LOVE YOUR WRITING BUDDY
MEETING ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Valerie Pary on setting your own pace
Louise Cusack goes to sea
The benefits of sharing a kind word
Ellen van Neerven’s heat and light
From the Chair
Leanne Dodd, QWC treasurer
on behalf of Kevin Gillespie

THE ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote, ‘Man is by nature a social animal’. Almost 25 centuries after those words were written they still hold true. We are compelled to group together in this thing we call ‘society’. The growth of today’s social media society is nothing new. It is merely a modern extension of this basic human need.

As an emerging writer during the infancy of social media, I had the choice to embrace this phenomenon or hide from it. I’m glad of my choice to join in because the romantic notion of the ‘non-social’ solitary author is lost on today’s readers. If you think you can avoid social media, let’s look at some stats. Facebook has approximately 1.23 billion users worldwide. More video is uploaded to YouTube in one month than the amount of video that NBC, ABC and CBS combined have produced in 60 years. Vine, Flicker and Instagram took top spots in the best-selling mobile apps for 2013, demonstrating the importance we place on sharing personal information. Social media is a phenomenon that is here to stay and with it has come a much more demanding fan base. In a world where everything is accessible at the tips of our fingers, readers want their authors to be accessible too.

Being an author in today’s society is about more than merely writing a book. Editors and agents are attracted to authors who have this thing called ‘platform’. Publishers will even demand you have one. So what is all the hype about? You owe it to yourself and your readers to find out so you can reach out and give them not only what they want but what they need. Society not only fulfils people’s basic needs, it also satisfies their desires and aspirations, so grouping and partnering with like-minded writers can also be a godsend in developing your skills and achieving your dreams.

So what do you do when all your dreams come true? You pay it forward. Volunteering at festivals, schools and libraries, and appearing on panels at writing events are not only wonderful ways to share your learning and experiences with fellow writers, but also ways to build your author platform.

So step up on your platform and take a bow – it’s your new stage.
ONE of my fondest memories from a writers’ festival is bumping into thriller writer Matthew Reilly at the Brisbane Writers Festival, back before it moved to the SLQ precinct. My then partner was a fan and said hello, we chatted, and when he found out I was an aspiring writer, he advised me to stick to writing what I loved. It’s advice I’ve clung to ever since.

You never know who you’ll meet at festivals, but you’re almost guaranteed to come away with a new addition for your ‘must-read’ pile, a new writer to follow; and if you’re lucky, a new friend or two.

As a rule, they’re a welcoming bunch, writers, happy to talk about the craft, the business, their work, and offer advice to fledglings. At conventions they swap stories, make recommendations, exchange contacts. Online friends put faces to names. It’s a pretty good mix of business and pleasure.

Festivals can be daunting, but also inspiring, and unlike a lot of social occasions, there’s one given: you really do all have something in common. ‘What do you like to read?’ and ‘Who are you here to see?’ are great questions to the next in line to while away the queue for coffee.

The calendar at the back of WQ shows events running all the way through to December, with a tantalising spring crop to keep the mileage up after the heady winter rush.

It’s worth leaving the keyboard to join the mix. Good friends, good times and good advice await.
PROFILE

Ellen van Neerven
Kathy George

MOST writers write differently to the way they talk and it’s not often you get a sense of a writer’s personality by reading their words, but this happens when I read Ellen van Neerven’s work. Heat and light radiate from the page, strangely so, since Heat and Light is the title of van Neerven’s short story collection. The winner of the David Unaipon Award for unpublished Indigenous writer in last year’s Queensland Literary Awards, it will be published this year by UQP.

The short story collection revolves mostly around an Aboriginal family, the Kresingers, which, to quote Tolstoy, is ‘unhappy in its own way’. There are different, sometimes clashing personalities, love triangles and family secrets. One cousin runs away to Sydney and hides his identity because of a traumatic childhood event. There are cultural lessons, as well as births, deaths and marriages, car chases and punch-ups.

The first story written for the collection was ‘S&J’, published in McSweeney’s, a huge achievement and confidence booster for the 23-year-old. The rest of the collection grew when van Neerven was injured in a traffic accident and could endure only short bursts of time at the computer, writing brief narrative glimpses with a sharp focus.

Born in Brisbane, van Neerven is of Mununjali and Dutch descent. She completed her schooling at Albany Creek and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from QUT. She has made appearances at the Brisbane Writers Festival, Melbourne Writers Festival, The Wheeler Centre, National Young Writers Festival and WordStorm, and is serving on the management committee of the Queensland Writers Centre. Her writing has also appeared in journals such as Voiceworks and Ora Nui, and online on Mascara Literary Review, Scum Mag and Stilts. She is employed as an editor at the State Library of Queensland as part of the black&write! Indigenous writing and editing project which aims to support and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers.

She’s quiet and unassuming and, yes, shy. But get her talking about Indigenous writing and her role in its development, and you get a sense of why her short story collection is called Heat and Light.

For one, she’s passionate about mentoring. Her own growth was encouraged and inspired by Krissy Kneen and the Avid Reader ‘crèche’, while others such as Anita Heiss and Sue Abbey showed extraordinary belief in her.

‘I do a bit of nurturing in building a writing community with black&write!’ van Neerven says. ‘Mentoring is a complex process, and can take many forms. It can be checking on emerging writers and their process. Reading, encouraging or developing writing. Sharing skills and experiences. It can be making connections between emerging writers and between established writers, and building infrastructure around that.

‘One day, when I’m much older and wiser, I hope to show the same support to others.’

Van Neerven didn’t discover Aboriginal writing until her late teens. She’d read books with Indigenous characters written by non-Indigenous writers, but nothing like Larissa Behrendt’s Home, or Tara June Winch’s Swallow The Air or Melissa Lucashenko’s Mullumbimby. There was very little Indigenous perspective. She began reading the poets Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Lisa Belllear and Samuel Wagan Watson and ‘it brought the two sides of my identity – the voracious reader and the young Aboriginal thinker – together’.

Today, she reads widely. And greedily. For now her favourite book is Louise Erdrich’s The Round House. Other writers who inspire her include Junot Diaz, Alice Munro, Lucashenko, Jeanette Winterson and Tao Lin.

A recently acquired ritual before settling down to write is to read a page or so of prose or poetry, ‘to filter out the noise of the internet, Twitter, Facebook and text messaging, because’ – and neither of us can remember who said it – ‘writers subconsciously absorb language’.

Planning plays a minor role. She likes to run with ideas.

‘There’s a perfect balance in having an idea a little formed but not too revealing. I like the mystery and the process when you sit down to write and things come together in the most surprising ways.’

Somehow we get talking about ancestral land and van Neerven admits she likes being in natural spaces.

‘I feel a vitality, a connection, coming from the land. I also like the energy radiating from big arts cities, Melbourne, for example. I enjoy watching football, too – soccer – going to games live or watching it on the big screen at the pub.’

I ask about the future, and there’s a brief glimpse of heat and light again.

‘I’d like to be travelling, researching a book. Also, to be invited to an overseas writers’ festival would be amazing. But mostly I’d like to see myself fulfilled, balancing my working life as an editor with my writing, and seeing the exciting happenings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authored literature.’

FURTHER INFORMATION
Ellen van Neerven, ellenvanneervencurrie.wordpress.com
Queensland Literary Awards, www.queenslandliteraryawards.com

Kathy George is a QUT creative writing graduate, and was a participant in the 2013 QWC/Hachette Developing Manuscript Program. She blogs at dappledwithdew.blogspot.com.au.
I also heard from non-writer passengers that they were happy to have something cerebral to entertain them rather than the usual options of bingo, bocce and ballroom dancing.

I delivered five 50-minute sessions during the fortnight cruise (on sea days) and each one consisted of a 40-minute slideshow talk, plus 10 minutes of question time. I often needed to continue answering questions outside when the sessions ran overtime, as the next presenter would be setting up in the room and timetables were strictly adhered to. It would be lovely to imagine I was rewarded so well for only five hours’ work, but it took me 50 hours to prep the talks before I left home.

