

NEWC

New England Writers' Centre

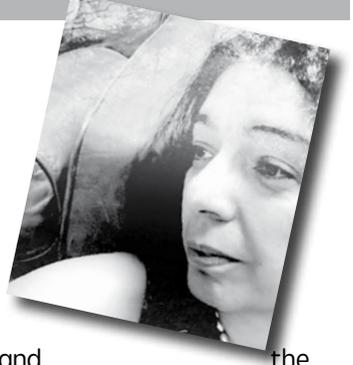
The New England Muse

Summer Newsletter 2019

Chair's Welcome Message

A new year, and a brand new program from NEWC, and what an exciting program it is, too!

We have fantastic writer's craft workshops ranging from fiction and non-fiction to editing, a great hands-on Self-Publishing weekend, as well as pitching events and of course our perennially popular program events such as Booked In, the Writing Hub, the Thunderbolt Prize, and the Illustration Prize. As well, this year I'm proud to say that we are rolling out Stories Connect, a major and unique new program initiative for 2019, which aims at encouraging creative expression and make connections between newly-resettled Yazidi refugee families and the broader Armidale community. Presented in partnership with Settlement Services International, Armidale Regional Council and Arts North West. Stories Connect will be presented in schools, the library, and the Folk Museum, and involve writing, illustrating, narrative photography and storytelling. We'll also be debuting an Illustrators' Circle, an informal get-together for our illustrator members. <http://www.newc.org.au/2019-program.html>



We are very grateful for the support of our wonderful sponsors who by funding us once again will allow us to deliver this fantastic program. We thank **Create NSW**, the **Regional Arts Fund**, the **Country Arts Support Program**, **Arts North West**, and **John and Gina Walker** for their generous support.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank retiring Board members: **Trish Donald**, **John C. Ryan**, and **Lyn Grace**, who have contributed a great deal to NEWC over several years. And to welcome new Board members **Catherine Wright**, **Helena Pastor**, **David Allan** and **Linda Nix**. Many thanks also to continuing Board members **Peter Creamer** and **Becky Holland**, and to our indefatigable office manager, **Paul Prenter**, and to NEWC Member **Kathy Ewers** for her continued steering of our Writing Hub program.

I'm also pleased to announce we have appointed a new **Program Manager**, **Beattie Alvarez**, who will take over the organisation and delivery of the program, with direction from the Board. Beattie has a strong connection and commitment to NEWC: she has previously served on the Board, as a member and later as Deputy Chair, and after stepping down from the Board two years ago, managed our website and social media and worked with Board members on grant application. With her range of skills and knowledge, she is perfectly positioned to help us deliver a packed program efficiently and successfully, as well as take some of the pressure off our very hard-working Board.

It's going to be a great year: and we hope to see you at some of our wonderful events in 2019!

A note from the Editor - Becky Holland

Welcome to 2019, and as Sophie Masson said we have an exciting year planned, a big thanks to Sophie for all the hard work and time she puts into NEWC. Most recently I attended a Literary Value Project to look at producing a map of Australian literary ecologies that identifies their extraordinary benefits and values including: literary merit, community development, personal identity, cultural cohesion, health and well-being and local and global interchange, all contributing to regional and national cultural economies, international visibility and esteem and financial profit. This was a wonderful opportunity for NEWC to contribute and network with other writing centres,

Universities, magazines and publishers.

2019 we will be bringing the newsletter to you in the seasons of the year. This is our summer edition. We'd like to include your stories, poems and articles so please email Paul at the office with your contributions.

Sadly, the literary world lost Mary Oliver, a beloved poet and an inspiring and wonderful writer.

As Mary Oliver said, "keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable."



In the reader's corner with Michelle from Reader's Companion

These were our five best selling fiction titles of January this year and fabulous to note that four of the five are by Australian Authors.

- A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles
- Boy Swallows Universe by Trent Dalton
- Shell by Kristrina Olssen
- Bridge of Clay by Markus Zusak
- The Lost Man by Jane Harper

And our five best selling non-fiction titles were:

- The Land Before Avocado by Richard Glover
- Dark Emu by Bruce Pascoe
- Simple by Yotham Ottolenghi
- Fast 800 by Michael Mosley
- Habitat: A Practical Guide to Creating a Wildlife Friendly Australian Garden by AB Bishop

It is heartening to see that three of the five authors in the non-fiction best sellers are also Australian. The variety of genres within these best selling titles is diverse, covering science, health cooking, Australian History, humour and gardening. Independent booksellers

To have a bookstore is a dream come true



are also in the final stages of judging the annual Independent Booksellers awards. Last year Roy was one of five booksellers across the country to judge the Fiction Category and this year Michelle is very proud to be judging the Non-Fiction as well as the Illustrated Non-Fiction. Keep an eye out in the media for the category winners and overall Independent Book of the Year to be announced in March – we have our favourites and some of them are in our January best sellers lists above.

Getting to know Linda Nix

Linda Nix is one of our newest NEWC board members and it is a great opportunity to get to know her better.

How long have you lived in Armidale?

I came to Armidale in late 2016 with my husband and business partner, Chris Mitchell. Among other things, we were looking for a tree change, a cooler climate and more affordable living than Sydney, and better internet services for our business – like the original NBN you have here. Armidale ticked all the boxes.

