t give her that.” His voice darkened. “War changes you. It takes things from you

that you can never reclaim.”

“I’m sorry, Mr. Barlow. But Miss Blanche is a beautiful woman. She will help you through it.”

He studied her for a moment. “Please, call me Thomas.”

That evening, Ruby sat in her velvet armchair with Oscar curled beside her and a book open on her lap. However, she couldn’t focus. Her mind drifted to Thomas—his voice, his presence. Then, Arthur’s voice ghosted through her thoughts: I miss you, Ruby, my love. Guilt weighed heavily on her chest.

The next afternoon, she returned to the wharf. The ship had arrived. The crowd surged forward, eager faces scanning the soldiers. Ruby pushed to the front, her pulse racing.

And then, she saw him.

A solitary figure stood at the ship’s edge, with his sleeve neatly pinned to his shoulder and his rucksack draped over his other arm. Ruby gasped.

“Arthur,” she whispered, then louder, “Arthur!”

His head turned, eyes searching until they found hers. His face was gaunt, his eyes shadowed, but it was him. She ran to him, her legs trembling.

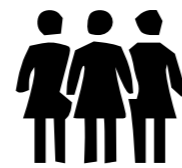
“Ruby,” he choked out.

She clung to him, fingers digging into the coarse fabric of his uniform. “It’s you,” she sobbed.

“It’s what’s left of me,” he murmured.

Ruby cupped his face. “To me, it’s you. That’s all that matters.”

That night, as Arthur slept beside her, Ruby lay awake, staring at the ceiling. She had him back. And yet, a quiet ache lingered—an unnamed longing she wasn’t yet ready to face.



### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2025

Please encourage new memberships.

We need to build up membership to keep generations coming through FAW NSW.

## The Twinkling Fisherman

*Brian Tolagson, Port Macquarie-Hastings FAW*

FERGUS MCTAVISH was as kind as any man along the Forth and Clyde Canal. “Have ye noticed Old Fergus always has ye twinkle in his right eye” folks would say. And aye, this was so.

As a wee lad he’d learned the ways of the canal fishermen. He would wander the banks and ask the old men who knew what all old men knew along the Forth and Clyde – how to land the carp, the beautiful 20lb

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## Branch Reports

### BLUE MOUNTAINS FAW

WE FIND ourselves starting the New Year with a renewed sense of what might be possible; making plans to take steps towards some long held dreams.

In December we celebrated with a delicious lunch and our group publication of Reflections which was a manifestation of our work during the year. Many thanks go to our President Mel Jones who initiated this and saw her dream through to completion, with the support of the committee.

In January our committee met to plan the 2026 programme and we were pleased to have some great ideas generated from members’ responses to our annual questionnaire. With a strong membership of over 40, our funds to allow us to invite guest speakers who provide us with stimulation and opportunities to grow as writers. This year we look forward to guest speakers: Paula Roe on romantic fiction, Michael Duffy on crime writing and Greg North on ballad poetry, which we hope will encourage our members to support the FAW’s Ray Cerhan Australian Ballad competition.

We also look forward to a visit from FAW State President Colleen Parker who will share her knowledge of the publishing industry. In addition to guests, we are lucky to have talented members who contribute by facilitating meetings, leading warm-up exercises and presenting topics to broaden our skills.

With new members expanding our group, we began our February meeting with a quick one sentence introduction about ourselves and what we like to write. We welcomed the new writing year with a list of current competitions to motivate

members.

Rosemary Baldry gave a presentation on Flash Fiction and members were inspired by an array of sensory artefacts supplied by Mel Jones. The most fascinating of these was a collection of her grandfather’s diaries which recorded the minutiae of his life including meetings with friends, bowling scores, the weather, and more. The diaries elicited a broad variety of responses from the group.

We also enjoyed a short reading from a play written by one of our new members.

With plans in place, we anticipate a very exciting year ahead.

*Jeanette Temesvary, Chloé Steward, and Rosemary Baldry*

### CANBERRA FAW

IN 2025 our focus in Canberra was on writing and collecting stories for our new anthology called ‘Dances With Words’. We held a Writers Retreat at Wilmslow House in Goulburn in September 2025 to help us focus on this task by learning some of the skills we needed from our guest speakers.

In 2026 our focus as a group is on editing and preparing the text gathered in this way for publication at our monthly meetings.

Our emphasis in Canberra is on writers helping writers. Our goal is for all our members to publish something – especially if it is for their first time. This will help our members overcome the feeling that they are not really writers. Once they are published, they will have overcome the first big milestone in a writer’s life – seeing their published work in print for themselves for the very first time.

Bring on 2026.

*Dianne Porter*



Mel Jones leads Blue Mountains Writers February Meeting

### EASTWOOD HILLS FAW

OUR FEBRUARY meeting was a perfect start to the new year where members caught up with each other and swapped tales of travel and festive fun. Eastwood/Hills branch members are a supportive, lively and welcoming bunch. We have a hard-working committee who do a fabulous job planning a range of interesting workshops each year.

Workshops for 2026 include Haiku; Historical Fiction; Online Publishing/Before and After Marketing; Myth and Legend; Victorian Poets; More tools for your Toolbox; Time Travel; and American Poets. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to explore different genres. There is always something for everyone to enjoy.

Our February workshop was hosted by Vanessa Proctor who provided us with the tools to ‘unpack’ and explore haiku. Vanessa is an experienced haiku writer who has lived in Japan for a few years. Her presentation style was friendly and relaxed. Some of us were new to this genre – Vanessa’s handouts defined haiku and provided excellent examples and guidelines.

Much discussion emerged from the activity of reading aloud well-known haiku. Members noted how different some interpretations were, considering there are so few words. How we interpreted them depended on our own life experiences.

Vanessa supported members to

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## Branch Reports

begin writing three haiku with a summer theme – as the start of our monthly assignment. We were encouraged not to rush or just sit at a desk, but to walk in nature, observe and take photos. We appreciated the opportunity to purchase some haiku and other poetry books that Vanessa brought along. All agreed that we would like a return visit from Vanessa sometime in the future.

Linda King

### ISOLATED WRITERS FAW

**D**URING THE summer break, a number of members said they'd like to learn more about the building blocks of writing. So, our first online meeting for the year kicked-off a series. Most, if not all, sessions will have a worksheet for completion during the meeting. The order in which we do this may change in response to participants' suggestions.

Convenor Philippa Yelland will send notes and worksheet to participants one week before the meeting so people have time to read and think. Then, in our time together can be used for questions and elaborations.

For example, for the first meeting, 01 Help, my (writing) wrist's broken, notes were sent by Sat 21 February. During the meeting – via Zoom – on Sat 28 February, we chatted about the topic and start edon the worksheet.

Then, in the March meeting, we began with feedback from the first meeting before moving into the topic of Theme – 3 ways to find it. And so on.

**10am, Saturday, 28 February**  
01 Help, my (writing) wrist's broken

Do you feel like a pretender? What do I need for writing success? Why is that manuscript in my bottom drawer? What's holding me

back?

**10am, Saturday, 28 March**  
02 Theme – 3 ways to find it

What do you have to say? How does your protagonist change? What's your genre?

**10am, Saturday, 18 April**  
03 Genre – how to determine  
What are external and internal genres? What roles are my protagonist and antagonist playing? What theme? Central question? Comparative titles?

**10am, Saturday, 23 May**  
04 Characters – how to create  
What is her/his wound? Their inner obstacle? Motivations? What are some hooks?

**10am, Saturday, 27 June**  
05 Scenes – writing with structure  
What is a scene? How to start? Turning point? Crisis? Climax? Resolution?

**10am, Saturday, 25 July**  
06 Plot – the 3 Ps of writing  
Pantzer vs plotzer vs plantzer – pros and cons? How many beats in a novel? How do I figure this out?

**10am, Saturday, 23 August**  
07 First draft – before you start writing  
Five questions to ask before you launch into the unknown.

