

# The Victorian Writer

June 2015 | The Writer's Toolkit

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from the Mississippi down to the East Coast

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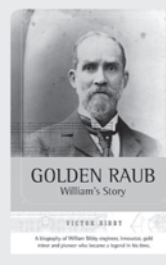
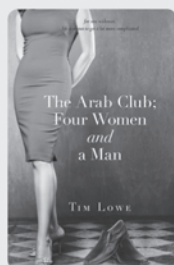
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## Editorial

For this issue we are going back to basics, covering everything from how to redraft to how to handle rejection, the importance of literary prizes (and why they are worth giving it a go) and the secrets to a successful pitch.

Editors Victoria is on hand to help us understand the role of editors – what their role entails, how you might use them to help shape your work and the best ways to find the right editor for you. Rebecca Jessen looks at literary prizes in her article 'The Value of Prizes' and shares how winning one propelled her writing career and boosted her confidence. In her article, 'They're Just Not That Into You', first time author Lorna Hendry shows us that numerous rejections does not necessarily mean the end of your writing career. And Kate Belle stresses the importance of redrafting (and rewriting) your work.

These pages are packed with advice from people who have been there, done that, and lived to tell the tale. Their knowledge will help to guide you through the pitfalls and the potholes of your writing journey.



Brigid Mullane, Editor

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# Ask an ALAA Agent

## From Blog to Book

In this month's Ask an ALAA column Agent Pippa Masson of Curtis Brown has some tips for turning your blog into a book.

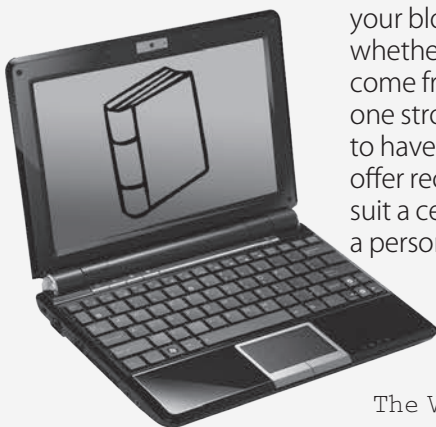
If I had a dollar for every person who has approached us saying, 'So, I have this really great blog that gets up to X amount of hits per day and now I want a book deal,' I'd be a rich woman. It's the new big thing – EVERYONE has a blog and now EVERYONE wants a book to accompany their blog.

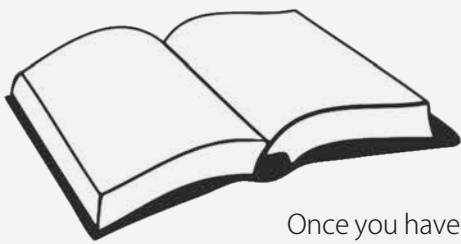
Bloggers like Sarah Wilson have paved the way. Her highly successful blog [www.sarahwilson.com.au](http://www.sarahwilson.com.au) spawned the I Quit Sugar program, which now consists of multiple books, an eight-week program and a spin-off blog of its own. Internationally, blogs like Sprouted Kitchen's <http://www.sprouted-kitchen.com/> tasty take on wholefoods have seen two cookbooks produced with undoubtedly more to come. Then there's YouTube star Zoe Sugg, better known as Zoella, <http://www.zoella.co.uk/>, whose debut novel 'Girl Online' smashed all sorts of book sale records when it was published.

But along with these success stories there's many a dark story – it emerged towards the end of last year that Sugg had not written her own book. It had, in fact, been written by ghostwriter Siobhan Curham. And, of course, the Belle Gibson/The Whole Pantry scandal is still very fresh in everyone's minds. Her wellness blog detailed the story of how she cured herself from terminal brain cancer by eating healthily – at the height of her success, she'd not only authored a book but The Whole Pantry app was going to be the only lifestyle app on the forthcoming Apple watch, a huge achievement! As we all know, her story was broken wide open after an investigative piece found the proceeds she'd promised to various charity organisations were never received and the true extent of her falsehoods was revealed.

The journey from blog to book can certainly be hugely prosperous for everyone involved, but it can also erupt in scandal. From now on in, I suspect publishers will be even more cautious about offering book deals to bloggers – they'll want facts verified and documented, recipes rigorously tested and communication with a blogger's audience to be honest and upfront. If you're looking to expand on your blog with a book, this is something you'll need to bear at the very forefront of your mind.

So, how do you go about getting a book deal to support your blog? Firstly, you will need to think long and hard about whether there actually is a book within your blog. Books that come from blogs are also pretty specific – you need to have one strong idea and stick with it. Lifestyle-based blogs seem to have the most success transitioning to a book, as they can offer recipes based around a theme, craft projects that might suit a certain occasion or advice targeting a particular time in a person's life, i.e. parenting, childhood development etc.





Once you have your idea, PLEASE make sure it's 100% new content – no-one is going to buy a book if half the content is available for free on your blog. Build on your online presence and brand, sure, but offer your readers something else that they can keep as a tangible object. Don't assume that because you started your blog two months ago, it now means you're ready to go down the book path. You're not ready. It takes years to build up a reputation, your readers, networks with other bloggers and the look and feel of your blog. Be patient, determined and stick to it. The most successful blogs that have become books are the result of many hours of dedication and care, blogs that already have their own personality and who thousands of readers already know so much about.

Here are some wonderful examples of blogs and bloggers that have had books published – happy reading!

meetmeatmikes.com  
lifeandothercrises.blogspot.com.au  
silviascucina.net  
www.notquitenigella.com  
www.whatkatieate.com  
hellosandwich.blogspot.com.au  
www.petite-kitchen.com  
www.hemsleyandhemsley.com  
www.101cookbooks.com  
joythebaker.com

Also important: don't think about a book as your eventual goal. It should be another branch on your tree – something else that attracts more readers to your blog which will in turn send other readers to your book which might then mean another book down the track! You need to keep up the commitment to your blog during the writing process, at publication and beyond. Build your community and support them so they will support you.

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Some smaller tricks and tips:

1. Do mention your traffic and hits but don't go too overboard – we just need to know the top numbers for unique visitors, views and social media. At the end of the day, those numbers will play an important part in an agent's or publisher's decision making process but the concept and execution of the concept is what will get you over the line.
2. If you work with a photographer or are a photographer then ensure your proposal is a visual as well as textual example. A team approach is a much more attractive prospect for a publisher and the best blogs to book will often use the same team that works on the blog no matter how big or how small!
3. Remember you are competing against the whole internet – do your research and make sure what you are doing is unique to you and your blog!📖

Pippa Masson has worked at Curtis Brown since 2001 in a variety of roles so is pretty much part of the furniture. She now works as a full time agent at the company and understands writing and writers very well since her mother is one! Over the years she's developed a comprehensive client list of adult fiction and non-fiction, illustrated titles and children's books. She is currently Treasurer of the Australian Literary Agent's Association.

<http://austlitagentsassoc.com/>



CC image courtesy of Sébastien Wiertz on Flickr.



# Re-Write Right

Author and creator of the popular blog [The Ecstasy Files](#) [Kate Belle](#) exposes the exhausting yet exhilarating process of the re-write.

‘There is no great writing, only great rewriting.’  
Justice Brandeis

The sickening realisation that the draft of my first book was awful came as a real shock to me. Not just a bit awful. Sniggering-behind-your-hand awful. I’d been under the illusion it was ‘good’ because I’d been possessed by a powerful rush of inspiration while writing it. The words came pouring out with such ease and when I re-read them I basked in the warm glow that comes with appreciating one’s own creative brilliance.

Then I stepped into the Advanced Year of the Novel course with Andrea Goldsmith. For me, studying with Andrea was akin to drinking rocket fuel. Her passion for quality writing, for working a story hard and shaping it into something worthy of a reader’s attention, was exactly what this floundering foundling writer needed.

In the bare winter light filtering in from Swanston Street I saw how clumsy, clichéd, and purple my words were. I quailed. I felt I’d never achieve the quality of writing I was aiming for. The greats were just too great. It didn’t take long for me to decide I was wasting my time.

‘No,’ said Andrea in a kind but condescending tone, ‘You don’t give up. You rewrite.’

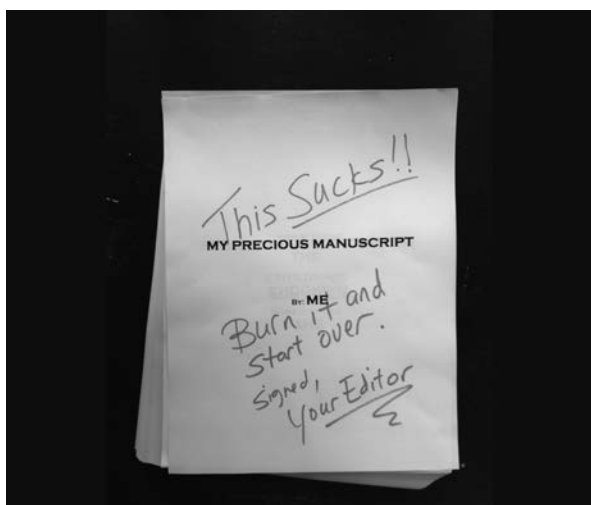
A true rewrite  
isn’t a  
desultory tidy  
up. It takes  
real courage.

I felt stupid, because I had been rewriting. I’d shifted a few words around, deleted some sentences, added a few in, all the while clinging to that magical phrase (even though it didn’t quite fit) because it was probably the best bit of writing in the piece. I thought the act of rewriting was like tidying the house. You pick a few things up and shove them under the bed, you blow the dust off the top of books and push cupboards closed on bunched up clothes and tangles of shoes. As long as it looked clean, I thought I’d gotten away with it.

Not so. When Andrea talked about rewriting, she was talking about RE-WRITING. That is, starting again with fresh eyes, chopping out whole chapters, writing new ones, experimenting with point of view and tense and plot lines, dumping scenes.

Through a bit of tough love I learned that a proper rewrite, a serious rewrite, is likely to involve chucking out thousands of words. Words I’d spent time on, that were sometimes full of jewel-like phrases that sang, yet sounded reedy and thin in the company they kept. I had to learn to do the hardest of things and put a big red line through my hard and beautiful work.

The process of truly re-writing is both exhilarating and exhausting. All at once you see a new and better way of telling your story while gulping down embarrassment at



the ungainly words that only yesterday seemed so good. There is grief at losing the bits you love so much and crippling self doubt – because what if the new words still aren't good enough?

I spent a nail-biting month waiting on editorial feedback after submitting the first draft of my second book, 'Being Jade', to my publisher. I knew it wasn't right, but I was too close to it to know what the manuscript needed. A month later my editor called me, filling me with praise before dropping the bomb.