The slideshow pictures need to be high-quality and very large because the largest theatre can seat 1,400 people. Because you’re using the pictures professionally, they also have to be either copyright free or belong to you. I planned to use 100 pictures for the five talks, and I certainly wasn’t going to pay $50 each for them at iStock (www.istockphoto.com), so I spent a long time trawling copyright-free websites looking for suitable images to match my planned talks, and then needing to alter those talks to fit the pictures I was finally able to source. If you only did one cruise, the work vs reward ratio wouldn’t be so shiny, but I also plan to use this set for library talks.

Regarding remuneration, my confidentiality agreement doesn’t allow me to discuss my pay or conditions, but the fact that there are writers lining up to do these gigs should tell you something. One thing you should know is that speakers can’t choose their cabin and may even end up in crew quarters (definitely not what you see in the brochures!) so be aware of that.

Overall, it was an exciting experience but there was very little downtime. I needed a holiday when I came home!

Louise Cusack is a best-selling fantasy author currently published with Pan Macmillan. She’s also a successful writing mentor and tutor who fled the bustle of Brisbane for a sea change at a beach outside Bundaberg and hasn’t looked back. louisecusack.com
WRITING buddy, writing partner, writing friend – whatever you call them, these people play a huge role in the lives of most writers. So what makes these writing relationships tick?

We asked 12 other writing buddies (see box for details), from beginners to published authors, about the benefits of their buddy system. Without exception, they demonstrated a deep care and concern for their buddies, not only as writers but as friends. Most said they trusted their buddy implicitly, and would ‘absolutely’ acknowledge their buddy’s support when publishing a work.

Nearly all exchange most or all of their work in progress, and give each other feedback. While they might argue about the feedback – typically disagreeing over punctuation! – everyone agreed that ultimate responsibility rested with the author.

As Brisbane creative and professional writing student Rachel Kench put it, ‘We’re very conscious that this isn’t our work that we’re looking over and that, in the end, our ideas or suggestions are just that.’

Email is the most common form of communication, allowing easy exchange of work in electronic format. The writers said they also used phone, text and social media to catch up, and most people met face-to-face when in the same city. With most being friends or spouses as well as writing buddies, a lot of non-writing socialisation goes on as well.

Almost all met at university, a conference, a writing program or some other writing-related environment. Quite a few became friends first and writing buddies later. Most identified a number of writing friends but pointed to one key buddy; even members of writing groups tended to identify one special person who was particularly on their wavelength.

Brisbane’s Kerri Harris said of her buddy Julie Kearney, ‘She is a perfectionist like me and treats her writing professionally, as I do. At the time I was in another writing group but the level of feedback I got (from Julie) was better than anything that came out of the other group.’

Opinions differed on the value of writing groups. Brisbane’s Krissy Kneen warned, ‘If you have too many voices it becomes confusing. I wouldn’t want more than three or four people commenting on a book. They would probably contradict each other.’

We’re very conscious that this isn’t our work that we’re looking over and that, in the end, our ideas or suggestions are just that

RACHEL KENCH

Brisbane playwright Katherine Lyall-Watson and Perth’s Laurie Steed felt a writing group could be as large as six people if everyone was dedicated and disciplined; Melbourne writer Les Zigomanis felt more than eight would be unmanageable. A number preferred to have only one writing buddy.

Betina Telegaru, an emerging writer studying at Queensland University of Technology, said, ‘I find one-on-one proofreading and editing to be the most effective. I find the feedback more detailed and helpful. However, if I feel the feedback I get from one writing buddy isn’t sufficient, it’s always great to have another perspective – that explains my three writing buddies.’

Laurie emphasised the role Les played in challenging the work. ‘We’re always willing to ask the hard questions: “How could this story be better? What’s missing or lacking?”

Krissy’s screenwriter husband and writing buddy Anthony Mullins said, ‘The most obvious benefit is the objectivity a writing partner provides for your work, but even more important I think is the companionship. Writing is such a lonely occupation most of the time. Having someone who not only understands what you’re trying to do but also cares that you’re doing it and wants you to finish – that sort of support can’t be underestimated. Every writer needs that.’

Krissy said, ‘It is through my writing partner’s first reading that I get to see my work through a reader’s eyes. She helps
me clarify which bits are working well and which aren’t. I feel totally lost when she is too busy with her own work to look over mine.’

E-zine publisher James Wright said of his non-writer buddy Evan, ‘My writing buddy is someone to bounce ideas off without guilt, fear of recriminations, fear of loss of control ... Two minds are better than one.’

Writing buddies often bring complementary strengths to the partnership.

‘I’m highly observant – it annoys Rachel slightly!’ Betina said with a laugh. ‘I have a good eye for detail, and I pick up a lot of the small errors she doesn’t notice. Whereas Rachel has a great way of stepping back and absorbing the piece as a whole, rather than breaking it down in parts. She edits in a way that’s conducive to the overall meaning.’

Asked to identify the costs or risks of the relationship, Les said, ‘The greatest risk is that I might be overstepping and abusing their hospitality.’

Krissy said, ‘You do risk losing friendships if the feedback is not delivered in the right way.’

Betina agreed, ‘There is always a risk of disappointment – if one of us is too busy to help the other, or we aren’t satisfied with the feedback the other gives. Conflicts can test our trust in each other, and this is a significant risk in working so closely with a friend.’

Charlotte Nash, whose second novel, Iron Junction (Hachette), is out this month, said, ‘Having to give my time to someone else’s work (is the cost), but as a writer you should be doing that anyway; you can’t grow on an island.’

Katherine warned of ‘spending too much time on another person’s work rather than focusing on my own. But this usually only happens when I’m looking for ways to procrastinate anyway!’

Julie provided a cautionary tale about perceived inequality in a writing relationship.

‘About a year or so ago I began moving ahead in terms of output and getting the odd thing published. At this point my writing buddy began to withdraw his always helpful, insightful critiques, saying he couldn’t presume to criticise my writing any more. I was too good for him, and so on. Our writing buddy relationship had got out of kilter because I was still providing him with the same level of feedback as before, but he was no longer doing the same for me. Eventually I suggested we end the writing relationship, which we have done. We still remain close friends.’

When we asked about the writing partnerships’ greatest achievements, we expected to hear ‘improved writing’, but at least as many responses focused on the friendship itself.

Charlotte said she’d gained ‘a really good friend. Lots of laughs. And the satisfaction of seeing my work in print and knowing she helped put it there’. And her buddy, Rebekah Turner, summed up the consensus: ‘My writing buddy is worth her weight in gold.’

Kathy George has won awards for short fiction, and her Gothic manuscript is under consideration by a publisher, which provides reflected glory for her buddy Andrea Baldwin, emerging author of adult and young adult fiction. Kathy blogs at dappledwithdew.blogspot.com.au. Andrea blogs at placeofsafety.wordpress.com and fictioncraft.wordpress.com.
Personal websites and blogs
A website and/or a blog is a must. I’m a WordPress (wordpress.com) gal – check out examples of my free sites (glitterrose.wordpress.com) and my custom sites (www.burnbright.com.au). You don’t have to spend money to have a website that is streamlined and useful. If you’re at the beginning of building your brand, start with a freebie and experiment. If you move on to a custom site, ask around for recommendations. You should NOT be spending thousands of dollars.

Facebook
Definitely the place to find a lot of people, and likely your own tribe hang out there. However, there’s been a lot of recent discussion about how youth are looking for alternatives to it because all their parents are on there! If you write for young adults, this is something you should take into consideration.

Decide straight up whether you want to build a personal page or fan page. A fan page dedicated to you as a writer, your book or series, can depersonalise your posts and may attract people who might otherwise not think, or be too shy, to request friend status with you. It also offers statistics and the opportunity to pay to promote posts (that’s a whole other article).