**10am, Saturday, 23 August**  
08 Winning – short story competitions

Enter late, leave early is the frequent advice. What about other advice? How do judges judge? How to tantalise readers? How can dialogue make plot, theme and conflict shine? Which point of view? How do you self-edit?

Philippa Yelland

### LAKE MACQUARIE FAW

**O**UR MAIN social events of the year were a great success – the Christmas party in December, and our January gathering in the New Year. At the January gathering we usually talk

about our writing achievements, big and small, over the past year and give some thought to what we would like to achieve in the forthcoming year. This year there was quite a deal to talk about.

Even though NaNoWriMo is no longer being held we decided to continue having our November word sprints for those members interested in participating. We have even extended them into 2026. They are a great opportunity to push ourselves into some writing!

Over December and January many of us are focused on the annual Newcastle Herald Short Story Competition. Several of us entered and some were shortlisted (Kristen Mair and Pam Garfoot shortlisted, Ned Stephenson awarded Highly Commended). A particular thrill of the competition is seeing ourselves in print in Newcastle's newspaper. We had the opportunity to revisit the winning entries at our February meeting. In a session led by Cate Plink (assisted by Pam Garfoot) we devoted the afternoon to the idea of 'competitions'. Cate spoke about the upcoming Seniors Card Competition, and we discussed the features of the winning NHSSC stories which made them winners.

Pam Garfoot

### LAMBING FLAT YOUNG FAW

**D**ECEMBER 2025 saw the presentation of prizes in our 43rd Annual Writing Competition. A large crowd gathered with writers travelling from Walcha, Orange, Sydney and the ACT to receive awards. A well-attended 'literary' lunch followed with much bonhomie and connections being formed.

Our Christmas lunch held in December as well was a very enjoyable occasion.

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## Branch Reports



Steve Thompson (centre) with Lambing Flat Young FAW members

Although we do not meet formally in December or January lots of work has taken place. Thanks to members Lauren, Maree and Helen we now have a reinvigorated Facebook page and have added Instagram connection as well. A Website is currently a work in progress. At this stage we plan to hold our writing competition again this year.

Nearly every member attended the 2026 planning meeting held in January 2026. There was much lively discussion as plans were made for this year. We welcomed two new members who bring with them enthusiasm and skills.

The book launch for Steve Thompson's memoir 'Back Home: Family Abandonment & Restoration' was held on February 8th, 2026. It was well received.

The next night we held our Annual General Meeting. Jennifer Haynes remains as President, Joan Dwyer became Vice President, John Dwyer and Helen Auld retained their positions of Treasurer and Minutes Secretary, respectively. Georgie Donaghey became publicity officer.

Jennifer Haynes

### MACARTHUR FAW

**C**ONGRATULATIONS TO Victoria on having sold her short story, 'The Teapot and Other Events', to English Woman's Weekly.

From time to time, we discuss authors who have influenced our

own writing. In a book I read recently, 'To Infinity and Beyond', the authors, Neil deGrasse Tyson and Lindsey NYX Walker, occasionally refer to scientific errors occurring in literature and film. If Icarus had indeed flown close to the Sun, we are told, "he would have frozen on ascent rather than melted". Another example: In the film, 'The Martians', starring Matt Damon, an astronaut is marooned on Mars following a huge dust storm, whereas "in the real universe such a storm would feel like a gentle breeze".

Victoria Chie tells us she has been reading 'The Housemaid' by Freida McFadden, describing it as "a masterclass on how to slip the creepy into what on the surface appears to be perfectly normal". Sounds interesting.

On the publicity front, with public notice boards becoming more difficult to find, we are grateful to resident aviation and fiction writer, Cathy Hobson, for maintaining our digital presence. Must keep up with the times.

Finally, as I am about to send this off, Victoria Chie has a cautionary tale to tell. On the point of sending off a short story which unfavourably mentions a fashion house, she decided to check if there was a fashion house with the same name anywhere in the world. There were several. Four more names produced the same result from around the globe; if not a fashion house, then the name of a well-known dress designer. Writers beware!

Bernard Smith

### MUDGEY FAW

**W**E HAD a very creative two days at Brigadoon, our President, Marilyn's, rustic shearing shed B&B, which overlooks the Capertee Valley. We were very happy to be joined by

Cheryl and Margo from the Blue Mountains FAW. The theme was Memoir and the shared life stories highlighted our diversity and experiences in bygone times.

We have produced a book, Tales from Brigadoon, as it seemed a pity to waste the amazing stories everyone wrote. They were too good to fade off into the ether, so have been preserved to be enjoyed by everyone.

Delicious food, fireside chatter, little sleep and the amazing view over the valley made our writers retreat an event to be long remembered. We hope to repeat our efforts this year incorporating a workshop on Crime Writing.

Our member, Steve Csuba, has made newspaper headlines being the oldest member of Mudgee Country Fit Gym at 93 years of age. We are proud of you Steve!

Meanwhile Sue Pridmore was surprised to receive an invitation from Bathurst MP Paul Toole to meet him at a café in Rylstone in regard to her writing achievements. Marilyn and Jill accompanied her and we were all delighted when he revealed the reason for the invitation – he presented Sue with a beautiful certificate congratulating her on her success in the Seniors Stories 11 competition.

Jill Baggett

### ORANGE FAW

**T**HE DECEMBER meeting was cancelled, as it would have fallen in the middle of the Christmas and New Year holiday break with Orange Library was closed. Instead, it was decided to hold the January meeting be held on the 3rd week of the month as this would help avoid clashes with public holidays.

Sunday 18 January saw six participants, including visitor

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## Branch Reports



Sue Pridmore receiving certificate from Bathurst MP Paul Toole for her success in the Seniors Stories 11 Competition

Rosann Morgan, enjoy an afternoon of writing activities. There were also six apologies from interested and prospective members. We now have six FAWNSW registered members and it is hoped that more registrations will occur at the February meeting. A big thank you to Annette Pearce for handling our registrations so efficiently and sending membership cards out so promptly. During General Business five special interest items sent through by FAWNSW were tabled and discussed.

- Australian Antarctic Arts Fellowship
- Eastwood/Hills FAW Writers' competition
- Gregory North – 125th anniversary Boer War re-enactment Banjo Patterson Tour
- FAWNSW Operations and Guidelines for 2026
- Australian Writers Mentoring Program

Members were surprised at the

variety of information provided by FAWNSW.

Members have been encouraged to try the prompted Dribble (50 words exactly) and crosswords based on etymology. The Dribbles are then shared at the next meeting. Jodi supplied the prompt, 'at death's door...' and the responses ranged from the deaths of a goldfish, an annoying buzzing fly, and a plant to bravery on the battlefield as well as not yet having reached the use by date. The prompt for February was to use a list of slang expressions found in each decade from 1920 to 2020 and write a dialogue between two people from different decades and include some of the slang expressions of the time.

Jen provided ten prompts, with four of them having been circulated earlier as pre-view prompts for the February 10 minute writing activity. Two had to be chosen for the text. Six writers and six very different results ranging from cash found in a coffee shop, overhearing things in a coffee shop, a face in the mirror, a man lost on a cruise, 'purrfect cats' and fortune cookies.

Although our numbers were small, the February meeting provided many laughs as we shared our Dribbles and 10 minute writing activity on famous first lines, organised by Sylvia. Jen read her poem 'The Battle of Night and Day' an excellent description of how light and shadows compete for time during the day and night. Sylvia shared her delightful children's story 'Mr and Mrs Moontickle' about two gnomes and their adventure with a ginger cat. Mr Moontickle is looking for his wife and finds her using her magic to heal the injured cat's leg. Sylvia plans to add illustrations and is thinking about publishing it.

Sylvia suggested that our inhouse collection of short pieces, including Dribbles and 10 minutes writing exercises be named 'Dribbles and Spits'. These will be circulated to members. Sylvia has also accepted the position of Vice President.