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'I think you need to lose Jade's point of view.'

Of course, Jade's point of view was my favourite in the whole book. I loved her voice. I'd written about 30,000 crucial words, entire chapters, in her voice. And now, to my chagrin, my editor was asking me to cut them because, she said, the story would be better served without Jade's voice unravelling the mystery of her character.

In hindsight I can appreciate what an incredibly tough call this was, and I tip my hat to my editor for having the courage to give it to me straight. She knew (probably better than I) what she was asking of me. To remove a character's point of view meant a rewrite of thirty percent of the manuscript. I had to take the essential plot points from those chapters and find a new way to incorporate them into one of the other character's voices.

This is what is meant by RE-WRITE. You go back to where you went wrong and start again.


A true rewrite isn't a desultory tidy up. It takes real courage. And honesty. No writer should be so arrogant as to believe their tweaked first draft is the best they can do. No true writer should be so disrespectful of their readers as to say 'I

can't be bothered, it's good enough as it is.' Such writers have allowed themselves to be seduced by a lazy idea of their own latent talent and are disconnected from the hearts of their stories.

Which is why vigorous and daring rewriting is so important. Rewriting should be an exercise in ego suppression, of disengaging the parts of the self intimately connected to those words you've sweated and bled and exalted over. It's an act of stepping as far back as you can from what you've created and appraising those words with a ruthless and critical eye. Actively looking for flaws and picking out the gold from that forest of words can be painful. There is grief. There's often disappointment, sometimes even despair. There is the cutting of the creative umbilical cord over and over again, until all the excess self indulgence has been pared away and only the essential bones of the story are left.

The process of truly re-writing is both exhilarating and exhausting.

What follows then is the humble process of rebuilding, of layering the flesh back, of allowing the story room to breathe and find its natural shape. There is still inspiration at this point, but it's more considered now. Gone is the initial flush of confidence that comes with that supernatural first surge of creativity. Rewriting is the true work of writing, driven by a deeper understanding of what the story is trying to say. Rewriting is a process that should be undertaken with deference and respect for the magic that has happened in the crucible of the first draft.

Every story has its own life, its own interior shape and structure. It's a writer's task to discover, to unveil, to reveal, the inner essence of story. Writers owe this act of discovery to themselves, but more importantly, they owe it to their readers. 

Kate Belle is a multi-published author who writes dark, sensual contemporary women's fiction. Her first full-length novel, 'The Yearning', was published in April 2013 by Simon & Schuster to rave reviews. Her second novel is 'Being Jade'. In 2012 Kate created The Ecstasy Files, a popular blog focusing on eroticism, sexuality and relationships.

# Editors? Who Needs Them?

The experts from Editors Victoria share with us the ins and outs of editing, how an editor can help you with your work, and the best place to find one.

**A**re you hoping to find a publisher for your manuscript? Or considering self-publishing? An editor can help you improve your writing and get it ready for submission or publication. A good editor is like a great coach – they will inform, encourage and inspire you to make your writing the best it can be.

## **What do editors do?**

Editors offer different levels of editing for different stages of your writing project. It's helpful to understand what each kind of editing aims to do, and the sort of questions an editor will be asking as they read your work.

## **Structural editing**

A structural edit is a detailed and practical analysis of your writing. The best time for this is when you have finished your first draft.

- Is your plot working?
- Are your characters alive?
- Is your setting established and believable?
- Is your narrative voice well developed?
- Will your story be interesting to the reader?

You can expect to receive detailed notes and suggestions, and maybe a sample page showing you some ways that the writing could be improved.

## **Copyediting**

A copyedit is useful when your story is working well, but there are elements of the writing that could be improved.

- Is your writing clear and consistent?
- Is the style right for the genre and your target audience?
- Are your grammar, spelling and punctuation correct?
- Is your manuscript presented professionally?
- Does it include everything needed for submitting to a publisher or self-publishing?

Your editor will usually work directly on your manuscript. They might change the words or punctuation, ask you questions, or write notes to draw your attention to areas you need to work on more.

## **Proofreading**

Proofreading is the final step of the process, only done when the work is ready for submission or publication.

- Is the manuscript consistent?
- Have embarrassing typos been found and fixed?
- Has there been a final check for mistakes or omissions?

Your editor will normally make these changes directly on your manuscript. They may ask you to solve any problems, and will let you know if there is anything missing.

## **What is a manuscript assessment?**

In a manuscript assessment, your editor will evaluate your work for all the elements discussed above, give you detailed written feedback and make suggestions about how you can improve it. They may also advise you about the level of editing your work would benefit from.

Many Editors Victoria members work as manuscript assessors for Writers Victoria, and others work privately.


## **What will it cost?**

The cost of editing will vary depending on what stage your project is at and what you want to achieve. Your editor will discuss costs with you before they start work.

## **How do I find an editor?**

The Editors Victoria Freelance Register at [editorsvictoria.org](http://editorsvictoria.org) lists 150 editors with a diverse range of skills, experience and interests.

A good place to start is to search the register using words like 'fiction', 'non-fiction', 'memoir' and 'self-publishing'. When you find someone that you would like to work with, click on their name to see their full profile.

Spend some time looking for the right person for you. Choose someone you can trust, and who understands and enjoys your writing. 

## **Want to know more?**

Contact [admin@editorsvictoria.org](mailto:admin@editorsvictoria.org) if you have any questions about finding or working with an editor. <http://www.editorsvictoria.org/>



# They're Just Not That Into You



First-time author Lorna Hendry shares her rocky path to publication and gives some tips on how to avoid, and cope with, rejection.

A couple of days before my book launch, I decided it was time to count how many times my travel memoir had been rejected.

Over an 18-month period, I'd tried lots of ways to get it published. I emailed publishers whose websites invited unsolicited submissions. For others, I uploaded a proposal and sample chapter online in a two-hour window on the correct day of the week. Once I left a copy of my manuscript on an editor's desk on my final day of an internship. I entered competitions and even sent it to an agent.

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Counting a very awkward conversation with an editor friend who found it in her slush pile, and both times the publisher that eventually took it knocked it back, the total number of rejections came to twenty-one.

Many of the rejections I had to infer after a prolonged silence, often holding out hope for months before finally accepting the truth. Others came with an explanation: one small publisher had just signed a very similar book, one didn't think the topic would have a large enough audience, several simply said it 'wasn't right' for them.

It was like trying desperately to get noticed by the coolest person in high school. The book had to be in the right place at the right time, and be exactly what they wanted in that fleeting moment.

And, just like high school, it was almost impossible not to take the rejections personally:

'Most of the time the reader feels like a voyeur reading about someone else's trip and it is hard to engage much beyond that.'

'The positive news was that everyone

really enjoyed your writing. It's the subject that they felt was the let-down.'

'Most successful memoirs have a strong emotional undercurrent pulling the story along. This is an absence that must be addressed to lift the manuscript to a publishable level.'

I think 'being in the right place' means aiming for the right publisher. There is very little point submitting to a company that doesn't publish the kind of material you've written. Do some research and think about where your book would fit in well. Look at their list of authors and titles, read up on the senior publishers and editors and work out what they are interested in. See if there are similarities with your work, or a gap that your book could fill. This process also helps you write a great pitch to the publishers that end up on your shortlist.

If you are anything like me, you know all this already but you'll submit widely anyway, just in case. That's fine, and it might even result in valuable feedback, but brace yourself for the inevitable knockbacks.

The 'right time' is harder to control. This might be about what the publisher has committed to already or what they need to balance out the mix. They might be looking for exactly the kind of book you are offering, or they might have just signed two short story collections already and don't have room for another. Maybe your book is suddenly very topical or is at the forefront of a new trend and they've been wondering how to ride that wave of interest.

Good timing also means not submitting too early. I still cringe when I remember sending a friendly editor at a large publishing house a very early draft of my manuscript – all 116,000 words of it. I was very lucky that she took the

time to tell me what I needed to do in the next draft, but (after I got over the shock that I had more work to do) I realised that I had completely blown my one chance with her.

As for being 'exactly what they want', I don't think you can ever guess that, but you can make sure that you give them exactly what they say they want. That means creating customised submissions for every publisher you approach. Read the guidelines and follow them to the letter. If they ask for the first 3000 words, don't send a 10,000-word edited highlights package. The quicker they can find a reason to say 'no', the quicker they can get through their huge slush pile.

Beyond that, blind luck still applies. My publisher knocked my book back originally because they did travel guides, not memoirs. Months afterwards, at their request, I had a go at turning it into more of a useful 'how-to' book, but my heart wasn't in it and neither was theirs. The following year – long after I had come to terms with the fact that my book was never going to be a reality – they decided to have a go at publishing their first travel memoir and asked to see the original manuscript again.

If there's a lesson in all this, it's that you shouldn't assume that a 'no' from one publisher means you'll never find the right one. From here, those twenty-one rejections don't look too bad. Many of them were completely predictable. The worst felt as if I had come really close but just missed out. The best told me hard-to-hear truths and helped me make the manuscript better.

I'm tempted to say that if I had known my book would be rejected so many times I would never have embarked on the whole process of writing it in the first place, but you'd all know I was lying. The first time I saw it in a bookshop my heart skipped a beat and I didn't stop grinning for days. I'd willingly have taken a hundred more 'thanks but no thanks' to get to that single 'yes'.<sup>10</sup>

Lorna Hendry is a designer, writer and editor, and teaches in RMIT's Professional Writing and Editing program. Her travel memoir, *Wrong Way Round*, was published by Explore Australia, an imprint of Hardie Grant, in April 2015.

Read the guidelines and follow them to the letter.



## MACQUARIE DICTIONARY grammar tip

### Beware too many abstract nouns

An abstract noun refers to an intangible thing, without physical properties, such as an emotion, concept, etc. love nationalism luck character Note that writing that employs too many abstract nouns can become difficult to read, so if your aim is to grab the attention of the reader, a string of abstract nouns will, generally speaking, have the opposite effect.<sup>11</sup>

The Macquarie Dictionary & Thesaurus Online is the most up-to-date Australian dictionary and thesaurus available, providing access to the Macquarie Dictionary Sixth Edition plus annual updates. Macquarie offers Writers Victoria members a 10% discount (Code: WR1T3R14), or you can take up a 30-day free trial at [www.macquariedictionary.com.au/trial](http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/trial)



# Three Minutes or Less



Basking in the recent success of her first novel 'Double Exposure', Kat Clay reveals her tips to perfecting your pitch.

Pitching your book to publishers at a live event can seem as brutal as a Chinese dating show. There are the judges who will make or break your book and the long queues of hopeful authors waiting for their chances at love – I mean publication – to be dashed in less than three minutes.

