

Newsletter of the SA Writers' Centre Inc.

February 2011

New National Body

In a new Literature Board initiative The Australia Council for the Arts has announced that five state-based writers' centres from around the country will combine forces to form a new national organisation.

Writing Australia (WA), which will be based in Canberra, will bring together the South Australian, Tasmanian, NSW, Victorian and ACT Writers' Centres to deliver services and programs for writers on a national level, while writers' centres from the remaining states will become associate members.

The new body will provide an additional layer of professional skills development and promotion for Australian writers, including a national program of resi-

dencies, opportunities for mid-career writers to promote their work interstate, a national conference and links to similar overseas service organisations.

A web-based information hub will also provide a 'meeting-place' for writers across Australia, in cities and the bush, as well as provide online workshops, comprehensive information on publishing opportunities for emerging writers and a wiki-based meeting place for writers at every stage of their career.

Writing Australia will commence operations in January 2011 once the recruitment of its national director is complete.

(more news on WA later in the year)

Diary Dates

Rural Roadshows

This year the Centre will be going on the road again with a series of talks and workshops. **Saturday, 19 March** will see writers **Sharon Kernot, Ray Tyndale** and **Malcolm Walker** visiting **Port Lincoln**. A week later, on **Saturday 26 March, Jude Aquilina, Steve Evans** and **Ken Vincent** will be in **Moonta**.

Poets & Platters

This popular evening appears once again as part of the **Barossa Vintage Festival** on **Wednesday 27th April, 7-10pm** at **Langmeil Winery, Tanunda**. Come along for wine, nibbles and some excellent poetry and yarns by some of South Australia's finest: **Bob Magor, Bill Marsh, Jude Aquilina, Louise Nicholas** and **Nigel Dey**.

Wanted: Six Young Writers

We are looking for six editors aged 20 to 30, who feel comfortable working within a team environment, to select work by writers aged 16 to 25 for publication in *dB Magazine*. Thanks to funding from Carclew Youth Arts Centre, participation in this program will be paid at the rate of \$60 per monthly meeting till the end of 2011. If successful with your application you will be required to:

- undertake four full-day training sessions with some of SA's most experienced professionals in the genre of poetry, prose, editing & marketing
- develop and help implement marketing strategies with the team to promote this opportunity to young writers
- meet monthly to select work for publication
- develop a strategy to provide adequate feedback to all contributors

- provide written feedback to all contributors during the monthly meetings
- create and participate at an event to attract young writers to the Salisbury Writers' Festival in August and the South Australian Writers' Festival at Onkaparinga in September.

If you think this sounds like an exciting opportunity, please send an expression of interest to Barbara Wiesner, Director of the SA Writers' Centre – no more than two pages detailing your writing credentials and the names of two referees – by 5pm Thursday, 24th February, 2011.

CARCLEW
YOUTHARTS

March issue *Southern Write*
Copy deadline:
5pm, 15 February 2011

Email material to: comms@sawc.org.au
Post to: 'Attention Editor', PO Box 43,
Rundle Mall, Adelaide 5000.

Centre Information

• **Sean Williams**, *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II*, Ballantine Books/Del Ray, 2010.

• **Amelia Walker**, *All You Need to Teach Poetry* (3 vols: Ages 5-8, Ages 8-10 and Ages 10+), Macmillan Teacher Resources, 2010.

Have you got a hearing impairment?

The SA Writers' Centre is a deafness friendly location. We have a Hi FM Hearing System which works both as an amplifier and a loop system that people with a hearing aid can tune into.

SA Writers' Centre Life Members

• **Max Fatchen**
• **Gillian Rubinstein/Lian Hearn**

Our Thanks

Thanks to Henry Ashley-Brown, Sarah Clay, Betty Collins, Jo Dey, Coie and John Dikkenberg, Barbara Fraser, Joanna Goldsworthy, Jade and Gary Rodgers, Gay Sanderson, Joel Shayer, Anne Timoney Jenkin, Paula Vince and Ken Vincent for their assistance in mailing the December newsletter to all our members.

Disclaimer

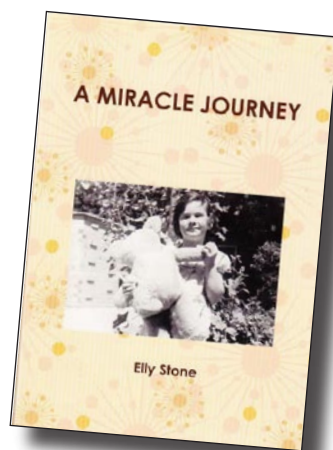
The information in this publication is presented in good faith as a service to SA Writers' Centre members. While the information is believed to be correct, the Centre takes no responsibility for its accuracy. No liability is accepted for any statements of opinion or any error or omission. Advertising material is accepted for this newsletter but such acceptance does not imply endorsement by the Centre.

Wheelchair/Lift Access to SAWC

Wheelchair access to the SA Writers' Centre is available at the 26 York Street rear entrance. Alternatively, come in from Rundle Street via Caffe Brunelli, proceed towards the toilets and take the door to your left at the end of the passage to reach the lift.



Thanks to SAWC sponsor:



Membership Benefits

Includes two free 20-minute appointments for in-depth writing and publishing enquiries per year (country members can access the service by phone); networking evenings hosted by staff, Board members or industry professionals; your monthly newsletter *Southern Write* - 11 issues per year - keeping you in touch with writing activities, publishing markets and opportunities; discounts on seminars and workshops; access to photocopying and our library of over 2,000 South Australian titles, including writers' resource books; 10% discount at various bookstores and concession prices at the Palace-Nova Cinemas; discounted advertising for individuals and free advertising for member groups in the monthly newsletter (conditions apply); free use of the Centre for book launches; up to 25 hours' free use of the Centre's rooms for groups; inclusion in the author profile section of our website; invitations to launches and events organised by the SA Writers' Centre; discounts for room hire; and occasional free movie passes, courtesy Hopscotch Films.

Thanks to the following people and organisations who donated books or journals to the Centre:

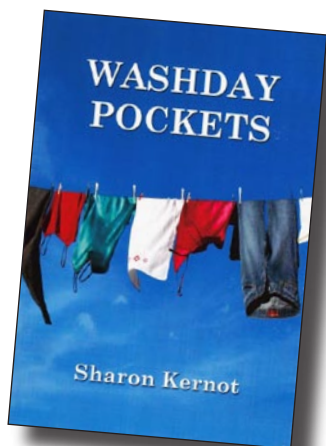
• **Accent Press** for *The Writer's ABC Checklist*, Lorraine Mace & Maureen Vincent-Northam, 2010 and *Successful Novel Plotting*, Jean Saunders, 2009.