Tell us about your business

Together Chris and I run Golden Orb Creative, which provides editing, book design and production, project management and related services. We also have a small publishing imprint, Lacuna, which publishes two to three titles a year.

How does your work involve writers?

I work with writers mainly as an editor, providing manuscript assessments or editing manuscripts in readiness for submission or publication. Sometimes the author is the client and sometimes it's the publisher. I also work with self-publishing authors on all aspects of publication, and with academics and students on papers and theses.



Are you a writer yourself?

Yes and no. I do some paid technical writing and copywriting, and a lot of unpaid report writing. Like many people, I have an unfinished novel languishing in my archives, and ideas for more. But as a professional editor, I am far too critical of my own work.

Why did you decide to get involved with the NEWC board?

I believe it's important to give back to your industry or profession. I have some experience as a volunteer for IPEd, the Institute of Professional Editors, on their accreditation and professional development committees. In Sydney I was involved with Writing NSW, presenting some courses as well as going to events. I wanted to continue that kind of involvement with writing communities at a more personal and local level. Since words are my passion as well as my profession, NEWC seemed a good fit for me.

NEWC You Tube Channel

Watch great interviews with fantastic Pitch Independent publishers on the brand-new NEWC You Tube channel!

A new year, and we have a new and exciting initiative! The brand-new New England Writers' Centre You Tube channel is now up and running, and features 13 fantastic interviews with 12 of the fabulous publishers and editors who visited our region during Pitch Independent in August last year. There's also a video interview with Michael Webster, Chair of the Small Press Network, who also travelled to Armidale specifically for Pitch Independent, from his base in Melbourne.

The School of Arts in the Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education (HASSE) at UNE partnered with us in Pitch Independent, with the Small Press Network giving in-kind support. Dr Ariella van Luyn and Dr Beck Wise of UNE, who work within its Writing program, interviewed, recorded and edited the interviews, with the approval of all the interviewees. Many thanks to them for all their hard work, and to all our Pitch Independent for giving so generously of their time and expertise.

This is an absolutely fantastic resource not only for NEWC and our region's writers and illustrators, but also for anyone interested in the publishing industry in Australia and its thriving small and independent sector.

So head over to the channel, and have a look and a listen, there is much to enjoy and learn:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe4PJFbj0gzhLQeYhAN8aw/videos>



You can renew your membership online

<http://www.newc.org.au/become-a-member.html>

Bundanon by Helena Pastor

In 2017, I was awarded a residency at Bundanon, on the banks of the Shoalhaven River near Nowra. My residency in January was a wonderful way to start 2018, and I recommend the experience to anyone who is thinking of applying.

Bundanon, a farming property bordered by bush and river, is Arthur and Yvonne Boyd's gift to the Australian people. The residency program is open to artists from all disciplines, and there are six studios located on the property.

On two previous visits to Bundanon, I stayed in the Writers Cottage, but this time I was in the Fern Studio Apartment – which felt arty and spacious, and gloriously mine for two and a half weeks. I loved being in that country again ... walking all over the property, swimming in the river, working in my studio, having breakfast on my verandah, and meeting an inspirational group of artists – a painter, a photographer, a singer-songwriter and

another writer.

Every day I thought to myself: How lucky am I?

I saw

wombats, echidnas, wallabies, kangaroos, kookaburras ... and cicadas. When I first arrived at Bundanon, the local cicadas were so loud I had to put my hands over my ears, but I soon became accustomed to their deafening daily soundtrack. I also saw and heard too many speedboats on the river – but it was summer after all.

While I was at Bundanon, I wrote

new material for 'Tattoo Songs', my second collaborative project with local Armidale composer Chris Purcell.

Then, on the Capricorn New Moon, I worked out the secret

ingredient that was missing from a memoir manuscript that has been simmering on the backburner for far too long. I also put together 15,000 words towards a new biographical work which brings to life the German



cows,





Occupation of Amsterdam in World War Two.

Applications open again in April 2019. The opportunity to have dedicated writing time at a place like Bundanon is a precious gift. Go for it!

Writing Hub by Kathy Ewers

Currently, I have the pleasure of facilitating the fourth year of the NEWC's Monthly Writing HUB. The Hub caters for writers of fiction, non-fiction or poetry, at any level, from published author to those who are interested in developing their writing. Some attendees have been writing for many years, some have always wanted to write but are only just getting around to it. All are welcome.

From February we will be utilising the University of Iowa's MOOC Pack, "Stories of Place: Writing and the Natural World". The University of Iowa is renowned for its International Writing Program and its MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses). The format of the Hub involves introduction of monthly topic, playing videos of international authors speaking on the subject, with discussions amongst attendees

throughout pertaining to the content of the MOOC materials. After every Hub a transcript of the presentations are sent out to attendees.

An opportunity at every get together for participants to share their own writing is also offered, where often critical but caring input from like-minded souls can be found. The format aims to mix information, learning, discussion and social interaction among members and potential new members.

The cost of attending the Hub is free for all members and aims to complement and support NEWC's program of paid workshops that happen throughout the year. The get together is held the last Saturday of every month starting at 10am at the Armidale Library.

A very big thank you
to our sponsors...



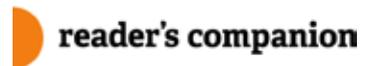
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 New England Writers Centre – NEWC

Contact us