All we need is a sassy host and it could make for some great TV.

But pitching your book doesn't have to be a daunting experience. Meeting a publisher in person is a great way to gauge their interests and to demonstrate your enthusiasm for your work. Last year I attended Literary Speed Dating held at the Wheeler Centre by Writers Victoria and the Australian Society of Authors. At this event you are given three minutes to pitch your work to publishers and agents. I prepared for the event for weeks beforehand and I had a great result, with 4/5 publishers I approached taking my proposals. When Crime Factory contacted me afterwards, I was overjoyed to find out they wanted to publish my first novella, 'Double Exposure'.

As an author, you need to be able to talk to people about your book without turning into a quivering mass of prepositions. So here are my best tips for how to pitch your book in three minutes or less.

## Write your elevator pitch

The first step is to write an 'elevator pitch', a one minute spiel to catch the interest of the metaphorical listener in the elevator (if you're ever stuck in a broken elevator with a publisher then good for you).

It's hard to whittle your book down to three sentences, but I break it down to three steps. I'll use my own pitch as an example:

**Who is the main character and what is their problem?**

When a codehex scrambles the spoken English language, a bullied 12-year-old boy is zapped into the World of Words.

**What is their solution?**

To return home, he must break the code and defeat the armies of the Chaos Queen, with the help of his blind best friend and his geriatric grandpa.

**What type of book is it?**

Zack F and the World of Words is a 50,000 word middle-grade fantasy novel which deals with themes of bullying, courage and living with a disability.

Bonus points for knowing where it would sit on the shelf in a bookstore. If you don't know where it would sit in a bookstore, you probably need to do some more research. It's no good saying, 'My book is so unique it doesn't have any similar titles,' because all a publisher will hear is 'I can't sell this.'

Research similar titles from the publisher you are pitching to, so you can indicate an awareness of their work. If that publisher doesn't have any searing biographies of a debt-ridden porpoise on their lists, then they probably don't publish that genre.

If you're struggling to get clarity on your pitch, consider attending a workshop. I attended the Pitch Perfect workshop, which helped refine my proposal. I also recommend reading 'A Decent Proposal' by Rhonda Whitton and Sheila Hollingworth.

## Practise

The first time I pitched a book to an agent, I hadn't practised, my hands were shaking



and I got my words mixed up. By practising your pitch, you're reducing the stress of what can be a nerve-racking experience.

Your elevator pitch should go no longer than a minute. Practise in front of a mirror to get your confidence up. Then practise without your piece of paper, until you can pitch like a ninja throwing shuriken.

Then practise in front of other writers. My writing group spent a day working on synopsis and pitching, where we each took turns to pitch our book to the room. It was invaluable to get other people's feedback in a safe space. They picked up any inconsistencies, confusing phrases and presentation issues.

After rehearsing my pitching, I realised I would babble. Say your pitch, then stop. If your pitch is only one-minute long, then so be it. This gives the publisher time to ask questions and to have a chat about your work.

Because you've practised your pitch, you'll be fine to deliver it to a publisher with the zingy confidence of Miss Elizabeth Bennet. Enthusiasm is infectious; express your genuine passion for your book and why it's important to you and your potential audience.

### **Give the publishers what they want**

If they want three chapters, a one-page synopsis and a cover letter, give it to them in a neat, well formatted package tied up with a bulldog clip. If they ask you to send it in an email, follow it up by the end of the day.

You don't need to bring flyers, brochures, hand-written speeches, chocolates, movie tickets... Part of pitching in any professional environment is putting the package together so that when it comes time to look at the proposal, all the elements are there right in front of them. Don't make the publisher work more than they have to – they don't owe you any favours and are extremely time-poor.

### **Accept rejection**

You've heard it before, but it's not personal. Publishers have lists and quotas and all sorts of internal hurdles to deal with before they even consider publishing your book. If you're writing in a popular genre, chances are that the publisher already has four other contracted writers in that area. And if someone doesn't

understand your project, that's okay too, because they're probably not the right person to give your book the love and care it deserves.

If your work is turned down, be polite, ask for a business card and whatever you do, don't jump up and down shouting, 'Why don't you love my novel? It's the greatest book since Neil Gaiman's biography of Duran Duran\*.' If you carry yourself in a professional way, you'll be remembered when you pitch your next book as someone who is easy to deal with.

If you've submitted to a publisher, wait an appropriate amount of time (often indicated on their website) before contacting them politely to follow up. However, a lot of publishers these days indicate that not hearing from them is a rejection.

### **Be ready to wing it**

So you've practised for weeks. You have bundles of laser printed synopses. And then you meet a publisher you weren't prepared for.

I went to the Literary Speed Dating event pitching a middle-grade fantasy novel, but I decided to talk to Cameron from Crime Factory as I also write crime fiction. Little did I know, that chance conversation would lead to my first book. It went something like this:

'So what sort of books do you like?' said Cameron.

'I love James Ellroy.'

'I love James Ellroy too! What other writers do you like?'

'I really like Jeff VanderMeer.' As I said this, Cameron pulled out a copy of Jeff VanderMeer's book 'Annihilation' from his satchel. And that, as they say, is history. ❶

\*This book does exist.

Kat Clay is the author of 'Double Exposure', released in 2015 with Crime Factory. Kat has been published in 'Literary Traveler', 'TNT', 'Travel Weekly', 'Matador Network' and 'Weird Fiction Review'. She is also an award-winning photographer. You can find her musings on creativity at [www.katclay.com](http://www.katclay.com) or twitter @kat\_clay.

# The Value of Prizes

Winner of the 2013 Queensland Literary Award for Best Unpublished Manuscript Rebecca Jessen urges aspiring writers to take the plunge in the vast depths of literary competition.



Literary prizes have helped launch the careers of some of Australia's most loved and successful authors, including Kate Grenville, Tim Winton, and more recently, Hannah Kent and Graeme Simsion. Australia has a long and rich history of supporting writers through literary prizes, and their value as a launching pad for emerging writers can't be understated. As the slush piles on editors' desks get increasingly large and difficult to break through, unpublished manuscript prizes can be a way in for new authors.

As an aspiring writer, the thought of publishing your first book can often seem like a faraway dream – something that you've spent years thinking about, but in reality, have little idea of how to actually achieve. This is where unpublished manuscript prizes come in. Winning or even being shortlisted for an unpublished manuscript prize is a sure-fire way to catapult you straight into the 'keep an eye out for this writer' category. Literary prizes are, more often than not, prestigious affairs. Most major, state and national prizes come with a generous sum of money and a publishing contract. This is dream-come-true material for any aspiring writer.


The reason I can say this with such confidence is because this is my story. My first book, a verse-novel titled 'Gap', is now out through University of Queensland Press. But let's not jump the gun here, how did I get to be in this position? Firstly, I had a lot of luck on my side. I am the first to admit I had a relatively smooth and fortunate path to publication: a somewhat rare first experience. Literary prizes can often feel like a complete lottery. Judging writing is an incredibly subjective process, and in the end it comes down to so many little factors, most of which you'll never know. Of course, this doesn't mean you don't throw your hat in the ring and hope for the best. In 2012, this is exactly what I did.

I entered my short story in verse, 'Gap' in the 2012 State Library of Queensland Young Writer's Award, hoping, as you do, for something to come of it, but knowing that it could just as easily come to nothing. It didn't come to nothing, I won the 2012 Young Writers Award for 'Gap'. I was fresh out of university and had a lot of knowledge but not a lot of real-world confidence. Winning the prize undoubtedly changed everything for me: the award gave me recognition and validation, but, above all, it gave me the confidence I needed to pursue my idea and turn it into a full manuscript. This is what I spent the next ten months doing (along with a lot of procrastinating). I had an end goal in sight and I was determined to reach it; the 2013 Queensland Literary Award for Best Unpublished Manuscript.

In the end, I had a matter of days to complete my manuscript before the deadline, but I made it and I even surprised myself a little. There were the anxious three months of waiting and hoping. When the day finally came and I found out I had been shortlisted, I was ecstatic. To say I didn't want to win the award would be untrue, but even being shortlisted was an honor, and one I knew would reap many rewards. I went

on to win the QLA for Best Unpublished Manuscript and part of the prize was a publishing contract with University of Queensland Press. Less than a year later, my book *Gap* was on the shelves.

When you are a relatively inexperienced emerging writer, it can seem almost impossible to break into the writing and publishing industry when nobody knows your name and it seems like every second person you meet is working on their novel. Manuscript prizes change this; they get you noticed by publishers, agents, editors, your peers. Even your mum starts taking you a little more seriously.

I know what you're thinking; it's all very well to say this when I'm now sitting on the other side, but it wasn't always like this. I was once an aspiring writer too, but with hard work, a lot of passion and even more luck, this changed for me. It can change for you, too. So take the plunge, make this the year you finish your novel and enter it into an unpublished manuscript competition. What do you have to lose? 

Rebecca Jessen lives in Toowoomba with her two cacti. She is the winner of the 2013 Queensland Literary Award for Best Emerging Author for her verse novel *'Gap'*. In 2012 Rebecca won the State Library of Queensland Young Writers Award. Rebecca's writing has been published in *'The Lifted Brow'*, *'Voiceworks'*, *'Stilts'*, *'Scum Mag'* and *'Rex'*. Rebecca graduated from QUT in 2011 with a BFA in Creative and Professional Writing.

Rebecca's verse novel *'Gap'* is out now through University of Queensland Press. She is the recipient of an AMP Tomorrow Maker grant

As an aspiring writer, the thought of publishing your first book can often seem like a faraway dream.

#### Unpublished Manuscript Prizes Open Australia-wide

Text Publishing Young Adult Prize  
[www.textpublishing.com.au/text-prize](http://www.textpublishing.com.au/text-prize)

The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award for unpublished writers under 35  
[www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=442](http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=442)

Black & Write! Indigenous Writing Fellowship  
[www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/awards/blackwrite/fellowships](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/awards/blackwrite/fellowships)

David Unaipon Award for an Unpublished Indigenous Writer  
[qldliteraryawards.org.au](http://qldliteraryawards.org.au)

#### State-based Unpublished Manuscript Awards

Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript  
[www.wheelercentre.com/projects/victorian-premier-s-literary-awards-2015/award-for-an-unpublished-manuscript](http://www.wheelercentre.com/projects/victorian-premier-s-literary-awards-2015/award-for-an-unpublished-manuscript)

Queensland Literary Award for Best Unpublished Manuscript  
[qldliteraryawards.org.au](http://qldliteraryawards.org.au)

Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature: Wakefield Press Unpublished Manuscript Award  
[arts.sa.gov.au/grants/adelaide-festival-awards-for-literature/](http://arts.sa.gov.au/grants/adelaide-festival-awards-for-literature/)



# Six Real Rules

Author and Manuscript Assessor for Writers Victoria, Rachel Hennessy, defies the 'How To' advice and offers up her rules to the world of writing and publishing.