• **Gawler Poetry Reader: Poets at the Pub**, no. 4, Garron Publishing, 2010.

• **Kami**, *Subterranean Redneck Blues*, Seaview Press, 2010.

• **Sharon Kernot**, *Washday Pockets*, Ginninderra Press, 2010.

• **James Richard Larsen**, *Sydney or Brewarrina*, 2010.



• **Bill 'Swampy' Marsh**, *New Great Australian Flying Doctor Stories*, ABC Books, 2010.

• **Melbourne Books** for *Award Winning Australian Writing*, Ed. Adolfo Aranjuez, 2010.

• **Overland**, iss. 201, Summer, 2010.

• **Hugh W. Robinson**, *Helping You Put It All Together: To Be Master of Your Own Destiny*, 2010.

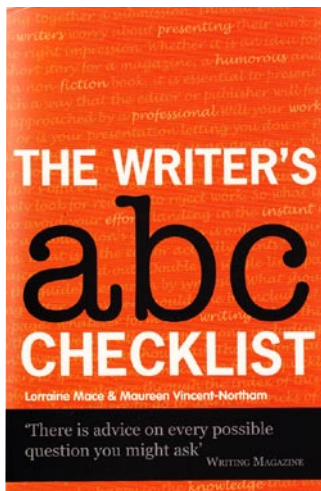
• **Elly Stone**, *A Miracle Journey*, 2010.

• **Wakefield Press** for *Lost In Laos*, Lydia Laube, 2010.

Book Reviews with Mark Caldicott

The Writer's ABC Checklist **Lorraine Mace & Maureen Vincent-Northam**

Accent Press, 2010
242 p. \$22.95

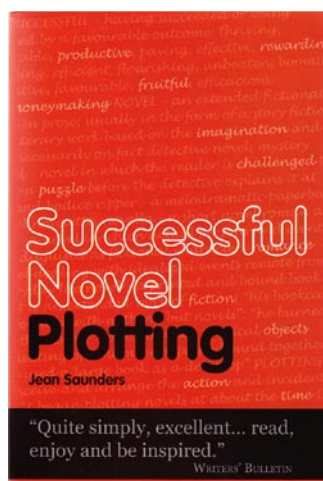


The Writer's ABC Checklist is exactly that – a checklist. Its entries arranged alphabetically, the two authors of this handbook present a run-down of almost every aspect of fiction and nonfiction writing. Topics addressed cover both the artistic and creative side of writing as well as the more prosaic, such as marketing, business, digital publishing and much more. Creative areas covered range from concerns of characterization, plot, dialogue, point of view, setting, style and theme in the writing of short stories and novels, through to editing. On the business side of things submission to publishers and journals, legal issues, websites and nonfiction proposals or article synopses are covered to name just a few of the entries. This handbook provides the writer with an impressive dissection of almost every imaginable aspect of the often protracted process involved in writing a novel, an article or a full-length work of nonfiction, right through to the protocols concerned with the submission of an article or book to an appropriate publisher. The authors also explore the role played by editors and agents in getting a work a publisher has accepted into print. The arranging of the several hundred entries in this book – clearly prefaced by a detailed contents section – makes this exhaustive handbook remarkably accessible for both the aspiring and the published writer. I cannot praise this book enough.

Successful Novel Plotting **Jean Saunders**

Accent Press, 2009
154 p. \$22.95

While some writers can generate a novel in a matter of months, for most of us it's a much lengthier process. The energy and inspiration that comes with an idea may be enough to carry you through from those first sentences to the final chapter, but what happens if you run out of steam or find you've taken a blind alley? While not ruling out the importance of that initial moment of inspiration, the author of this handbook argues that methodical plotting can facilitate and build upon the process of getting your novel onto paper. Jean Saunders suggests that taking a critical or analytical approach to plotting can not only smooth some of the tangles and dead ends that arise from a more spontaneous writing approach but it can also lend life to your characters and enable you to shape your novel, lending it intrigue and interest. While much of her discussion focuses on the writing of genre fiction and how careful thought and planning will give you a clearer idea of just how the novel you are setting out to write will look when it is finished, she does not rule out the need to focus upon the plotting process when working on a literary novel. Who knows, by applying or adapting her technique to your own writing practice, the varied aspects of novel plotting Saunders goes into can turn your initial idea into a work of genuine inspiration.



Workshops

How History Feels

with Alan Tucker

Saturday 19th February, 10am-1pm

The writing of historical fiction blends several skills. First comes finding and exploring (researching) the history, a key ingredient in the storytelling. How does a narrator or character feel? How are they affected by history?

Make Your Novel a Page Turner

with Paula Vince

Saturday 19th February, 10am-1pm

Want readers to come to the end of a chapter and say, 'Just one more page'? Want to keep people awake beyond midnight because they have to find out what's going to happen next? This workshop looks at effective but uncomplicated techniques to add suspense, mystery and drama to your stories.

The Children's Publishing Maze

with Phil Cummings

Saturday 19th February, 2pm-5pm

Do you want to find your way through the maze that is the children's publishing market – picture books, 'chapter' books, novels – younger, emerging or older readers? What are publishers looking for? What strategies can be used to expand ideas, take them to the next stage and plan the bigger project?

Finding Your Story

with Heather Britton

Saturday 19th February, 2pm-5pm

Got a life story you want to write but don't know where to start? Sift through your experiences, get to the heart of your story and as you delve deeper you'll find your writing voice. Whether it's a book-length manuscript or memoir for your family this workshop is for you.

That Weekly Word Count

Board member **Sandy Verschoor** contemplates pitfalls of the New Year and the dreaded 'P' word.

It's all in the planning. I try not to make New Year resolutions, as they tend to make me spend the rest of the year feeling bad for not fulfilling my promises.

I am, however, the consummate planner, somewhat addicted to plotting out my year. I start with all the things that didn't quite get done before December 31 and add to the list over days and sometimes weeks. I mentally separate them into categories - family, work, home, study, travel and with my year stretching before me I begin mapping out work schedules, school holidays, annual leave, and trips away. My working week is carefully organized, as is childcare and daily school pickups, visits with my mother, shopping and walking the dog.

