

# The Write Stuff

Monthly Newsletter of the Helensvale Writers Group – February 2024

## This month's meeting: Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February: Megan Norris

Yes, it's early! How often do we have 5 Thursdays in the month of February? (*Not before 2052. I have planned to be on an extended fishing trip that year. Up the river Styx...*)

This month, our resident True Crime guru **Megan Norris** will present on the subject of '**How to write a pitch for publishers, and how to prepare a manuscript for submission**'.

In other words: How to prevent the fruits of your labour getting murdered by the publisher and simply disappearing, wearing a pair of concrete shoes into the deep unknown.



## Last month's meeting:



As I wrote in a follow-up email to our members: No guest speaker? Quelle horreur!

How wrong could you be? In our group we have so much talent and material, that you could run for 4 hours, not just two, without the danger of risking ennui.

Did you know that a historian of all things Irish, and particularly the Kennedys and the Ryans, is a member of our group?

**Brian Kennedy** (that's him, with his partner Colleen) has published 13 books on this subject.

Did you know about one of the most important things when publishing on Amazon (and any other overseas publisher) that could cost you thousands of dollars if you don't observe the rule? Sorry, you should have been there... But **Stacey King**, our resident expert on publishing and all things to go with it, will put up some notes on our website. And whilst we are there: don't forget to confirm that you didn't use Artificial Intelligence!

Famous Swimming Coach **Terry Gulliver** announced that his memoir has now been published, and our convenor **Grahame Moore** in 2023 wrote another three (yes, 3!) 80,000 words novels. And, in a recent phone call, he told me that he has just about completed another one, "in a different genre"... Grahame also introduced us the concept of "Subliminal Music" he plays when writing. It's also known as 'muzak', e.g. background music without words. However, *my* preferred genre '[psychedelic](#)' didn't get much traction... 😊

## November competition: Parody, Spoof, Satire:

Well, no new entries were received, so we need to think of something else to run a competition among our members. **Got any good ideas?** Let us know - tell us at the next meeting, or if you cannot attend, reply to the email this newsletter was sent to you.

## Can you improve on that?

*“Absurd vanity! I am able to detect only the faintest remains of that glorious past today. Now I look on a landscape arid and deserted, where once a gay society flourished amid the splash of fountains and cool sounds of laughter from the grove on summer evenings, from where the erotic imploring of the oud aroused our lusts...”*

Alex Miller - 'Landscape of Farewell'

I'm not necessarily suggesting that you write a better sentence yourself (if you do have one, please let me have it!) but if you come across a paragraph that you catch yourself re-reading again and again... I'm a sucker for it. Share it! Take a photo with your smartphone and **send your entry as a photo, text, email or doc to [helensvalewriters@gmail.com](mailto:helensvalewriters@gmail.com)** (or simply reply to the email with which I sent you this newsletter).

## Upcoming Writers Competitions

- a) [Stringybark Open Short Story Awards 2024](#) - total pool \$1,350, the only condition: it must have a link to Australia. Maximum 1500 words. **Closing on 25<sup>th</sup> February**
- b) [South Coast Writers Centre 2024 Poetry Award](#). Here is your opportunity to shine: write a poem (max 50 lines) to the theme 'gentle'. Closing 5<sup>th</sup> March.
- c) [Peter Carey Short Story Awards](#): Winning entry gets \$2,000, runner up \$1,000. 2000 - 3000 words - open to all Australian Residents. Closing 14<sup>th</sup> March.
- d) [The Hope Prize Prize 2024](#) International competition - 2000 - 5000 words on theme of hope and resilience. \$10,000 AUD first prize. Closing 22<sup>nd</sup> March.
- e) There are another 280 (last time I looked) competitions on [reedsy.com](http://reedsy.com) – There must be one or two which suit you!

See you at the Helensvale Library Thursday week.

Franz Huber,  
[Helensvalewriters@gmail.com](mailto:Helensvalewriters@gmail.com)  
0484 597 451

### ***Bangxiety***

*When you are 65% into a romance and the main protagonists haven't had sex yet and you worry that you might have accidentally selected a "clean" romance.*