I run both a personal page and fan pages. I’ve surveyed my audience and they tell me that they enjoy the blend of personal and professional posts on my personal page. But this might not suit you.

Whichever you choose, know, as with all social media, that you need to post statuses regularly. I haven’t used Pay to Promote on Facebook but the experts at the Creative Collective (www.thecreativecollective.com.au) tell me that since Facebook changed its algorithms recently, it can be beneficial if you know how to work it. It’s apparently also advantageous to share to Facebook from Instagram. This will boost your visibility.

Instagram
All hail the power of the hashtag! With more than 150 million active monthly users, Instagram is one of the most popular picture and video sharing platforms, especially in the under-29 age group. Writers can use Instagram in creative ways, other than just sharing book covers and social pics. Take photos of book reviews, or blog posts, or handwritten journal entries, or notes, and upload them. This can be a time-effective solution to sharing information.
Twitter
Twitter is really useful for a quick exchange of information. Indeed, it has become the ‘go to’ source for breaking world news. The facility to attach images and video to posts makes it more visual than you would first think. Twitter expert Keith Keller recommends a minimum of five tweets per day for new users (which may simply be retweets) and applies the 80-20 rule (80 per cent sharing useful links and information, 20 per cent about you and your work) to posting on this platform. Twitter has its own bio-rhythms and is excellent for connecting with people in different time zones.

Tumblr
Still mainly the province of a younger demographic, and chosen by them because it’s streamlined blogging that allows a lot of self-expression. I use my Tumblr to repost blogs from all my social media into the Tumblr community.

Pinterest
Pinterest has a huge, growing, image-centred, buy-oriented community with a large female membership. Using Pinterest to collect picture boards of the things that interest you can be endlessly fascinating for your readers. But you can also set up boards that link readers directly to buy options for your work. I would encourage you do both. Don’t underestimate the power of Pinterest.

Google Plus (Google+)
Some of the People Who Know tip Google Plus to be the turtle who beats the hare (Facebook). With all Google’s various information management and social media options (YouTube, Google Calendar, Gmail, Google Drive, Google Analytics) now integrating, it’s becoming very easy to position yourself in G-space. Google+ hangouts can be recorded and uploaded on YouTube, which is a useful tool. I’m seeing writers and readers groups in abundance there. Check out Google Authorship (plus.google.com/authorship/) as well. Signing up to this will give your blogs a by-line on Google search and improve your author ranking.

Automated management tools
There are a lot of social media timesaver tools out there – HootSuite, Twitter Feed, Social Oomph, and more. I’ve tried a number, but I went back to just using a blog with share buttons. I blog it and share to all my platforms. And that is that! When I have time, I hang out on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest to interact and gather information, because that’s where my friends are. I’m pretty sure you’ll find most people do the same.

Spend a day or two sifting articles and recommendations for social media strategies and looking at sites like Social Media Just for Writers (socialmediajustforwriters.com) and you’ll soon start to get a picture of what’s out there. Once you’ve asked yourself some of the basic questions mentioned earlier, you should be in a position to make good choices. Start with one or two options; master them and get to know their idiosyncrasies. Social media platforms have their own nuances, attractions and pitfalls. For example, Twitter users can be quite confrontational, but it’s a lightning-quick way of connecting with a lot of people.

Oh, and did I say it? Had a few drinks and feel like posting online? DON’T. It’s out there FOREVER.

FURTHER INFORMATION
Marianne presents Blogs, Books and Branding: author platforms for QWC in Cairns, Townsville and Charters Towers in May. She also runs Year of the Novel, starting this month, in Brisbane. See page 20 or qwc.asn.au for details.

Write To Done has more on making a social media plan: tinyurl.com/k7mejdd

Marianne de Pierres is a multi-award-winning Australian author who publishes novels in the science fiction, fantasy, crime and young adult genres. Her stories have been translated into many other languages and been adapted across different media platforms. Visit her websites at www.mariannedepierres.com, www.tarasharp.com.au and www.burnbright.com.au.
IT’S fine for a character to feel the need for speed, particularly if they’re a Top Gun pilot, but should you, as a writer, feel the same? The answer depends entirely on your creative style.

Writing is as much art as craft, with a pinch of magic thrown in. There’s no one way to write, and anyone who says there is should be approached with the same caution as a lion loose in your back yard. Just as there are writers for whom the pre-dawn hours are golden while others work best late into the night, there are tortoise and hare writers. Neither is preferable. There is only what works for you. Despite this, lately I’m seeing a lot of books, workshops and online resources urging you on to the fast track. Write your book in 30 days, says one; write 5,000 words a day every day, says another.

If you’re the sort of person who can’t start the next sentence without editing the previous one to death, there may be merit in letting your muse off the leash to see what happens. Every November thousands of writers commit to the speed-writing exercise called Nanowrimo. Standing for National Novel Writing Month, it began in San Francisco in 1999 and went global. In his book *No Plot, No Problem* (Chronicle Books, 2004), the founder, Chris Baty, tells how he and 21 friends each set out to write a 50,000 word novel, emphasising quantity over quality. Baty says, ‘The stultifying pressure to write brilliant, eternal prose had been lifted … The roar of adrenalin drowned out the self-critical voices that tend to make creative play such work for adults.’

If your self-critical voice is holding you back, by all means try something like Nanowrimo. I’m not sure I agree with Baty’s description of the event as low stress, but it may get you past the sheer terror of putting words on a page or screen.

For terror, there is. I’m often asked whether the fear of writing ever goes away, and reluctantly admit it doesn’t. No matter how many books you’ve written, there’s always the question: I did it before but can I do it this time?

Writing is like fishing. You never know whether you’ll catch a minnow or a whale, or anything at all. Writing’s joy lies in its unpredictability. You learn to expect the fear and write in spite of it.

Writers have told me they’re only interested in writing best-sellers. Yet we aren’t the right people to make this assessment. Most successful books are those their creators wrote without knowing where it would lead. No doubt Shakespeare chewed many quills to nubs as he wrote *The Gentling of the Vixen*, scratched it out, tried *The Taming of the Vixen, The Taming of the Wench* and many more variations, before settling on *The Taming of the Shrew*. No matter how successful we are, we all confront fear when we sit down to write. Experience teaches us to get on with it, to recognise our own process and roll with it, but the fear never goes away completely. As with the shrew, you tame the fear and write anyway.

Writing at speed without stopping to edit yourself is one approach, perhaps the main reason why speed challenges are so successful. Even Baty didn’t expect his first attempt to produce ‘the work of genius (he’d) secretly hoped for’. Then he adds, ‘Whatever varied directions our stories were moving in, they were definitely moving.’

However, speed writing can’t be considered sustainable unless you’re a natural hare. Such writers are known as pantsers, from flying by the seat of their pants, because they like to discover the story as they write. Their opposite, plotters, prefer to work out every twist and character development before starting.

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**Most writers eventually morph into a blend of pantser and plotter**

Most writers eventually morph into a blend of pantser and plotter. The pressure of deadlines means you don’t have time for the false starts and dead ends that true pantsing inevitably involves. You still leave yourself room for unexpected twists, while having the plotter’s grasp of where the story is going.

Some tortoise writers never overcome the need to edit as they go, and this is fine. Best-selling writer Dean Koontz admits that he can’t produce new words until he has polished the previous sections, and his success speaks for itself. Only when the need to edit stops you moving forward at all, should you reevaluate. Trying one of the fast-track methods might shake you out of the habit. While you may never turn into a hare, you may at least become a more productive tortoise.
Hares have their own problems. For more than a decade I’ve mentored the winners of the annual Valerie Parv Award, run by Romance Writers of Australia. Winners seem to be predominantly hares, which suggests that if nothing else, hares get a lot of work done. But many also plunge ahead without considering whether they’ve chosen the most effective direction.

For such writers, I recommend a process I call ‘20 options’. First identify the work the scene or chapter has to do. Is it revealing new aspects of character, carrying the story forward, increasing conflict, adding pace and tension, or providing new information to the reader? Every passage in your story should do one or more of these.

