

Carindale Writers' Group Meeting

27 May 2010

Start 9:30

Present: Beverley, Rolando, Lydia, Karen, Dorothy, Judy, Nick (AKA Fred the Rebel), Marjory, Chip, Michael, Brian, Wendy, Dawn, Pam, Len, Naomi, Thea, Jeff, Debby, Rebekah, Shirley.

Apologies: Gary, Sandy, Heather, Marilyn

News/ challenges/ discussions/correspondence:

1. Len has officially taken over our interim library role while Leslee-Anne is away. Len will be bringing the books along to each meeting, so don't forget to take a second and see what's on offer.

2. Following on from last meeting, Bev has lodged our intention to hold Rebekah's Critical Feedback process workshop at the Queensland Writers Week from 11-17 October. We're still waiting to hear back about that one, but we can't see any reason why we'd have any troubles. So at the moment, all going well, just a reminder that will be Thursday 14th October in our usual meeting room and providing we do get the official go ahead, we'll aim to have invites out sometime in September.

3. Ideas are invited as to how we can spend additional funds we have available from membership fees. Suggestions so far include making another book of short stories but in print rather than disc this time. Any suggestions please let Bev know and we can discuss further at the June 10 meeting.

Feature Reader:

Wendy: From her ongoing novel, chapters 10 and 18

Overview:

A re-write of two chapters from Wendy's post apocalyptic novel. The first focuses on the two central characters of the novel, Mirry and Brynn, giving an insight into the extent of Brynn's hidden evil character; and Mirry's struggle to fight against it, knowing that everyone else still looks up to him as a sort of saviour in the new world. Chapter 18, while still depicting the continuing struggle between Mirry and Brynn, takes a more encompassing and symbolic view of the whole novel as we watch Brynn's plans unfold in a sacrificial ceremony to enhance his power over the many characters we've already been introduced us to. The suspense builds as we become desperate to know... will we get to see Brynn fall from grace, and will Mirry finally will summons the courage to rise against him?

Critique:

Wendy asked two questions today. Firstly she asked how we felt about the characteristics of Brynn and Mirry. There was a general dislike of Brynn, feeling he was controlling yet detached as well as powerful and hypnotising. Some even commenting that he had the profile of a serial killer or a cult leader. On the other hand, most felt compassion for Mirry but also worried that she may be going down the same evil path as Brynn as she struggled against him. The end of chapter represented a hint of a turning point in the story when Mirry sliced Brynn's arm open... was it a subtle sign that while she may not hold the power at the moment, she very well could in the future? Both chapters were representative of a giant see saw, we're just waiting to see which way it will fall... to good or evil?

Secondly, Wendy asked whether there was a balance between narrative and action. There was one point where a few people felt imbalance as the crowd dispersed in panic and chaos after Mirry sliced open Brynn's arm with a knife. Based on the previous narrative, this didn't seem like a realistic reaction from the crowd. Other comments were that it the balance was good because it seemed to be like a movie running through your mind. There were also a few comments that perhaps some additional dialogue could move the action along faster, but all in all a ripping yarn, and as someone said, what a remarkably creative mind Wendy.

Additional Readers:

Shirley: A story of birth

A short, fun and interesting piece about the birth of Freud showing just how unexpected life can be.

Lydia: from this meeting's exercise topic...

A crooked tale about a foreign business man who got more than he bargained for. Full of wit, and sporting a surprise ending, this piece received not just a few laughs, but a number of chortle's and perhaps even a guffaw from the enraptured audience. All of this was enriched with some very lively accents... maybe you should lead us all in some



acting classes Lydia next meeting Lydia? As promised, here's one gold star for you.

Marjory: Word Power

A thought provoking and humorous piece about how words sound in comparison to their meanings. A good reminder that as much as we speak, read and write throughout most of our everyday lives, we may not take the time to think more deeply about the words we use. Marjory posed some interesting very questions indeed... I'm still pondering who may have first thought of the word thought. A bit of a mind boggler. Thanks Marjory.

Chip: Bloggers

Chip delved into cyberspace with a spin on the recent 'Boob quake' fiasco, touching on topics of whether religion necessarily makes someone a good person, the damage religious belief can do in certain situations and how prevalent religion is amongst bloggers. Thanks to Wendy for reading the lead female role, and for chip's animated depiction of God. Hmmm, maybe we really do have a few budding actors here?

Debby: The Newspaper

Weaving real life newspaper story from 1954 (I think it was 1954, sorry if I'm mistaken Debby) into her family memoirs, the story gave a background of a young couple's early life together. While Debby warned us that being a memoir it would be 'a bit dry', it was anything but. Evoking a very rich, gentle and nostalgic sense of time as we followed Charlie riding his push bike home from his clerical job on a cold wet evening, Debby managed to capture just how prevalent struggle was in every days lives and how the simple pleasures can mean so much. It just made you want to be home in front of the fire on a cold winters evening.