Throughout the year there are always a surfeit of new articles offering advice to emerging writers on a number of 'How Tos': 'How to submit to literary journals'; 'How to make the most of writing competitions' or 'How to get your manuscript published'.

As someone who has, hopefully, moved through the emerging stage (although, God knows, there are days when it doesn't quite feel like it), I glance at such articles with a certain sense of nostalgia. They remind me of a time when it all seemed rather simple: just follow the stated 'rules' and success – in the form of publication, oh wondrous publication – would come. They also make me recall how hard it is to always follow the offered pieces of advice.

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So, I offer up my own rules, spiced up with a little dose of reality, to help those who are starting out in this crazy world of writing and publishing

## **Rule #1: Always read the journal or publisher you are planning to submit to**

In the days before the internet (yes, those days did exist), getting your hands on a literary journal meant either going to the university library and tracking it down via the Dewey Decimal system (which everyone knows makes no sense) or stumbling across a well-worn copy in an obscure-but-trendy café or borrowing it from a well-off friend. I never had enough money to subscribe to any of them and, consequently, sent off short stories to the most inappropriate places.

I still remember a rejection slip which read, 'We cannot see a place for your work in our publication,' which was a very kind way of saying, 'You've obviously never read a word we've published...!', which I hadn't.

With the advent of the internet, it does not take long to get to know the style of any given journal and, frankly, you're an idiot to send work in before you've spent some time perusing the (usually) free content

they provide on their sites. It is all very well to believe your work to be unique, and therefore not catered to any particular style. But the fact is, writing does not spring from a vacuum, and there are trends and fashions. For example, 'flash fiction' didn't exist when I was starting out and now it is everywhere.

If you happen to be working on a full-length manuscript, you also need to step into the publishers' shoes. Finding out what Penguin, Allen & Unwin and Picador are producing is only a Google search away. While it might often seem daunting – and, again, there are many who think you should just lock yourself in the garret and write – there is no point working for years on a book which covers exactly the same material as something Helen Garner just wrote. (This is actually what happened to me and, whilst my novel, 'The Quakers', was eventually published, it was rejected by at least one publisher for drawing on the same story as Garner's non-fiction work 'Joe Cinque's Consolation').

## **Rule #2: Put your money where your mouth is**

Once you know what places might suit your short work, I would recommend making the commitment and subscribing to at least one or two of them. I completely confess I never did this when I was young, mainly – as I mentioned – because it seemed too expensive and, in my student days, it probably was. But many journals now have online subscriptions only, which, really, won't break the bank (\$35 for 'Kill Your Darlings' is a complete bargain).

This shows you are committed to the ongoing life of the publication, not just your own contribution to it. After all, most of these journals survive through subscriptions and if you want to continue to have places to publish, you need to outlay some investment in your future.

Similarly, buy books, online or physical, I don't care which. Buy the books you want to see on the bookshelves because, if you don't, the publishers will stop publishing

Buy the books you want to see on the bookshelves because, if you don't, the publishers will stop publishing them.

them. Of course, I'm also a fan of using libraries, if you can't spare the money.

**Rule #3: You're never too busy to read**

I still remember one of my fellow writers telling me he was 'much too busy' to read. When I heard this, I had no sympathy whatsoever for this part-time chef and part-time writer. Now, perhaps, as a part-time mother and part-time writer, I am more forgiving and would express my horror in milder tones: 'How can you not read?!' I remember exploding, 'If you haven't got time to read because you're too busy writing, then why should anyone take the time to read you?'

But whilst I might be more sympathetic to the scrambling-for-time-to-write syndrome, I will not concede to the can't-find-time-to-read solution. Adjust your mind-set to consider reading as writing. Even if you only have limited time, you must see reading as the creative foundation of your work.

**Rule #4: Never submit a first draft**

As embarrassing as it is to admit, I would often write a story in a very short time, do a few corrections, read it out-loud to confirm my genius, knock out a cover letter and – whoosh! – throw it into the post-box with a flourish of satisfaction. Ah, the arrogance of youth. The foolishness of this seems self-evident, but I still encounter creative writing students who don't believe in re-drafting. Some of us are gifted enough to get away with it. I never was.

**Rule #5: Don't sit around waiting for your rejection slip**

Once you have done the hard work of researching a journal or publisher, re-drafting your story or manuscript, endlessly tweaking your biography and actually sending the monster off, the temptation is to sit back and wait for recognition of your literary talent to knock on your door or pop up in the inbox.

I have always kept an Excel spreadsheet with

details of the date, type of work and name of the submissions I am working on. Needless to say, there is always more than one. Even when I was concentrating on one of the three novels I've written, I always had a few short stories on the go – just for the sake of variety – and, more recently, I have also begun writing non-fiction.

The old saying 'don't put all your eggs in one basket' applies here. It is an easy trap to fall into: to pin all your hopes on that major writing competition you've just entered or that residency program you've just applied to and, thereby, stop working on anything else. Just get onto the next thing.

**Rule #6: Enjoy the life of an unpublished writer**

As a younger writer, I was convinced life would change irrevocably once I was published: flowers would smell more beautiful, friends would gaze at me with un-fettered respect and even small animals would lick my hand adoringly. The fact is, publication does bring satisfaction, but it is satisfaction of a peculiar kind. If I'm honest, I can barely look at a page of any of my publications without a cringe of some kind: how that word could have been better, how I should have described the character more clearly or how that metaphor doesn't quite work.

In the days before publication, I could dream of the perfection of having one's work out in the world. But once it is out there, you can't ever bring it back.

Take some time to enjoy your time in the shade, because the glaring sun can be a tough place to hide. ❶

Rachel Hennessy has published two novels: 'The Quakers' (Wakefield Press, 2008) and 'The Heaven I Swallowed' (Wakefield Press, 2013), as well as various short stories. She is a manuscript assessor for Writers Victoria and has taught creative writing at the University of Melbourne.

# Decisive Moments

Writer and winner of the 2013 Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Award James Cristina shares how travel, and receiving editorial feedback, has shaped his writing journey.

The creative impetus inspired me to travel. I am sure of this. There was an innate restlessness to seek out divergent paths and discover new places. It was plain to me that there was a lot to discover. Having a mother that was fluent in three languages and a capable pianist made me acutely aware of this. At twenty-seven I decided to return to Europe. Despite being armed with a couple of degrees and a teaching qualification, I felt inadequately equipped. I had commenced writing a novel, but felt that my voice was unformed. At twenty-seven there were two things that I was astutely aware of. Whatever I wanted, I didn't have. Whatever I needed wasn't readily available.

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In my travels I found paths to take the journey further. As with any venture one becomes aware of a range of possibilities. Even the disappointments seem imbued with some message. At that stage in my life there seemed like no dead ends. Perhaps it was this frame of mind that motivated me to pursue places that I was often encouraged to steer clear of. Despite advice to the contrary, I pursued a teaching career in the Middle East. I loved teaching in Jordan, Bahrain and memories of my solitary drive at 160km/hr across the Saudi desert remain with me to this day. Despite the teaching opportunities, the contracts, the cultural opportunities and the friendships, my main motive for work and travel remained creative. It must have been. I noticed a pattern of living in a place for two or three years and then moving on, irrespective of contract renewals and pay increases.

In the wonderful novel 'Borderline' by Janette Turner Hospital I recall a character than I felt some affinity with, the piano tuner Jean-Marc Seymour. I felt that he held some resonance for a character that I was hoping to realise, a character that would eventually filter his way into the novella I submitted into the 2013 Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards. Jean-Marc travels from house to house, at times an eavesdropper, at other times a confidant, working note by note, marking details that filter into the greater body of a story. At the end of the novel, his work and title prove secondary to his ultimate pursuit, that of storyteller.

The novella that won the 2013 Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Award, 'Antidote to a Curse', was part of a greater body of writing that seemed beyond completing. It wasn't for lack of work, or lack of drafting, or even lack of advice. It was obvious to me that something was missing, but I seemed unable to locate the essential element. I was working on a novel, a binary novel, two narratives dovetailed together. I had a firm conception of the piece – the structure – but the narrative remained far from apparent. Perhaps there remained another bus ride, another teaching contract, or if Jean-Marc was penning the narrative, another piano to tune.


Winning the prize certainly registered as a green light. The awards ceremony had been impeccably hosted, marking another memorable occasion. Standing amongst the audience and staff in the Melbourne Library, the beginning of my novel had finally been realised. I decided that I would re-sequence the intersecting narrative from the fragment I submitted. Little did I realise it at the time of submitting, the prize would prove integral to the creative process itself. Receiving editorial advice from the award's judge Barry Scott (Transit Longue Publishers) would prove, to me, the undeclared trophy, though Lord Mayor Robert Doyle's endorsement, the prize money and press were certainly appreciated.

Receiving  
editorial advice  
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undeclared trophy.





I have written about the necessity of experiences, particularly travel, as an essential aspect in mapping out a robust canvas, but of course maintaining an inspiring reading routine was paramount. Of course, no account of my writing journey would be complete without due tribute to the reading. Though last mentioned, was this the ultimate tool in the writer's kit? While the list of inspiring texts would be too long to list here there were three texts that I seemed to gravitate to time-and-time again throughout the writing process: 'Crisis at Bihac' by Brendan O'Shea; 'The Collected Poems' by Emily Dickinson; 'The Temple of The Golden Pavilion' by Yukio Mishima. Now that the manuscript is almost complete I can say that these books held clues.

Of course the beauty in relating a story like this lies in the knowledge that everybody's writing journey is different, but I'm certain, to one that is dedicated, there are pivotal moments that bring one's ambitions that step closer. 

James Cristina studied literature and creative writing at the University of East Anglia, Norwich and is interested in subjective narrative and non-conventional narrative forms. He currently teaches English language at Deakin. [james.cristina@deakin.edu.au](mailto:james.cristina@deakin.edu.au)

The 2015 Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards are now open. See [www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/MelbourneLibraryService](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/MelbourneLibraryService) for more details.

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## Nitpicker



Your monthly editing lesson, brought to you by Penny Johnson, Program Coordinator of RMIT's Professional Writing and Editing.



1. The local health food shop has been transformed (into/in to) a bustling natural health supermarket.
2. Instead of two cash registers, there (is/are) now at least eight.
3. All are (manned/operated) by young hipsters.
4. The (amount/number) and variety of fruit and vegetables on the shelves depend on the season.
5. Still, healthy treats are also available and (include/include:) organic chocolate, chia balls, date bars, gluten-free cookies and more.

