



Carindale Writers' Group Meeting

20th October 2011

Present: Shirley, Leslee-Anne, Judith, Ed, Jeff P., Len, Hazel, Beverley

News/ challenges/ discussions/correspondence: With so few members present at this meeting, our discussion turned to absent members. If you are battling illness, know you are in our thoughts; if you are on holidays, please return safely to us; if, on the other hand, you have just become 'out of sync' with Carindale Writers' Group, know we will happily welcome you back to our fold.

Talking of members who have taken time off this year brought to mind one very popular absent member, **Karen Reyment**, who has finally completed her writing contract for the '2012 Foodie's Guide to Brisbane'. Karen has made quite an impact on the national food-writing scene since she joined our ranks, and this book is yet another notch on her ladder of writing fame. Congratulations, Karen! The book, available for purchase at selected newsagents and booksellers, will surely make a well-received Christmas gift for that special 'foodie' in your family.

Some-one else making a splash in publishing is our long-term member **Ed McMahon**, who has succumbed to the digital age and placed his book "The Butcher's Apron" on www.lulu.com Ed told us he had already sold 4 books in the couple of days of placement. Those of us lucky to have heard readings from 'The Butcher's Apron' in the early days of its penning, will recall the story is about the Irish revolution and has all the pathos and mind boggling heroism the genre deserves. Ed was telling us how important the cover is for E-Books, and how he designed the cover himself rather than use the stock cover offered by the website. Good move, Ed, your artistic flair will certainly help sell your book!

“The Butcher’s Apron” can be downloaded for the miserly sum of \$2.99. Perhaps CWG members can help swell those sales for Ed.

Leslee-Anne, our resource librarian, brought to our attention at the last meeting how we haven’t added any new books to our collection for over twelve months. This meeting, she came prepared with a printout from Writer’s Digest (an American based, online writers resource site) with many great books offered at fire-sale prices. Leslee-Anne will order a collection of books to the value of \$50 to suit our member needs and she will be reimbursed COD.

Feature Reader:

Reading from her novel in progress, “The Reluctant Pioneer” **Judith** shared her frustration with the genre of historical fiction. She mentioned the ‘never again’ words, but I’m thinking that, in spite of all the painstaking research to ensure every fact is as correct as history makes possible, the story is, nevertheless a labour of love for her.

The story revolves around a convict ancestor of Judith’s (Will Richardson), deported from England to Van Diemen’s Land to serve time for a trivial offence. Will is a very young man, with a young man’s dreams and hopes and Judith is at pains to show the new world and experiences from his eyes. The first part of her reading showed Will’s sensory responses to the milieu on the docks prior to his departure. The second part of Judith’s reading showed Will settling in to his new identity as a convict, far from family and all things familiar, in a cruel, harsh land.

Critique: In response to Judith’s request on paragraphing issues, the feedback suggested it is a common challenge to know where to break the sentences into a new paragraph. Apart from the obvious ‘new speaker, new line’ advice, another suggestion was to think of the paragraph like a scene from a film – where the camera cuts away in a film to a new scene, the same device might be adapted for paragraphing. In other words, stay with the paragraph as long as the action doesn’t change. However, if it changes, even for a short interjection, there must be a new paragraph to signify the shift.

This method is also handy for shifting point of view as well. Try to think of your characters’ eyes as a camera lens and only report what they can see. Something pointed out during Judith’s critique was the importance of selective point of view. If you have one main character, he/she is the only one capable of sensory

reactions such as touch, smell and feelings. He/she shows us what is happening in the story space through their reactions.

Another suggestion concerned the importance of tension in the plot. In this case, Judith felt adding Will's quest for a better life as a free settler (with his own farming land) would add tension to the plot.

It was a most enjoyable reading by Judith and we thanked her accordingly.

This meeting's exercise: The titles set for this meeting was either 'The Song' or 'Desperation'.