The Seniors' Stories Volume 12 writing competition is in the process of being organised to promote writing and encourage seniors to give it a try. OFAW has been selected as one of the 6 writing workshop venues in NSW. We are excited to have FAWNSW President Collen Parker, who will be running the workshop, also visit us at our March meeting.

*Jennifer Allen and Uta Purcell*

### REVESBY FAW

OUR MEETINGS were well attended last year, with numerous stories shared. Anyone who has an interest in writing, is welcome to attend the meetings. A different writing topic is set for each month. Members have the opportunity to share their stories with the group. Alternatively, writers can choose a different story to share.

A topic is also selected each month for a quick 10 minute script. One minute to think, then nine minutes to write. After pens down, each story is read out. A sure fire way to encourage creative thinking.

Thanks to our president Simon, a book of short stories was published. Nine authors contributed a total of 36 stories.

One of our members; June Colin-Thome, successfully entered her story, 'Reminiscing About Change' in the 2025 Seniors Writing Competition.

June will be hosting a book launch at our February meeting, for her book of poems titled, 'Memories of Sri Lanka.'

My entry into the 2025 Seniors

*Cont. next page...*

## Branch Reports

Writing Competition, was a story entitled 'Difficult Transition,' which was selected as one of the 100 stories, published in the book. A great honour.

A presentation was held in early November, in the State Library of NSW.

*Eddy Schaap*

### PORT MACQUARIE FAW

CHRISTMAS WAS a particularly memorable occasion for the branch. We shared lunch at an Asian restaurant, where everyone discovered new favourites—especially the desserts. The gathering was marked by lively company, seasonal humour in the form of Christmas jokes and riddles, and wide-ranging conversation. Topics flowed easily from the weather and our writing over the past year to art, artists, and memorable literary and cultural characters. Among these was Hyacinth Bucket, portrayed by the late Dame Patricia Routledge, who passed away in October 2025.

Following the change of our regular meeting date from the last Saturday of each month to the first Saturday, the branch was required to adjust several scheduled activities, particularly early in the year. In previous years, a January meeting was easily accommodated; however, the revised schedule now coincides with New Year festivities. As a result, branch activities were deferred to February, and the annual elections have been rescheduled from February to March.

Despite these adjustments, we have carefully curated a full and engaging program of activities for the year. These include author visits, excursions, and opportunities to strengthen our connections with the broader literary community in Port Macquarie. We began the year

with a visit from John Cooper, a self-published author. Following the passing of his wife in 2022, John has channelled his energies into writing poetry as part of his grieving process. This led to the publication of *Words on Paper*, followed by *More Words on Paper*, in which he introduced the character Walter. The Walter poems have since evolved into a series of fictional works titled *The Smiths of Elouera*, depicting life as it was in 1921–1922. John concluded his presentation by reading his emotionally charged poem, "Tears on My Pillow."

Looking ahead, we plan to continue exploring the use of AI in writing. In addition, as a way of encouraging one another to write more regularly, we have set ourselves the task of researching suitable writing competitions to participate in throughout the year.

We look forward to another fruitful, productive, and successful year of writing together.

*Pinado Waba*

### SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS FAW

GOthic TROPES dominated our October meeting with Deb Ritchie leading us in a masterclass on gothic prose, referring to and analysing a piece written by Greg Baker. This was a continuation of our practice this year of looking into examples of prose and poetry and examining the components that give rise to good writing.

This trend led to the Magnificent Seven in our November meeting, when seven members read aloud pieces they have written. Actually, one of these people was Alyse, a visitor, but we look forward to having her as a member this year.

We also congratulated the members who contributed to the writing of the history of FAW Southern Highlands, as we had

completed our submission to the FAW NSW Centenary project. This effort brought together new and long-term members to produce a written history of which our branch can be justifiably proud.

We finished off the year in fine style with two special guest speakers at our December meeting. It being the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen, we were honoured to welcome Jan Merriman, president of the Jane Austen Society, Southern Highlands, and author of *Jane Austen's Remarkable Aunt, Philadelphia Hancock*. Jan was joined by Australian romance author, Penelope Janu. Jan and Penelope generously shared with us many stories of history and writing technique and each fielded numerous questions on their craft.

Our members then presented some of their own works in our traditional end of year party. It has been a great year with many visitors and new members, and all of our regular meeting segments keeping everyone engaged in writing.

*Rick Watkins*

### STROUD FAW

OUR ANNUAL Christmas get-together took place at the Stroud Country Club and was very much enjoyed by members and guests. Christmas came and went in a flash and we are looking forward to a productive and creative 2026. We are being spurred on in that regard by Colleen Parker's account of her undertaking of the 12 Stories Life Writing project in the Spring edition of *Writers Voice*. Six of our members have signed up, myself included, and an air of enthusiasm and optimism was in evidence at this month's meeting as a result. We will undertake the project individually but it has, and will continue to, become an

*Cont. next page...*

## Branch Reports

entertaining topic of discussion at our meetings with members reading out excerpts from their life story writings.

One of our members, Marilyn, has put together an entry into the CWA International Country of Study competition. She chose the 'book' category with Korea as the subject country. Members present at our November meeting when she brought in her entry were most impressed by her ideas, her skill and the effort she had put into creating her 'book'.

We are grateful to Elizabeth for volunteering to attend the quarterly FAW zoom meetings on behalf of Stroud Writers.

We are looking forward to being a part of our bi-centenary celebrations in Stroud later this year.

*Hilary Heanly*

### WOLLONDILLY FAW

WOLLONDILLY FAW commenced the year with an informal meeting and exciting news; congratulations to Hemat Malak who won the prestigious Bruce Dawe National Poetry 2025 Competition. Our January get-together was a good opportunity to discuss ideas and exercises for the year.

It was proposed a story and poetry writing competition be held for Year 8 to 10 students at the two High Schools in Wollondilly LGA. Members have generously offered to donate prize money to cover a 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each category.

A suggestion was made for a joint writing exercise, with the hope that taking over an existing story may encourage less confident writers to make a start. Gaynor M and I (Narelle) met to brainstorm the first chapter, setting time, location and introducing interesting characters, not all of whom survived to chapter 2! The embryo of a story was shared

at the next meeting and enjoyed by all. What happens next will be decided by another member.

Writing themes for each month were also decided. Members can email their themed story/poem or other contributions to our publisher, Jean to be printed in our monthly Scribblings magazine with gentle critique suggested for each author at the following meeting when they have the opportunity to read their work.

February saw our AGM and we were happy that Annette P was again willing to stand as President. Annette has been a very competent and hardworking President, and we are glad she is willing to continue for 2026.

Narelle N stays on as Treasurer and Jean M continues a fantastic job as editor of Scribblings. The role of Secretary/Publicity is to be shared by relative newcomers Pamela MJ, Hemat Malak, and assisted by long standing members Helen R and Narelle N.

Quite a few from Wollondilly FAW are 60 or over; many are primed and planning their entries for the NSW Seniors Writing Competition which will start on April 1st. Last year saw four of our members making the 2025 Volume 11. Each year we encourage eligible members to give it a go.

We hope it is a great and inspiring writing year for us and that we continue to encourage, learn and enjoy our group.

*Narelle Noppert*

### WYONG FAW

WYONG WRITERS concluded the 2025 year with a final meeting in November combined with a Christmas meeting.

Our Inhouse Haiku competition was won by Maureen Trotter and Runner-up was Keith Brady.

