

The Write Stuff

Monthly Newsletter of the Helensvale Writers Group – June 2025



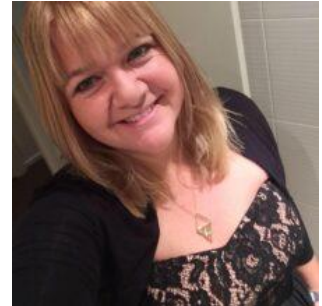
This month's main speaker: Chris Barnes

Our main Speaker will be the very talented Chris Barnes, a writer/novelist/film director and film producer, is the founder of Púka Entertainment Productions. He will speak to us about the similarity of the Entertainment Arts. As he said to Grahame recently, "An artist paints a picture on his canvas to make others understand what he sees artistically, and authors do precisely the same thing, only they use words to make others picture the scene in their minds as they read the storyline."

P.S. Our Convenor has a great surprise in store for everyone who attends on that day.

'Under the Spotlight' speaker: Kathy Shanks

Kathy Shanks is the founder of Turtle Publishing. She will be telling us what she does at Turtle, and will tell our members of areas where some folks do not realise that she can help them. Turtle Publishing is a business to assist writers in all areas of 'after you have written your masterpiece': editing, formatting, cover design, distribution etc etc.



Last month's main presentation: Hamid Mirfenderesk – 'A story about Physics'



Well, talking about a presentation with a difference... Hamid opened up asking "What are you doing for fun?", explaining that, as different writers write about different things, relationships and life experiences, Physics addresses the same thing.

"Physics can answer the age-old question: *Why are we here?*", Hamid stated. *[I recall that I often thought the same thing when I was sitting in a High School Math class... Ed. ☺]*. Hamid took us through a fascinating journey, starting with a quote by famous Danish Physicist [Niels Bohr](#): "*We must be clear that when it comes to atoms, language can be used only in poetry. The poet, too, is not nearly so concerned with describing facts as with creating images and establishing mental connection.*" Well, why didn't my Maths teacher come up with

that one! Ultimately, everything, be that a human, a table or a jug of water, can be broken down from to Electrons, Protons and Neutrons, Hamid explained.

His presentation continued on Einstein's Theory of Relativity, Werner Heisenberg, the evolution of the world as we know it from 4.5 Billion years ago to today (Homo Sapiens only started about 300,000 years ago, or 6.7% of the total time). And then he concluded with one of the most profound writers this earth has seen, the Persian Poet [Saadi](#)

*Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.*

*If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.*

*If you have no empathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain.*

What a feast! That was a completely different concept about writing than we had ever heard before! Thank you, Hamid.

Last month's Spotlight speaker: Carin Needham

"How to deal with the bad guy in an appropriate and horrible fashion?" Carin asked. "Where better to go for inspiration than Disney..." Disney?? Yes, Disney.

Carin is a writer of Thrillers (check out her website!). Her manner of speaking is very calm and quiet, yet sometimes the air of a thriller writer comes through her facial expression and her voice. It can be almost disquieting, in a delicious way. Difficult to describe for an amateur of my limited writing skills. Sorry peeps! You should have been there!



Carin kindly agreed to share her notes exclusively with the group – they were sent out by email to the members about two weeks ago and are very much worth studying. And check out her website <http://www.carinauthor.com> - all her works can be obtained from there.

What else happened / will happen?

Lots. Scary stuff too: **Livia York** outlined her experience of her computer developing a life of its own: "*Lisa is following your story...*" **Rosina Owen** started her memoir, **Ralph Mayn** elaborated on a book he recently read '[The axman's carnival](#)', **Jan Kuperman** recommends a website <https://scriptshadow.net/>, that will help you to convert your story into a film script, **Susie Groundwater** has her manuscript all ready to go to a publisher... **Lily Arthur's** book 'Prisoner of the State' is going gangbusters. It's going for a reprint! **Stacey King** enthused about Microsoft's new utility 'Co-Pilot': she used it to compile an 18,000 word Academic Paper on her Banaba study series. And, as always, lots more, lots of banter and laughter and coffee break discussions.

HWG Challenge: 'An accidental Meeting'

The deadline for our group's second competition for 2025 (31st May) has passed, and we await the judges' decision with bated breath. Hopefully, you'll learn all about it at the upcoming meeting on 19th June! Now, here is a wake-up call:

Offer of FREE Editing Services for the winner. This is hot off the press: **Gail Tagarro**, one of our members who is a professional Editor (regrettably, we haven't seen her for a while), has offered a prize of free comprehensive editing (yes, in-depth) of a short story of up to 5,000 words. Howzat!

Two workshops by Melaina Faranda

Many of our members would recall Malaina's presentation in August 2023 (see [September 2023 newsletter](#)). Quite happy to "give her a plug": She is running two workshops on or near the Gold Coast on 26th July on 'Creating Compelling Characters' ([click here](#)) and a 'Get Unstuck Writing Retreat' on 4th – 6th August at Binna Burra Lodge – [click here](#).



Here is a veritable treasure trove of writing courses – and they are FREE!

Our member **John Griffith** sent me this jewel. Was I to print the lot, this newsletter would expand to a small book. In short: navigate to www.scribophile.com and click on the **Academy** tab. We are not just talking about some interesting drips and drabs. John's example was about [Character Arcs](#) (*no Henrietta, I had no idea either*). There are dozens of chapters of serious learning material there. Here is one about the [Lover Archetype](#) that I wish I had looked up before the deadline to last month's competition entry!

Can you improve on that?

She was beautiful, but not like those girls in the magazines. She was beautiful, for the way she thought. She was beautiful, the sparkle in her eyes when she talked about something she loved. She was beautiful, for her ability to make other people smile, even if she was sad. No, she wasn't beautiful for something as temporary as her looks. She was beautiful, deep down to her soul. F. Scott Fitzgerald - 'The Beautiful And The Damned'

Upcoming Writers Competitions

- a) Here is a long term project: Deadline is 26th February 2026. [Next Generation Short Story Awards](#) **What? Not 'Next Generation'?** Look closer. They have categories for 'Seniors 60 – 69 years' and 'Seniors 70 years and above'. Some our group's members qualify for these...
- b) There are another 280 (last time I looked) competitions on reedsy.com – There must be one or two that suit you!

This month's meeting is on the usual day, time and place: **third Thursday of the month, 19th June 2025, 10:00 am**, ground floor meeting room of the Helensvale Library. **Please be a little bit early** so we can start right on time – we need to be out by 12:15.

Best wishes,
Franz Huber
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**To make a long story short,
I became an Editor.**