I love planning. Sometimes, I do it just for fun. I plan a different career, a year off, a journey through a foreign country. My penchant for planning drives my family a little nuts but they have got used to it over time, understanding that my 'fun' plans are organic, not hard and fast and very likely to change.

This year is no different, with one exception. The only thing I always have to 'fit' around everything and everyone else is, in fact, the thing I most want to do - write. So this year, I have attempted to plan my 'writing life', giving it the same importance as the rest of my life.

I started by creating an excel spreadsheet, the year broken into months and each month broken into weeks. I googled writers' festivals, which I may or may not be able to attend, and slotted them in along with the CYA Conference (Children's and Young Adult) in Brisbane, and a workshop that took my interest.

Next, I scanned through the past 12 months of *Southern Write*, populating the months with the various writing competitions, anthology submissions, spoken word and prize opportunities which I would be most likely to either have existing short stories, essays or poetry to submit, or for which I might be able to create work.

Mumbling my mantra '*writers write, writers write*', I set myself a 'new work' word count target - a moderate one, so I have some chance of achieving it and of

not getting so upset with myself that I give up. 2,000 words a week seemed to be very achievable. A few quick calculations and I realized this would give me 26,000 words a quarter, and a whopping 104,000 words a year!

My elation was swiftly followed by a reality check. Creative Writing at Adelaide University taught me about the hard work of writing, being re-writing, again and again and again. My first novel, a children's adventure for 9 - 12 year olds, was only 40,000 words and took me the best part of three years to get it to a standard ready to submit to a publisher. I don't know about you, but I find it far easier and so much quicker to generate new writing than to edit, so when adding 'editing' to my calendar, I reduced my editing load to 1,000 words a week, 13,000 words a quarter, 52,000 words a year.

'I have in my collection, my personal yet-to-be-published backlog (best sung to the Twelve Days of Christmas): one children's novel, one chick lit crime. one chapbook of poems and four picture books.'

I wondered if I'd got that wrong, given I need to do more editing and re-writes than new writing. I figure I could allow myself to swap between the two word counts as needed. 2000:1000, 1000:2000. Regardless, I would be generating a bucket load of work.

Lastly, I added a column entitled 'pitching and submitting to publishers'. I have already done a fair amount of research into the who's who of the Australian publishing world, maybe it is time to get serious about submitting. I have in my collection, my personal yet-to-be-published backlog (best sung to the tune of *Twelve Days of Christmas*): one children's novel, one chick lit crime, one chapbook of poems and four picture books. Plus, of course, there are the mandatory work-in-progress projects, many years worth: outlines, first chapters, unedited first drafts - folders and folders of them, all incomplete.



So, finally, I have a plan for my writing. I have printed it off and stuck it on my study wall. Brilliant. Now all I have to do is stick to the schedule. What can go wrong?

Am I a writer? Yes. Am I an author? Not yet. But if I stick to my plan I might yet get there.

PS: Three weeks into the New Year and Sandy is 6,000 words behind in new writing, 3,000 behind in editing and has yet to send off anything anywhere. Thankfully, New Year plans can always start in February.

'This morning I took out a comma and this afternoon I put it back in again.'

- Oscar Wilde

'I didn't write with a target audience in mind. What excited me was how much I would enjoy writing about Harry. I never thought about writing for children - children's books chose me. I think if it is a good book anyone will read it.'

- J. K. Rowling

Profile: Lia Weston

SA Writers' Centre member Lia Weston talks to Malcolm Walker about writing.

Lia Weston was born in Sydney in 1974 but spent her formative years in Adelaide. After an adolescence at an all-girls' school and a stint at Adelaide Uni, she found herself facing the world with nothing more than an Arts degree and an irrational hatred of berets. In between subsequent hospitality and administration work, she honed her writing skills by ghosting her friends' essays and creating rhyming couplets to entertain her father. Lia then set herself a challenge to finish her unfinished novel. The result, *The Fortunes of Ruby White*, was published by Simon & Schuster in July, 2010.

***The Fortunes of Ruby White* is a comic novel about a jobless heroine. Can you tell us what influenced you to write it?**

Initially, a documentary examining some of the more bizarre New Age therapies, where vulnerable people were being fleeced by so-called psychics and healers; secondly, a job selling a product I knew had flaws. The ideas collided: if you were employed to hawk bogus products, how far would you bend your ethics in order to stay employed? The New Age field is also ripe for satire. I was involved with it for a few years, but when I found myself eye-rolling during a seminar I knew it was time to move on. (The well-known presenter was saying that when a light bulb flickers, it's a loved one trying to make contact. In my house, it's called 'crappy wiring'.)

Is comic fiction tricky to write?

I actually find it trickier not to write comic fiction; it seems to be the way my brain works. I tend to find that if my writing isn't comic, it's deeply depressing; sometimes I worry I can only go one way or the other. I blame a childhood that featured a lot of Tom Lehrer and Stan Freberg, courtesy of my parents.

How did *The Fortunes of Ruby White* get from the slush pile to an editor's desk?

Luck and timing. I picked Simon & Schuster as they were a publisher I admired but didn't produce much local fiction, figuring I'd have a better shot that way. Naively, I went about it completely backwards: wrote the manuscript, sent it off, and *then* began researching the

industry. The more I read, the more I realised the chance of getting any book picked out of slush – let alone a first novel, let alone one by an author with no agent – was incredibly slight. To test the waters, I entered into the Salisbury Writers' Festival's First Page session and then waited eagerly on the day for feedback. My page wasn't picked, which convinced me that my manuscript was being used to prop up the short leg of a desk and wasn't even good enough to warrant a rejection letter. Two weeks later, Simon & Schuster emailed to say they were interested. I'm still not sure what the lesson is out of this. Fortune favours the ignorant, perhaps.

What are you currently reading?

Unusually for me, as I'm normally years behind everyone else, something relatively current – Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom*. Next on the list is Bill Bryson's *House*, but he'll probably have put out 'A Short History of Something Else' by the time I get to it. I also recently finished Allayne Webster's *Our Little Secret*, which upset me for days afterwards (in the best possible way).

What books have influenced you?