Maureen's winning entry:

*glimpses through  
bare limbed hedge  
homestead*

Keith's runner-up entry:

*flashing in the late sun  
sardines  
fresh from the Bosphorus*

The club hosted a workshop by Haiku specialist Vanessa Proctor as a lead in to the competition to help members get to understand Haiku poetry. (For more details on Vanessa <https://haikupedia.org/article-haikupedia/vanessa-proctor/>)

We appreciate the judging of this competition by FAW NSW Lake Macquarie member Irina Frolova as an external judge. (For more details on Irina <https://www.facebook.com/irinafrolovapoet>)

Our Anthology 2025 Moonlight and Shadows with a theme of Moonlight can play tricks on your eyes. Especially with a full moon shining onto an empty street full of shadows was completed in November 2025. Copies of this Anthology are available for purchase for \$10.00 from the club at a meeting and will make a good Christmas stocking filler

What's on in the New Year?

An energetic committee lead by President Lorraine Munt has plans for 3 workshops for the New Year. In February 2026 a workshop on writing a Children's story will be conducted by Wyong Writers Group member Patricia Webb as our Inhouse Prose Competition 2026 (A Children's story) gets underway. Visitors are welcome to attend the workshop. Details of our meeting details are at [wyongwriters.org](http://wyongwriters.org)

*Glenn D'Cruz*

## Writing Competitions



### SENIORS CARD

#### SENIORS CARD SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2026

The Department of Communities and Justice together with the Fellowship of Australian Writers Inc (FAW) is conducting an exciting FREE short story writing competition for Seniors Card and Senior Savers Card holders.

This year those people unable to attend a workshop in person can register to attend the Liverpool Library workshop via Zoom.

The Prize is publication in their next book, Seniors Stories Volume 12.

**THEME: Neighbours, Strangers and Everything in Between**

Word limit 1,000 words

OPENING DATE: 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2026

CLOSING DATE: 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2026

Submit your entry online at [www.fawnsw.org.au](http://www.fawnsw.org.au). Forms are interactive. On the website, search "Seniors Card Short Story Competition"

Entry form, terms and conditions will appear. Complete entry form, attach your entry then submit. Good Luck to all.

**Workshops for the Vol. 12 competition are as follows:**

Orange Library	13 <sup>th</sup> March	2pm – 4pm	Colleen, Uta
Gosford Library	16 <sup>th</sup> March	9:30 – 11:30am	Liz
Liverpool Library	18 <sup>th</sup> March	10am – Noon	Cate
Laurieton	20 <sup>th</sup> March	10am – Noon	Jackie, Alison
NSW State Library	27 <sup>th</sup> March	10am – Noon	Cate, Sandi
Warrilla Library	27 <sup>th</sup> March	1:30 – 3:30pm	Colleen

To register for any of the workshops, please contact Jackie Lang (Ph. 02 6559 5387, or email [jackie13@bigpond.com](mailto:jackie13@bigpond.com))

To register for Liverpool as an internet attendee please contact Cate Plink (Ph. 0492 833 522, or email [catedplink@gmail.com](mailto:catedplink@gmail.com))



#### SENIORS CARD SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2026

##### Terms and Conditions

- The writing competition is open to all Seniors Card and Senior Savers Card holders in New South Wales.
- Senior Card number is COMPULSORY on the entry form. (No replacement number).
- Entry is free.
- The theme for 2026 is **Neighbours, Strangers and Everything in Between**
- Title MUST be unique. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE THEME AS THE TITLE.
- Story length maximum 1,000 words.
- Closing date is 6pm 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 and no entries will be accepted after that date.
- The top 100 entries will be published in the Seniors Card Anthology to be released by the Department of Communities and Justice in October/November 2026.
- The judge's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Entry Forms are available on the FAW NSW website [www.fawnsw.org.au](http://www.fawnsw.org.au). The forms are interactive, and the entry can be attached.
- Assistance for a typewriter prepared or hand-written entries, please phone 0495 833 522 to discuss your entry submission.
- Entries must be in a word document, not a PDF or Jpg format. Entries sent in other formats other than word will not be accepted.
- Entries should be in 12pt font and double spaced and 'Footer' to include title and page number. **Name should only appear on the entry form.**
- Multiple entries may be submitted, but only one story per writer will be selected.
- The use of AI in the creation of the work is prohibited.

Any queries please contact **Fellowship of Australian Writers New South Wales** at 0413 285 431.

## Writing Competitions



### FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS JEAN STONE AWARD 2026

Entries close: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026

#### CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

*Failure to comply with the following conditions will result in disqualification without refund*

- The Award is for a poem or group of poems up to 60 lines.
- Entrants must be permanent residents of Australia.
- 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.
- Multiple entries are permitted, a separate Entry Form must be submitted with each entry.
- Entry Fee is \$15.00 per entry.
- The closing date is 6pm 31st August 2024.
- Entries are to be submitted and paid for using the Stripe payment system via the online form available on the FAW website at [www.fawnsw.org.au](http://www.fawnsw.org.au)
- For those unable to use the online form, a separate form will be forwarded by email from the

Closing 31 August 2026:

### 2026 HILARIE LINDSAY POETRY COMPETITION FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL CHILDREN

SECTION 1: Years 11 & 12	up to 60 lines	Prize \$125
SECTION 2: Years 9 & 10	up to 50 lines	Prize \$100
SECTION 3: Years 7 & 8	up to 40 lines	Prize \$90
SECTION 4: Years 5 & 6	up to 40 lines	Prize \$70
SECTION 5: Years 3 & 4	up to 30 lines	Prize \$50
SECTION 6: Years 1 & 2	up to 20 lines	Prize \$30

Entries are sought in the following categories:

**Entrant's name must appear on the entry form ONLY.** The entry fee is \$5.00.

All entries and payments should be done via the submission form on the [fawnsw.org.au](http://fawnsw.org.au) website with the

[compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au](mailto:compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au)

- The author's identity must appear on the Entry Form ONLY. The author's name must NOT appear on either the manuscript.
- The results, and the judge's report, will be emailed to all contestants after 31st October 2024
- 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. Unsuccessful entries will not be returned.
- Entries must be original, creative and inspiring works which present to the audience an engaging work of literary excellence. The use of AI is not allowed.
- The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. **There will be no individual appraisals.**
- FAW NSW reserves the right not to award any prizes if, in the judge's estimation, no entries of sufficient merit are received.
- Normal competition rules apply, see website for more details.

#### THE AWARD

PRIZE: \$500

The Prize winner will be invited to attend the Awards Luncheon in May 2027

Cate Plink

8/15-21 Gosford Avenue

The Entrance NSW 2261

Email: [compconvenor@gmail.com](mailto:compconvenor@gmail.com); Phone 0492 833 522

entry attached where indicated as a word document. Should an online submission not be available, students may request an entry form and payment details from [compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au](mailto:compconvenor@fawnsw.org.au).

Entries must be student's own work, unpublished and not having won any competition at time of entry.

Normal Competition Conditions apply. **Closing date for the competition is 6pm 31st August 2026**

**Winners will be notified prior to 31st October 2026**

**Additionally, owing to the passing of long-time judge Jan Dean, we are looking for somebody to take on the role. Anyone who is interested should contact Cate Plink by the details below.**

For any further information please contact the competition convenor, Cate Plink, by ph. 0492 833 522 or email [compconvenor@gmail.com](mailto:compconvenor@gmail.com).

## Writing Competitions

Closing 03 May 2026:

### WRITERS UNLEASHED PICTURE BOOK BOOK COMPETITION 2026

After a four-year hiatus, the popular **Writers Unleashed Picture Book Competition**, presented by the **Federation of Australian Writers (FAW) Sutherland Shire**, returns in 2026, bigger, bolder, and more inspiring than ever. The Writers Unleashed Picture Book Competition supports the development of new and established voices in children's literature and visual storytelling.

#### PRIZES

**1st Prize:** \$500

**2nd Prize:** \$300

**3rd Prize:** \$200

**ENTRY:** \$30

Certificate awarded to shortlisted and winning entries

#### IMPORTANT DATES

**Competition Opens:** 2 March 2026

**Competition Closes:** 3 May 2026

**Shortlist Announced:** 7 Aug. 2026

**Winners Announce:** 19 Sept. 2026

See our website [sutherlandshirefaw.com](http://sutherlandshirefaw.com) for full details on the competition, including terms and conditions and how to enter.