Answers on page 34



## Friday

Every Friday

**Andrew Thompson on 3WBC (94.1FM)**, 12.30–1pm. Short stories, poems, music.

**Mornington Community Writers Group.** 10am and 7.30pm, Mornington Community House, Albert Street, Mornington. 5975 4772

1st Friday

### Life Writing Group

7–9pm, Village School, 9–13 Holloway Road, Croydon North. \$2. 0468 882 256 / melaleucablue@gmail.com

2nd Friday

### The Friday Group

10am–noon, Writers Victoria. barryrevill@bigpond.com

Last Friday

### Melbourne Poets Union meeting.

7pm, various locations, usually Wheeler Centre. \$10/\$9/\$8. mpuinc@yahoo.com / 0404 517 881.

### Society of Women Writers VIC meeting.

11am, Hayden Raysmith Room on the 4th floor of Ross House. \$5. www.swwvic.net.au

## Saturday

Every Saturday

**Poetica.** 3.05pm, ABC Radio National.

### Poetry Sessions

2pm, Dan O'Connell Hotel, 225 Canning Street, Carlton. 9387 2086 / 0412 224 655.

1st Saturday

**Word Tree.** 3pm, Burrinja Cafe, 351 Glenfern Rd, Upwey. 9754 1789.

2nd Saturday

### Wordsmiths of Melbourne Poetry Group.

2–5pm, 8 Woodhouse Rd, East Doncaster. \$30 yr/\$5 session, \$3 concession. 9890 5885, poeticachristi@netspace.net.au

3rd Saturday

### Henry Lawson Society

1.30–4.00pm, Monastery Hall, St. Francis Church, Lonsdale St, City. 9785 7079.

**poetry@fedsquare.** 2–4pm, Feb–Nov, in the Atrium. www.fedsquare.com

Last Saturday

### Boroondara Writers' Inc

Jan–Nov. 1–4.30pm, Glenferrie Rd. 0419 399 140, boroondara.writers.inc@gmail.com

## Sunday

First Sunday

### ARVOS. Australian Rhyming Verse Orators.

2–5 pm, Scout Hall, Jack O'Toole Reserve, Willsmere Road, Kew. arvosbushpoetry.com

2nd & 4th Sunday

**West Word.** 2pm, Dancing Dog Café, 42A Albert St, Footscray. west\_word@yahoo.com

3rd Sunday

### Melbourne Romance Writers Guild.

Fitzroy Library. 0401 200 431 / www.melbournernwg.com

### FAW Mornington Peninsula Branch

1.45 for 2pm, Community Contact House, 9 Albert St, Mornington. charmaine calaitzis, 9770 9405.

Last Sunday

### Readings by the Bay

2–5pm, Mordialloc Neighbourhood House. mairi@ozemail.com.au / 9587 8757.

## Highlights

4 June

### The Long and Winding Road to Getting Published

Join writers and Readings booksellers Leanne Hall, Miles Allison and Alec Patric as they discuss their stories of how they got published with Readings book buyer and spotter of the next big thing in local publishing, Martin Shaw in this Emerging Writers' Festival event. [www.readings.com.au/events](http://www.readings.com.au/events)

15 June

### Litlolz

Celebrations of beloved books and characters are often dominated by characters who seriously suffer. But we should equally celebrate fictional characters who you don't need to recover from after reading. Chris Flynn chats to Toni Jordan, Debra Oswald and Shane Maloney about how and why good writing can (and even should) make us smile.

[www.wheelercentre.com/events/litlolz](http://www.wheelercentre.com/events/litlolz)

litlolz

# June

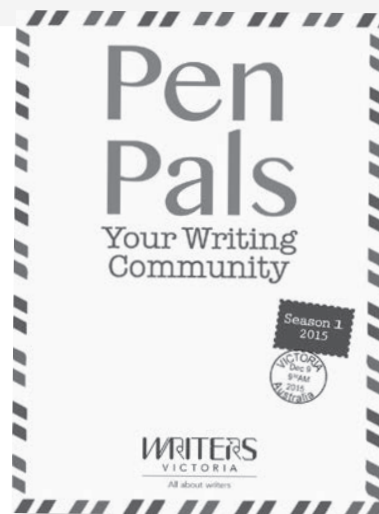


CC Image courtesy of 3eChavel on Flickr.

# Courses 2015

**writersvictoria.org.au**

See more courses and workshops and book online at [writersvictoria.org.au](http://writersvictoria.org.au), phone (03) 9094 7840 or email [program@writersvictoria.org.au](mailto:program@writersvictoria.org.au). All events are held at The Wheeler Centre unless stated otherwise.



## Write-ability

### Write-ability Writers Group

Write-ability aims to support writers with disability who want to develop their skills and writing careers. Drop into one of our fortnightly Write-ability Writers Group sessions.

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Book your free place online or email [access@writersvictoria.org.au](mailto:access@writersvictoria.org.au)

This project is made possible by the support of the City of Melbourne 2015 Arts Grant Program. It is presented in collaboration with Arts Access Victoria.

When: Tuesday 9 June and Tuesday 23 June



## Poetry

### Undoing Writers' Block Masterclass for Poets – A New Path to the Waterfall (Melbourne)

with Deb Westbury.

Have you been meaning to write? Wanting to write? Not sure what to do next? Learn how to get out of your own way and to reconnect with and sustain your 'always there' passion for writing poetry.

Deb Westbury has been a familiar and respected voice in Australian poetry since her work was first published in 1975. She has developed a dual career as a writer and an inspirational teacher.

Deb's tour is made possible by the support of the Australia Council for the Arts in collaboration with the national network of State and Territory Writers Centres.

When: Thursday 4 June, 10am–4pm

Member price: \$170/\$180

Non-member price: \$230

Level: Emerging

### What Makes It Poetry? (Woodend) with Deb Westbury.

How does poetry distinguish itself from other literary forms? In this practical workshop, find out about why poetry matters, the uses and challenges of poetry (reading and writing), the elements of poetry and the ways in which they interact to create a successful poem (sound, image, meaning and shape).

Deb Westbury has been a familiar and respected voice in Australian poetry since her work was first published in 1975. She has developed a dual career as a writer and an inspirational teacher.

Deb's tour is made possible by the support of the Australia Council for the Arts in collaboration with the national network of State and Territory Writers Centres.

When: Saturday 6 June, 10am–4pm

Where: The Norma Richardson Hall, 15 Buckland Street, Woodend

Member price: \$70/\$80

Non-member price: \$120

Level: Emerging



## The Salon

**The Salon Goes Regional (Woodend)** with Deb Westbury and Woodend Winter Arts Festival

Join us in Woodend for a Season 2 program launch with a poetic twist with special guest Deb Westbury. Presented in collaboration with the Woodend Winter Arts Festival.

Deb Westbury has been a familiar and respected voice in Australian poetry since her work was first published in 1975. She has developed a dual career as a writer and an inspirational teacher. She is the poetry consultant for Varuna, The National Writers' House. Her books of poetry are 'Mouth to Mouth', (1990), 'Our Houses are Full of Smoke' (1994), 'Surface Tension' (1998), 'Flying Blind' (2002), and, most recently, 'The View From Here' (2008).

Deb's tour is made possible by the support of the Australia Council for the Arts in collaboration with the national network of State and Territory Writers Centres.

When: Friday 5 June, 7pm–8:30pm  
Where: The Village Larder,  
81 High Street, Woodend  
Price: FREE but bookings essential  
Level: All

**The Salon Does Season 2** with Jenny Valentish

Join us for a sneak-preview of all of the literary goodies we'll have coming up for you in the second half of the year, with special guest Jenny Valentish.

Jenny Valentish has been the editor of 'Time Out Melbourne' and 'Triple J Magazine'. She has written for women's titles – 'Cleo', 'ELLE', 'New Woman' and 'Minx' (UK); teen titles – 'Sugar' (UK) and 'Chik'; men's titles – 'Ralph'; 'Men's Style'; newspapers – Fairfax; News Ltd, 'The Saturday Paper'; and miscellaneous other titles including 'The Big issue' and 'The Monthly'. She has lectured in journalism at Monash University and guided students through their work experience modules.

When: Tuesday 9 June, 6:15pm–8pm  
Price: FREE but bookings essential  
Level: All

## Novel in a Year

**Voice and Point of View** with Demet Divaroren

This workshop is part of our Novel in a Year series, with 10 different writers guiding you through the key elements of novel writing.

A good character will have a unique voice that captures readers and stays with them long after the last page. But how do you create a voice that's memorable, distinct and consistent? Learn how to find your character's voice and the best point of view to tell their story.

Demet Divaroren writes fiction and non-fiction and is the co-editor of 'Coming of Age: Growing Up Muslim in Australia' anthology. Her writing has appeared in 'Griffith REVIEW', 'Island', Scribe's 'New Australian Stories' anthology, 'The Age Epicure' and 'The Big Issue'. Demet has taught creative writing at TAFE and has appeared as a panellist, guest speaker and workshop leader at literary festivals, institutions, and schools across Melbourne.

When: Sunday 21 June, 9:30am–12:30pm  
(1pm–4pm BOOKED OUT)  
Member price: \$80/70  
Non-member price: \$110  
Level: Emerging

## Memoir in a Year

**Synopsis and Pitch** with Foong Ling Kong

There is no one-size-fits-all book proposal and pitch, but there are elements worth knowing about that may improve your chances of getting past first base. Find out how publishers choose and what they look for. Learn the rudiments of a well-constructed proposal, how to write a successful covering letter and the importance of a good synopsis.

Foong Ling Kong has two decades' experience as an editor and publisher of books across a wide range of genres, especially non-fiction. She is also Managing Editor of 'Anne Summers Reports' and a board member of the Stella Prize.

When: Sunday 14 June, 9am–midday  
(1pm–4pm BOOKED OUT)  
Member price: \$80/70  
Non-member price: \$110  
Level: Emerging

## Workshops

### **Short Story Masterclass** with Laurie Steed

The creation of innovative, memorable short fiction is never accidental. It's the result of thematic consistency, authenticity of voice and any number of carefully considered choices in regards to story style, format and structure. Explore the advanced elements of crafting quality short fiction such as interlinking narratives, subtext, and non-linear approaches to time within the narrative framework. Get feedback on a story of your own and find your way towards writing memorable, original, and ultimately more publishable fiction.

Laurie Steed is an author of award-winning literary fiction from Perth. His stories have been broadcast on BBC Radio 4 and published in 'Best Australian Stories', 'The Age', 'Meanjin', 'Westerly', 'Island', 'The Sleepers Almanac' and elsewhere. In 2012 he won the Patricia Hackett Prize for Fiction. Laurie's tour is made possible by the support of the Australia Council for the Arts in collaboration with the national network of State and Territory Writers Centres.