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy was the first book I read which tackled high-end academic concepts in such a bizarre way; always beautifully understated, measured, but somewhat detached, even when the world is (literally) exploding. I'm a sucker for bleakly humorous books, and it's also impossible for me to dislike someone who loathes pointless bureaucracy as much as I do. Also Cynthia Heimel's *If You Can't Live Without Me*, *Why Aren't You Dead Yet?* for her razor-edged sarcasm, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for exploring disturbing concepts with delicate language, Bill Bryson's *A Walk In the Woods*, for the ease and fluidity of his writing (not to mention his dab hand with a curse word), and Stephen King's *On Writing*, in particular for its analogy that stories are 'found things, like fossils in the ground', which gives me courage when things aren't going well.

Do you have a non-writing job?

I work six days a week (sometimes seven, if I'm lucky) at the bicycle shop I own with my husband. Fitting writing around work is an ongoing battle. (As I type this, it's 5.30



a.m.) On the plus side, many people have been fascinated by the whole book thing; almost half of the people at the launch were bike shop customers, which was lovely.

How did you get started as a writer?

When I was 7, my father said that rhyming couplets were the lowest form of poetry, so naturally I started writing screeds of them to entertain him. (He ended up changing his mind, possibly to shut me up.) In high school, I drew political cartoons for a favourite teacher. At uni, I ghost-wrote my friends' essays. *The Fortunes of Ruby White* came after this, and I've just realised it was the first thing I wrote purely for myself. How odd.

What's the one important lesson you've learnt on your journey to becoming a writer and how has it helped you improve your craft?

Don't edit as you go. Writing, editing, and re-writing the same sentences over and over and over does your head in and gets you nowhere. Letting go and just putting words on the page, even if they're making you cringe, is the key to actually getting things done. I hate the first draft but I love to edit.

Your publishers have been calling you the next Helen Fielding. How do you feel about that?

Terrified. Immensely flattered, but terrified.

Do you have any tips for aspiring writers?

If you want to get published, write for yourself but edit for your reader. Don't

interview continues on page 8

Opportunities

Submissions Wanted

[untitled] is seeking short stories between 300-5000 words as well as seeking submissions of stories from people who have had experience with breast cancer, either as a carer/family member or patient to go into their anthology 'Journey'. For details go to www.busybird.com.au

Australian Writers' Guild

AWG is offering a professional development opportunity for an emerging playwright. To be eligible for this residency applicants must be a permanent resident or Australian citizen, a member of the AWG, a playwright with experience writing for co-op productions or community theatre, who has not been credited as the Writer for a professionally produced, full-length play in Australia or in a comparable market internationally. Entrants must be available in 2011 between June and September to take up the residency. Closes **Friday, 11 February**. Go to awg.com.au

Carclew Grants

Applications are now open in the 2011 scholarship program for artists aged 26 and under for arts activity/projects occurring 1 July-31 December 2011. Closes **Tuesday, 15 March**. Details at www.carclew.org.au

Carclew Information Sessions

Information sessions for the above grants are as follows: Sesion 1: General Information Session, 5.00 to 6.00pm, **Thursday, 3 February**. Session 2: Young Artist's and Career Pathways – Information session and networking evening, 5.00 to 7.30pm, **Thursday, 10 February**.

Looking for authors

Mostly Books seeks expressions of interest from authors who would like to have some space in the shop for a Saturday morning or Thursday evening event. The venue is also available for book launches. For details call Samuel or Jacqui on 8373 5190 or email mostlybooks.internode.on.net

Mettle^m

Submissions of gay-themed art and writing are being sought by this new quarterly magazine to be launched in March 2011. For guidelines go to www.mettle.com

WritingRaw goes weekly

WritingRaw is now a weekly literary magazine dedicated to new and emerging writers. Go to writingraw.com

TEXT

Submissions are sought by *TEXT*, a publication of the Australian Association of Writing Programs. Visit www.textjournal.com.au/ for more details.

Aurealis Editors Wanted

Australia's premiere magazine of fantasy and science fiction is looking for a new editor or team of editors. You'll need to be an enthusiast with good organisational skills and a strong understanding and appreciation of the speculative fiction genre, preferably with some experience and/or formal qualification in publishing. Please send CVs, expressions of interest and requests for further details to publisher@aurealis.com.au. Applications close **Friday, 18 February**.

Churchill Fellowships

Applications close on **Monday 28 February**, 2011. Fellowships are open to Australian citizens aged over 18 years who wish to design their own research project, travel the world and further their knowledge in their chosen field before returning to make a contribution to Australian society. For details see www.churchilltrust.com.au

Call for Submissions

Mostly for Mothers, an imprint of Wombat Books, is calling for nonfiction submissions to an anthology of real-life stories about miscarriage. They are not accepting fiction submissions. Submissions close **26 February**, 2011. Visit www.mostlyformothers.com/miscarriage.html

Wildcare Nature Writing Prize

Supported by the Tasmanian Writers' Centre, this international literary prose competition in the genre of nature writing is open to entries in both fiction and nonfiction, with a first prize of \$5000 and a wilderness residency in Tasmania. Entries must be anonymous, one per person and between 2000 - 4000 words. **Closes 21 February**. Details at www.tasmanianwriters.org

Pure Slush

Pure Slush, established December 2010, aims to promote fun - and less wank - in flash fiction. A bit lofty, but there you go. For submission details go to <http://pureslush.webs.com/>

Coriole National Wine Poet Competition

Coriole Vineyards are seeking poems for wine labels for the next 'Coriole Poet Series'. It's free to enter six short poems. Winner receives \$4000 plus \$1000 of wine. Entries close **1st March**. For entry form and guidelines visit www.coriole.com or email helen@coriole.com

Cordite Poetry Review

Submissions for our thirty-fifth issue - Oz-Ko (Australia-Korea) - will remain open for a limited time only. Visit www.cordite.org.au/submissions for full details.

Arts SA Funding Round

Independent Makers & Presenters: Project Grant applications close **Friday, 18 March**. The Richard Llewellyn Arts & Disability Trust grant closes **Thursday, 31 March**.