The winners will be announced at the **WRITERS UNLEASHED FESTIVAL** which will be held in September.

**Kirrawee Library+**

6 Kiln Rd, Kirrawee

**Saturday 19 September 2026**

### SCRIBES WRITERS OPEN POETRY COMPETITION 2026

Entries close: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Style: Free Verse

Theme: Open. Line count 60 maximum (excluding title)

Prizes: 1st \$200 2nd \$100 3rd prize \$50

Highly Commended and Commended Certificates at the judges discretion

Entry fee: \$12 EFT Only (no cheques or postal orders please)

Entry via email or post. Please note all postal entries must be postmarked on or

before closing date (30 June 2026)

For full competition details, Conditions and Entry Form please visit the Scribes

Writers Website and follow links to the Poetry Competition page

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

### EASTWOOD/HILLS FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS LITERARY COMPETITION 2026

Entries close: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

All categories Open Theme

Category 1: Flash Fiction

Max 500 words. First Prize \$150, Second Prize \$50

Category 2: Philippa Holland Award for Poetry

Includes all forms of poetry except Bush Poetry

(See separate Boree Log competition)

Max 80 lines per poem.

First Prize \$150, Second Prize \$50

Category 3: Alan Russell Award for Memoir

Max 1,500 words. First Prize \$150, Second Prize \$50

Category 4: Short Story.

Max 1,500 words. First Prize \$150, Second Prize \$50

Entry Fee: \$8 per entry or \$30 for 4 entries.

Cheques or money orders in AUS\$ payable to:

Fellowship of Australian Writers.

Fees can also be sent electronically (details on website)

Please Note: Entries can now be submitted online.

Each entry must be accompanied by a separate signed entry form.

Conditions of entry and entry forms can be found on the Eastwood/Hills FAW website:

<https://hillsfaw.wordpress.com/>

Enquiries: Carolyn Alfonzetti

[Carolyn.alfonzetti@me.com](mailto:Carolyn.alfonzetti@me.com)

### EASTWOOD/HILLS FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS BOREE LOG AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE 2026

Entries close: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

First Prize: \$100 plus a trophy and certificate.

Ballads to be in perfect rhyme and metre with maximum 80 lines and an Australian Bush Theme.

Entry Fee: \$8 per entry or \$30 for 4 entries – Maximum 4 entries per entrant.

Cheques or money orders in AUS\$ payable to:

Fellowship of Australian Writers.

Fees can also be sent electronically (details on website)

Please Note: Entries can now be submitted online.

Each entry must be accompanied by a separate signed entry form

Conditions of entry and entry forms can be found on the Eastwood/Hills FAW website:

<https://hillsfaw.wordpress.com/>

Enquiries: Carolyn Alfonzetti

[Carolyn.alfonzetti@me.com](mailto:Carolyn.alfonzetti@me.com)

## Writing Competitions

Closing 30 June 2026:

### SCRIBES WRITERS OPEN POETRY COMPETITION 2026

Style: Free Verse

Theme: Open. Line count 60 maximum (excluding title)

Prizes:

1st prize \$200

2nd prize \$100

3rd prize \$50

Highly Commended and Commended Certificates at the judges discretion

Entry fee: \$12 EFT Only (no cheques or postal orders please)

Entry via email or post. Please note all postal entries must be postmarked on or before closing date.

For full competition details, Conditions and Entry Form please visit the Scribes Writers Website and follow links to the Poetry Competition page:

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

### LAKE MACQUARIE FAW ALICE SINCLAIR MEMORIAL WRITING COMPETITION 2026

Opens May 29th; closes Midnight, July 31st

Entry fee \$15 per entry

Prizes: First \$300 + certificate; second \$150 + certificate  
Open theme short story (to 2,500 words) or poetry (to 50 lines)

Entry form and conditions of entry available on LMAFW website <https://lakemacfaw2.wordpress.com>.

### 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.*

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD HONOUR ROLL

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 \*

### FAW NSW LIFE MEMBERS

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

\*Deceased

## Poet's Voice

### The Hunters

Long legged, a model of elegance  
Head swivelling, knowing eyes alert  
Forelegs held in innocent prayer  
Gossamer wings neatly arranged  
Vivid iridescent colours  
Ready to capture the unwary  
A skilful hunter is the  
Praying Mantis  
Posing for the paparazzi cameras  
On the red carpet, head-turning gowns  
Capture the light, as the celebrities  
Strut, swivel and turn with poise  
Each outfit unique with its own eye-catching gimmick  
Will the reviews be kind or scathing?  
Hunters all, of notoriety in the limelight  
Actors and models  
Fame is instantaneous  
Using a mobile phone for selfies  
Do the hair, do the make-up, do the nails  
Tilt the head just so, pout  
Show a tat or a bit of cleavage  
Look longingly into the phone, caressing it  
A friend snaps you, posts it on the web  
The competition for likes is on  
Body enhancements to create perfection  
Illusions, to give confidence  
In a competitive world of unnatural beauty  
Followers line up to see the latest must have  
Clones of the fashion world easily hunted down  
Daily spending, addictive screen time  
Just to feel part of a group  
Victims of the cons used by influencers

It is a reciprocal arrangement  
Once hunted the followers watch and wait  
The influencers count their likes  
Posting regularly, promoting must have items  
Enjoying the likes provided by the locus swarm of buyers  
While sitting elegantly and watching  
A praying mantis ready to hunt  
For more followers

Uta Purcell, Southern Highlands FAW and Orange FAW



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(\$60 for non-members)  
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[www.csooper.com.au/contact](http://www.csooper.com.au/contact)

### Grave Goods

The ancients.  
Egyptians.  
Chinese.  
Celts.  
Whoever.  
Needed the trappings  
where they were going.  
I'm not sure they ever made it.  
I think they didn't.  
But they don't know that they didn't.  
So, all those things  
they once controlled, loved, played with  
mean nothing  
to them,  
even if they mean something to those of us  
that are here now.  
We don't take things with us.  
Unless we count the teddy bear interred with a baby  
or a favourite pair of slippers.  
So, what to do  
with the mountain,  
yes, mountain  
of chattels, that surround us.  
Things that we control, love or play with?  
Things that remind us of who we are?  
How much to keep?  
How much discard?  
When we are no longer,  
not aware of what was once.  
Will our goods  
mean something to those left behind?

Greg Baker, Southern Highlands FAW

### SUBMISSIONS TO POET'S VOICE:

Send your poem in the first instance to the Poetry Editor, Brian Tolagson: [brian.tolagson@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## Poet's Voice