Hazel chose the latter topic to share a short extract from the memoir she is writing about her life in Burma. Her story for today was particularly harrowing. In 1944, Burmese people are desperate for food. So desperate that Hazel's family dog becomes a major source of finding sustenance for them. When he brings home a bone, the older brothers split the bone and extract the marrow for the family to eat before giving the hollowed out bone back to the dog to eat. Nevertheless, when the dog brings home a human bone from one of the Japanese soldiers' corpses left rotting in the streets, there's a line to be drawn. Later, when the dog goes missing, the reader can only guess what fate befell the family pet.

Thanks for sharing this story with us, Hazel!

Shirley's story was typically 'out back' Australiana. A lovely young lass in a country town enjoys the attentions of a surveyor—one of a team breathing life into the isolated hamlet. When he leaves, she is left behind with only memories – and 'their song'.

Well done, Shirley, we want more of these from you now.

Beverley (yours truly) wrote a short, short story about the power of a song to bridge unconscious and conscious states. A wife and mother has a near death experience but is brought back to life when the lyrics of a song disrupts her 'crossing over' and her deceased grandmother tells her it isn't her time to say goodbye.

Feature Reader for next meeting: ?Maria (Please get in touch with Debby to confirm)

Exercise choices for next meeting: “The Lost Story” or “Last Will and Testament”.

Writing opportunities: <http://www.bristolprize.co.uk/>

<http://www.twelfthplanetpress.com/news/twelfth-planet-press-novel-manuscript-submission-month-january-2012>

Chip’s Computer Tips

What to Do When Internet Explorer Won't Run

A CWG member is having a problem with Microsoft Internet Explorer 8 on his Windows XP system: Whenever he runs the browser, it pops open for just a second or two, then immediately closes again.

Now that's what I call a busted browser.

This kind of problem occurs when Internet Explorer gets "corrupted," meaning there's been damage to one or more of the files that make the program work. Microsoft has documented the issue, which apparently occurs with IE7, IE8, and even IE9 (way to make progress, there, Microsoft). The solution is to uninstall and then reinstall the browser.

Unfortunately for Bill, he's already tried that--several times. (I don't know if he's visited Microsoft's FixIt Center; that's worth a try.) That leaves two options. First, consider wiping your system and reinstalling Windows XP or moving up to Windows 7. I know that sounds like overkill for a problem like this, but it's something every user needs to do from time to time--and you'll net a faster, like-new system for your trouble.

Second, give up on Internet Explorer. I've mentioned this option before in response to others who've had problems with their browser. IE doesn't work? Try Firefox. Having trouble with Firefox? Try Chrome. Any replacement browser will allow

you to import all your bookmarks, so the transition should be fairly simple (even if you will have to learn a slightly different interface). I use all three

I realize this doesn't solve the actual problem with IE, but it does give you a fast, easy, and effective workaround.

From Chip

And because I couldn't choose between them, you get another one from Chip)

How to Avoid Unwanted Browser Toolbars

Have you ever found your Web browser loaded with mysterious toolbars out of the blue, and wondered where they came from?



I see this all the time. One day someone's browser is humming along as always, and the next it's saddled with a bunch of weird toolbars they didn't ask for and don't want.

Spyware is one possible culprit. If you suddenly encounter a toolbar called Super Internet Search or something equally fishy, it probably got there by way of a [drive-by download](#) (spyware that broke in when you visited a tainted site) or some other kind of infection. Scan the PC promptly with a good [antimalware tool](#)--and whatever you do, don't use any of the toolbar's buttons or its search box.

Another possible culprit: you. Many freeware, shareware, and even commercial programs try to slip in a browser toolbar during installation; and if you're not paying attention, you might click right past the setup screen that lets you opt out. For example, when you install a [Java update](#), you'll end up with the Yahoo Toolbar unless you uncheck a box along the way. That particular toolbar isn't spyware, and you can easily uninstall it--but it's still an unwanted addition to your browser. Bad developers, bad!

But wait, there's more. See the next page for a charming bevy of writers.



Photo printed in The Redland Times with the article on my editor's choice award.



How about this bunch of roses! Biggest bouquet I've ever received. That's international best seller author, M.K. Hume with me.

Happy writing everyone!
Beverley