

THE HUNTER WRITER

90 Hunter Street, Newcastle NSW Australia • Phone: 02 49263485 — Web:
<http://www.hwcentre.com>

www.newcastlepoetryprize.com

Hunter Writers Centre...expanding the parameters of Writing in Australia
Vision Statement, January 2008

November has been a huge month for writing in the Hunter with four book launches and a number of successes for our members. Catchfire Press kicked everything off with the launch of *People of the Valley*, a beautiful book that gathers together the stories of people in the region.

Lockup Director Gerry Bobsien launched her first book, *Surfache* to rave reviews and Poetry at the Pub also launched their annual anthology. With the launch of *The Night Road* coming up, Newcastle surely remains at the forefront of new writing.

Local authors have also had individual successes with HWC member Andrew Slattery winning the prestigious Bruce Dawe poetry prize. Congratulations to Andrew and to HWC board member Maria Freij who was commended in the award.

This is the last newsletter of the year as the Hunter Writers' Centre will close mid Dec until the end of Jan. We hope to see you at our weekend of poetry but if not, have a great Christmas and we'll see you next year!

*Read on for a message from the HWC
Chair, Greg Hall...*

From the chair...

There is a Christmas tradition in my family, when the whole clan manages to gather in one of our homes – yes, good old Irish Catholic stock, with a smattering of Cockneys, Scots, Germans and Hungarian Jew, for good measure, where we raise a glass to those members of our mob who have gone over to the other side.

With the aroma of good champagne filling our nostrils we toast them, followed by a few sung verses of one relatives' favourite 1920's tune, "pop go the corks, la, la la," where upon we regale one another with outrageous stories of choice moments we either shared with the absent one or of them as we tuck into the feast.

On some occasions in years past, we have actually set a place and put a chair in front of that setting to mark the no show by one or another recently deceased family member, who had planned to join us that Christmas. A powerful symbol, the empty chair hints at more than just the physical absence of a loved one, but a sense that the event is somewhat poorer with their passing.

Morbid by some, it can also be a powerful reminder that the person in

question did live and who in their lifetime touched those who knew them in different and significant ways, some spoken, others not. The absent one may be silent but collectively we remember their actions, words, letters, cards and gestures.

With this in mind, Friday night's (Nov 27) public launch of the Newcastle Poetry Prize Anthology, *The Night Road*, at the Newcastle Regional Gallery, Laman Street, will bear witness to the presence of an empty chair.

An initiative of the Sydney PEN organisation, (Poets, Essayist and Novelist), the Empty Chair is a campaign that attempts to raise awareness of writers who are unable to be with us, silenced because of their work.

On Friday night the Empty Chair will represent dissident writer and former Chinese PEN President, **Lui Xiaobo** who has been in detention since December last year. He is due to stand trial on "incitement to subversion of state power" and is accused of "spreading rumours defaming the government". Lui was arrested for signing Charter 08, a declaration calling for political reforms and human rights. It is claimed Lui has confessed to the charge, one that carries a maximum five-year prison sentence. (See www.pen.org.au for more detail).

The NPP launch is HWC's biggest public event for the year, and on behalf of the its board and fantastic management team, you and your guests are invited to join us next Friday night to celebrate the power of words. The event is free.

We wish you all a safe and happy festive season, and that 2010 is a brilliant one.

- Greg Hall, Nov 09

E V E N T S

NEWCASTLE POETRY PRIZE

Friday 27th November, 5.30pm
Newcastle Region Art Gallery
FREE ENTRY

The announcement of the NPP prizewinners and the launch of *The Night Road*, the 2009 Newcastle Poetry Prize anthology.

SITESOUNDMIN(e)D

Friday 27th November, 8.00pm
Conservatorium of Music,
Cnr Laman St and Auckland St
\$15 or free with a copy of *The Night Road*

SITESOUNDMIN(e)D is an exciting collaboration between local poets including; Judy Johnson, Ray Kelly, Kylie Rose, Ivy Ireland, Keri Glastonbury Clarke Gormley and Rod Smith, and composers; Solange Kershaw, Stephen Wye and Justin Wolthers. It is a new visionary work of contemporary music theatre exploring site, history and the pluralistic voice, about the James Fletcher Hospital site in Newcastle. From ballads to new opera aria, from multi character libretto to spoken text accompanied by a range of music including; brass band, string quartet contemporary rock and avant sound scape this promises to be one of Newcastle's most innovative performance events for some time.

THE PROCESS OF THE POEM WITH NPP HEAD JUDGE PHILIP SALOM

Saturday 28th November 10.00am – 12 noon
The Lockup, 90 Hunter St, Newcastle
\$15 (pay on the day)

Want to try something different? Instead of a workshop of frowning over the micro-managing of poems - a few lines cut here, a metaphor altered there, a sharper look at verbs, a confused poet left at the end of it all - Philip will read and talk through a variety of his own

poems. Informative but informal. Questioning and interaction are both welcome. Philip will address, quite frankly, the origins and draftings, the problems and surprises and the insights learnt by persistent and rigorous attention to firstly the creative rush and later the poem as its own source of inspiration.