**When:** Sunday 21 June, 10am–4pm  
**Member price:** \$180/170  
**Non-member price:** \$230  
**Level:** Established

### **The Verse Novel** with Lisa Jacobson

Writing a verse novel is like riding a horse: the story wants to gallop home but the poetry must be reined in. It can be a rewarding ride, but one that requires tenacity and trust in the creature itself. Explore the verse novel through conversation, creative wordplay and samples of the form. You may have a work in progress, an emerging idea, or no idea at all – whatever stage you are at, this short course will help your writing evolve.

Lisa Jacobson is an award-winning poet and fiction writer. Her verse novel 'The Sunlit Zone' won the 2014 Adelaide Festival John Bray Poetry Award and was shortlisted for four other national awards, including the Prime Minister's Literary Awards.

**When:** Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 June, 10am–4pm  
**Member price:** \$260/280  
**Non-member price:** \$380  
**Level:** Emerging and Established

## Winter School

**Member price:** \$120/\$130

**Non-member price:** \$180

**Level:** All Winter School courses are for early and emerging writers (unless otherwise stated)

### **Reviewing** with Alison Croggon

What makes a good critique? How do you make the move from personal opinion to officer reviewer (and get paid for your efforts)? And how do you get your opinion heard in the wide world of online commentary? Explore what makes an effective and engaging review and get tips on developing your own critical style.

Alison Croggon was the 2009 Geraldine Pascall Critic of the Year and ran the influential review blog Theatre Notes for eight years. She has reviewed for 'The Bulletin', 'The Australian', 'The Guardian' and the ABC. She is also an award-winning poet and novelist

**When:** Monday 6 July, 10am–4pm

### **A Crash Course in Freelance Journalism** with Greg Foyster

Whether it's your core practice or a stimulating side venture, freelance writing offers journalistic independence and creative control. Gain a toolkit for getting started, including advice about pitching, planning, interviewing, editing your own work and building a successful business model.

Greg Foyster is a full-time freelance journalist and editor. His feature articles, news stories and opinion pieces have appeared in 'The Age', 'The Big Issue', 'Crikey', the ABC and 'Smith Journal'. He is the author of the book 'Changing Gears: A Pedal-Powered Detour from the Rat Race', and has been featured in 'The Age' Top 100 list of inspiring and influential Melburnians.

**When:** Tuesday 7 July, 10am–4pm

### **Blogging 1.0** with Karen Andrews

Blogging is a terrific way of developing your voice and can be a powerful platform from which to showcase your talents to readers. Many bloggers have gone on to create careers for themselves, making money, signing book deals and other exciting tales. If you want to start a blog but feel a little overwhelmed and need some guidance, learn the cornerstone concepts such as

planning and writing content, social media navigation, audience development and more.

Karen Andrews is an award-winning writer, author, editor, poet and publisher. Her work has appeared in 'Island', 'Meanjin', 'The Age', 'The Australian', 'Sunday Life' and many other publications. Her latest book is 'Crying in the Car: Reflections on Life and Motherhood'. She has been blogging since 2006.

When: Wednesday 8 July, 10am–4pm

**Writing for Audio** with Michele Lee and guests  
Radio plays conjures up BBC radio serials with cheesy sound effects. But most festivals are programming audio works and the revamped Creative Audio Unit at Radio National continues to produce radio drama. Everyone's connected to a smart-phone, everyone's familiar with the intimacy of a podcast. How do you write creative work that is to be experienced primarily through the ears and mind?

Michele Lee is a Melbourne-based playwright and author. Her radio play 'See How The Leaf People Run', commissioned and produced by ABC Radio National, won an AWGIE award for Best Original Radio Play in 2013. Her audio theatre work 'Talon Salon' invited people into nail salons to listen to audio pieces while getting their nails done. She is currently working on an audio theatre piece for Arts House. She writes about identity, race and otherness.

When: Thursday 9 July, 10am–4pm

**Advanced Short Story** with Cate Kennedy  
What are the elements that make a good story great? If you're not sure, or need reminding and re-inspiring, come along to an intensive day focussed on tapping into your storyteller intuitions about characterisation, narrative, dialogue and imagery. The skills you learn in short story writing can inform all other genres and can increase your confidence in developing your writer's voice, exposing your strengths and weak spots, and help you uncover your most vibrant subject matter.

Cate Kennedy is an author and editor who has long had a love affair with the short story form. Her most recent collection is 'Like a House on Fire' which won the Queensland Literary award for a short story collection in 2013, and her most recent editing venture is

'New Australian Love Stories' (2014). She also writes poetry, non-fiction, children's books and novels, and her work has been published both in Australia and internationally.

When: Friday 10 July, 10am–4pm

**Historical Fiction** with Ilka Tampke

From 'Akhenaten' to 'The Secret River', powerful, well-told historical fiction can help us connect to our cultural ancestry and more deeply understand who we are. Is there a moment or character in human history that ignites your imagination? This is where we begin. Explore how to make a past world pulse with life, as well as how to navigate the research process so that it fuels and inspires your writing.

Ilka Tampke is the author of 'Skin', the story of a young woman's rise to power set in Iron Age Britain on the cusp of Roman invasion. 'Skin' has been sold in the UK, US, Germany and Sweden. Ilka completed the graduate diploma in Professional Writing and Editing at RMIT in 2012 and has had stories and articles published in several anthologies.

When: Monday 13 July, 10am–4pm

**Dance Steps for the Self-Employed Writer** with Jackey Coyle

How do you build a living around creative writing? Some writers teach, some run workshops or hold down a job. Others speak, edit or write copy, articles or corporate content. To design your writer's life you need to have extra skills to plan, work smarter, keep the books, maximise tax deductions and run your writing micro-business. It's like learning to dance – getting with the rhythm, sharpening your coordination, mastering new steps and being nimble.

Jackey Coyle sustains her creative writing practice by writing features, editing fiction and non-fiction, teaching writing, and sharing what she's learned in her Dance Steps for the Self-Employed course. She is President of Editors Victoria and Editor of 'Inside Small Business'. Her successful businesses include publishing-editing-writing, retail-wholesale, teaching-training, picture-framing and design.

When: Tuesday 14 July, 10am–4pm

**Self-Editing for Writers** with Glenys Osborne

For a writer, the ability to edit your own work is a necessary survival skill. Part vocational requirement, part housekeeping and part self-care, editing your own text is crucial to making it attractive to literary agents, publishers and ultimately readers. Self-editing can also be vital to exploring and realising your creative intentions. Bring a 500-word extract from a first draft of your own work and a blue pen to receive an overview of approaches and practices related to self-editing.

Glenys Osborne writes, edits and teaches. She taught editing in RMIT's Master of Communication for more than a decade, was formerly a managing editor in educational publishing house and was also a fiction editor for the creative journal 'Etchings'. Glenys has won numerous prizes for her short fiction. Her first novel, 'Come Inside' (2009), won the Barbara Jefferis Award and was shortlisted for 'The Age' Book of the Year, among other awards. She is writing her third novel and a collection of short stories.

When: Wednesday 15 July, 10am–4pm

**Lit Journals 1.0** with Ronnie Scott

Australia is undergoing a renaissance of literary magazines – publications with unique voices and visions that cultivate, incubate, and spread interesting art and writing. Learn how to start your own, from conception to publication to distribution. How do you find good work, and how do you make good work better? How do you make sure your magazine reaches the right audience? And how do you develop the magazine so it survives long into the future?

Ronnie Scott founded 'The Lifted Brow' in 2007. There, he published work by some of the best young writers working in Australia today, alongside luminaries like Helen Garner, Neil Gaiman, Christos Tsiolkas, and David Foster Wallace. He's a writer for 'The Monthly', 'The Believer', 'The Australian', 'The Saturday Paper', ABC Radio, the National Gallery of Victoria, and many other venues, and he's the author of 'Salad Days', an essay about food and money (Penguin, 2014).

When: Friday 17 July, 10am–4pm

**The Real in Sci Fi and Fantasy** with Isabelle Carmody

It's the reality in science fiction and fantasy that captures an audience and holds them. Some aspects of reality are better explored with the fantastic. Think of gender in 'The Left Hand of Darkness' and in 'The Handmaidens' Tale'. Think of the betrayal of friendship and ideals in 'Animal Farm'. Learn how to make the fantastic feel real using characterisation, place and detail. Try your hand at finding yourself in a fairy tale, and discover how this can result in a remarkably original story.

Isabelle Carmody is one of Australia's most highly regarded and prominent authors of fantasy. A consummate and much-loved storyteller, Isabelle has written over thirty novels and many short stories and she has a host of award-winning novels to her credit. She also illustrated 'The Legend of Little Fur' series and 'The Kingdom of The Lost' series. Isabelle is currently working on 'The Red Queen', the final book in the Obernewtyn Chronicles which will be published later this year.

When: Friday 17 July, 10am–4pm

**Investigative Writing** with Julie Szego

When we talk about investigative writing most of us think about the front-page "exclusive". But a newspaper report can also mark the start of a writer's investigative journey, not the end. Whether an essay, memoir or hard-hitting exposé, most stories force the writer to find the answer to a question. Learn how to nail the question, chase down leads and shape your quest into a narrative that hooks readers from first sentence to last.

Julie Szego was a lawyer before she switched to journalism. She worked for 12 years at 'The Age' and now writes a fortnightly column for the paper. She has taught writing at RMIT University and journalism at Monash University, edited her father's 2001 memoir, 'Two Prayers to One God' and contributed to various books and publications. Her non-fiction book, 'The Tainted Trial of Farah Jama', was shortlisted for the 2015 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards.

When: Saturday 18 July, 10am–4pm



# Classifieds

## Writing Mentor & Freelance Editor

Do you need an objective critique of your writing project? Denise Taylor offers mentoring, editing and proofreading packages tailored to suit the requirements of each writer. For a quote, please submit an overview of your writing needs to [www.denisemtaylor.com.au/contact/](http://www.denisemtaylor.com.au/contact/) or call for a chat on 0438 113 331.

## Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015

Please visit [melbourneprize.org](http://melbourneprize.org) to register your interest to receive information on the Melbourne Prize for Literature 2015 and Awards. With a prize pool over \$100,000, including a new award, all writing genres are eligible. Open to Victorian residents only.