Writer Required

Writer wanted to assist with extremely controversial factional saga (99% fact, 1% fiction) involving divorce, kidnapping, smuggling, money laundering, tax avoidance, blackmail and collusion. If interested or brave enough, please contact Michael Gee on 0419 228 894 or via email at michaelgee@adam.com.au

Inaugural kuril dhagum Indigenous Writing Fellowships

Open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers. Two Fellowships, each worth \$10,000. Manuscripts are invited in fiction, poetry, young adult and children's writing. No entry fee. All entrants receive feedback. Guidelines at www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/ppp/blackwrite or email enquiries to: indigenous.writing@slq.qld.gov.au

Silver Blade Quarterly

Silver Blade, a quarterly journal of classic fantasy, is seeking submissions for issue no. 10. Go to www.silverblade.net

Opportunities

Train Stories

A new short story magazine seeks material you'd like to read on the train. *Train Stories* will not be a literary journal but a fiction magazine. Go to <http://trainstories.blogspot.com/>

Do You Have a Script?

Or a story to tell? Submit your script and win a \$500 option agreement. Stories with female heroine or strong supporting role, given first preference. For details, please contact Clare Katavich at film@stagefilms.com.au

Submissions Wanted

Ace Press, a new boutique publishing company, is calling for submissions for fiction (popular and literary), biography,

memoir and young adult fiction. Guidelines at <http://www.acepress.com.au/pages/Manuscript-Submission-Guidelines.html>

In The Raw Script Readings 2011

The Dungog Film Festival is calling for script entries to its 'In The Raw' program. Go to <http://dungogfilmfestival.org/2011/in-the-raw.html>

Gay & Lesbian Contributions

Contributions sought – stories and anecdotes of personal journeys – for a paperback anthology. Ideally stories could be 300 - 1500 words, maximum length is 3000 words. If you have not come out yet and wish to share 'why not', please send your words in. Stories will need to be edited and we will require a signed release giving

us permission to publish them. For more information contact soniafriedrich@virginbroadband.com.au

Writer Required

James from Sudan is writing about the war in his homeland and how it affected the mothers of the children and young men who were taken as soldiers. The manuscript has been written but assistance is required with editing and polishing. For more information contact James at dakthondit@yahoo.com.au

Software Supermarket

Lindy Warrell looks at the writing software Scrivener.

Originally designed in the UK for the Apple Mac, Scrivener is a professional quality word processor and project management tool that now also has a Windows version thanks to a writer-programmer based in Sydney. For someone like me, who never felt confident with Word and sundry files and bits of paper everywhere, Scrivener has really made a difference.

Described on the web site www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener.php as 'your complete writing studio', Scrivener allows you to import photographs, images, web pages and files for individual projects so each has its own resources right there as you write.

Scrivener's versatility will astound. It offers an outline facility that lets you pick and choose what you want included. It has a unique corkboard feature that lets you play with your synopsis and organise your work as though you were working with cards. Scrivener does not tell you how to write, it provides a context in which you are free to format, organise, structure, research, and write with all your tools in one place.

One of my favourite things is being able to write on full screen, blank white page on black: no distractions, just words on the page. Everything you produce is exportable to a comprehensive range of contemporary formats so you're in complete control of how your work is exported or printed. Scrivener's backup is almost invincible. Even if you lose the application, your files will remain intact and can be opened without it!

Scrivener is no ordinary writing application. It does not overwhelm you with set categories and predetermined 'how to write' features. You can customise everything, sync with mobile apps and keep track of your revisions – just for starters.

Literature & Latte, Scrivener's home, offers excellent user forums and personalised support. Tutorials are available to guide you through every step. You can try before you buy but the cost for Scrivener 2.0 is a mere US\$45. Amazing value. I just had to recommend it to everyone at SAWC.

Letter to the Editor

I enjoyed Anna Solding's insightful look at editing writers' anthologies ('Cracking the Code of Collections', *Southern Write*, December 2010). She entertainingly summarises the rewarding experience, in 2003, of selecting and putting together a student literary compilation.

She bemoans that 'Wakefield Press no longer works with the University of Adelaide' to produce collections of excellent short writing from around the State and beyond. Only one year ago, though, this important collaboration produced the first-rate and very successful book *Small City Tales of Strangeness and Beauty*.

It just takes a couple of enthusiastic new editors to urge another such collaboration – and the best writing by this rich field of new South Australian writers could be published in another productive partnership.

2011 may be the year of the best writing that South Australia has yet generated. Take the initiative, writers and editors, and support emerging excellence!

Best for the Emerging Year,
Stephen Lawrence.



Poetica February Program

Poetica is presented by Mike Ladd on Saturday at 3.05pm and repeated 3.05pm on Thursdays.

- 5 Feb The Human Project: poetry and philosophy of Martin Langford.
- 12 Feb Man at the Edge of the World: a meeting with neurosurgeon and translator of ancient Chinese poetry Ian Johnston.
- 19 Feb Latin-American Poets Part 1: selected poems from some of the best-loved Latin-American poets, including Jose Marti, Gabriela Mistral, Cesar Vallejo and Jorge Luis Borges.
- 26 Feb Latin-American Poets Part 2: works by Pablo Neruda, Octavio Paz, and Homero Aridjis.

Website: www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/poetica/

Mon 21 Feb: Book Signing

Hear M. D. Finn talk about *The Culture Perspective: A Real Man's Guide to a Happy Successful Life* at 7.30pm, Domain Theatre, Marion Cultural Centre, 287 Diagonal Road, Oaklands Park. Free event – bookings essential. Marion Cultural Centre Box Office or call 8375 6855.

Tues 22 - Fri 25 Feb: Spoke Writers' Festival

Part of the 2011 Adelaide Fringe, SPOKE is Adelaide's new mini-writers' festival and boasts a slew of award winners, scene celebrities and multi-taskers, all from South Australia's local, inner-city, urban and indigenous pool of writers. For details go to <http://www.adelaidenews.com.au/spoke2011/>

Tues 15 Feb: SCBWI Meeting

SA Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators meeting, 7pm at the SA Writers' Centre. Speaker: graphic novel creator Dan McGuinness of *Pilot & Huxley* fame. Open invitation. Members: gold coin donation. Non-members (aspiring & published): \$5. First visit: no strings. If you come more than once (and we'd love you to), you need to join. Contact: Mandi Graham at amanda.graham@scbwiaustralia.org

Contributions Wanted

As Barbara Wiesner has outlined in the past we like to involve members in our program. So once again we're looking for people who can run a three-hour workshop on any aspect of writing, publishing or the industry in general for 2011. If you have expertise in any of these areas that you would like to share, please send an expression of interest – an outline of no more than 200 words, along with a 50-word bio – to director@sawc.org.au or post it to the SAWC.

