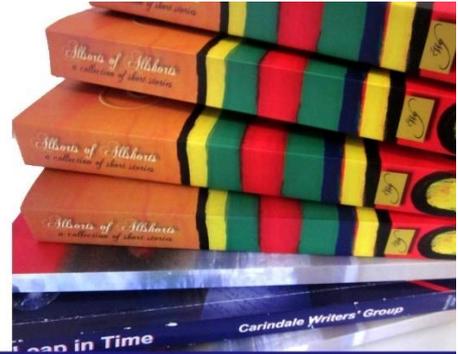


Carindale Writers' Group



www.carindalewritersgroup.org

... providing encouragement through sharing and discussion

carindalewritersgroup@gmail.com

Carindale Writers Group meeting 24th October 2018 Holland Park Library 10am – 1pm

Present: Catherine Clarke, Dave Shellshear, Debby Raymond, John Jukes, Judy Rostedt, Leslee Anne Hewson.

Apologies: Tony Tabrett.

Featured writer Catherine Clarke

Catherine's story, *Gin Palace by the Sea*, provoked a lot of discussion. Some of it had to do with what we understood as a 'gin palace'. Various interpretations included bordello, or speakeasy from the prohibition era, or living luxuriously. Mostly we spoke about the main character's expectation of retirement and 'God's waiting room'.

In her dream, Pearl's subconscious was mining the dis-heartening attitude to ageing and the invisibility of old people. Being aged does not necessarily mean infirm. We heard an evocative opening to quite a poetic story, the progression of which was good. We would have liked Pearl's name mentioned earlier. To set the scene of the group's plan for retirement immediately after the prologue would assist the reader. A notable difference in style was detected in the early part of the story where there was lots of metaphor, compared to the greater mundanity of its second part. Some wonderful images and alliteration dotted this scarily credible story about a group of people living together in retirement, whose relationships descend into bickering over trivial things. The somewhat dark ending didn't seem finished and there was confusion at one point about who the speaker was. There was good use of similes and it was nice to see that the main character kept true to herself throughout.

Gin Palace by the Sea captured the sense of faded dreams. It's Pearl's story yet she seems removed from it. The nightmare opening sequence was very realistic, with the story tracking towards a perfect ending.

Catherine responded about the possibility of developing this piece, especially to bring out the characters. It would be interesting to consider what you do with the reality of aging; how to live life with fun. She realised it would be a more positive story if she were to emphasise the uplifting view of looking out over the ocean from the house by the sea.

Writing Magazine's editor James McCreet gives advice about the writer's most common failings.

- Don't begin a novel before you've learnt to write.
- Learn about correct punctuation.
- Let the dialogue reveal action and intention without tags full of reporting verbs, adverbs and descriptions. Ensure it sounds the way real people speak.
- Be precise in the words you use. Choose carefully because the right word will grab and keep the reader's attention.
- Be clear about who is telling the story ('point of view').
- Ensure the first 300 words grab the attention of an agent or publisher by being focused on what the reader needs and nothing more. Make sure that first page is thoroughly proof-read. You can't afford a single mistake.

Information courtesy of writer and CWG member Diane Clarke

Featured writer Dave Shellshear

Dave composed a modern version of the classic Red Riding Hood story.

Readers really liked this fun version and it's opening paragraph. The sense of being waylaid by the animal makes it a scary story. Although one reader loved all the characters' names being similar – and the metaphor of Ragnarok and its epic – another felt that although they were great names there were too many beginning with the same letter. It meant having to re-read the story to work out who was who, and to see who threw the sausages as a diversionary tactic.

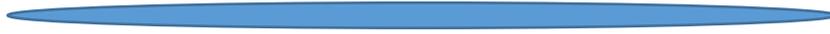
We loved that the story was set in Australia. More Australian descriptions could be used. Creek could be a billabong and trees could be Queensland Blue Gums.

It was pointed out by several readers that the main character, Redmonda, didn't outwit the dingo as the story purported. We had some fun acknowledging that the story's originators, the Brothers Grimm, were not up to today's Barbie fashions, a requisite of all smart young girls!

All classics had a moral. The moral of this one is, never talk to strangers in the guise of a dingo. Nor should he mess with pretty girls. They'll plug you!

