

The Write Stuff

Monthly Newsletter of the Helensvale Writers Group – July 2024

This month's meeting: all psychological.

Speakers: Christine Betts and Anna Chrichton



This month it is all about Psychology: we have TWO psychologists speaking!

Our “Under the Spotlight” speaker will be **Anna Chrichton** (photo right), who works as a clinical psychologist. After morning tea, our principal speaker is **Christine Betts** (photo left), a member of the Gold Coast Writers Association. Christine is a published author and is a former judge of GCWA competitions.



Last month's meeting: Josh Hale and Jack Kregas

Jack Kregas (photo right), in his ‘Under the Spotlight’ segment, started a discussion on being a **Storyteller -v- being an Author**. “I’m definitely a Storyteller”, he said. But there is more: when writing, you need to decide on what sort: Journalist (reports on news and presents his/her own opinion), Storyteller (just that), Author (professional, originator of a written work. You become an author once your work is published), Writer (or Blogger) who writes for the purpose of communication, including advertising copy, ghost writing. You can be multiples of these. For example, our Megan Norris is/was a professional journalist, and now writes



stories about other people’s experiences. With multiple books published, she definitely is an author! Jack started off quite a vivid discussion on the floor!

After the coffee break, author, director, scriptwriter, film maker **Josh Hale** (photo, left with Susan Groundwater and our convenor Grahame Moore) took the floor. “I was an only child”, he said, “so I had plenty of time”. And he’s

used it well: his 3rd feature movie will premiere in October. This one is a comedy about someone living with a disability who is living with a friend who has everything. “I needed to direct my first movie myself; nobody took me seriously” he said. His first film’s budget: \$5,000.00 (yes, five thousand). Then somebody approached him and asked “What could you do with real money? Like, say, \$150,000?” That produced a Horror movie, It only goes up from there. The current one has a budget of \$200,000. It was filmed on the Gold Coast (yes, we have excellent facilities), with American accent voices. Do you want to appear in a movie? Yes, you can: Very low pay, but you get free food, and you can get near an actor. Lots of free time in-between to work on your book (or script). How to you get a guest appearance of a famous actor? He tried Brian Brown - total work 4 hours for \$40,000, plus airtravel, accommodation etc. Got knocked back...

An important tip: **If you work with somebody else’s money**, you need to do **what they want**. Then, when the financier was impressed by your work and wants another one.

What else happened?

Lots. **Jan Tarbuck** keeps getting letters of congratulations... this one from no other than Buckingham Palace. The Royals apparently wholeheartedly approve of her work! Our convenor **Grahame Moore** introduced a new member: his daughter Susan! (see picture above). He also sent off two novels for printing. **Jan Kuperman** has now two books ready for sale (see pictures right)... **Selena Budgen** did a lot of journalling whilst she was away, now started on a novel... **Brian Kennedy** had two operations last month - didn’t seem to affect his book sales though: the ‘Ryans’ book has sold out... **Rolando Rizzo** started work on the upcoming Ghost competition: dusted off a 40,000 word novella he’d written ages ago, trying to compress it into 1000 words... Yes, of course, I’m over the moon! **Jack Kregas** emphasised the need to have your computer read the story back to you. Only then do you realise that you have misspelled a word, e.g. kept/keep. There was, as always, more. You should have been there! Ah, perhaps worth a mention: your humble newsletter editor advised that he received a phone call from **John Griffith**, who at the time was at the **Winton Outback Writers Festival**, to advise that I had won this year’s competition. **Jim Dickson**, when considering Grahame’s ‘Fear’ competition, suggested a story based on

‘Hippopotonstrosesquippedaliophobia’

Which, with 36 letters, is longer than **Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious** (34). Yes, I thought you’d ask. It’s the fear of... long words. Feelings of shame or fear of ridicule for mispronouncing long words may cause distress or anxiety. (Certain US political heavyweights would know exactly what I mean...)

The Grahame Moore ‘Fear’ Challenge is closed

We had a total of 25 stories, from 17 authors submitted! It’s now all “with the gods” - Grahame will “call in the artillery” (read: professionals) to do the judging. Sorry, you’ll just have to wait... At this month’s meeting, Graham might have a result. **You’ll need to be there.**

Can you improve on that?

Now though, my head is starting to hurt again, and my shoulders ache. I can smell my mother; vanilla and freesia and the shampoo she uses that comes in a green bottle. I can feel the heat of her, like asphalt in the summer, the minute before she wraps her arms around me. “Jacob”, she says. My name rises on the roller coaster of a sob. My knees give with relief, with the knowledge that I have not faded away after all. Jodi Picoult ‘House Rules’

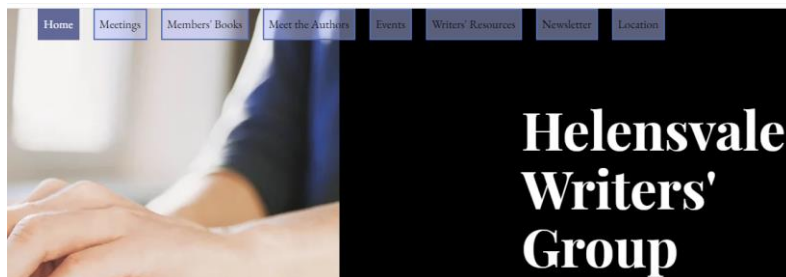
Do you ever catch yourself re-reading a paragraph again and again... I'm a sucker for it. Well, please share it! Take a photo with your smartphone and **send your entry as a photo, text, email or doc to helensvalewriters@gmail.com** (or simply reply to the email with which I sent you this newsletter).

Upcoming Writers Competitions

- a) **Helensvale Writers Group (that's us) - Grahame Moore competition 'Ghost'**. In celebration of his birthday (towards the end of August). Submissions **close on 15th August 2024**. I have already received several entries. Entry is limited to registered members of the Helensvale Writers Group (if you receive this newsletter via email from helensvalewritersgroup@gmail.com), you are.)
- b) **The Best Australian Yarn** - this is "the big one": **some \$80,000 of prizes** in total; \$50,000 for first prize. Short story, fiction only, max 2,500 words **But you better get mooooooving!** Closes Monday 12th August 2024.. [Click here](#) for all the details.
- c) **Anthology Personal Memoirs competition**: If you are a memoir writer, this international competition is for you. [Click here for details](#). Closes 31st August 2024.
- d) **2024 Thunderbolt Prize for Crime Writing**. Various sizeable prizes, including for non-fiction. 'Emerging Authors', Poetry. [Click here for details](#). **Closes 27th September 2024**.
- e) There are another 280 (last time I looked) competitions on [reedsy.com](https://www.reedsy.com) – There must be one or two that suit you!

See you at the Helensvale Library on the **20th of June!** Usual place, downstairs meeting room. Start at 10:00 am sharp, please try to be on time, thank you!

Have you recently visited our website?



Our webmaster, **Stacey King**, has put so much very useful information up there: Check out the **Writers' Resources tab**. Dozens of links addressing just about every subject.

www.helensvalewritersgroup.org will get you there.

See you at this month's meeting on 18th July. Usual location: ground floor meeting room at Helensvale Library.

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I don't want my favourite fictional characters to be real.

I want to be in their fictional world with them.