The editor of *Southern Write* is also seeking expressions of interest for newsletter articles and interviews for next year. Please, no creative writing, no poetry and no self-promotional pieces. Once again, if you feel you have an interesting article that looks at an aspect of writing or publishing which we haven't covered within the last 12 months, please either email or post your 200 word outline and 50 word bio to comms@sawc.org.au

AUSTRALIAN POETRY NEWSFLASH!

Congratulations to Sandra Thibodeaux: the Australian Poetry Poet in Residence for 2011.

Thanks to the Pratt Foundation, Sandra (based in Darwin, Northern Territory) will spend time writing poetry, reading publicly, attending events, contributing to publications and working with Australian Poetry to be an ambassador for poetry promoting her own work and the art form. Stay tuned for a more formal introduction and plan of her activities.

Paul Kooperman
Director, Australian Poetry Centre
National Director, Australian Poetry

...continued from page 5

write for acclaim or money (ha ha! No, really) or awards. Just concentrate on telling a great story in the simplest, crispest language you can. Re-read favourite books to work out why you love them, and see if you can make those elements your own to develop your style. I also think it's crucial to always look for the truth in the moment, as, in my own reading, I find it's those tiny kernels of 'Ah! I thought I was the only person who thought that' which hold the most resonance.

What's next for Lia Weston?

I've just finished the first draft of my second novel, which is a story about obsessive love. It's quite different to *Ruby White*. While it percolates away in a desk drawer, I'm creating an epistolary project with someone I've never met, plus a short story to contribute to an anthology; both are projects with The Australian Literature Review. I've never written a short story or collaborated with someone else before, so it's very exciting. Finally something that doesn't have to be 100,000 words long!

Where do you see yourself and your writing in 5 years time?

Although I'd love to see myself on a window seat of my New York penthouse, approving the costume designs for 'Ruby White: The Movie', I have a feeling I'll be continuing to juggle my writing/work/general life commitments, hopefully with another one or two books on the shelf. And if we've got a part-timer at the shop so I can have a few days off each week, that will be a bonus.



An Occasional Column

Keith Oatley looks at the emotional effects and attachments of books we read as children.

One afternoon last weekend, I opened *Swallows and Amazons*, by Arthur Ransome and read the first chapter. It starts with the seven-year-old Roger, running in wide zigzags up a hill from a lake towards his mother standing in front of a farm house where his family is staying for the summer holidays. Instead of running directly towards his mother, which he is tempted to do, because she is holding an envelope in which he thinks, correctly, is a message from his father for which he and his siblings have been waiting, he continues to run in zigzags. He is a clipper ship tacking against the wind.

As I started to read, I found myself in tears, and I continued tearfully to the end of the chapter? Why should this have been? There was nothing sad in the chapter. It is joyous. The message from the children's father, on a ship at Malta bound for Hong Kong, is that the children are allowed to take the small sailing dinghy, *Swallow*, they've found in the farm's boathouse, and sail it to the island about a mile offshore, and camp there.

I don't think my tears were of the kind that, as Ed Tan and Nico Frijda have explained, can occur in fiction when one feels oneself in the presence of something larger than oneself. Nor did they come from any sense of loss of a happy childhood. My childhood was fairly solitary with the predominant tone of having to keep my head down to avoid reprimand. I've had good periods of happiness in my life, but all in adulthood.

My tears could perhaps have been nostalgic (defined as memories of things that never happened) but I think they were a matter of attachment, as when one is reunited with an attachment person after a period of separation and danger. In the first paragraph of *Swallows and Amazons*, I was suddenly reunited with an object of attachment. I have read all of Ransome's children's books, I think when I was between eight and eleven. I used to own the whole set. I remember them on a bookshelf. They must have been given to me, one by one, by my parents. When my own sons were young, I read some of the books aloud to them when we went on sailing holidays. Each book was read on the boat, in the

evening, in the setting of the story: the West Coast of Scotland, the Norfolk Broads, the Essex Backwaters.

My attachment to these books was made at a time when neither my parents nor I knew anything about sailing. It must have been Ransome's books that implanted in me the desire to sail. I did learn to sail; at one point I built and raced a sailing dinghy. Later I bought a second-hand Hurley-22 in which at weekends and holidays I cruised with my family on the South Coast of England, and I have chartered boats in Scotland, Turkey, Greece, the British Virgin Islands and the Great Lakes in Canada.

And – strange that this should only have occurred to me now – at the same time that he planted the interest in sailing, it could have been Arthur Ransome who gave me my love of fiction. The opening of *Swallows and Amazons* provides a perfect example. The prose is transparent. Important elements of fiction are present: the imagination with Roger as a clipper ship, the important shift from exterior to interior (Roger wants to run straight to his mother, but continues tacking), and the interpersonal (Roger's mother is patient, she knows her son needs to tack towards her, and Roger knows that she knows).

In many ways Arthur Ransome was a romantic figure. He was a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*. He reported on the Russian Revolution, he knew Trotsky and Lenin, and fell in love with Evgenia Shelepina, who was working as Trotsky's personal secretary. He may have been a spy for the British Intelligence service, though later he was arrested on orders from MI5 and then released.

Despite the romantic elements, a 2009 biography by Roland Chambers reports Ransome as a bit of a cad, rather out for himself. Diana Wynne Jones, another extremely famous children's writer, confirms in her autobiography that he had a side that was less than benign. During World War II, she was evacuated as a child to a house on Coniston Water that had been owned by a family who were friends of Ransome. It was the original for the house in front of which Roger's mother

stood, as the small boy tacked towards her. Ransome has said that *Swallows and Amazons* was written because he'd fallen in love with the area when he and his siblings had spent summer holidays there when they were children. Wynne Jones recounts how, one day some children who, like herself had been evacuated there, were playing by the lake and she saw a portly and irate man rowing out towards them from his houseboat. He said angrily that he wasn't going to be disturbed by a parcel of evacuees and that he would come next morning to complain, which he did, still in a fury. The man was Arthur Ransome. 'He hated children' said Wynne Jones. His books indicate that he had had a glorious childhood, but the incident Wynne Jones reports seems to suggest he could no longer remember being a child. Perhaps the best of him, as of certain other writers, was in his books. *Swallows and Amazons* and the books that followed it seem to be pure gifts.

Roland Chambers (2009). *The Last Englishman: The Double Life of Arthur Ransome*. London: Faber & Faber.