Say you want Character A to learn an important secret being kept by Character B. You’ve set them up as potential lovers and decide that in bed is a great way for A to learn B’s secret. But is it? By challenging yourself to come up with 20 ways A might learn the secret, you open up exciting new creative territory.

The first thoughts on your list will be the safe, predictable ones. The next few will be a little more interesting, and the last few, when you’re really stretching to think of anything, will be the specks of gold in your idea pan. I’ve spent days making lists before finding that speck.

While I was Established Writer in Residence at Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers’ Centre in Perth, I wrote a movie script where I knew what the climactic scene had to achieve, but couldn’t settle on the best way to show it. I listed 20 possibilities, then 20 more, until I had 100 options, a tenth being exciting enough to develop. In the end I combined two options. The scene involved drugging one character and having her crash a helicopter, a long way from the uninspired talking-heads scene I started with.

You don’t have to crash helicopters or drug characters to achieve your aims. How you get there will depend on your own writing approach – tortoise, hare or some combination – and the requirements of the story. But unlike the tortoise and hare of Aesop’s fable, you can create your own hybrid and finish the race – your book – at your own best speed. For a writer, that’s the most worthwhile goal, and the only one completely under your control.

Valerie Parv is one of Australia’s most successful writers, with more than 29 million books sold in 26 languages. She is the only Australian author honoured with a Pioneer of Romance award from RT Book Reviews, New York. With a lifelong interest in space exploration, she counts meeting Neil Armstrong as a personal high point. So it’s no wonder she’s taking romance to the stars and beyond in her Beacons series – Birthright (2012), Earthbound (2014) and Homeworld (Corvallis Press USA). She loves connecting with readers via her website valerieparv.com, blog valerieparv.wordpress.com, @ValerieParv on Twitter and on Facebook.
Encouragement was especially appreciated by those who didn’t get much feedback.

As one woman said, ‘I think this is the first note I have received from someone I didn’t even know who said my writing inspired them in some way.’ Comments like that were humbling for me and made me wonder why I didn’t express gratitude more often.

Many people went further than simply thanking me. Some looked up samples of my writing and gave me positive feedback. Others told me about the highs and lows of their own lives, asked me about myself or told me that they would pray for me. An elderly gentleman sent me copies of a children’s book and two poetry chapbooks he’d written, a university professor sent me some free articles of helpful writing tips, one writer asked me to be a guest blogger on her website, and a lovely American lady has become a Facebook friend.

All of this was unsolicited. I simply wrote an encouraging note, but I certainly found the old proverb to be true: ‘Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.’

I also learned a few lessons about how to encourage other writers:

1. Comment on a specific aspect of the writing that has had an impact on you, e.g., something you’ve been able to apply or that has challenged your thinking in a good way. That always means more than a generic ‘I really liked your article’.

2. Be genuine. People can smell brown-nosing a mile away. The purpose should be to encourage the other person, not to advance your own cause.

3. Don’t assume they’ll necessarily want to hear all about you and your projects. Unless it’s pertinent to the point you’re making about their writing, keep yourself in the background.

4. Be prepared that people may want to engage further, e.g., by asking questions or inviting you to send some of your work. You don’t have to befriend everyone, but complete silence could undo the encouragement you’d offered previously.

Harper Lee never expected much success with her novel To Kill a Mockingbird, but ‘hoped someone would like it enough to give (her) encouragement’. Winning a Pulitzer Prize and selling millions of copies would have allayed her fears, but there are many writers who plug away faithfully without receiving such accolades. Giving encouragement to others only takes a little effort, but it can have positive repercussions for you and mean so much to them. You might just encourage the next Harper Lee.
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**A beginner’s guide to commercial services**

Peter M Ball

COMMERCIAL services are services targeted at writers and publishers; they charge a commercial fee and expect you to think like a small business owner, rather than a writer looking for a way to get published.

While commercial services can be an everyday part of a professional’s business, they can also be a source of frustration for newcomers. Sometimes this is simply a case of honest mistakes – what seems like an ideal route to get where you’re going may instead lead somewhere else entirely. Sometimes it’s a case of mismatched expectations, especially in cases where the writer’s ambition has been manipulated by advertising copy. And sometimes there are sharks, preying on those who don’t know enough to recognise the fin cutting through the water.

**1. There is no magic fix**

Hiring a commercial service can be one of the best investments you can make as a writer, but it’s important to keep your expectations in check. The right commercial service can save you time and money, and it can help take your project to the next level. But if you’re looking for the shortcut that will take you from an unknown to a bestseller, it’s probably time to adjust your expectations.

**2. Shop around**

Choosing to hire any commercial service is a business decision, and it should be treated like one. Make sure you look at several providers, and take the time to familiarise yourself with their background and the work they’ve done for prior clients. Look for qualifications and associations with industry bodies, and ask them for details if they haven’t got such details publically posted.

In short, do your due diligence. If you’re investing money in your career, it’s worth taking the time to ensure you’re investing it in the right place. Shopping around can ensure you’re getting both the best service and the best price.

**3. Look for a track record**

Established services will have a track record you can look up. Many will trumpet these proudly, offering you samples of previous work and referrals from satisfied clients, but that doesn’t mean you have to stop there. A quick internet search can turn up both satisfied and unsatisfied clients, while services such as Writer Beware (www.sfwa.org/for-authors/writer-beware/) can warn against unscrupulous providers.

**4. Educate yourself**

It’s a good idea to learn as much detail as you can about the service that you’re buying. There’s a wealth of information out there for writers these days, both on the internet and from professional organisations such as the Australian Society of Authors or your state writers’ centre.

Doing enough research to understand the basic assumptions of the field can be important. For example, learning the difference between a line edit, a copy edit and a manuscript assessment can be a valuable thing when searching for an independent editor. Similarly, knowing a little about the way digital publishing works and how e-books are created can help you determine exactly what you need to pay for and what it’s really worth.

**5. When in doubt, money flows towards the writer**

I can’t remember which author gave me this advice, way back at the start of my career, but it’s a simple and easy mantra that’s been repeated, time and again, by writers smarter and more successful than me. Money flows towards the writer, not the other way around. You don’t pay to be published; a publisher pays you for the right to produce your work. It’s advice that made sense to me, even as a young writer, and cleaving to it saved me from making some very expensive mistakes.

You invest in services because they’ll enhance your chances of making a profit in the long run. If there’s more money going out than you reasonably expect to earn back on your project, or if costs seem to be escalating beyond your initial quote or budget, it may be time to re-examine what you’re doing.

**6. Know your rights, read your contracts, and remember to think long term**

Any writer working without a basic understanding of copyright can be easy prey for the unscrupulous. The rights to reprint, adapt and reproduce your work are the source of income for many content creators, and it’s important to understand what you’re signing away when you agree to a contract. You rarely sell the work outright – instead, you lease the right to reproduce and distribute it to your publisher.

When engaging a commercial service, it’s important to double-check any contracts or business agreements. There is no reason that a service you’re paying for should take ownership of rights to your work, and it can be important to look at the fine print regarding which rights you’re licensing when dealing with services that assist in self-publishing your work.

Finally, it’s important to think long term about your project. With e-publishing especially, you can find services that may offer to take a percentage of your profits rather than an up-front fee. This may seem attractive in the short term, but an e-book can conceivably sell long beyond the commercial lifespan of a printed work, and that short-term saving could be considerably more expensive over the lifetime of your project.

The *Australian Writer’s Marketplace* is Australia and New Zealand’s guide to writing markets, providing submission and contact details for the print media and publishing industry ([www.awmonline.com.au](http://www.awmonline.com.au)). Peter Ball is *AWM* manager by day and a fiction writer by night (petermball.com).
These listings are paid advertisements and messages from advertisers. Inclusion on this page does not provide an endorsement of advertised services by Queensland Writers Centre.

