



***Carindale Writers' Group Meeting***

***June 11<sup>th</sup> 2009***

**Start 9:30**

**Welcome to:**

**Present:** Jeff, Mike, Dawn, Leslee Anne, Judith, Sandy, Beverley, Debby, Anne, Annette, Marilyn, Brian, Ian, Mike,

**Apologies:** Chip, Dorothy, Io, Kerry, Rhonda, Bill, Richard, Wendy

**Feature Readers:** Anne, Marilyn, Jeff

**Anne** was the first reader for the morning and entertained us with a short story about a husband loving his car more than his wife and family. There was an ironic twist in the story, with the long suffering wife finally getting what she had always longed for due to the fickle intervention of fate.

There were very few problems picked up on during the reading, apart from the need for more dialogue and for a little less condensation of the chronological time frame.

Well done, Anne!

~~~~~

**Marilyn** shared the opening pages of her work in progress. This story has the fascinating title of "Goats, Green Acres and Gumboots" and had us sitting up straight in our chairs as we followed the true to life struggles of a likeable fictional family. As most of us said in the following critique, the narrative was also classic for how inspired curiosity in the reader and achieved the most sought after effect of bringing characters to life. Whether her 'mother' character was feeding chooks or killing snakes, it was most definitely a picture painted in words.

Marilyn began by telling us she was writing for a younger reader, but I hope we convinced her to leave her options open on that score. I think she will find the characters are going to take over her story and they will dictate the final outcome. (*And isn't that the amazing alchemy of writing?*)

We certainly look forward to hearing how this story unfolds, Marilyn. I have a feeling it could be the "Angela's Ashes" of Australia.

~~~~~

**Jeff's** reading was from his novel in progress, "The Fusilier of the Line". It was a chapter written in the format of a letter coming from his main character, Charles, at the war-front, to his uncle in his home village. Some people thought that the letter was a tad too long and might have been broken up on the pages by being interspersed with action. However, everyone agreed the notion of a letter from the trenches belongs in Jeff's novel and that Jeff was able to provide the reader with much relevant historical information in this way.

.....

**Morning Tea:** A special morning tea this morning. Mike made his yummy cheese scones for us and our birthday boy, Jeff, brought along a scrumptious home made chocolate cake to share. There was carrot cake and another home baked cake that I wish I had tasted as well. Thanks to all those who contributed. (*Must be about time we went back to Arnott's biscuits though, before we get too used to the good life, hey?*)

**News/ challenges/ discussions/correspondence:**

- Morning Tea: The suggestions for clean up duties resulted in the unanimous decision to end the meetings by 12:45 to ensure the room is back in order before one o'clock.
- Last meeting, Bev H., who works as a legal secretary, volunteered to pass the disclaimer idea by her employer and get his opinion. Unfortunately, Beverley was absent this morning.
- Brian's revised letter to the BCC re the One Book, Many Brisbane's Competition was re-read. We all signed it for him to send, and now await the outcome.
- Leslee Anne reported back that she had recovered 2 out of the 6 outstanding library books, which means there are still 4 lurking somewhere. Please keep looking!
- Beverley reminded members to send contributions to her for the newsletter.
- Our multicultural/immigration project 'The Great Aussie Jigsaw' has the cut off date of July 1<sup>st</sup>. Although we have stipulated a maximum word limit of 6000 words, it was agreed that there could be a trade off of words between members. If your story is shorter, you can 'give' the unused portion of your word count to another person. Next meeting will be dedicated to reading these stories and critiquing, so please bring your completed manuscripts with three extra copies for editing purposes.

**Feature Reader for next meeting, June 25<sup>th</sup> :**

A whole session devoted to the immigration stories...

**Free Tickets for the Movies**

**Icon Distribution has generously donated 8 ‘buy one get one free’ seasonal tickets for the movie “Disgrace”. They are available for the first 8 members who reply to me with “Disgrace” in the subject line. The movie is based on the Booker Prize winning novel by Nobel Prize winning author J.M. Coetzee and is a Steve Jacobs film.**

(I read the review in Saturday’s paper and it sounds like a movie for people who like intelligent movies – perfect for writers...)