This story was a very different style to the author's usual memoir. The language in it could show whether it's intended for children or adults. Tenses occasionally need attention. Because it's a send-up it doesn't need the happy ending but it does need to end with a bang. The brother needs to feature more if he's to be mentioned at all. More dialogue would enhance this fun story. To really modernise it you could say that people use quad bikes in the bush these days. The image of 'Red' (Redmonda) Riding Hood on a quad bike was so appealing it gave us quite a chuckle.

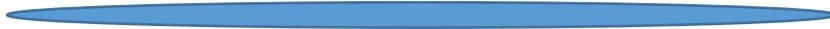
Characterization was one-sided. The dingo needs a scarier description, and the forest needs a name. The ending needed something extra. How about lacing the sausages with vodka!



Hard copies of written work

Printouts provided by the featured writer for the meeting need to be double-spaced to allow room for written comments.

For the exercise, please provide a few written copies. These permit a full spontaneous response to an aural presentation. Listeners are able to give more feedback when they can read it at the same time.



Critique and feedback

Whatever meeting you attend – whichever venue or day of the week – you are encouraged to give feedback to the featured writer. Listening to and learning from feedback is what makes us better writers. The more feedback and critique, the greater the improvement.

You are a member of a writing critique group. To get the most from the group, you have to invest something in it. So, please take the time to read the work of every featured writer and then send feedback on it to carindalewritersgroup@gmail.com or to the writer in question. When it's your turn, we do it for you.

The critique and feedback you get from members of Carindale Writers Group is invaluable. For the price of your annual membership to Carindale Writers Group – only \$20 – and a small contribution at every meeting, you get enormous value from those who give critique. Please be one of them.

It's worthwhile to know that you could pay upwards of a thousand dollars for a manuscript appraisal. Your colleagues at Carindale Writers Group give it to you for free.

www.carindalewritersgroup.org

Christmas meeting

The Holland Park Christmas meeting on Wednesday 12th December welcomes members who usually attend our meetings at Carindale Library. Every member is asked to bring a plate of food to share.

All members are invited, especially those we haven't seen in a while. Please come along and enjoy re-connecting with your friends at Carindale Writers Group. We would really like to see you.

A trivia quiz will take place; perhaps a humorous play reading; and who knows what other festive offerings there might be! If you've got any ideas or contributions of a light-hearted literary nature, please let Dave or Debby know by contacting carindalewritersgroup@gmail.com

Anthology meeting

Anthology preparations are well in hand. We already have enough promised material to make up at least half the required word count. Closing date for submissions is 10th January 2019, giving you plenty of writing time. Hopefully the Christmas holidays will enthuse you to further edit and polish your suspenseful stories!

An informative paper called *If You Go Down to the Woods Today* was emailed recently to all members. It's about the difference between suspense and mystery. The genres can overlap, even in the one story. It makes for a light-hearted and useful read.

Plotting workshop

Dave will follow up with his colleague Tony Thwaites to ask Venny Armano to come to us for a workshop on plot development.

Debby will follow up with another contact with enquiries about the same workshop.

Future workshops suggested are 'show, don't tell'; and using dialogue to move the story along.

Membership drive

Please be reminded that a proposal was accepted to hold, on our second meeting next February, an event that should appeal to would-be writers who haven't found us yet; perhaps either a workshop or a flash fiction exercise, inviting them to join us. Naturally, every meeting includes morning tea. Please tell us how you would develop this idea. carindalewritersgroup@gmail.com

Next meeting Carindale Library

Thursday 1st November

9.30am – 12 noon

Next featured writers (2):

Mary Calligeros: Memoir, chapter 1

Hazel Barker: Memoir, book IV

Next exercise: *Burning*

Suggested word count around 500 words.

Next meeting Holland Park Library

Wednesday 14th November

10.00am – 1pm

Next featured writers (3):

John Jukes: Fighting Fires

Leslee Anne Hewson: Charlotte's
Bravery

Inda Zabri:

Next exercise: *Colour*

Suggested word count around 500 words.



Email	carindalewritersgroup@gmail.com
Website	www.carindalewritersgroup.org
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/Carindalewritersgroup/
Co-conveners	Dave Shellshear and Debby Raymond
Treasurer	Debby Raymond
Librarian	Dave Shellshear