### The Other Gallipoli

Egg-flip poured into a funnel atop a rubber tube  
 I could control the flow into my throat by pinching the tube  
 because I have no lower jaw  
 it was shot away  
 along with my teeth and half my tongue  
 shot away by enemy snipers  
 In the stinking-hot prickly-gorse-strewn woods  
 above Suvla Bay  
 12th August, 1915  
 I was second-lieutenant Rolland Pelly, 5th Norfolk battalion  
 I was lucky to be alive  
 colonel Beauchamp ordered captain Culme-Seymore  
 move your machine guns with the reserve company  
 major Kennedy told the captain  
 get your machine guns up to the front  
 machine guns tripods ammunition boxes no mules  
 all carried by men  
 colonel in a rage  
 ordered the captain again  
 move the machine guns back to the reserve  
 captain looked to the major  
 began to move the guns back to the front  
 half the gear one hundred metres at a time  
 half the gear one hundred metres at a time  
 only four men still alive in the machine-gun company  
 in blazing hot bullet-zinging spiteful air  
 Captain Culme-Seymore collapsed  
 heat exhaustion  
 carried off on a stretcher  
 bravery bursting through a khaki jacket with a colonel's  
 silver badges  
 no sensible head to curb the courage  
 Frank Beck led a company of 5th Norfolk battalion  
 into a farm wooded corrugated ground  
 far in advance of any British position  
 in the face of rorting enemy machine guns  
 the enemy set the woods on fire  
 a company of men from Norfolk  
 entered the burning woods  
 and were never seen again  
 no list of the dead from the battlefield  
 no list of prisoners of war  
 no hospital list from Suvla to Constantinople  
 ever recorded a name from 5th Norfolk  
 save for second-lieutenant Rolland Pelly  
 Captain Frank Beck was last seen  
 before the company burned  
 sitting against a tree

his head on one side  
 the soldier who saw him  
 could not decide  
 whether Beck was already dead  
 Queen Alexandra cried to the reverend  
 Charles Pierrepont Edwards MC  
 a man of the cloth with a military cross  
 bring me back my Sandringham!  
 late in 1918, a shoe scuffed up a Norfolk regimental cap badge  
 Pierrepont entered the woods  
 after the battle the farmer had returned to find  
 his paddocks and woods growing corpses from a foreign land  
 he pushed them all into a ravine and covered it with dirt  
 Pierrepont exhumed the remains of one hundred and eighty  
 all re-interred in Azmak cemetery  
 simple white crosses  
 another seventy carried over time by water and fauna  
 to an anonymous eternity  
 and those re-interred  
 had their own anonymity  
 by virtue of enemy soldiers' desire  
 to rip all disks and ribbons from the dead  
 5th Norfolk shoulder titles  
 Pierrepont's only clues  
 the re-interred brethren  
 had one unifying mark  
 of which Alexandra was never apprised  
 a bullet hole in the back of every skull  
 after four months  
 of facial reconstruction  
 agonizing tedious terrifying  
 I could sip tea from a cup  
 I was second-lieutenant Rolland Pelly, 5th Norfolk battalion  
 how was I lucky to be alive?

*Richard Watkins, Southern Highlands FAW*

### The Dentist

I went to the dentist the other day, and just thought I would mention  
 I can't really afford it these days now that I'm on a pension.  
 So I brushed my teeth for half an hour and flossed 'til my teeth felt sore.  
 'I think you need a clean' he said, Oh! that will cost a lot more.  
 We know tea and wine will stain out teeth and chocolate gives you the horrors  
 So, as he searches for cavities beneath, your mind is counting the dollars.  
 When it's finished, they hand you a bill and you can't help emitting a moan.  
 You then go over straight to the bank and get yourself a loan.

*Jackie Laing, Port Macquarie-Hastings FAW*

## Literary Achievements

### BLUE MOUNTAINS FAW

**Blue Mountains Writers** Anthology of short stories and poems, *Reflections*, published December 2025

### ISOLATED WRITERS

**Issy Ginarmo (Jill Baggett, Narelle Noppert, and Maureen Kelly)**

*The Arrangement*, Kaleidoscript Magazine  
*Every Dog Has Its Day*, DoubleSpeak  
*Gerry and the Jury*, Close to the Bone  
*Highway to Freedom*, Wicked Shadow Press  
*The Perils of Growing Older*, All Your Stories

### LAKE MACQUARIE FAW

**Pam Garfoot**

Shortlisted in the Newcastle Herald Short Story Competition, short story "Callum, Nat and me".

**Kristen Mair**

Shortlisted in the Newcastle Herald Short Story Competition, short story "Broken washing machines".

**Jan Mitchell**

Has begun work on her sixth book (previous are listed at <https://www.janmitchellozauthor.com/>).

**Mick Payze**

Has reached 45,000 words in his memoir.

**Ned Stephenson**

Highly Commended in the Newcastle Herald Short Story Competition, short story "J3RKO".

**Black Crow Walking**

Published, book *Days of wisdom: a spiritual journey with archangels and archeiai*, channelled by Black Crow Walking and the team (e-book and paperback of 576 pages, available through Amazon).

**Bethany Wooden**

Has received a very useful manuscript assessment for her first manuscript, *Katie and the Flood* (using FAW's Manuscript Assessment Service – see <https://fawns.org.au/writing-resources/manuscript-assessment/>).

### LAMBING FLAT FAW

**Steve Thompson**

Memoir – *Back Home* – published

**Maree Myhill**

*Eucalypt: A Tanka Journal*, Issue 39 2025, Tanka published Short Story 'No More Sunday Phone Calls' published in *Seniors' Stories* Volume 11, theme 'Then and Now'

**Lyn Yates**

Poem accepted for *The Australian Country Women's Anthology*, theme 'Her Beauty and Her Terror'.  
*Eucalypt: A Tanka Journal* Issue 39 2025, Tanka published

### MOOCOBOOLA FAW

**Wendell Watt**

*Poem I know a valley*, *Writers Voice* June 2025

**Elizabeth Hamlin**

*Short Stories 57 Short Stories*, Amazon, August 2025

**Murray Howlett**

*Article SS Pakeha*, *South America 1937*, *Ships Nostalgia Website*, October 2025

*Article SS Munkana*, *Newcastle 1935*, *Ships Nostalgia Website*, October 2025

*Article Unknow Ships*, *Hong Kong 1930s*, *Ships Nostalgia Website*, October 2025

**Peter Davis**

*Poem The song by the sea*, *Senior Stories* Vol. 11, November 2025

**Paul Vallis**

*Story Much ado about something*, *The Grapevine*, January 2026

*Story The trouble and strife*, *The Grapevine*, March 2025

### MACARTHUR FAW

**Victoria Chie**

*Short Story The Tea Pot and Other Events*, sold to *English Woman's Weekly*.

### PORT MACQUARIE - HASTINGS FAW

**Kaye Christensen**

*Short Story: Hats and Saturdays Go South*. Published WV. 290 December 25

**Donna Moody-Martin**

*Poem: Deluge*. Published WV.290 December 25

**Ian Keast**

*Poem, 'Grandkids'*, in the *Port Macquarie-Hastings Library Anthology 2026, Growing Together*.

*Poem, 'bright verbal colours'*, in *Studio*, Number 165.

*Poem, 'Q's and A: Watching Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead'*, in *Studio*, Number 165.

**Colleen Parker**

Presenter: *Seniors Festival: Memoir Writing Workshop*  
 Georges River Libraries Hurstville Library, NSW Monday, Mar 2 from 10 am to 12 pm AEDT

Published and Wrote many articles in the *Ruby Celebration Book* published for John Paul Village 108pp (40 years).  
 Print run 500.

New Production Editor and Producer of the *John Paul Village b/w 60pp quarterly Newsletter* *Designing and Creating Colour Covers and Writing articles* as well as accepting contributions from *Village Residents*.  
 Print run 500.

## Short Stories

### The Twinkling Fisherman

Cont. From Page 10 ...

carp. The old men found the lad with the twinkling right eye eager for their wisdom. They could nay resist the wee sprat and readily answered his questions. So many questions, such a curious lad!

In time as he grew toward manhood, Fergus ventured up to the streams of the Grampians twinkling his way from angler to angler acquiring a great store of knowledge, a wealth of experience rivalling the best of the old men.

He earned a few pounds each day selling his catch to the vendors in the hamlets of the Grampians, enough money to have the best array of fly making equipment along the Forth and Clyde.

By his twentieth birthday he could innovate his fly making as well as any old man in the lowlands. His repute as an oracle and teacher spread. But then his life took a U-turn. The bonniest lass he'd ever seen moved into a house along the river. He found himself drawn to the nearby banks perchance to make her acquaintance.

His lucky day came in summer that year on a Sunday when he'd just hooked a large carp. So, busy he was wrestling the fish he was oblivious as she and her companions approached. "Good morning lad," a male voice with an educated brogue said, "I've noticed ye spend a lot of time here on the banks. Enjoy your fishing I see – perhaps you could teach me".