QWC recommends the following when engaging writers’ and commercial services:

- Request quotes in writing from a variety of sources, to get an idea of average rates.
- Don’t hesitate to ask for samples of material, drafts and mock-ups.
- Carefully look over all contracts, including fine print, and request legal advice before signing.
- Keep details, records and copies of all documentation and correspondence: emails, letters and phone calls.

For further information about writers’ and commercial services, refer to ‘A beginner’s guide to commercial services’ on the facing page.
Workshops and events

**Everything I Know About Writing I Learned From Watching Television: building a narrative**

with Kate Eltham and Robert Hoge

*Brisbane workshop*

Sunday 6 April
10.30am–4.30pm

**Fees**

QWC members $110/$99
Non-members $160/$144

Using examples from *The West Wing, Community, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Breaking Bad* and even Korean drama, explore elements of writing craft such as narrative structure, dialogue, constructing scenes and generating conflict.

**Year of the Edit**

with Charlotte Nash

*Brisbane masterclass series*

Sundays 6 April, 1 June, 3 August, 5 October, 7 December
10am–4.30pm

**Fee** $595

Year of the Edit will help you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your manuscript, kill your darlings, and refine your work through structural and copy editing and the art of critique. All students participate in group critique on the first 10 pages of their work-in-progress.

**Capturing the Muse: reviewing the arts**

with Cameron Pegg

*Brisbane workshop series*

Wednesdays 9, 16, 23, 30 April 6–8pm

**Fee** $95/$80

In this four-week series, you’ll learn the art of reviewing books, theatre, film and art, and explore the cultural assets of the State Library of Queensland, to hone your skills as a critic, consumer and appreciator of culture.

**What To Write About: the authenticity of the writer’s voice**

with Lloyd Jones

*Brisbane masterclass*

Friday 11 April
10am–noon

**Free** (bookings essential)

This special event at the Judith Wright Centre, co-sponsored by QWC, Griffith REVIEW and Brisbane Writers Festival, will explore how a writer’s voice imagines or defines a place.

**Whispers Reading Salon**

Saturdays 12 April, 10 May, 7 June, 12 July, 9 August, 11 October, 8 November, 13 December 3–5pm

**Free**

Relax in the SLQ Cafe as a diverse snapshot of writers share their works, and connect with passionate readers and writers as we celebrate the unique stories and voices that define Queensland.

**Shake Your Money Maker: creating a great grant application**

with Australia Council

*Brisbane IQ seminar*

Saturday 12 April
11am–1pm

**Fees**

QWC members $30/$27
Non-members $50/$45
Youth $15

Explore all aspects of novel writing, including characterisation, narrative structure and voice. Between classes stay focused and motivated with the support of your peers and the expertise of a professional author. All students receive feedback from the tutor on the first 10 pages of their work in progress.

**Write On!**

with Aimee Lindorff

*Brisbane workshop series*

Tuesdays 15 April, 13 May, 10 June, 15 July, 12 August, 16 September 6–8pm

**Fees**

QWC members $280/$252
Non-members $350/$315

Explore the core ingredients of good storytelling, from getting started to creating complex characters, writing electrifying dialogue and making setting and structure pull their weight.

**Fees**

QWC members $280/$252
Non-members $350/$315

Through reading fellow participants’ work and receiving feedback on your own, you’ll learn the art of critique and finish the course with short work ready to submit to markets.

**In Conversation: Matthew Condon**

*Brisbane event*

Wednesday 16 April
6–8pm

**Fee** $10 ASA members, QWC members and their guests

Brisbane’s Matthew Condon discusses his latest work, reveals his writing habits and shares his insights into working in the publishing industry.

**Year of the Fiction Novel**

with Marianne de Pierres

*Brisbane masterclass series*

Saturdays 19 April, 14 June, 16 August, 20 September, 15 November
10am–4.30pm

**Fee** $595

Explore and share all aspects of novel writing, including characterisation, narrative structure and voice. Between classes stay focused and motivated with the support of your peers and the expertise of a professional author. All students receive feedback from the tutor on the first 10 pages of their work in progress.

**Books and Beyond: exploring digital narratives**

with QWC

**Sunshine Coast event**

Wednesday 23–Thursday 24 April
As part of Voices on the Coast, www.voicesonthecheckout.com.au or 07 5477 3437

In this digital world, there have never been more opportunities to reach readers and access new, global markets. Explore the multitude of emerging publishing models and formats in the digital realm such as e-books, bookish apps, book trailers, hyperlinked books, and everything between.

**Pathways to Independent Publication: Smashwords (2 of 4)**

with if:book Australia

**Brisbane seminar**

Saturday 26 April
10.30am–4.30pm

**Fees**

QWC members $30/$27
Non-members $50/$45
Youth $15

An introduction to the Smashwords publishing service for those interested in digital publication and distribution.
Riverbend Poetry Series
Tuesday 29 April
6pm for 6.30pm
Riverbend Books and Café, 193 Oxford St, Bulimba
Cost $10
www.riverbendbooks.com.au or 07 3899 8555
One of Brisbane’s most popular poetry reading events, the series showcases a diverse snapshot of the brightest Queensland poetic voices and spoken word artists.

Rhyme & Reason I
with selected artists from the Riverbend Poetry Series
Brisbane workshop
Wednesday 30 April
6–8pm
Fees
QWC members $30/$27
Non-members $50/$45
Join one of the established poets appearing at the Riverbend Poetry Series to explore the poetic form. You’ll learn all about poetry, from conception through to publication and performance.

Rewriting History: research for writers
with Darryl Dymock
Brisbane workshop
Saturday 3 May
10.30am–4.30pm
Fees
QWC members $110/$99
Non-members $160/$144
Whether you’re writing biography or historical fiction, having an awareness of the time and a strong foundation of research is integral to the believability of your story. Navigate the pathway of your story and utilise history to enrich character, place and narrative.

Blog On
with Emily Craven
Brisbane workshop series
Thursdays 1, 8, 15, 22 May
6–8pm
Fees
QWC members $160/$144
Non-members $210/$189
Interested in blogging but aren’t sure how to start? Covering everything from content to platforms, this series of workshops will take you through the steps of developing your online presence and becoming a master blogger.

Introduction to Creative Writing
Brisbane City Council Taster Course
Brisbane Square Library
Saturday 3 May
10.30am–noon
Free
For beginners or those looking to brush up on their skills, explore creative writing basics, and come away with tools and exercises to nurture that inner storyteller.

LATE last year, a group of MIT students completed a prototype for a book as their assessment piece in a postgraduate subject called Science Fiction to Science Fabrication. Their prototype took the 1973 novella by James Triptee, Jr, The Girl Who Was Plugged In, and augmented the text with lights, sounds, heat, vibration designed to manipulate heart rate, and compression on the torso to simulate tightness in the chest.

With a nod to the book’s title, the reader must literally strap themselves in for the full effect. The result looks like a cross between a large format board book and a polygraph machine. The Girl Who Was Plugged In changes its mood depending on where you’re up to in the story using its sensory extensions to make you feel the story’s warmth and chills, its love and its despair.

It’s an interesting idea – a book that makes you ‘feel’ things.

Hey, wait a second. A book that makes you feel things is just a book, isn’t it?

Ever since we figured out we could write down text to transmit stories, we’ve been dreaming up new ways to augment it, first with images and atmospherics and later animation, sound and video. In this way we might think of this MIT project as a modern interpretation of an illuminated manuscript.

But I can’t help wondering if the act of throwing more stuff at a text demonstrates a basic lack of understanding of what reading is, or why it is. The magic of a book is that it’s all there in the text. You only have to read to make it work. And what you feel may be different from what the next person feels. One reader’s tragedy is another reader’s comedy.

What purpose do vibrations, sound and lights serve that a good text is not already supplying? Vibrations and heat might suggest an emotion, but they are meaningless without context. Are they a supplement to how you already feel, courtesy of the words, or are they a hamfisted manipulation into some predetermined notion of how you should feel?