POETS LUNCH

Saturday 28th November, 12 noon – 2.00pm
The Lockup, 90 Hunter St, Newcastle
\$15 (pay on the day)

Come and have lunch and a glass of wine with us in the exercise yard at the Lockup. This will be an opportunity to hear the anthology poets read from *The Night Road* so please feel welcome to come along and bring your friends.

REPULSION THRUST

Wednesday 9th December, 2.00pm – 3.00pm
Toronto Library, 7 Pemmell St, Toronto

Magdalena Ball, will read from her new poetry book *Repulsion Thrust*, and talk about the relationship between poetry and science in an open forum.

THE MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR AT THE LIBRARY

Wednesday 9th December, 10.00am – 12 noon
Wallsend District Library

Celebrate the Dame of crime, murder, mystery & intrigue... Morning tea with delightful delicacies and much more. Compete in a Trivia competition and swap your unwanted Agatha Christie books. To book your tickets, phone the theatre on 4929 4969

OPPORTUNITIES

Saturday 31st October – 6th December

Crime Writers' Association - 2010 new crime writing competition - The Debut Dagger - will be running from 31st October 2009 to 6th February 2010. Entrants are required to submit the first 3000 words of their crime-themed novel, plus a 500 / 1000 word synopsis of the rest of the book.

This competition is not only judged by leading editors and literary agents, but the short-listed entries are also made available to all the editors and agents who are members of the Association. Further details can be seen at www.thecwa.co.uk

November 1st, 2009 - March 12th, 2010.

Central Coast Poets Inc. advise that entries for the Henry Kendall Poetry Award 2010 open on November 1st. Conditions of entry and entry forms can now be downloaded from our website at www.centralcoastpoets.com.au

or send a SSAE to:- Secretary, Central Coast Poets Inc., PO Box 780, WOY WOY, NSW 2256. Open theme, max length 32 lines, entry form essential. First, second and third prizes \$500/\$200/\$100. Selected entries included in Anthology to be published September, 2010.

Deadline late November

The Organizers of 'The Olive Tree Market' are starting a new Night Market in collaboration with 'Renew Newcastle'. Red Lantern Night Market will be held over three Fridays in December, in and around, Morgan St Newcastle. Think night markets in Darwin and Asia and image life back in the city! Market Stalls will exhibit and sell work by emerging and established artists and designers, fashion and fair-trade products and high quality imported goods.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to Vicki McSpadden who won the Memories of Penrith Adult section award for her "affectionate, lively and witty piece of writing." The judges praised her essay saying it conveyed "the pleasure of nostalgia and a wistful sense of the passing of time."

If you would like to be apart of this, email Kate at kate@thisisnotart.org

Monday 30th Nov

Horse SA Writing Competition

1. Open Short Story: Any subject related to Australia 1200 - 1500 words

2. Essay: Any aspect of South Australian horse history. 1200 - 1500 words.

References to be used.

Entry fee \$7.70 per entry. Prizes: Classes 1 & 2 \$100 first prize. Prize for best South Australian entry. Contact Katharine for an entry form.

7th Dec - 2009 Overland Judith Wright Poetry Prize For New And Emerging Poets

Overland and the Malcolm Robertson Foundation have joined forces to create the Overland Magazine Judith Wright Prize for New and Emerging Poets.

In 2009 the prize money is \$3000, with two minor prizes of \$500 each.

Poets are eligible if they have not yet had a collection of their work commercially published.

The entry form and guidelines are available at: www.overland.org.au

8th Jan 2010- Adelaide Plains Poets

It's that time of the year again - Adelaide Plains Poets are seeking poems for our annual poetry competition. There is a \$500+ prize pool, with no entry fee for Primary School or Secondary School students. \$5.00 entry fee for the Open Section, entries close 8 January 2010. Entry form and guidelines are available at the website below, or contact me on (08) 85272412;

jeebers@bigpond.com

30th Jan 2010 - The Josephine Ulrick Literature Prize 2010 and The Josephine Ulrick Poetry Prize 2010

Amongst the world's richest literary prizes! \$40,000 in prize money in 2010!

Griffith University's School of Humanities administers The Josephine Ulrick Literature Prize and The Josephine Ulrick Poetry Prize on behalf of the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Foundation for the Arts.

Entry forms available from:

www.griffith.edu.au/ulrick

Enquiries: Clare Keys (07) 5552 8093 email: c.keys@griffith.edu.au

1st Feb 2009

Blemish Books is now accepting suites of poetry (15 - 25 poems) for Issue 1 of their new Triptych Poets series.

Submissions close 1 February 2010. For details go to

www.blemishbooks.com.au/triptych.html

New anthology by Wombat Books imprint, Mostly for Mothers

Mums and work, stories and tips on balancing your roles. A collection of stories about working from home with children. Mums can share their stories and their tips about surviving the work force or starting their own business and working from home. Submissions open until June 2010.

<http://www.mostlyformothers.com/workingandmothering.html>