Rolando: "On the wedding day"

Rolando shared one of his past writing escapades; a tongue-in-cheek ad for a gym specialising in helping brides lose weight before their big day. As he secretly hoped, I'm not surprised that particular friend didn't express a desire for a follow up piece but maybe Rove or perhaps some other comedy skit show could use your services in future Rolando?

Len: "When married mothers manage the world"

A topic that I'm sure at least 50% of the population would agree on, Len's short story described how we'd all be better off if women ruled the world. Now, I can certainly say I'm part of the 50% in favour, but I'm just a little surprised (pleasantly of course) that a member of the other half of the population would not only agree but advocate that opinion through writing. Now girls, what do you think our chances are of convincing the other 49.99999%?

Rebekah: the start of her article

Rebekah gave us just a little glimpse into an article in progress about her experience of flight in a Tiger Moth plane. Even though we only heard a few words, it certainly rang true to our last meeting's exercise theme of trust as she described the feeling of twisting and barrelling through the sky; surrendering all to put her life in the hands of the pilot (a very experienced one we're sure!).

Dorothy: From The Birds: The Dry Earth

Another excerpt from the beloved Birds, this teary tale showed the experience of death through the eyes of Deeley (I hope I spelt it correctly Dorothy, it's quite an unusual name!), just a child of around seven at the time. There was some debate afterwards as to whether a child so young could feel the sorrow described which in turn inspired quite some strong feelings. So good to be part of such a lively debate on human nature, thought and behaviour, because after all, isn't that what we're all writing about in the end?

Feature Reader/s for next meeting: Dawn

Exercise to work on if you have time: Flash Fiction! In 100 words write a story using the following words:

- Bottle
- Cruel
- Sunday
- Temptation
- Breakfast

Happy Writing Everyone!

Chip's Computer Tips

Saving Your Personal Information

What are the most valuable information and items on your computer? It's the data that you have put into it. These might be letters, documents, email, photos, artwork, your favourite websites, bank and financial data and your personal contacts and addresses. All this adds up to years of personal information. Without it, your daily routine could be severely hampered. Then the inevitable day comes and you crash. What happens then? Of course, you know about backing up your data, and perhaps you do, such as putting your photos on a CD or DVD. Or perhaps you use the Microsoft Windows/Vista backup program on a regular basis.

These days, the new technology offers you several backup options and you can choose one or more to suit your personal needs. It's just a matter of copying your folders and files from one storage area to another. You have the options of adding a second hard drive in your computer, use a portable hard drive, an external hard drive, a DVD burner or a flash drive. They are all relatively inexpensive, starting at less than \$100.

Adding a second hard drive to your computer has the advantage of allowing you to put your personal data and additional software programs on it while you are using your computer normally. You run just your operating system on your main drive. If your operating system or main hard drive fails you already have your personal data on your second drive. Advantages: This backup method is simple, fast and has a large storage capacity—100gb is considered small these days. And many computer shops will install one for you without a service charge.

External hard drives are the easiest to install. They come equipped with the USB port. They can do full or daily backups from your home or office computers and allow you to copy data from one computer to another if yours aren't networked. If one computer fails, you can simply plug the drive into another computer and continue whatever you were doing.

CD and DVD players and burners usually come as standard equipment for home and small business users. The DVD's have up to 8Gb capacity. If you don't have one, you can add an external burner that plugs into a USB or Firewall port. Advantages: Portable and easy to copy files and folders and programs. Disadvantages: Long term disk storage; the burning software that comes with the drive is not always easy to use.

Portable hard drives are small and fit into a shirt pocket or handbag. They are ideal for to use with a notebook computer or to copy data from your office computer. Advantage: High capacity and portability. Disadvantage: high cost per gigabyte compared to standard hard drives.

Flash drives are the latest items on the market. It's the easiest way to plug in and copy financial statements, photos from a digital camera, software programs and personal information. Advantages: Cheap cost per gigabyte of storage. Easy to plug in and use. A disadvantage is the high cost per gigabyte of storage and their comparative small storage capacity (although 10Gb is now common).

How to Backup Personal Data on your own Windows Operating System:

From Start, go to Programs, click on Accessories, System Tools, Backup. Then, click Backup Wizard. It will ask you what you want to back up. In this case, you don't want a full backup, so pick Selected Files. You will see a Backup Utility page. From that open up C drive and you will see My Computer, My Documents, My Network Places and others. Just tick the files or folders you want to save. Now, here's one more tip. If you use Outlook Express or Internet Explorer as your email client and browser, you won't find it listed under those names. Instead, it is nested in Documents and Settings. So, if you want to save your Favorites, all your email, including your email folders and addresses, tick Documents & Settings, too. You can back them up on any type of drive or DVD. It's that easy.

