

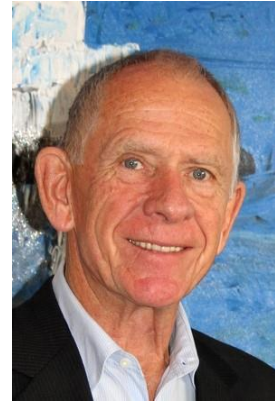
The Write Stuff

Monthly Newsletter of the Helensvale Writers Group – August 2025

This month's main speaker:

Ian Mathieson - 'The Evolution of the English Language' (and where it may be going)

Ian is a professional editor (member of the Institute of Professional Editors), as well as an author and trainer of effective management procedures. In addition to his publication 'The Effective Leader', he has written a biography of Steve Hinchy. He writes short stories (and he is a worthy competitor in the Winton Outback Writers Competition) and also serves as a judge in writing competitions.



'Under the Spotlight': Grahame Moore – Do we need to be incorporated?

At last month's meeting, we started a discussion on the question of whether we ought to be incorporated or not, and if yes, could we simply become a member of the Gold Coast Writers Association. This is an important item to discuss, so we allocate the 20 minutes or so of this segment to further discuss this and – hopefully – come to a decision.

Last month: Kellie Cox – Writing Real Characters



Without question, the individual characters in your (fiction) story or novel are just as important, if not more, than the plot itself. He/she can't be "humdrum", at the very least the character must be "different". (I'll use the male gender from now on; hope this is ok with you all... 😊) He doesn't have to be a nice person, he can be flawed, but **he must be likeable**. Flawed? Yes, "the flaws must make the reader relate and want to see him learn, love, feel and grow through the story" Kellie elaborated. And he must drive the story. So, think about a person who is – unusual. Here are

some examples: Whimsical with his affection. Delusions of grandeur torment his mind...

The main character should develop with each chapter. He can face hardship, unravel, behave badly, **as long as we still like him**. As the story goes on, he reveals more of himself, both to the reader, as well as to the other characters.

What about the other characters? "The other characters are playthings for our main character" Kellie said, "they can be romanced, killed, they can be highly unlikeable. But they should always be multi-dimensional."

One final tip: "Write what you know, and research what you don't". As always, there was much, much more. Sorry peeps, if you weren't there, you should have been! Well, there is a solution: navigate to Kellie's website <https://www.kelliemcox.com/> – she has a lot to offer!

Last month's Spotlight: Anna Crichton - Scrivener

You should have a squiz at that superb software package, **Scrivener**. When Anna (*pictured with her husband James*) displayed her slides, it reminded me of an civil engineer friend of mine who enthusiastically demonstrated his latest software tool, Microsoft Project. "It keeps track of everything and allows me to insert and move individual segments of the project around" he said. In a similar way, Anna's (too brief) outline showed how you can keep track of your works. Yes, plural, as is normal for serious writers who have multiple projects on the go all the time.



Whilst suitable for all types of writing, I would imagine Scrivener to be particularly useful for writing non-fiction (as is Anna's work), where accuracy is paramount. She and James have used Scrivener for some 10 years. It's for you to keep track of your individual works, stories, chapters and down to scenes and snippets within your chapters and stops you from getting into a muddle and be organised instead. [Click on this link.](#)

What else happened / will happen?

- Our guest speaker (and member) Kellie Cox is taking the plunge and is writing her first script
- Rochelle Miller, President of the Gold Coast Writers Association (GWA) is on the way to completing a fantasy novella. She also outlined what the GWA is all about, and assured us that members of our group could be members of GWA, yet remain independent and continue to hold our own regular meetings at Helensvale. Of course, as many of our members already are, you may attend both the groups' meetings.
- Jack Kregas was interviewed by a Literary Magazine in the USA – [click on this link](#) to access it.
- Peter Loveday is "becoming more and more passionate about (that is, writing about) ADHD"
- Grahame Moore started his 27th novel. This one is a girl's story. [*Hmmm... and there I thought ALL of his stories had girls as one of the main protagonists... Ed. 😊*]
- Rosalyn Thurecht is writing her memoir
- And a lot of other updates, including a new member being introduced: welcome to our group, Madalyn!

New HWG Challenge: Deadline 30th August 2025

I've been overwhelmed by the number of entries I've received so far. Well, not exactly... But that's ok, just don't leave it to the last minute. The topic for the next competition has been determined: "**Under Stormy Skies**". You can stretch the theme into any direction you like; weather event, personal drama, angry boss, threatening misfortune. Usual conditions: Fiction, 1000 words maximum, **deadline is 30th August 2025** (not 30th September as incorrectly stated in last month's



newsletter) and no late entries accepted. All entries will feature in our Christmas compilation book (but copyright remains with the author). **You've got another three weeks.**

Upcoming Writers Competitions

- a) [The Hope Prize](#) is an international short story competition. They are seeking powerful, original stories of hope, **fiction or creative non-fiction**, from both emerging and established voices. Up to 5000 words. **Winner's prize \$10,000 AUD**, shortlisted stories will be published in a Simon & Schuster anthology. **Closes 31 October 2025**
- b) Here is a long term project: Deadline is 26th February 2026. [Next Generation Short Story Awards](#). **What? You're 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...
- c) There are another 280 (last time I looked) competitions on [reedsy.com](#) – There must be one or two that suit you!

Are you following our Facebook page?

We seem to have very little traffic our our Facebook page. If you do visit, please like the post. If you have not yet visited: easy: just **search for Helensvale Writers Group**. If you have anything that you'd like to post: let me have the details!

Can you improve on that?

*Oh Joe, Joe." She murmured in a snuggling, contented way. Sweat sprung upon his forehead and his throbbing temples, so calm and cool but a moment before.... Through the half-open door a little breath of wind threaded in and made the lamp-blaze jump; it rustled outside through the lilac bushes like the passing of a lady's gown. **George W Ogden - The Bondboy.***

Got anything to brag about?

Well, let's hear it! Don't be shy if you have won an award, or even if your story got published! Your fellow members would like to know about it. Send me an email.

New (temporary) meeting location

This month's meeting is on the **usual day, third Thursday of the month, 21st August 2025, BUT NOT AT THE SAME PLACE:** Due to renovations at the Helensvale Library, we are meeting at the **Helensvale Community Centre, 31 – 37 Discovery Drive, Helensvale** (just a bit further up on Discovery Drive on the right side, opposite Club Helensvale). **The meeting will start at 10:15** – Grahame and I will be there at 10:00 am to set up. **Please be a little bit early** so we can start right on time – we need to be out by 12:30.

Best wishes,
Franz Huber
Helensvale Writers Group
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*Publication is not the business of
poets; being a poet is all,
being known as a poet is nothing.*
Emily Dickinson



“Who is putting all the Math books
in the Horror section?”