



Carindale Writers' Group Meeting

25 February 2010

Start 9:30

Present: Beverley, Jeff, Dorothy, Lydia, Sandy, Leslee-Anne, Chip, Brian, Wendy, Debby, Don, Michael, Judy, Nick, Marjorie, Naomi.

Apologies: Marilyn, Heather, Richard, Io, Sandy, Karen, Gary

News/ challenges/ discussions/correspondence:

1. Michael attended a writer's workshop which gave some interesting tips on how to create a deep point of view. He thought it may be worthwhile having the organiser come along as a guest speaker at one of our meetings. Bev will look into this and let us all know the outcome.
2. Following Don's tips last week on self-publishing and his website Zulu Express he clarified how to submit manuscripts to the site. Just go to the website www.zuluexpress.com.au, hit the 'Mailbox' button and attach your manuscript along with a short biography, sample chapter and synopsis. Thanks Don and good luck to everyone who decides to give it a go!
3. Lydia raised a question about the best way to go about manuscript appraisals. Beverley suggested going through the Society of Editors, or someone associated with them. It was generally agreed that the best avenue is to go to the website of or otherwise contact a publisher of your book's genre to see who they will accept as an editor, but remember to choose wisely as it can be quite expensive.

Feature Reader:

Michael: 'The Sawdust Apprentice'

What a fabulous title for a story! Michal read us two chapters from a story he says seems to have picked him as he always thought he might write a crime novel. The tale is about Jamie who's life is changed by the war. What proceeds is a story rife with believable characters and a thrilling plot line including Jamie's estranged wife Maggie, her friend Sally and the shady character Sam among others.

The story received a lot of points for suspense... in fact comments even included an 'Excellent, Triple A+' and that it 'Had a touch of Dickens'. It was suggested that perhaps there could be fewer sentences starting with pronouns such as 'He' or 'She' just by turning the sentence around and placing the 'He' or 'She' in the middle. Also to dialogue attribution, a few 'He/She said's could be removed as the narration already tells who's speaking.

Thanks Michael, it truly was a pleasure to listen to... and to any cranky primary school teachers who may not appreciate talent when they read it, well here's a big PHOOEY! to them.

Morning Tea. Thanks for the healthy treats again Dorothy.... The Tim Tams were quite good too though I must admit.

Guest Speakers:

Chip regaled us with an Autobiographical monologue titled 'Too smart for your own good' or 'Ghost writers in Cyberspace' ...whichever you prefer. I'm sure the problems presented in the story about the range of frustrations you can have with computers can be appreciated by all. Very funny Chip, and well done for not resorting to throwing the computer.

Lydia read us a beautiful poem entitled 'As I remember' reflecting on the idea of senses. Very nostalgic and what a beautiful reading voice Lydia... If anyone needs any stories recorded, this is definitely your girl.

Dorothy... Short but sweet, or should I say, steamy, Dorothy took this week's task to a new level that would have made Mills and Boon proud I'm sure. Phew, I think I'm still blushing!

Marjorie's story 'The Intelligence' about the war to end all wars. Thought provoking and a good philosophical piece for thought. Why are millions of dollars spent on weaponry and space travel when people are suffering from their effects already? Debby followed Marjorie's story with a complimentary limerick about nuclear war.

Brian treated us with two stories of a returning favourite character, Martin Moran. Brian also worked with the sensual theme to bring along quite an intense and action filled story set on a hot September day on the beach. Seduction ensues between characters Martin and Siobhan and after a stimulating build up the piece ends in an action packed fight as Martin saves Siobhan from an unsavoury Scotsman who crudely interrupts their intimacy. Suspense, action and seduction, thanks Brian, you had us all riveted.

Wendy read an edited passage from her novel. Following this week's 'sensuality' theme it followed main characters Brin and Miri in their first sexual encounter, from the perspective of Miri. Miri is trying to fight her attraction to Brin but he wins over in the end. There was a general consensus that the imagery was quite engaging, but a couple of suggestions that the reference to Brin's 'hairy body' evoked images of a monkey and so distracted from the steamy, intense mood. Good progress Wendy!

Bev's 'Bob and Dolly' was certainly a tear jerker! The moving story of widower Bob and his faithful poodle Dolly. It highlighted the miscommunication between master and his loyal friend, which I'm sure we can all relate to in some way in our own relationships. Excellent build up of emotions Bev, the ending definitely brought a tear to the eye.

Feature Reader/s for next meeting: Beverley

Exercise to work on if you have time:

Write a short story that brings about the feeling of a season: Summer, Spring, Winter or Summer. But describe the season without saying what it is directly... basically a descriptive piece but with plot.

From those read next meeting we will choose ONE piece to be used for the following meetings exercise.... where everyone can have a go at rewriting the ending of that story. It will be interesting to see how many different variations we can get from a whole group of writers. Exciting indeed!

Happy Writing Everyone!

Chip's Computer Tips

Access Your Home PC When You're Not Home

I've noticed that a lot of CWG members have laptops as well as home PC's. I wonder how many of you access your home computer through your laptop when you are in some café having coffee.

There are many solutions that afford remote access to other PCs, but I've yet to find one I like better than oldie-but-goodie LogMeIn.com Free.

All you do is download and install the small LogMeIn utility (which is available for both Windows and Mac), set up your account and password, then leave your PC running when you leave the house.

To connect from afar, just open up a browser (on any Internet-connected PC), head to the LogMeIn site and sign in to your account. Click the big green Remote Control button, enter your password, and in a few seconds you'll see your home PC's desktop right inside your browser. (The first time you do this, you'll need to install a browser plug-in, which is quick and painless.)

You can now interact with your home PC just as if you were sitting at it. (I recommend maximizing the LogMeIn window within your browser so you can enjoy a full-screen interface, which is much easier on the eyes.) Keep in mind that everything will seem a bit slower than usual, which is simply a by-product of remote access. Also, graphics may look a little splotchy, as LogMeIn intentionally reduces Windows' color depth to improve performance.

If you do maximize the LogMeIn window, you'll need to move your mouse cursor to the top of the screen (near the center) to access its toolbar.

I've used LogMeIn a whole bunch of ways. I sometimes fire up the app to shut down the PC in our studio remotely, just so I don't have to run outside.