**A big thank you to Icon Distribution and the team at Thinktank Communication from The Carindale Writers’ Group!**

~~~~~

**Other writing:**

**Brian** read the story he began last meeting and this time we were treated to the missing pages and thus were able to hear about the fall from Grace of Brian’s vainglorious character, Roscoe, who was very much in love with his profile until he lost his crowing glory. A great story, Brian, thanks for sharing it with us.

**New writers’ readings:**

**Ian** read a short story entitled “Fair Dinkum Fisherman” which was another of those ‘one that got away’ stories with a great ending. Good one, Ian!

~~~~~

**Exercise to work on if you have time:** “Sunrise in July” Write a short story paying particular attention to setting, but engaging all the senses; not just the visual.

~~~~~

**Good News from the Library.** The renovations on the building have been postponed to early next year. We don’t have to move out. Yeah!!!

~~~~~

**Congratulations to Karen!**

Karen here... remember me ☺

Next time you are in the newsagents have a look at the June edition of ABC’s life ETC magazine. I have a 4 page feature published about our adventures!

Hope you and the group are all well, you sound like you are keeping busy.

Take care,

Karen X

## Contributions from Members:

**(from Debby.)**

Here is a piece I have lifted almost verbatim from the book *Eucalyptus* by Murray Bail. (It appears on page 37 or so.) It is particularly useful as it deals with this writer's idea of what constitutes a paragraph. I love the way he describes it. Other writers might find it useful.

### **A PARAGRAPH IS**

“A paragraph is not so different from a paddock – similar shape, similar function. And here's a connection worth pondering: these days, as paddocks are becoming larger, the corresponding shift in the cities where the serious printing's done is for paragraphs smaller. A succession of small paddocks can be as irritating as long ones wearisome. The single-idea paragraph which crowds the newspapers is a difficulty. Newspaper writers spend their days trailing after people above the ordinary in some way or other – the human equivalents to earthquakes, train crashes, rivers in flood – and write small paragraphs about them, when everybody knows that a brief rectangular view is not enough. The people written about in newspapers have already made something visible of their lives, large or small, brief or lasting, which is surely why journalists take an interest out of all proportion in newspaper proprietors; for here is one of us, or almost, who is larger than life.... These days it's common to trudge (as the reporters were forced to do) across a paddock that seems to go on forever and ever, amen. Other paddocks may be congested, untidy, restricting movement. It's just as easy these days to get clogged up or trip in the middle of a paragraph! As in a paddock it is sometimes necessary to retrace our steps. Easy to lose heart, lose your way. In these and other situations the impulse is to take the short cut. 'A problem paddock' – there's a common description. Words, yakety-yak, are spoken within the paddock (paragraph). The rectangle is a sign of civilisation: Europe from the air. Civilisation? A paragraph begins as a rectangle and by chance may finish up a square. Who was it said the square doesn't exist in nature? A paddock has an alteration in the fencing for the point of entry, just as a paragraph has an indentation to encourage entry. A paddock too is littered with nouns and Latin in italics, even what appears to be a bare paddock.... A paddock is supposed to fence off wandering thoughts.”

~~~~~

### **Uninstalling programs (from Chip)**

While its important to not to have multiple anti virus programs on your system, it's also good practice to keep all types old programs off your system.

Uninstalling software should be easy. Open the Control Panel by clicking Start, settings and Control Panel. In the Windows 95, 98, ME and XP Control Panel, click Add/Remove Programs or in Vista choose Programs and Uninstall a Program.

In this screen you will get a list of programs that are installed on your machine. Click the one you want to remove and the uninstall process should start. You may have to answer some questions during the process.

That said, it isn't always that easy. If the program is damaged, then it may not uninstall. Some programs are simply badly designed and won't obey the rules. When that happens, you'll need to call for support.

~~~~~

**Happy Writing Everyone!**