

# The Write Stuff

Monthly Newsletter of the Helensvale Writers Group – December 2024

## Christmas Luncheon on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024



Grahame has booked the ‘Glass Room’ at the newly refurbished **Club Helensvale (Helensvale Bowls Club)**. It is right between the bistro and the bowling lanes. Its major attraction is that the entire room is enclosed in smoky glass, which provides an almost noise free environment, yet you can see out. (Yes, you’ll be able to hear and understand what the person next to you

says!). We’ll have a sumptuous buffet (main course and dessert). Some non-alcoholic drinks are included too, alcoholic drinks can be purchased at the bistro bar. The event is **free of charge for registered members**. Partners and guests are cordially invited for a very low cost of just **\$40.00 per person, payment on the day in cash (note: no credit cards)**. If you have not yet put your name down at the last meeting, please reply no later than Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December, so we can advise the venue. Please email us, indicating numbers.

[helensvalewriters@gmail.com](mailto:helensvalewriters@gmail.com) (just reply to the email this newsletter was sent from).

## ‘Under the Spotlight’: Hamid Mirfenderesk

Hamid (photo left) was born in Iran. “I prefer to call it Persia” he said. Why? Well, prior to the “Cultural Revolution” (Hamid decidedly put a (!) next to it), the country was quite prosperous and, of course, was a major source of philosophy, Rumi (1207 – 1273) being the best known in the western world.

Hamid emigrated from his country in 1979, after

qualifying as a Civil Engineer. *[I have little doubt that people of his calibre abandoning their country massively contributes to a country’s economic woes. Ed.]*

Nostalgically, Hamid mused on his birthplace’s most favourite festivals: **Nowrus** (‘New Day’), their equivalent to New Year, based on “the day when Winter ends and Spring begins” (in 2025 this will be on 20<sup>th</sup> March). Or the Scarlet Wednesday Fire Festival ([Chaharshanbe](#)



[Suri](#)), celebrated on the eve of the last Wednesday of the year. The festival goes back to [Zoroastrian](#) origins.

After the revolution followed the hostage crisis, and the war with Iraq (some 250,000 victims).

*"I had a dream to go to Holland"* he said, *"but Australia ticked all the boxes. I am very grateful to have been welcomed to this country."* Today, Hamid has a deep affection to poetry. *"Though, as a student, I didn't appreciate it very much"* he quipped. After retiring some 18 months ago, he considered painting, then heard about writing. *"I realised how much I like to write"* he said. The decisions had to be made on what genre? The meaning of life? *"Through writing, I calm down if I'm unsettled. I look at life from a different angle, a different perspective."* Welcome to the group, Hamid!

*As you start to walk on the way, the way appears. Rumi 1207 - 1273*

## Last month's main speaker: TM Clark

*"Do you have a Buffalo in your life?"* was one of the early questions Tina Maria Clark, who writes under the name of TM Clark (picture Page 1, right) asked us. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Tina considers the Buffalo to be one of the most admirable animals. Tenacious, stubborn, prepared to fight against all odds to protect its herd, even fighting a lion...

Have you ever listened to a speaker, and then realised that you completely forgot about taking notes as you had intended? Well, that happened to me at last month's meeting, when Tina elaborated on various methods to assist you in reaching your goals. "It helps to have the assistance of a Psychologist for character development" was one of her bon mots. Opening up with the statement *"Believe what you want, and what you half-want"* is one of her key take-aways from last month's lecture.

Lecture? Indeed, Tina's presentation was more of a workshop than a speech. She went through an entire sequence of how to reach your goals as a writer over the next 12 months, the next 5 years, the rest of your life. *"I don't know one author who is ever 100% happy with what they have published"*, she said, so the idea is to clearly think about your goals. Not just what you intend to do, what mistakes you can learn from, but most importantly, what do you really want to achieve, when you will be happy.

In essence, we received the benefit of an entire course. You most likely would need to pay serious money to participate in it (or go onto one of the cruises where she presents). Much too much to report on in a newsletter. Well, why not go on a cruise? Click here: [Writers at Sea retreat](#). That one is sold out, but I'm sure there will be another one! Simply check Tina's website <https://www.tmclark.com.au/> and subscribe to her mailing list.

## What else happened?

**Jack Kregas** and **Jan Kuperman** exhibited at the Runaway Bay Library, and have been invited to come again in February. Stacey King had a TV interview on 'Women living on their own boats'. **Lily Arthur**'s new book **'A Prisoner of the State'** due to be on the shelves before Christmas. Over 1200 copies already sold to BigW! And **Jim Dickson** contracted a publisher for **'Feel the Fear'**, it should be available soon. (Yes, it is! [Click here](#). BTW, did you know that, since joining our group in May, he's written four books?). As always, lots more happened! You should have been there.

## Can you improve on that?

Am I the only one who frequently re-reads a superbly written sentence or paragraph multiple times? You know, one you feel that “there’s no way I could write something like that”? Seems to be. Not a single submission from members of our group in the last two years.

## The Grahame Moore ‘Serenity Challenge:

All stories that were submitted have been compiled into a book, together with the stories from the Fear and Ghost competitions will be compiled into an A5 book. Grahame has arranged printing with [Clark & Mackay Publishers](#) and all **authors will be presented with a free copy at our Christmas party**. Talking about a ‘limited edition collector’s item! Note: **authors will retain their copyright** of submitted stories.

Grahame will announce the winners of the Serenity competition at the Christmas Luncheon.

## Upcoming Writers Competitions

- Not sure if we would get away with this in Australia – the Discrimination Police would arrest us. But there is a competition in the UK, that limits its [submissions to Over 60’s](#). And there is a juicy prize of £500! The same site has lots of other competitions too.
- Fancy yourself as a bit of a Bush Poet? **Man from Snowy River Bush Festival and others** have both written as well as performance competitions. [Click on this link](#).
- There are another 280 (last time I looked) competitions on [reedsy.com](#) – There must be one or two that suit you!

See you at this month’s Christmas Luncheon – see details above. If you haven’t booked yet, please do it now. Free for registered members. Bring a partner or friend along – \$40.00 is excellent value for a sumptuous buffet in a reserved, closed area.

I wish you and your loved ones a joyous festive season, and may the new year bring you lots of interesting times (but not the type referred to in the famous Chinese Proverb), good health and contentment. If I don’t see you at the luncheon: looking forward to meeting you at our first meeting for 2025 on 16<sup>th</sup> January.

Best wishes,  
Franz Huber  
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*"I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights."*

“Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home.”

**G.K. Chesterton. Brave New Family**

The earliest Carol singers can be found on the Bayeux tapestry...and were soldiers from Western France...they were known as the Brittany Spears