Arthur Ransome (1930). *Swallows and Amazons*. London: Cape.

Ed Tan & Nico Frijda (1999). 'Sentiment in film viewing.' in C. Platinga & G. M. Smith (Eds.), *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition and Emotion*, (pp. 48-64). Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Keith Oatley

First published July 2010, this article is reproduced by kind permission of *OnFiction*.

OnFiction is a magazine with the aim of developing the psychology of fiction. Using theoretical and empirical perspectives, its contributors endeavour to understand how fiction is created and how readers and audience members engage in it. Readers can find it at <http://www.onfiction.ca/>

Kate Alder's poem 'Gariwerd', shortlisted in the *page seventeen* Poetry Competition, appeared in *page seventeen*, iss. 8.

Elaine Barker's poem 'Tartan Slippers' appeared in the December edition of *The Guardian*. Her poems 'Missing' and 'Reckoning' were published in *The Independent Weekly*, 'Derelict' appeared in *Prospect Two* and 'Start of Day' in *Poetry Monash*, no. 81.

Ross Duffy's short story 'Astute Counselling' was awarded Most Highly Commended in the *Port Stephens Examiner* Literature Award, 2010.

Sally Harding's *City Dog Country Dog* was published by Wakefield Press.

Jayne Kader's novel 'Mrs Morris for Beginners' was shortlisted for the Varuna HarperCollins Manuscript Development Award.

Stephen Lawrence was shortlisted for the 2010 Synaptic Graffiti Poetry Competition with his poem 'I was thinking about the stock market'; his story 'The Borealis' was shortlisted in the inaugural Hearsay competition; his poems 'Pinocchio' and 'Something needs my attention' were published in *Windmills 6*, Deakin University.

Marilyn Linn had two tanka published in *Eucalypt Challenge*, no. 9. Her weather haiku was in *Notes from the Gean*, vol. 2 iss. 3, December, 2010.

Peter Lyons's short story 'Christmas Without the Underpinnings' was shortlisted for the *Positive Words* End of Year Short Story Competition.

Kristin McEvoy came second in the Scarlett Stiletto Award and won the Domestic Malice section of this award run by Victorian Sisters of Crime.

Feast has received a grant of \$10 000 from ArtsSA to stage **Robert Moore's** play *Brewing* in November, 2011.

David Mercer's short story 'The Potent Pumpkin' was Commended in the Spring 2010 The Best of Times Short Story Competition.

David Mortimer's poem 'Lobster Logic' was published in *TEXT* vol. 14, no. 2 (October 2010) and his seven-poem sequence *Beyond First*, comprising 'Orbital', 'Bach's Music', 'Not-Being and Somethingness', 'Second-Born', 'High Summer', 'Found Object' and 'Attention Span' appeared in *Time with the Sky: Newcastle Poetry Prize Anthology*, 2010.

Mark Neuling won the 20-25 year-old category of the 12 Words Story competition.

Chrissy O'Reilly's short story 'Catch Me When I Fall' won 1st prize in the 2010 Write On Townsville Annual Short Story Competition.

John Pfitzner's poem 'A failure of humanity' was one of three winners in the 30th anniversary *Studio* Poetry Award and will be published in the next edition of *Studio*, no. 119.

John Sabine's essay, 'Imagining the Unthinkable: a Radical New Look at Indigenous Affairs in Australia' was published in the November issue of the Queensland literary journal *The Write Angle*.

Alice Shore's poems 'Perception of Love', 'throwaways' and 'we are all guests in this universe' were published in *Poets at the Pub: Gawler Poetry Reader No. 4*.

Lidija Šimkutė's bilingual CD, with jazz pianist Saulius Siauciulis, was launched in Vilnius. An interview with Lidija was televised on Lithuanian television in October, 2010. Her cycle of 15 poems, *Thought and Rock* (trans. Andre Ehin), appeared in *Nadine*, June, no. 62.

Heather Taylor Johnson had a creative essay published in *Transnational Literature* and poetry in the following journals: *Foliage Oak* (US), *Storyteller* (US), *Griffith Review*, *Famous Reporter*, *Poetrix*, *Social Alternatives* and *page seventeen*.

Zenda Vecchio's short story 'Face in the Mirror' appeared in *Tamba*, iss. 47 (Spring/Summer, 2010)

Valerie Volk's poem 'Recall' was published in Issue 35 (November) of *Poetrix*.

Meredith Whitford's new novel, *Shakespeare's Will*, was published by BeWrite Books.

Thank You

The SA Writers' Centre would like to thank the following people and organisations for donating books to our St Lucy's Party fund-raiser:

Patrick Allington
Deborah Bogle, The Advertiser
Katharine England
Sue Fleming, Adelaide TAFE
Omnibus Books
Wakefield Press
Sean Williams

GUIDELINES for PUBLICATION in MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS SECTION

We're pleased to know of our members' achievements – but space is limited. Our inclusions policy is as follows:

- items need to be actually published, not simply 'accepted for publication' – so please tell us once your work is in print
- date of publication must be no older than six months
- we cannot include links to web addresses, websites, electronic journals, etc.
- nor can we mention community readings and talks
- we don't list 'letters to the editor', reviews or lengthy entries
- to be included you must be a member of the Centre
- and please use current entries as formatting guidelines for contributions when notifying us of your success

Feb 5: The CWA Debut Dagger ●

Open to all writers who have not had a novel published commercially. Submit the first 3000 words of your crime-themed novel, plus a 500-1000 word synopsis. The shortlisted entries are circulated to all editors and agents who are members of our Association, and to an increasing number who contact us asking to see the list. Details at www.thecwa.co.uk (click the 'Debut Dagger' link).