It’s hard to know without giving the book a whirl (which I would volunteer for any time).

But of course any suggestion of manipulation gets me thinking. What if we designed a text to lead you one way emotionally and set the sensors to push you another way? That’s when augmenting a text becomes really interesting.

FURTHER READING

If:book Australia promotes new forms of digital literature and explores ways to boost connections between writers and audiences (futureofthebook.org.au). Simon Groth is if:book’s manager, as well as a writer and editor of fiction and non-fiction (simongroth.com).
11 April
Peter Cowan 600 Short Story Competition
tinyurl.com/l8gz8z3
Entry fee $10, $20 for 3, $30 for 5
This WA contest, for short stories to 600 words, has two categories. Open offers 1st prize, $200; 2nd, $100; 3rd, $50. Youth, for writers 12–17, offers $100 to the winner. Enter by post only.

20 April
International Poetry Contest
tinyurl.com/mq6svcv
Entry fee Free
Website Good Morning Bedtime Story offers publication and a book prize to the top three poems to 100 lines. Entries must ‘have pertinence to mental health’. Enter by email.

23 April
(Previously listed)
Positive Words Short Story and Poetry Competition
positivewordsmagazine.wordpress.com/competitions/
Entry fee $3.60, 4 for $12
There are two categories in this contest: short stories to 2,000 words and poetry to 48 lines, each paying $100 to the winner. Enter by post.

25 April
Raspberry and Vine Contest
tiny.cc/vgrdsw
Entry fee $10
This contest seeks fiction to 4,000 words, with a $300 prize. Submit by post.

28 April
Sunshine Coast Literary Association Annual Writing Competition
www.scilit.org
Entry fee Non-members $9, members $7, students $5
This competition is open to residents of the Sunshine Coast and Gympie. It has four categories: open short story to 2,500 words and poem of 15–40 lines, and young adult (high school) short story to 1,500 words and junior (primary school) to 1,000 words. Each category offers 1st prize $250; 2nd, $150; 3rd, $75. Feedback costs $15 extra.

30 April
Charlotte Duncan Award
www.celapenepress.com.au
Entry fee $9.90
This contest seeks short stories to 1,500 words for readers aged 9–12. First prize, $75; 2nd, $50; 3rd, $25. No horror or violent themes. Enter by post.

30 April
(Previously listed)
CYA Conference Published Author Competition
tinyurl.com/kbnkt5w
Entry fee $33.50/$36.50 (PayPal)
The Children’s and Young Adult Illustrators Conference is running this contest for writers and illustrators with two or more titles in children’s and YA genres. Send the first three chapters (50 pages max.) or up to three picture book texts using the website. Winner receives critique from Sue Whiting of Walker Books plus consultation with an editor or agent. All entries receive feedback.

30 April
(Previously listed)
CYA Conference Unpublished/Aspiring Competition
tinyurl.com/lceck9k
Entry fee $17/$18 (PayPal)
Open to writers and illustrators of children’s and YA books with no more than one title to their credit. There are eight categories, each offering a first prize of $50; 2nd, $30; 3rd, $20. All finalists will be submitted to a publisher. All entries receive feedback.

BOOKS FROM OUR BACKYARD
2013
QWC’s annual catalogue comprised of books written by Queensland writers, Books From Our Backyard, is now open for registrations. If you’re a Queensland author and had a book published in 2013, head to www.backyardbooks.com.au to register for this year’s edition of Books From Our Backyard. For more information, visit the website, or call QWC on 07 3842 9922.

KEY DATES
Registrations open: Tuesday 1 April
Registrations close: Sunday 27 April
30 April
(previous listed)
CYA Conference Hatchlings Competition
tinyurl.com/mfv2std
Entry fee $11/$11.50 (PayPal)
For unpublished writers and illustrators aged 8–18. Three categories offer first prize of $50; 2nd, $30; 3rd, $20. All finalists are submitted to a children’s publisher. All entries receive feedback.

30 April
(previous listed)
British Australian Community Literary Prize
tiny.cc/uxpim
Entry fee $10
This contest seeks essays of up to 800 words addressing ‘the positive heritage of British culture in Australia’. The winner receives $1,000 and will be published in the organisation’s journal. Submit by post.

30 April
(previous listed)
Erotic Short Story Competition
litterravenpublishing.com/erotic-short-story-competition/
Entry fee Free
This contest is for erotic short stories to 3,000 words. First prize, $75; 2nd, $50; 3rd, $25. Prize winners are eligible for publication in a digital anthology. Submit by email.

30 April
(previous listed)
Erotic Short Story Competition
litterravenpublishing.com/erotic-short-story-competition/
Entry fee $20
This item ran in the March issue of WQ with the wrong closing date. This contest is for poetry manuscripts of 40 A4 pages. It offers publication for the winner. Enter by email.

17 May
CALEB Award
tiny.cc/5hvdsw
Entry fee $45–$150
This Brisbane-based prize for faith-inspired books covers six divisions. Books published between 1 January 2013 and 31 May 2014 are eligible. The main prize is $1,530 with section prizes of $333, with an unpublished fiction section offering publication. Enter by email or by post.

23 May
Bush Lantern Awards
www.abpa.org.au/events.html
Entry fee $8, $20 for 3
This Bundaberg contest for bush poetry on an Australian theme to 100 lines offers 1st prize, $200; 2nd, $100; 3rd, $75. Submit by post.

30 May
SecondBite Poetry Competition
tinyurl.com/l5ycb4m
Entry fee $15
This contest seeks poems to 40 lines on the theme of ‘food’. First prize is $5,000, two runners-up of $500 each. Submit by post.

30 June
(CORRECTION)
John Knight Memorial Poetry Manuscript Prize
www.eruditescribe.com/john-knight-memorial-poetry-manuscript-prize/
Entry fee $20
This item ran in the March issue of WQ with the wrong closing date. This contest is for poetry manuscripts of 40 A4 pages. It offers publication for the winner. Enter by email.
Open submission calls
A selection of regular submission programs run by major publishers:

**HarperCollins:**
Wednesday Post, www.wednesdaypost.com.au

**Hachette Australia:**
general email subs, tiny.cc/kzivbw

**Allen & Unwin:**
Friday Pitch, tiny.cc/3vckz

**Pan Macmillan:**

**Momentum:**
Momentum Monday (digital only), momentumbooks.com.au/submissions/

**Penguin:**

**Harlequin Digital First:**
tiny.cc/ubwixw

**Escape:**
digital imprint of Harlequin Australia, harlequinescape.com

**Carina Press:**
Harlequin digital-first imprint, carinapress.com

**Destiny Romance:**

**Bloomsbury Spark:**

**Random House digital:**
www.atrandom.com/eoriginals/index.php

**National Script Workshop**

This program offers playwrights a chance to have a play workshopped for up to 10 days with a dramaturge, director and actors. Travel, accommodation and some expenses are covered. Applications should be made online and close on 11 July.

**Australia Council grants**
australiacouncil.gov.au/grants

The Writers’ Travel Fund offers up to $4,000 for writers looking to explore market opportunities in Asia. Closes: 9 May

**New Work, and New Work – Digital and New Media:**
these grants offer from $10,000 to $40,000 to help the creation of a new work. Close: 15 May

**Arts Queensland**

The Queensland Government’s arts funding body makes up to $10,000 available for individuals ‘to participate in transformational professional and career development opportunities’. Applications close on 28 April and 15 September.

**UWA Publishing**
uwap.uwa.edu.au/about-uwap

This university-based publisher has opened an imprint for academic monographs, although a ‘publishing subsidy’ is sought.

**Three Kookaburras**
threekookaburras.com

This new publisher seeks fiction and non-fiction to be published digitally and by print on demand. Submit a 10,000-word sample by email.

**Glitterwolf**
glitterwolf.webeden.co.uk

Contributors to this magazine ‘must identify as belonging to the LGBT spectrum’. Poetry to 60 lines and fiction to 10,000 words is accepted; the magazine does not edit its acceptances, and offers a digital copy as payment. Submit online or by email. Submissions for issue 6 close on 20 June.