## New Free eBook

Writers Victoria member Pat Amor and her husband, Ron, have written a FREE eBook, *Tall Pop-pies Along the Yarra*. The book contains mini-biographies of thirteen inspirational men associated with the Yarra River: Aboriginal Elder, William Barak; Co-founder of Melbourne John Fawkner; Surveyor Robert Hoddle; Overlander Joseph Hawdon; Gambling entrepreneur John Wren; Artist and conservationist Neil Douglas; Bridge-builder engineer John Monash, Canoe-builder Carl Sierak and contemporary figures: Environmental Campaigner Leonard Allen; Winemaker Guille dePury; Athlete and Governor John Landy and the first Yarra Riverkeeper Ian Penrose. This free ebook is available from [www.smashwords.com](http://www.smashwords.com)

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# Member Discounts

## 5% Discount

Deans Art [deansart.com.au](http://deansart.com.au)

Punthill Apartment Hotels [punthill.com.au](http://punthill.com.au)

## 10% Discount

Ballarat Books [ballaratbooks.com.au](http://ballaratbooks.com.au)

Benn's Books [bennsbooks.com.au](http://bennsbooks.com.au)

Brunswick Street Bookstore  
[brunswickstreetbookstore.com](http://brunswickstreetbookstore.com)

Busybird Publishing [busybird.com.au](http://busybird.com.au)

Collected Works Bookshop  
Lvl 1, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne. 9654 8873.

Continental Bookshop Soundbooks  
[continentalbookshop.com](http://continentalbookshop.com)

Create a Kid's Book [createakidsbook.com.au](http://createakidsbook.com.au)

Griffith Review [griffithreview.com](http://griffithreview.com)  
Code: WRITVIC

Hares & Hyenas Bookshop [hares-hyenas.com.au](http://hares-hyenas.com.au)

Halcyon Hideaway [halcyonhideaway.com.au](http://halcyonhideaway.com.au)

Macquarie Dictionary Online  
[www.macquariedictionary.com.au](http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au)  
Code: WR1T3R14

New International Bookshop  
54 Victoria St, Carlton South. 9662 3744.

Paperback Bookshop [paperbackbooks.com.au](http://paperbackbooks.com.au)

Queensberry Pip holiday rental Daylesford  
[queensberrypip.com](http://queensberrypip.com)

Rose Lawyers Tel. 03 9878 5222  
[www.roselaw.com.au](http://www.roselaw.com.au)

The Lifted Brow literary magazine  
[theliftedbrow.com](http://theliftedbrow.com)

Wordy-Gurdy Publishing and Editing  
[www.wordygurdy.com.au](http://www.wordygurdy.com.au)

## 15% Discount

Sybers Books [sybersbooks.com.au](http://sybersbooks.com.au)

Angleton's Office Supplies  
187 Smith St, Fitzroy. 03 9419 5855

## 25% Discount

Little Raven Publishing [littleravenpublishing.com](http://littleravenpublishing.com)

# Competitions

## **2015 Grieve Writing Competition**

Entries are open for Hunter Writers Centre's annual Grieve Writing Competition. The maximum length is 500 words for prose pieces and 36 lines for poetry. Prizes of up to \$1000 will be awarded to the top entries focussing on the theme of grief. Entry fee is \$11, but free for members of Hunters Writing Centre. [hunterwriterscentre.org/grieve-project.html](http://hunterwriterscentre.org/grieve-project.html)

Closes June 1

## **The Novella Award**

The Novella Award is a writing competition that celebrates new fiction in the novella form. The Novella Award is now open to any unpublished novella, written in English, between 20,000 and 40,000 words. 1st Prize is £1,000 and publication by Sandstone Press. Entry fee is £17. [thenovellaaward.com](http://thenovellaaward.com)

Closes 5 June

## **Shoalhaven Literary Award 2015**

The Shoalhaven Literary Award for 2015 is now open. This year the competition is for short stories. The theme is open and the word limit is 3000. First prize is \$1000 and a two-week residency at Bundanon on the beautiful Shoalhaven River. [www.fawnswoalhaven.org.au/](http://www.fawnswoalhaven.org.au/)

Closes 12 June

## **The Norton Writer's Prize**

The Norton Writer's Prize is awarded annually for an outstanding essay written by an undergraduate. The winner will receive a cash award of \$1,500. Two runners-up will each receive a cash award of \$1,000. [books.wwnorton.com/books/norton-writers-prize/?mid=145](http://books.wwnorton.com/books/norton-writers-prize/?mid=145)

Closes 15 June

## **American Short Fiction Contest**

All entries must be single, self-contained works of fiction, between 2,000-6,500 words. The first-place winner will receive a \$1,000 prize and publication in our spring issue. One runner-up will receive \$500 and all entries will be considered for publication. International submissions in English are eligible. Entry fee is \$20. [americanshortfiction.org/2015/04/17/now-open-american-short-fiction-contest/](http://americanshortfiction.org/2015/04/17/now-open-american-short-fiction-contest/)

Closes 15 June

## **The ACU Prize for Poetry**

The 2015 ACU Prize for Poetry will be awarded for outstanding poetry with the theme Peace, Tolerance and Understanding. The competition is open to all citizens or permanent residents of Australia and any international student currently studying at an Australian university may also apply. First prize is \$7,000.

Closes 16 June

## **The S.D. Harvey Short Story Award**

This annual competition organised by the Australian Crime Writers Association. Prize partner 'Kill Your Darlings' will publish the winner. Winners also receive a cash prize of \$1000. An entry fee of \$10 applies and stories must be between 2000 and 4000 words in length. [killyourdarlingsjournal.com/2015/02/the-s-d-harvey-short-story-award/](http://killyourdarlingsjournal.com/2015/02/the-s-d-harvey-short-story-award/)

Closes 16 June

## **34th Newcastle Poetry Prize**

Entries are open for the 34th annual Newcastle Poetry Prize. You can enter a poem, or suite of poems, up to 200 lines in length. First prize receives \$12,000, with additional prizes for runners up. The Harri Jones Memorial Prize is awarded to a poet under 35 years of age, who also receives \$250. [hunterwriterscentre.org/newcastle-poetry.html](http://hunterwriterscentre.org/newcastle-poetry.html)

Closes 19 June

## **V.S. Pritchett Memorial Prize**

This annual prize of £1,000 goes to the best unpublished short story of the year. The winning entry is also published in Prospect online and the RSL Review. [rsliterature.org/award/v-s-pritchett-memorial-prize/](http://rsliterature.org/award/v-s-pritchett-memorial-prize/)

Closes 22 June

## **Scribes Writers 'Poetic Licence' Poetry Competition**

This open-themed poetry competition has two categories: Traditional verse and free verse. The winner of each category receives \$200. Entry fee is \$7. Poems have a maximum of 60 lines. [www.scribeswriters.com/poetry.html](http://www.scribeswriters.com/poetry.html)

Closes 30 June

### **The Greenhouse Funny Prize**

The Greenhouse Literary Agency is looking for humorous picture books, middle grade, teen and YA stories with outstanding plots. Greenhouse aims to nurture and grow the talent of exceptional writers. <http://www.writing.ie/writing-comps/the-greenhouse-funny-prize-2015/>

Closes 30 June

### **Books Ireland Short Story Competition**

Books Ireland invite you to enter their inaugural short story competition. It is open to all writers of any nationality writing in English. The maximum number of words allowed is 2,600. The winning story will be published in a future issue of Books Ireland and will receive €400. [www.booksirelandmagazine.com/competition/](http://www.booksirelandmagazine.com/competition/)

Closes 30 June

### **Helen Sheehan Book Prize**

The Helen Sheehan Book Prize is for an unpublished YA manuscript, minimum of 50,000 words. They are interested in quality stories with heart, guts, and a clear voice. The winning manuscript will receive \$1000 and a contract with ERB. There is a \$20 submission fee. <http://www.elephantrockbooks.com/ya.html>

Closes 30 June

### **Howard Frank Mosher Short Fiction Prize**

The Howard Frank Mosher Short Fiction Prize is an annual contest for short fiction. Entries must be original, unpublished and under 10,000 words. The winner receives \$1000 and publication. Two honourable mentions receive \$100 each, and are considered for publication. Entry is \$20. [hungermtn.org/contests/howard-frank-mosher-short-fiction-prize/](http://hungermtn.org/contests/howard-frank-mosher-short-fiction-prize/)

Closes 30 June

### **The Moth International Short Story Prize**

The Moth International Short Story Prize is open to everyone, as long as the work is original and previously unpublished. There is a 6,000 word limit. The entry fee is €12 per story and first prize is €3000. You can enter online or simply send your story or stories

along with a cheque or postal order made payable to 'The Moth Magazine Ltd.' and an entry form or a cover letter with your name and contact details and the title of story attached to: The Moth, Drummullen, Cavan, Co. Cavan, Ire-land. This year's competition will be judged by Donal Ryan. <http://www.themothmagazine.co.uk/mothstory/story1.asp>

Closes 30 June

### **Children's Peace Literature Award**

This Award of \$3,000 is offered by Psychologists for Peace, for books for children published between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2015 with a theme or main character(s) encouraging the peaceful resolution of conflict and/or promoting peace at the global, local and interpersonal level. The award is made biennially by the Psychologists for Peace Interest Group South Australian State Group. Details at [www.psychology.org.au/about/awards/childrens/](http://www.psychology.org.au/about/awards/childrens/) or by email to [helen.winefield@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:helen.winefield@adelaide.edu.au)

Closes 31 July

### **2015 Carmel Bird Award**

Entries are open for the 2015 Carmel Bird Award. They are looking for short crime fiction with a uniquely Australian flavour, and which breaks free of the crime genre conventions, up to 5000 words. The prize will be judged by Zane Lovitt. Winning and selected shortlisted stories will be published in the Spineless Wonders. First prize receives \$500. <http://shortaustralianstories.com.au/submissions/the-carmel-bird-award/>

Closes 31 August

### **2015 Cowley Literary Award**

The 2015 CLA will again comprise Fiction and Non-Fiction sections with a maximum of 1,500 words. Entry will open 1st January 2015 and close on 31st August 2015. Comprising two sections, fiction and non-fiction, the Cowley Literary Award will have no subject theme. It is for writers to decide their subject. Stories to be a maximum of 1,500 words. Entry is \$25. First prize is \$5,000 and runner up receives \$1,000. <http://www.australianartsales.com.au/cowley-award>

Closes 31 August

# Milestones

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Pat Amor and her husband, Ron, have written an eBook, 'Tall Poppies Along the Yarra'. The book contains mini-biographies of thirteen inspirational men associated with the Yarra River. The free ebook is available from [www.smashwords.com/books/view/519952](http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/519952) or [www.ronamor.net](http://www.ronamor.net)

Gloria Meltzer's manuscript 'Only In Sri Lanka' has been accepted for publication by Jojo Publishers, and will be published later in 2015.

Lee Kofman had an essay included in the anthology of motherhood 'Mothermorphosis', published by Melbourne University Press.