"Aye, that I can do ye. That's what I do – fish and teach fishing."

Fergus still had his eyes fixed on the river and the action there. He pulled his grand trophy from the river. "Ah, what a beaut fish," a female voice said in an accent he'd not encountered. "What bait do you use?"

He could barely understand her words but replied "I use flies. Make them myself. And I teach people to make them. And how to fish." But ... suddenly their eyes met. This was certainly the bonniest of lassies. She stood mesmerised by his twinkling right eye. Electricity maybe, but there certainly was chemistry.

The connection was apparent to all – to the educated male voice, the lady standing beside him and a dark-haired lassie in her early teens. Fergus removed his fishing glove and shook their hands as he was introduced – Bill, Emma and Margaret. But it was Shirley, a niece of Bill and Emma visiting for a few weeks, who held his interest. He was invited to lunch after church and they parted company.

He immediately packed his gear and headed home to prepare. What a day, and he would never use that fly

again on fish. It would be a memento of this his greatest catch. He passed a group of the old men on his way. He felt he didn't need to ask them questions this time but did have one "Where's Australia?"

One suggested "Lad, I reckon it's near Germany".

Another said "I heard that lassie speak one day and I reckon she's from Somerset. That's where it be".

The canniest of the old men volunteered "I reckon it's a colony but I don't know where it be".

The couple spent much time together. But, in time, Shirley Donald was due to return home to Port Macquarie. 'Port Macquarie' he thought 'water and Scots ... can't be too bad!'

"You got flies down there?" he asked her.

"Flies! Have we got flies! 'That's the only thing I know about?" Shirley assured him Australia had plenty of flies.

They were married twenty-nine months later in a tiny kirk in a quiet street in Port Macquarie. Fergus and Shirley McTavish were very popular in their community – she the very essence of beauty and he with the twinkling right eye.

He learned to ply the estuaries and fluvial domains of the area and adapted flies to suit the strange varieties of piscatorial creatures in this land where otters have duck bills, large rabbits have baby carriers and kingfishers mock you with laughter. In time, his knowledge was widely respected. But Fergus denied many opportunities to be with Shirley and their four kids as much as he could.

Shirley eventually qualified as a teacher and relished her days with infants in a small school in the town.

Their children all moved away. Ellen became a P.A. in Sydney, Jo passed her teaching degree and was posted to a high school in Walgett, a day's drive away and Debbie travelled the world with the UN.

His son and pride was wee Bill, a musician and environmentalist. His only disappointment with the family was that none of them took an interest in his great passion, his fly making.

And with the nest empty Fergus turned his attention more and more to experimenting with his flies, new materials, news locations, new flies. He made thousands of clousers, poppers, floppers and his own range, the fergies. He used them on flathead, bream, whiting and even luderick. In freshwater he chased good bass, trout and found that carp were a pest. He was an expert carp fisher and could land fifty or sixty in a day easily, a blessing for the Aussie environment where these introduced fish out-competed indigenous species.

He and Shirley largely went their own ways most days

## Short Stories

but kept their affection renewed by always spending Sunday mornings together. They'd have breakfast, go out for a drive or coffee or a walk. This kept their marriage together despite their disparate interests and livelihoods.

But in his late seventies, Fergus had a dilemma. He had a huge knowledge and a sharing heart but his diagnosis of early dementia now filled him with dread, a fear that all he has learned will be lost to Time. He yearned to be an 'old man' like the ones of the Forth and Clyde, the ones who taught him so much so willingly. He lamented that his son never showed any interest in his flies but understood the need of all people to travel their own life journey.

But the pace of life is more rapid and people don't have time to learn the old ways. "Dear, you should write a book. Put it all down and have it published, instead of sitting here tying flies," Shirley consoled him. "It'll all be lost if you don't put it down on paper."

Fergus knew she was right as always but only he knew he could no longer concentrate long enough to write a book. And his muscle memory seemed so much better than his mind memory.

One day a new family moved in next door. Gazing out from his work room a few days later he noticed a lad about twelve cleaning a fishing rod. The twinkle glowed in Fergus' right eye. He went and introduced himself and invited the boy and his mother to see his fly gear. The boy was enchanted. "I only ever fish with bread," he said, "can you show me?"

As the months passed the boy learned so much – Fergus was amazed by his acumen but reflected increasingly on his canal-side days with the old men.

The boy started introducing Fergus to new materials – biros, dog hair, lace off-cuts, anything lying around that could be formed into an imitation aquatic invertebrate that may appeal to a wily fish.

"Dear, you've got your old twinkle back. That old right eye is doing its magic again."

"Aye, Shirley. I have such a fortunate life – enduring stability, you, a great passion for my work, indeed several things, and now the opportunity for a legacy."

And his rate of deterioration into dementia reduced but he knew he didn't need to say this – Shirley would know. With an outlet for his legacy, a conduit for his knowledge to endure. He smiled every night at his own good fortune.

### Blessed Assurance

Lyn Yates, *Lambing Flat (Young) FAW*

HE WASN'T slim or a good looker but she knocked me for a six, I'd only gone to the Stock and Feed for some fencing wire, when life changed in an instant. Wow! Did she have a presence, left me speechless, a condition I don't normally suffer as many will testify?

'Hello; my name is Mary' flashing a mouthful of pearly whites, 'I've just arrived in town and without taking a breath; 'who might you be?' Once again I was flabbergasted. 'Oh, I am Ted', not game enough to look her in the eye. 'I've gotta to do some fencing you know what cattle are?' Was the best I could do? 'Not really Ted; I'm a city slicker in need of some dog food; I've just moved into the Jones' old place, teaching my game!' That was it, a moment many only dream of, amid the aroma of stock and feed!

The physical attraction was electrifying! Who'd a thought a not too bright farmer with a gammy leg since contracting polio in my younger days, and an out of town school teacher both in their mid-thirties, would hit the jackpot in the love stakes! Our courtship was brief, we weren't wasting any time. Church bells resonated on a glorious sunny day. It seemed the good Lord was blessing our union as the congregation swelled with city folk and neighbours alike, witnessing our wedding vows. In sickness and health, until death do we part!

Within five years we'd had three kids; although times were tough, Mary could turn a pittance into a feast. Gathered around the table it was Mary who taught our children to reverently give thanks to the Lord, before we all devoured a much favoured rabbit stew. Evenings spent on the veranda, I'd strummed my old guitar while Mary softly sang,

'Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine,' while our children played marbles or knuckle bones under starry skies!

Enduring years of drought, searing heat, paddocks nothing more than dust bowl, despairingly, I'd returned to the old timber framed; rusted galvanised iron roofed farmhouse. To be greeted by flour dusted apron after throwing my sweat stained weather beaten hat inside the back porch. 'Have a cuppa', placing a freshly baked buttered scone served with cheese on the kitchen table. 'In God's time Ted,' was all Mary said. Even when at our lowest ebb Mary always looked to the heavens, thanking the Lord for his goodness, leaving me to wipe many a tear from my hardened exterior. All through life's trials and tribulations our love never diminished, only strengthened, affirming the instant appeal in the Stock and Feed Store some forty years ago!

Cont. From Previous Page ...

The rains eventually came and within a few seasons depleted grain silos were filled to overflowing. There was great deal of rejoicing; many having cheated the banks from seizing their properties now the cash flowed! Our Church was packed to the rafters; my Mary played the organ as the congregation sang one of many hymns.

‘Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine,  
oh; what a foretaste of glory divine!’

Our children have grown and flown having settled in greener pastures but life had taken its toll as we’d both become older and wider! Helplessly, I’d gaze in Mary’s direction, while the very essence of the woman remains; the physical frailty and the repetitive questioning of a fragile mind meant we could no longer live out our days together on the farm. Mary needed constant care, regardless of daily visits I’m no longer recognised by my soul’s desire, as I gently hold her feeble hands whilst rubbing her well-worn wedding band. Quietly one night I sensed the presence angels’ hovering over our marital bed and I knew my Mary had received her heavenly reward.