**Lakeside Circus**
lakesidecircus.com

This US speculative fiction digital magazine publishes short fiction to 2,500 words, poetry, and essays to 3,000 words. It pays US1c a word, with a minimum of US$10. Submit online.

**Amplified Author**
www.udemy.com/the-amplified-author-creating-ebooks

This course, created by if:book Australia, provides an overview of e-books, including industry trends, rights, licensing and royalties, as well as self-directed lectures on the practical skills of using PressBooks, an online e-book creation tool.

**Storyworks**
www.storyworkspublishing.com

This is the digital imprint of Jane Curry Publishing (below). It accepts non-fiction and fiction. Submit by email.

**Jane Curry Publishing**
www.jane Currypublishing.com.au

This Australian publisher seeks manuscripts for a range of non-fiction topics such as self-help, health, family and ethics, and also message-based children’s books. Submit by email or post.

**Publishizer**
publishizer.com

Publishizer is a portal that aims to raise funds to self-publish a book through pre-orders. A front cover and synopsis are required. The site, and PayPal, take a percentage of successful fundraising.

**Pure Slush**
pureslush.webs.com

This non-paying, Adelaide-based online journal seeks short fiction or non-fiction to 1,000 words for its weekly ‘Year of Travel’ program. Submit online.

**The Suburban Review**
thesuburbanreview.com

This Melbourne-based quarterly accepts short fiction and creative non-fiction to 1,500 words and poetry to 30 lines for its website. Longer pieces are accepted for themed print editions, paying $50. Submit by email.

**Shimmer**
www.shimmerzine.com

This US-based speculative
QLD EVENTS

**April 23–26:** Voices on the Coast, Sunshine Coast
**May 7–18:** Anywhere Theatre Festival, Brisbane
**May 17:** Bundy WriteFest, Bundaberg
**June 13–15:** Gold Coast Writers Festival, Gold Coast
**July 5:** Festival, Gold Coast
**July 8:** CYA Conference, Brisbane
**July 16–19:** CYA Conference, Brisbane
**July 18–27:** Literature Festival, Mackay
**July 27–30:** Noosa Long Weekend, Noosa
**August 1–31:** SF and Fantasy Month, Logan libraries
**August 16–22:** Book Week, national
**August 29–31:** Queensland Poetry Festival, Brisbane
**September 3–7:** Brisbane Writers Festival, Brisbane
**October 10–12:** Whitsunday Writers Festival, Airlie Beach
**October 23–26:** Reality Bites, Cooroy

Fiction magazine seeks stories to 7,500 words. It pays US$5c a word. Submit by email.

**Kitaab**

kitaab.org

This Singapore-based website, catering to emerging Asian writers, seeks stories to 5,000 words and poetry to 60 lines ‘set in Asia or about Asia or Asians’. It pays S$20–100. Accepted stories may be printed in anthologies. Submit by email.

**Melbourne Books**

www.melbournebooks.com.au

The publisher of the Award Winning Australian Writing anthology accepts submissions of fiction, non-fiction and poetry collections. Submit by email with form from the website.

**Wombat Books**

www.wombatbooks.com.au

This Queensland small press accepts fiction and non-fiction submissions by post and email, and is beefing up its list for early readers (ages 6–8). It also has a Christian imprint, Even Before.

**Neon**

www.neonmagazine.co.uk

This UK literary magazine accepts short stories, poetry and flash fiction, and pays by royalty. Submit by email.

**Forbidden Fruit**

tinyurl.com/p53u99r

This anthology, to be published by US publisher Lady Lit, seeks short stories of 2,500–5,000 words about ‘unwise lesbian desire’. It pays US$40 plus contributor copies. Submit by email before 15 May.

**Tongues**

tongues.net.au

This online magazine is due to launch this month, and features articles on language learning, culture, well-being, travel, arts reviews and memoir, in ‘as many languages as possible’. It is seeking editors in various languages. It also accepts short stories (no erotica) of 1,000–2,000 words and collections of up to five stories for publication as digital and audio books on a royalty-sharing basis. Submit by email.

**The Never Never Land**

tinyurl.com/lp7hqpj

The Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild seek short stories of 1,000–5,000 words for this Australia-themed anthology. It pays $30 plus contributor copies. Submit by email between 1 June and 31 August.

**Rattle**

www.rattle.com/poetry/submissions/guidelines/

This US magazine pays US$50 for poetry, translations and essays, and has themed issues twice a year. For its northern autumn issue, it seeks submissions from ‘poets of faith’ by 15 April. Submit by email or post.

**Milestones**

We always love to hear about members’ successes; please email editor@qwc.asn.au with your good news.

**Jennifer St George’s** third novel, *The Love Deception*, was a finalist in the 2013 Australian Romance Readers Awards for Favourite Short Category Romance section. Her fourth book, *The Billionaire’s Pursuit of Love*, has been published by Penguin’s Destiny Romance. Also short-listed in the ARR Awards was Cheryse Durrant (Cherie Curtis), with *The Blood She Betrayed* (Favourite Sci Fi, Fantasy or Futuristic Romance).

**Susan K Sutherland** has won second prize with ‘Show Don’t Tell’ and was highly commended for ‘Pumpkin Scones’ in the Stringybark Malicious Mysteries Short Story Awards. Both have been published in the awards anthology *Malicious Mysteries*.

**Paul Sherman** was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day honours list for services to the arts as a poet and playwright, and to education.

**Gerry Callaghan**, aka The Dust Poet, cafe poet at Mary Ryan’s in Milton, has published *Hannah’s Song* through Palmer Higgs Books. Her poem ‘Chartreuse’ has been included in the WA Poets Inc. anthology *Poetry d’Amour 2014: Love Poems* and has been, as part of a selection of her work, broadcast on radio station 4RPH.

**Barry Rosenberg** has had short stories ‘Finding his Roots’ published in *Growing Concerns* and ‘Nil’ in *We Walk Invisible*, both by Chupa Cabra House.

**Angela Slatter** and **Linda Bruesmith** had their respective stories ‘St Dymphna’s Home for Poison Girls’ and ‘Pale Street’ published in *The Review of Australian Fiction*.


**Chris Pearce** has published his historical novel, *A Weaver’s Web*, as an e-book.

**The Second of Three**, a memoir by **Lindsay Boyd**, is now available at Smashwords.

**Mocco Wallert** has had her poem ‘Sounds of Brisbane’ published in the FAWQ members magazine, *Scope*.

**Bianca Turabi**, writing as BG Bowers, has published her debut poetry collection, *Death and Life*.
To join the Centre please complete the information below or join online at www.qwc.asn.au.

Please complete and return to:
Queensland Writers Centre, PO Box 3488,
South Brisbane Queensland 4101 | F 07 3842 9920

**Applicant’s details**
Name
Organisation
Postal Address
Telephone
Email

Please indicate
- New member
- Renewing

**Duration and type of membership**

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**Donation**
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(Donations of $2 or more are tax deductible)

**Workshop booking form**
QWC member
- Yes
- No
Name of event/s

**Payment**
Please find enclosed my payment of $[ ]
- Mastercard
- Visa
- Cheque
- Money order
Card number

Expiry date

CCV # (last 3 digits on back of credit card)

Cardholder’s name

Signature

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*PDF option means that you receive WQ as a PDF copy into your inbox on the first of each month, not as a hard-copy magazine. **Concession applicants must provide a copy of health care, student or pensioner cards. All prices include GST. Donations are welcome and are tax deductible. QWC has a no-refund policy. Provided three working days’ notice is given, participants may use the paid funds as credit for or towards the cost of attending another workshop, seminar, masterclass or event (space permitting). All credit must be used within 30 days of issue.