Feb 14: Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Literary Competition ☞●

Three categories: 1. Short story, max 3000 words, 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$50. 2. Poetry, limit 30 lines, 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$50. 3. Bush Verse, limit 52 lines, 1st prize \$100. For entry forms send SSAE to Ruth Claridge, 99 Victoria St, Eaglehawk 3556 or phone 03 5446 8240 or go to <http://dahlia.bendigo.net.au>

Feb 18: ABC Bed of Roses Competition ☺●

The *Bed of Roses* Love and Friendship Competition is for short stories of love and friendship in 250 words or less. Win a bunch of roses and a signed *Bed of Roses* DVD. Go to <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/bedofroses/#/love-and-friendship-competition>

Feb 19: Laura Literary Awards ★●

Open section, short story. Up to 1500 words, prize \$200. Young adult (13-18) up to 1000 words, prize \$50. Junior (under 13) up to 500 words, prize \$25. The C. J. Dennis Poetry Awards: Poem up to 60 lines, open prize \$200. Young adult (13-18) prize \$50. Junior (under 13) prize \$25. Fee for open sections \$10 per entry. Guidelines and entry forms available at www.laurafolkfair.com

Feb 20: Dignity for Disability Competition ☺☞●

What's your idea of a perfect South Australia for people with disabilities? Express yourself to Kelly Vincent and you could

be in the running to win one of four \$500 prizes. More details at www.d4d.org.au

Feb 28: FreeXpression Literary Competition ☺☞

Five sections: short story, traditional rhyming poetry, free verse, article/essay and haiku. \$5 per entry (\$25 for 6 entries), accompanied by entry form. First prizes range from \$100 to \$250. More information from PO Box 4, West Hoxton, NSW, 2171.

Feb 28: Brighton Cow ☺●

Short Story Fiction - up to 3,000 words on any theme. 1st Prize £100.00, 2nd Prize £50.00, 3rd Prize £25.00, plus publication on website. Go to <http://www.brightoncow.co.uk/comps/index.html>

Feb 28: Signatures Short Story Competition ☺●

Humorous short stories to 1500 words. Cash prizes for 1st & 2nd place, plus publication in *Signatures Journal*. Certificates for Highly Commended and Commended. Prize money dependent on entries received. No official entry form required but all entries must conform to standard competition guidelines. Entry fee \$5 in cheque or money order only. Email entries not accepted. Send to Signatures Short Story Competition, PO Box 72, Wyong, NSW 2259. Enquiries to beejaves@iprimus.com.au

Feb 28: [untitled] Short Story Competition ☺●

1st Prize \$250; 2nd Prize \$100; 3rd Prize \$50. One entry \$10.00, two entries \$15.00. Shortlist judged by Arnold Zable. Download forms from <http://www.untitledonline.com.au/competition.html>

Feb 28: The Charlotte Duncan Award for Children's Writing ●

Celapene Press invites entries for the Charlotte Duncan Award for a short story for young readers aged 9-12 years. Entry fee \$9.90 per story. 1st prize \$75, 2nd prize \$50, 3rd prize \$25. Winning and commended

entries will be published on the Celapene Press website. See entry form and guidelines at www.celapenepress.com.au or send SSAE to 2 Bonview Crt, Knoxfield, VIC, 3180.

Mar 1: Two Fires Poetry Competition ☺●

Poems up to 30 lines. Prizes of \$1000 and \$300. Details and entry form http://www.twofiresfestival.com.au/html/poetry_competition.html

Mar 9: Kinglake Flash Competition ●

1st Prize £500.00 and a Kindle 3G, 2nd Prize £150 and a Kindle, 3rd Prize £50.00 and 7 runners-up at £20.00 each. All winners included in an anthology. Details at: www.kinglakepublishing.co.uk

Mar 11: The Neil Gunn Writing Competition ●

This is the 11th Neil Gunn Writing Competition for adult prose and poetry. Theme: A Wrong Turning. First Prize £500 each category. For details see the Highland Council website: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/libraries/neilgunn/>

Mar 24: Black Dog Institute ☺●

The Black Dog Institute's national and NZ writing competition on 'Postnatal Depression, Men and Women - Personal Experiences and the search for real answers'. 1st Place \$2000; 2nd \$1000, 3rd \$500. Details at <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/media/writingcompetition/index.cfm>

March 31: Kernewek Lowender Writers' Competition ☺★☞

Theme is 'To Awaken in a Strange Place'. Adult Section: Entry fee is \$5 for first entry, \$2.50 each for subsequent entries. Adult short story up to 2500 words and adult poetry up to 50 lines. Prize money \$100 each. Young Writers: 12-18 yrs, max 2500 words (\$50 prize). Under 12, 1000 words (\$25). Young Poets: 12-18 yrs, to 50 lines (\$50). Under 12, to 30 lines (\$25).

Apr 29: Campbelltown 2010 Literary Awards ☺☞★●

Five categories according to age, ranging from 5+ to 65+. Theme is 'They were the best of times, they were the worst of times'. First prizes range from \$500 to \$200, with silver and bronze prizes valued at between \$300 to \$50. Entries must not exceed 2500 words and must have a connection to Campbelltown. For more information and entry forms go www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au and click on 'Recreation'.

May 20: Bush Lantern Award 2011 ☺★☞●

Bundaberg Poets' Society - Open Section: 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$75. Entry fee \$8 or 3 poems \$20. Junior Section for primary and Secondary students. Prizes from \$50 down to \$10. Free entry. For guidelines and entry forms email Sandy at lees@fastel.com.au

Please note: competitions are listed in order of closing date

Key

- ☺ competition listed for the first time
- ★ competition with sections for young writers
- ☞ SA Writers' Centre holds the entry forms
- the entry form is available on the Internet

Entry Forms: ☞ Entry forms 20c each or send one business-sized stamped self-addressed envelope, plus one loose 60c stamp for every TWO competitions.

Membership Application Form

SA Writers' Centre Inc PO Box 43 Rundle Mall 5000 ABN 40 783 458 265 Ph (08) 8223 7662 Fax (08) 8232 3994 Email: sawriters@sawc.org.au

Name/Organisation

Address

Suburb/Town

Postcode

Telephone..... Fax Email

\$127 organisation with use of facilities (inc GST)

\$90 organisation (inc GST)

\$66 waged (inc GST)

\$39 student/healthcare cardholder (inc GST)

\$15 youth (under 18) (inc GST)

Renew

New

Concession number

Date of birth/...../.....

Method of payment: Cheque/money order attached Bankcard Mastercard Visa

Credit card number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Expiry date

Cardholder's nameCardholder's signature Date of application

(Please enclose a SSAE [A4 envelope only] for return of receipt and membership card. If a tax invoice is required, please tick)

[FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Rec No:Rec Date:On database:

If undelivered please return to:

SA Writers' Centre Inc

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Rundle Mall SA 5000

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February 2011**

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Fostering, developing and promoting South Australian writers and writing.

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The SA Writers' Centre is assisted by the Australian
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funding and advisory body.