Amanda Witt had a short article detailing her struggles with unemployment published in the April issue of the ALIA magazine, 'Incite'.

Julie Constable's 'The Gunyah Tree' was published in 'In their Branches: Stories from ABC RN's Trees Project' edited by Gretchen Miller. The piece was broadcast last year.

Maribel Steel had an essay published with Culture Victoria & Museums Australia (VIC), 'Eyes on Access: A Shared Vision', as part of a special project exploring a sensory experience from the world through the eyes and ears of the deaf and blind communities in Victoria. She also had a feature article published by the Australian Society of Authors (ASA), 'Changing the Way We See Books', in 'The Australian Author' magazine.

Kirstyn McDermott won 'Best Fan Publication in Any Medium' for her podcast 'The Writer and the Critic' at the recent Ditmar Awards.

'As Wasps Fly Upward' by Judith Beveridge, tutor, and 'Pitch and Yaw' by Alex Skovron, member, have been shortlisted for the Peter Porter Poetry Prize.

'Tattoo' by Susan Yardley, member, was shortlisted for the 2015 Commonwealth Short Story prize.

Members Alice Bishop, Rebecca Butterworth, Li-Kim Chuah, Emilie Collyer, Astrid Edwards (member and Committee of Management), Lian Low, Izzy Roberts-Orr, and Sam van Zweden have been selected for Hot Desk Fellowships, hosted by the Wheeler Centre and supported by the Readings Foundation.

Emily Bitto's novel 'The Strays' won the 2015 Stella Prize announced on the 21st April. 'The Strays' is also longlisted for the Dobbie Literary Award for a First Time Published Author along with Nicole Smith's 'Sideshow' and tutor Maxine Beneba Clarke's 'Foreign Soil'.

Susan Hawthorne, member and tutor, is a recipient of the 2015 George Robertson Award, which recognises long and distinguished service to the publishing industry.

Laurie Steed, member and tutor, has been selected as Writer in Residence for the BWRes at Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest in Kentucky, USA. He will spend the time working on his novel-in-stories, 'The Bear'.

Sarah Vincent, staff member, is one of 30 writers Australia wide who has been accepted into the ACT Writers Centre's Hardcopy program. The program is a 6-month manuscript development and publishing pathways development program for emerging writers.

Demet Divaroren and Amra Pajalic's anthology, 'Coming of Age: Growing up Muslim in Australia', was named a Notable Book of 2015 in the Eve Pownall Award for Information Books.

Pauline James's debut novel, *Disturbing the Dust*, published by Jojo Publishing, was launched at Readings, Hawthorn, in April. A psychological novel, set largely in England, it explores the challenge of coming to terms with injustice. Books are readily available from the publisher and certain Readings' and Dymocks' stores, and further information can be found at [www.paulinejames.com.au](http://www.paulinejames.com.au).



# Opportunities

## **Submit to 'Verandah'**

Submissions are open for 'Verandah', an annual anthology published by Deakin University. Single submissions \$10; two or three submissions \$15. Submissions can be a mixture of prose, poetry or art. Each year 'Verandah' offers a number of prizes for the best submissions. [verandah-journal.wordpress.com/submit-2/](http://verandah-journal.wordpress.com/submit-2/)

Closes 5 June

## **Glenfern Fellowships**

Emerging and established writers are invited to apply for the 2015 Glenfern Fellowships. Winners of the prestigious Fellowships will receive free use of one of our historic Glenfern writers' studios for three months (from October to December 2015). The Glenfern Fellowships for emerging writers are supported by the Grace Marion Wilson Trust. Apply online at [writersvictoria.org.au](http://writersvictoria.org.au)

Closes 19 July

## **Submit to 'Visible Ink Anthology'**

Visible Ink is now open for Issue #27 'After the Rain' submissions. We accept narrative non-fiction, fiction, poetry and flash fiction. All written submissions must be maximum 2,000 words; poetry, maximum 50 lines; flash fiction, maximum 250 words. Details and guidelines can be found at: <http://visibleinkanthology.com/submissions/>

Closes 27 July

## **Submit to 'Southerly'**

Southerly has opened submissions for their 2nd edition of 'The Naked Writer'. Southerly is looking for essays and creative non-fiction, stories and poems, on all aspects of the writing process and the links between life and work. Short stories must be between 2000-8000 words and up to 5 poems can be submitted at a time. <http://southerlyjournal.com.au/2015/04/13/call-for-submissions-the-naked-writer-2/>

Closes 31 July

## **Submit to Hardie Grant Egmont Ampersand Project**

Hardie Grant Publishing has opened submissions for Young Adult and middle-grade manuscripts across all genres and lengths. Successful manuscripts will be considered for publication. Manuscripts must be unsolicited and unpublished. For eligibility and submission forms see: <http://theampersandproject.tumblr.com/rulesFAQ>

Closes 14 September

## **BuzzFeed Emerging Writers Fellowship**

During BuzzFeed's four-month program, the writers in this fellowship will benefit from career mentorship and editorial guidance while also receiving financial support. The fellowship begins the first week of January 2016. Applicants must be authorised to work in the United States. Further application details can be read on their website. <http://www.buzzfeed.com/saeedjones/buzzfeed-emerging-writers-fellowship#.kf9K1r7nzW>

Closes 1 October

## **Submit to 'Busybird Creative Fellowship'**

The inaugural Busybird Creative Fellowship is awarded each year to a new or emerging writer. The fellowship includes \$500, the use of the Busybird Publishing studio gallery spaces, mentorship, free entry to any in-house workshops and discounted publishing services. [http://www.busybird.com.au/?page\\_id=5386](http://www.busybird.com.au/?page_id=5386)

Closes 30 October

## **Submit to 'Southerly'**

Southerly is looking for essays, memoir, fiction and poetry on all aspects of war in honour of the 2015 centenary of the landing at Gallipoli for their next themed journal 'War & Peace'. Short stories must be between 2000-8000 words and up to 5 poems can be submitted at a time. <http://southerlyjournal.com.au/2015/04/13/call-for-submissions-war-peace/>

Closes 31 October

# PEN International and the Protection of Refugees

by Chris McKenzie, PEN Melbourne

Earlier this year more than 1000 writers joined the call put out by PEN International, English PEN, German PEN and colleagues, for greater protection for refugees in Europe. The situation of people trying to cross to Europe to escape war, persecution, hunger and the subsequent inhumane living conditions in their homelands is a human catastrophe which resulted in the deaths at sea of more than 1700 refugees and migrants by mid-April this year. PEN International's message to the European leaders stated the demand that the nations of Europe create common, humane laws of asylum that are not driven by national interests, but instead by a spirit of solidarity and a sense of responsibility. The obligation to provide protection to persecuted people must apply without reservation.

John Ralston Saul, PEN International president said: 'We go to the European Parliament with a simple message: We and our civilisation will be judged by the solidarity we show with people in crisis.' Ralston Saul's words echo the strong feelings of many who condemn the inhumane treatment of those seeking asylum in Australia. Under the UN's 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the subsequent 1967 Protocol, to which Australia is a signatory Australia has humanitarian and legal obligations to accept refugees. There is no denying that this is a complex situation and the numbers of people displaced by on-going conflicts and the devastating effects of climate change, particularly in our region, will surely increase in the coming years.

PEN is one of many organisations Australia wide who support and lobby for the rights of asylum seekers. As an organisation that advocates for the human rights of people detained, imprisoned, and in other ways persecuted for peacefully doing their job as writers, usually under repressive regimes, PEN has long been committed to speaking out also on behalf of refugees seeking safety in Australia. PEN has worked specifically on the cases of writers held in Australian detention centres. Iranian dissident Ardeshir

Gholipour arrived here after being imprisoned in Tehran for his involvement in the Freedom Movement of Iran among other democratic movements. Ivory Coast journalist, Cheikh Kone was imprisoned in the Port Hedland Centre after escaping his country following the publication of an article asserting that election results had been rigged. PEN Melbourne and Sydney PEN played a significant role in their release from detention.

The more recent reports about the brutal treatment of asylum seekers and their children in detention centres on Manus Island and Nauru weigh terribly on all who care about human rights and our obligations under the UN convention. PEN stands for freedom of expression and upholds the power of the written word to cross borders and create understanding between people and across cultures. Of great concern to PEN is the restriction placed on journalists and writers who want to gain access to the detention centres to report on the state of affairs there and to convey back to us the stories of the detainees. As has been shown in the anthologies of stories written by refugees and advocates that have emerged in recent years, it is the personal story, that one deeply felt account of the why and the how of an asylum seeker's journey that opens hearts and minds to the humanity of that person and to the certain knowledge that there but for some sort of good fortune go I.

As Gillian Triggs president of the Australian Human Rights Commission put it in her foreword to the 2014 report 'The Forgotten Children: National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention', 'Australia should return to its historical generosity of spirit by welcoming to our shores those who seek our protection from conflict and persecution.'<sup>11</sup>

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**Nitpicker answers:**  
1. into  
2. are  
3. operated – This is the preferable choice, as 'manned' can be read as gender-specific and many style guides advise against it.  
4. amount  
5. include

# Membership Form

WRITERS  
VICTORIA

Name  Membership number (if applicable)

Organisation (if an organisational membership)

Postal address  Email

☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive our enews

Suburb  Phone

Postcode  State  Gender ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other

Age ☐ Under 18 ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55–64 ☐ 65+

At what stage of writing are you?

☐ Early (just begun) ☐ Emerging (some publication) ☐ Established (published a full-length work)

What do you write, or what would you like to write?

<input type="checkbox"/> Academic	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime	<input type="checkbox"/> Literary fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Web content
<input type="checkbox"/> Biography/Memoir	<input type="checkbox"/> Essays/Reviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Lyrics	<input type="checkbox"/> Romance	<input type="checkbox"/> Young adult
<input type="checkbox"/> Blog	<input type="checkbox"/> Family history	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Screenwriting	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Technical	<input type="checkbox"/> Feature writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Playwriting	<input type="checkbox"/> Short stories	
<input type="checkbox"/> Childrens	<input type="checkbox"/> Graphic novels	<input type="checkbox"/> Poetry	<input type="checkbox"/> Speculative fiction	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copywriting	<input type="checkbox"/> Journalism	<input type="checkbox"/> Popular fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Travel	

Do you identify as:

☐ Culturally and Linguistically Diverse ☐ Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander ☐ Person with Disability

One-year memberships

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$68	<input type="checkbox"/> Institution/Corporation \$210
<input type="checkbox"/> Concession \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Writers group/Not-for-profit organisation \$130
<input type="checkbox"/> Regional \$44	<input type="checkbox"/> Overseas individual postal subscription \$88

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