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**Diary dates**

**6 Apr**
*Watching Television: building a narrative*
with Kate Eltham and Robert Hoge
10.30am–4.30pm

*Year of the Edit (begins)*
with Charlotte Nash
10am–4.30pm

**9 Apr**
*Reviewing the Arts (begins)*
Cameron Pegg
6–8pm

**11 Apr**
*What to Write About*
with Lloyd Jones
10am–noon

**12 Apr**
*Creating a Great Grant Application with Australia Council*
11am–1pm

Whispers Reading Salon
3–5pm

**15 Apr**
*Short Story Clinic (begins)*
with Patrick Holland
6pm

**16 Apr**
*In Conversation with Matthew Condon*
6–8pm

**19 Apr**
*Year of the Fiction Novel (begins)*
with Marianne de Pierres
10am–4.30pm

**22 Apr**
*Write On! (begins)*
with Aimée Lindorff
4.30–5.30pm

**23–24 Apr**
*Harnessing Fan Fiction with Sophie Overett*
at Voices on the Coast

*Exploring Digital Narratives with QWC*
at Voices on the Coast

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**ONLINE**

**7 Apr**
*AWM Year of the Novel Online (begins)*
Proudly presented by Hachette Australia with Bronwyn Parry
Developed by award-winning author and teacher Dr Kim Wilkins (also publishing as Kimberley Freeman)

See page 20 or awmonline.com.au for AWM Online Learning Centre and Amplified Author courses.

AWM Writing Races each Wednesday, 8pm
www.facebook.com/AWMonline.au

**QLD EVENTS**
A calendar of state literary events appears on page 21.
Membership benefits

For membership information contact

**Queensland Writers Centre**
Level 2
State Library of Queensland
Cultural Centre Stanley Place
South Bank
T 07 3842 9922 | F 07 3842 9920
qldwriters@qwc.asn.au
www.qwc.asn.au

**Write to us**
Queensland Writers Centre
PO Box 3488
South Brisbane Qld 4101

**Membership Benefits**
As a member of the Queensland Writers Centre, you have access to a wide variety of resources and information.

**Information and Advice**
The Centre's professional and friendly staff are available to answer queries by phone, mail, email or fax.

**Writer's Surgery**
Offers members the chance to discuss their projects (including grant applications) face-to-face or by telephone with an experienced editor or published author.

**Workshop Calendar**
An annual program of workshops, masterclasses and industry seminars.

**Members' Bookshop**
Stocks a range of practical writing guides and handbooks sold online and at QWC with exclusive discounts for members.

**Advertising Discounts**
Members receive a 25 per cent discount on advertising in QW and our fortnightly e-bulletin, a fantastic way to promote their business to an engaged, educated readership of thousands, with wide interests in culture, music, food, family and travel as well as reading and writing.

**Legal Advice**
We advise contacting the Arts Law Centre of Australia: www.artslaw.com.au, T 02 9356 2566, F 02 9358 6475, toll free 1800 221 457. Alternatively, the Australian Society of Authors offers a contract advice service – details are available on their website www.asauthors.org. There are also contract FAQs on the site. Alex Adsett Publishing Services offers commercial publishing contract advice to authors and offers a discount to QWC members, www.alexadsett.com.au.

**Member Discounts**
Presentation of your membership card will provide you with discounts at the following stores:

**Bookshops**
12 per cent discount at Queensland Writers Centre
10 per cent discount (includes mailing facilities); American Bookstore, Brisbane City
10 per cent discount (includes mailing facilities); Byblos Bookshop, Mareeba (discount on second-hand books only)
Dymocks, Brisbane City
Dymocks, Gladstone
Dymocks, Townsville
Folio Books, Brisbane City
The Jungle Bookshop, Port Douglas
The Library Shop, SLQ, Brisbane City
Maleny Bookshop, Maleny
Mary Who, Townsville
Riverbend Books, Bulimba
Rosetta Books, Maleny
The Written Dimension Bookshop, Noosa Junction
The Yellow Door Books and Music, Yeppoon

**Cinemas**
$10 tickets at Dendy Cinema, Brisbane

**Other Discounts**
Aromas coffee 10 per cent
La Boîte Theatre tickets $25 (preview) $39 (in season), all shows.
Chinese Remedial Massage, 20 per cent discount to all female writers, phone Sara 07 3844 2331.
Good Reading Club cardholders receive members’ prices at QWC events.
Olvar Wood Writers Retreat offer a 10 per cent discount to QWC members on all their writer services. Find out more at www.olvarwood.com.au.

**Founding Patrons**
Thea Astley
Bruce Dawe
Geoffrey Dutton
David Malouf
Michael Noonan
Jill Shearer
Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

**Honorary Life Members**
Hilary Beaton
Martin Buzacott
Heidi Chepoy
Laurie Herganhan
Helen Horton
Philip Neilsen
Craig Munro
Robyn Sheahan-Bright

**Terms & Conditions**
Refund/Returns Policy
QWC does not offer refunds on books, magazines or other products purchased from QWC, except where the goods are defective by fault of the publisher, manufacturer or distributor.

In the event that you have purchased an event ticket and Queensland Writers Centre must cancel that event, we will try to reschedule it for a later date. If we cannot reschedule the event, or if you are unable to attend on the amended date, your payment will be refunded in full.

If you cancel a booking for, or are unable to attend, an event such as a workshop, seminar or masterclass, Queensland Writers Centre will not provide a cash refund. If your cancellation is made at least 5 business days prior to the event, you may use your original payment as credit towards the cost of attending another QWC workshop, seminar, masterclass or event (space permitting). If the alternative event is valued at less than the value of the original booking, no cash will be refunded for the balance. The alternative event you select must take place in the same calendar year as the original booking. If there are no available places in another event, your credit may be used to purchase or extend QWC membership.

If you have paid a deposit to secure a place in a Year of the Writer course (Year of the Novel, Year of the Edit etc.), your deposit will only be refunded in full if you cancel more than six weeks prior to the course start date. Cancellations after this date will not be refunded.

All credit must be allocated within 30 days of issue by making a subsequent booking. Please note: credit cannot be used to purchase books or other products available from the QWC shop.

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Association of Writers at Work
Brotherhood of the Wordless
Bundaberg Writers Club
Bush Curlew
Capricorn Writers Group
Carindale Writers
East Creek Writers
Fairfield Writers Group
Fellowship of Australian Writers
Garden City Creative Writers
Geelong Writers
Gold Coast Writers Association
Hervey Bay Council for the Arts
Scribes
Horizon Publishing Group
Licuala Writers Group
Mackay Writers Group
Macleay Island Inspirational Writers Group
The Manuscript Appraisal Agency
Ravenshoe Writers
Romero Centre
Rosicrucian Society
Sisters in Crime
Society of Women Writers
Stanthorpe Writers Group
Strathpine Library Writers Group
Sunshine Coast Literary Association
Sunshine Coast Writers Group
Symposium Society
Tropical Writers
Writers in North Queensland
Writers in Townsville Society
Writing with a Vision

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Australia Council Literature Board
Australian Society of Authors
Boolarong Press
Brisbane Square Library
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Northern Territory Writers Centre Inc
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Perth Writers Festival
Peter Cowan Writers Centre
Redcliffe Library
Riverbend Books
Somerville House
South Australia Writers Centre
State Library of Queensland
Sunnybank Library
Sunshine Coast Libraries
Tasmania Writers Centre
Thuringowa Central Library
University of Queensland
University of Queensland Press
Writers Victoria
Writing Western Australia
READY TO WRITE?

The AWM Online Learning Centre offers a suite of tutor-led, self-directed online courses designed to fit around your schedule. Ideal for writers with busy schedules, living rurally or wanting to learn on the run. In 2014, the courses on offer are:

- YEAR OF THE NOVEL ONLINE
- SALLY COLLINGS’ PITCHING TO PUBLISHERS
- INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING
- TOOLKIT FOR WRITERS
- THE AMPLIFIED AUTHOR

For more information, visit www.awmonlinelearn.com.au or contact us at 07 3842 9922