‘Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine,  
oh; what a foretaste of glory divine!’

## 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>.

## Bookshelf

FRANK MCQUIRE



*Off-Centre Short Stories*

Whether on a plane, train, or simply relaxing at home, Frank’s Australian-centric collection of short stories is guaranteed to put a smile on your face. Aptly named ‘Off-Centre’, perhaps his quirky outlook on life is amplified by the fact that Frank is legally blind.

Packed full of quirky tall tales and true that will warm your heart or leave you laughing out loud as you peek into bygone eras, experience growing up in Australia, reimagine fairy tales, or take a fantastical journey into the future.

You can find this book on Amazon:

eBook: <https://amzn.asia/d/odEVabos>

Paperback: <https://amzn.asia/d/04yukY7g>

STEVE THOMPSON

*Back Home: Family Secrets, Abandonment and Restoration*

Steve Thompson woke up in Wollongong Hospital soon after his fifth birthday, trying to understand what life was about, while drifting in and out of consciousness. Privately, he feared a nagging obsession that he didn’t belong there.



*Back Home* is set in Australia and against a backdrop of English cultural history. Steve Thompson looks back at a childhood filled with family secrets. His family began emigrating from the United Kingdom to Australia in 1926 when the British government granted his uncle free passage to the continent. Over time the rest of the family followed, with the author arriving in 1951. Whilst growing up with his family in their new surroundings, he found his British and Christian background were considered handicaps by the Frogs Hollow working-class community.

Almost a decade later, his parents ended their marriage and the family scattered. The author sunk into a deep depression and the damage echoed down to the next generation, contributing to his own divorce. Then, shattering news was revealed as family secrets emerged. In this memoir, he reveals how he overcame obstacles, came to terms with the past, and sought to reconcile with loved ones.

Price: \$32 + postage. To order a copy, please contact Steve

Thompson at [authorstevethompson@gmail.com](mailto:authorstevethompson@gmail.com)

You can find this book on Amazon:

eBook: <https://amzn.asia/d/08OulsJC>

Paperback: <https://amzn.asia/d/064oVdQb>

FAW members:

Send details of your recently published books to  
[wveditor@fawns.org.au](mailto:wveditor@fawns.org.au)

## 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, 83 Macquarie Road, Springwood  
Enquiries: Jeanette Temesvary  
Phone: 0423 908 199  
Email: [temesvary.jns@gmail.com](mailto:temesvary.jns@gmail.com)

Postal: 91 Buena Vista Road, Winmalee 2777  
Facebook page: Blue Mountains Writers FAW

### CANBERRA & REGION FAW

Second Sunday – 2:00 pm

O’Connor Uniting Church Hall, Cnr Brigalow St and Scriviner St, O’Connor, ACT 2602  
Enquiries: Dianne Porter (Pres.)  
Email: [porter.32@bigpond.com](mailto: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](mailto:riaraebeam@gmail.com) or Laura Davis (Sec.)  
Email: [lauraceedee@yahoo.com.au](mailto:lauraceedee@yahoo.com.au)  
Web: [hillsfaw.wordpress.com](http://hillsfaw.wordpress.com)

### GOULBURN FAW

Third Wednesday – 6:00 am to 8:00 pm

Goulburn Worker’s Club, McKell Place, Goulburn  
Enquiries: Janice Jensen (Sec)  
Email: [Goulburn.FAW@gmail.com](mailto:Goulburn.FAW@gmail.com)

### ISOLATED WRITERS FAW

This group of writers do not meet in person but keep in contact through Philippa Yelland, their Convenor, either through the state FAW website [fawns.org.au](http://fawns.org.au) or [isolatedwriters@fawns.org.au](mailto: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: [lakemacaw2@gmail.com](mailto:lakemacaw2@gmail.com)  
Facebook: /LakeMacFAW  
Web: [lakemacaw2.wordpress.com](http://lakemacaw2.wordpress.com)  
X formerly Twitter: @lakemacaw2  
Instagram: #lakemacaw2

### 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](mailto:lambingflatbranchfaw@hotmail.com)  
Facebook: @LambingFlatWritersGroupYOUNGNSW  
Instagram: @LambingFlatWritersGroup

### MACARTHUR FAW

3rd Sunday – 1.00 pm

Campbelltown RSL Club (Topaz Room), Carberry Lane.  
Enquiries: Victoria Chie  
4862 2771  
Email: [macarthurfaw@gmail.com](mailto:macarthurfaw@gmail.com)

### MOOCOBOOLA FAW

3rd Thursday – 1.30 pm

Gladesville Library  
Pittwater Road, Gladesville.  
Enquiries: Robert Dickins 0407 682 443

### 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](http://mudgevalleywriters.wordpress.com)

### ORANGE FAW

3rd Sunday of the month –

2:30pm to 4:00pm  
Orange Library Research Room,  
Civic Square Byng St., Orange  
2800  
Enquiries: Uta Purcell (Sec.)  
Phone: 0420924346  
Email: [orangenswfaw@gmail.com](mailto:orangenswfaw@gmail.com)

### PARRAMATTA FAW

1st Saturday – 12.30 to 3.00pm

5 Phive, Parramatta Square,  
Parramatta  
Enquiries: Cecile McCarron (Sec.)  
Email: [qsteps15@gmail.com](mailto:qsteps15@gmail.com)

### PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS FAW

1st Saturday – 1.00 to 4.00pm

Venue: Endeavour House, 176 Hastings River Drive, Port Macquarie  
Enquiries: Ian Keast (Pres.) 0437 006 202  
PO Box 67 Port Macquarie 2444  
Email: [iankeast74@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:revesbywriters@gmail.com)  
Web: [revesbywriters.com](http://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](mailto:fawshnsw@hotmail.com)  
Web: [fawsh.wordpress.com](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:sutherlandshirefaw@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.writersunleashed.com.au/faw-meetings](http://www.writersunleashed.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](mailto:sydcityfaw@gmail.com)

### WOLLONDILLY FAW

2nd Sunday – 1.00 pm

Enquiries: Annette Pearce (Pres.)  
0432 857 236  
[wollondillybranch.faw@gmail.com](mailto:wollondillybranch.faw@gmail.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](mailto:glenndc@ozemail.com.au)  
Web: [www.wyongwriters.org](http://www.wyongwriters.org)

This page has been updated  
as at 27 November 2025—Ed.

## FAW ISOLATED WRITERS BRANCH

### MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES:

Philippa Yelland, Isolated Writers Convenor  
Email: [isolatedwriters@fawnsw.org.au](mailto:isolatedwriters@fawnsw.org.au)  
Mobile: 0449 651 190

### ASSISTING THE CONVENOR:

Jill Schuler  
Email: [jillschuler9@gmail.com](mailto:jillschuler9@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 0467 677 764.

### MEMBERS' ACHIEVEMENTS:

The Editor, Writers Voice  
PO Box 93  
Dapto, NSW, 2530  
Email: [wveditor@fawnsw.org.au](mailto:wveditor@fawnsw.org.au)

### AFFILIATION FEES:

FAW NSW Affiliation Fees are due  
31 December yearly...

Isolated Writers: \$40.00 pa (*\$20.00 pa for the period July to December 2025 only*)  
Under 21/Youth Rate: \$20.00 pa (*\$10.00 pa for the period July to December 2025 only*)  
Overseas Members: \$51.00 pa (*\$25.50 pa for the period July to December 2025 only*)

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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.fawtas.org.au)

#### Western Australia (FAWWA):

Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA) Inc.  
PO Box 6180, Swanbourne WA 6910  
[www.fawwa.org](http://www.fawwa.org)

#### Queensland (FAWQ):

Fellowship of Australian Writers Queensland (FAWQ)  
[www.fawq.com.au](http://www.fawq.com.au)



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