

***Carindale Writers' Group Meeting***

**25 November 2010**

Start 9:30

**Present:**

Rosemary, Maria, Judy, Marjorie, Leslee-Anne, Karen, Chip, Michael, Dorothy, Bev, Heather, Shirley, Dawn, Maria, Angela, Ian, Naomi

**Apologies:**

Hazel, Brian, Marilyn, Debby

Firstly, a very big thank you to Leslee-Anne for opening up her beautiful home to us for the last meeting. It was gorgeous sitting on her deck amongst the trees listening to everyone's beautiful writing, and eating all the yummy food brought along.

**News:**

**Next meeting is our Christmas Lunch:** Don't forget that our next meeting is our Christmas lunch to be held at the Redlands Sporting Club, 20 Anson Road, Wellington Point. We'll meet at the club at 11am and then all head into the restaurant as a group. The cost is \$19.80 for adults and \$16.00 for seniors.

**Out absent Treasurer:** We were told that Jeff is making a good recovery and sending out email updates with his usual dry sense of humour. I bumped into him at our regular Thursday trivia night, and he was indeed looking very much recovered. Hopefully he'll be able to make it along to the Christmas lunch.

**Next year:** Our first meeting back in the New Year will be the 27<sup>th</sup> January. It will be held at the new interim library at Carindale Shopping Centre which is approximately 200m from the current site, across the road at the Home & Leisure Centre alongside Harvey Norman. I'll be holidaying down in Tasmania at that time, but will look forward to catching up with everyone in February.

**Feature reader:  
Judy and 'The Reluctant Pioneer'**

Judy read from her novel 'The Reluctant Pioneer' set in colonial Tasmania days. While staying as close as possible to the historical aspects of the time, Judy wants to ensure the novel is still a story within itself rather than just an account of history. Starting in England a young man, Will, is sent to Van Diemen's Land for stealing while drunk.

Judy first read the introduction to the book and wanted to know if we would read on. Everyone agreed yes, that it set a scene, created a character, time, place and image.

Judy then continued reading the next few chapters, with Will leaving for Australia.

**Critique:**

I'm putting the critique in point form in its entirety today as Judy wanted someone to take down all the notes so she could concentrate on listening. So here we go in point form....

- Sometimes Will is referred to Richardson, Why? Will is more personal and reminds me of a young man, while Richardson seems old and cold. The story is complicated and hard to follow with two names.
- There was wonderful historical information, but the first part seemed to be a lot of bulk information. Perhaps take some breaks to describe things i.e. noise of wind etc to break up dialogue; otherwise it's a whole lot of telling.
- I loved the part where he heard the echo's of his mother's voice, a lovely touch. Bring this out using memories to show they help him put up with his current situation.
- Well done on the description of the convicts.
- The whales in the Derwent River were lovely. Lifted spirits.
- The dialogue when the females enter into the story is good. It plants a seed that Will might have some positive hope for the future.
- They didn't have any rising agents for bread in those days, so would spirits have precedence on the boat over things like flour and sugar?
- I don't know about them getting drunk as alcohol would've been pretty scarce. It seems like there wouldn't have been enough space on the boats for some of the comforts they had like alcohol and new clothes.
- The story had a good flow and continuity.
- When you tell things through Will's eyes you should use words he would use e.g. the word 'occupants' when he was looking around the cell. Would he use/know such a word?

- The voice and tone was very appropriate but it needs just a bit more colour. Show more descriptions rather than just being told a list of things.
- There were some evocative descriptions - just take it a little further.
- We'd like a bit more of Will. More Will voice, less narrator voice. It's all about Will's unique story.
- I would have like to have felt more threat. It was a tough time and place but it didn't seem that bad in the story.
- Show a little bit more depth of character of Will.
- Is the story plot or character driven? Stay with Will as the focus.
- Show more emotion. Readers want to be able to relate will to themselves and to themselves and their own emotions.
- Describe more about what the conditions were like so readers get the idea that this particular area wasn't as brutal as some other areas.
- Regarding the character of Collins – wouldn't he have barked at them rather than talked to them like gentlemen?
- Needs more colour, smell and sound.
- At some times the archival material was a little overwhelming, I would have like to have seen more emotion
- I'd like to hear more from Will's point of view. I wanted more to tell us what Will's character is like.
- Perhaps a bit more action/conflict is needed. Some more tension between the characters or conditions.
- Say somewhere that this new life in Australia is better than life back in England
- What does Will ultimately want and what is standing in his way? What/who is stopping him from getting it?
- Make Will reflect about how good it is in Australia and feel somewhat guilty about his family back home.
- Hope for future. Even if conditions are good, will he have hope? And hope for what?

### **Additional Readers:**

We started off with the imaginings that the setting of ‘a country road’ inspired. Bev shared a memoir of first loves and the reminiscent deliciousness it can bring. Marjorie followed with a short story with a character inspired by her husband. Dorothy then gave us a treat with a first look at the epilogue for The Byrds and Maria finished with a youthful experience of church. There wasn’t as many additional readers today, but we certainly lingered at Leslee-Anne’s little piece of paradise for as long as possible chatting amongst the fig trees and the birds.

**Next Meeting’s exercise:** Write a story inspired by Christmas lunch. Maximum of 500 words.

**Feature Reader for next meeting: Ian**

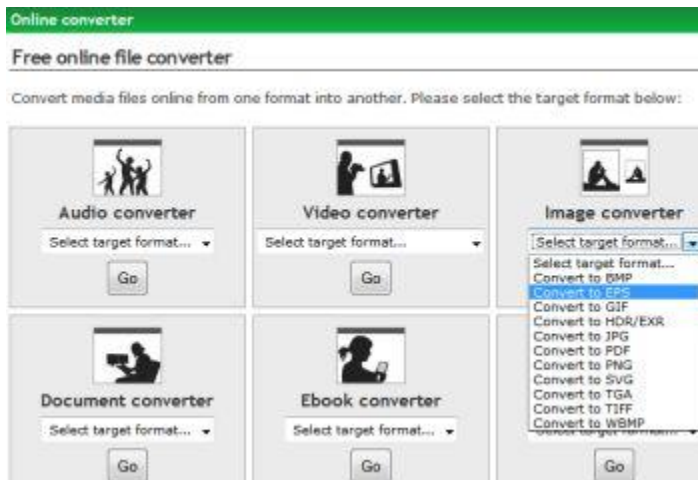
**Until next time... happy writing everyone,  
Naomi**

### **Now for Chip’s Computer Tips**

#### Convert Files to Other Formats

Recently a friend of mine ordered a new logo for his company. He received inside of a week. The logo, however, was in EPS format--something that few programs outside of Photoshop can create. (Freeware favorite Paint.NET can't do it; neither can GIMP.)

He asked me if there was a file converter around that he could use. I told him about [online-ConVert.com](http://online-convert.com), a free site that can convert any image file to just about any format you need (including, thankfully, EPS).



All you do is select your file, choose any extra settings you may want (like sharpen or convert to monochrome), and then click *Convert file*. In just a few moments, the site uploads your file, converts it, and gives you a download that's ready to save to your hard drive.

You can also enter an e-mail address if you want to share the converted file with someone else or retrieve it later--but that's optional.

The site handles more than just images: it can convert audio files, documents, e-books, and videos. It also has a "hash converter" that will turn any snippet of text into an encrypted hash of your choice.

This is a great little tool, one I highly recommend bookmarking. Try it.

*Chip*