



E-Newsletter

President's Message

Dr Susan Steggall

Readers and writers in Australia are well served with festivals at which to meet the world's top authors and find out what is 'making it' in the book world. Prizes also bring to our attention the best of Australian writing, the most recent being the Stella Prize awarded to Heather Rose for her novel *The Museum of Modern Love*. While the resolution of stories of love lost and regained, and mourning, in this book could in themselves be rather ordinary all are made extraordinary by the power of the event around which they revolve: 'The Artist is Present' by artist Marina Abramovic, who sat silent, unmoving, each day for 75 days in 2010 at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. I am not particularly a fan of Abramovic's practice but I have come to admire, through Rose's novel, what might drive an artist to the limits of human endurance.

In May we continue our excellent line up of monthly speakers and workshop presenters. Playwright Alana Valentine will give the Keynote Speech on the topic of 'Animating the Archive' – how to bring the stored history of human society to life. Alana's stage productions have met with great success both nationally and internationally (see p.4 for more details) and she has been shortlisted in the 2017 Premier's Literary Awards.

Workshop presenter Cathie Tasker is well known to many of you after her work as judge in the 2016 Book Awards. Cathie will be working on the theme of trends in Children's and Y/A fiction. As Guest Speaker, SWW member Jan Conway will talk about her experience of living on a Pacific Island and how she is turning this into a memoir (see p.3 for details of both speakers). Deadlines for the 2017 writing competitions are once again included – below – as a reminder to stir your imaginations. Entries are already coming in: <http://womenwritersnsw.org/competitions/>

There are two very important events on the SWW agenda: Firstly the re-scheduled **Evening Workshop on 4 May** with presenter Virginia Gordon, to be held at The Women's Club in Elizabeth Street, Sydney. It is not too late to attend. Check SWW website for details and book in at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/social-me-too-successfully-using-social-media-to-sell-more-books-tickets-33614059557>

The second is the **SWW Writers' Retreat**, on **15-17 September 2017** on the theme of 'Spinning Straw to Story Gold. **Deadline for bookings is 30 June**. Go to SWW website for details – <http://womenwritersnsw.org/events/writers-retreat> – and see p.6 for details of the program.

Another important SWW event is the **AGM on 14 June**. Please make every effort to attend *and* think about joining the committee. We have an excellent group of committee members and enjoy many collegial moments together as we work through the business of the Society.

SWW COMPETITIONS 2017 Entry Deadlines

Poetry – 12 June; Short Story – 10 July; Non Fiction – 7 August

Announcement of ALL Prize-winners: 8 NOVEMBER

Entry forms are on SWW website: www.womenwritersnsw.org

Di Yerbury Residency, Entry Deadline: 30 November

Details and entry form will be in the JULY 2017 *Women's Ink!*



Dr Susan Steggall

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2017

10 May:

Workshop-Cathie Tasker

Guest Talk-Jan Conway

Keynote-Alana Valentine

14 June:

Workshop-Virginia Gordon

**AGM-Election of 2017-2018
Committee**

Keynote-Maggie Joel

12 July:

Workshop-Libby Hathorn

Open Forum-News Bites

Keynote-Libby Hathorn

9 August:

Workshop-Melinda Smith

Guest Talk-TBA

Keynote-Belinda Murrell

15-17 September:

SWW Writers' Retreat

'Spinning Straw to Story Gold'

at **The Brahma Kumaris**

Centre for Spiritual Learning

Booking Deadline: 30 June

NEXT LITERARY LUNCHEON

Wednesday 10 May 2017

Gallery Room, State Library of NSW
Macquarie Street, Sydney

Program

10.00 – 11.45am Workshop:

‘Trends in children’s fiction’

Cathie Tasker

Workshop Coordinator

Robyn McWilliam 0418 225 051

12.00 – 12.20pm: Arrival & Registration

12.20 – 12.45pm: Luncheon

12.50 pm: Guest Speaker

‘We lived on a coral atoll once...’

Jan Conway

1.05-1.35pm: Keynote Speaker

‘Animating the archive’

Alana Valentine

REMINDER

Bookseller Janet Grundy will be coming to most SWW luncheon events to sell books by our Guest and Keynote Speakers. It’s a wonderful way to support your fellow writers!

LUNCHEON AND/OR WORKSHOP

Pay by direct deposit into the SWW bank account by the FRIDAY before the meeting OR you can still pay on the day of the meeting.

Members:

Luncheon \$45 (ML)

Workshop \$30 (MWS)

Luncheon & Workshop \$68 (MLW)

Non Members:

Luncheon \$50 (NML)

Workshop \$40 (NMWS)

Luncheon & Workshop \$83 (NMLW)

*For Direct Deposit please use the codes listed above
The Society of Women Writers’ NSW Inc
BSB: 062 018 A/C: 00950433*

Everyone must book with Lynda Calder **BEFORE 10.00am on the MONDAY before the meeting.**

NB: There is a permanent list for bookings if you wish to be on it

Please book by email if you have access to a computer.

Contact Name: SWW Lunch Booking

Email address: swwlunchbooking@gmail.com

Mobile phone: Text message to 0403 177 208

Your text message should be addressed to swwlunchbooking or swwlunch and should contain: date, your name and phone number.



Workshop

Trends in Children's and YA Fiction

Cathie Tasker

Once an editor/publisher, Cathie Tasker has edited and commissioned nearly 800 books, mostly children's and YA fiction. She now works full-time as a creative writing teacher for the Australian Writers Centre. She is passionate about books, reading and online learning and has worked with Australia's leading trade and children's book publishers -HarperCollinsPublishers, Scholastic Australia and Koala Books. She judges literary awards, and has worked with the CBCA, the Aurealis Awards and others. She recently completed 3 years of judging for the CBCA, so is up-to-date with trends in children's and YA fiction. Cathie sees her most important skill as teaching writing and working as a structural or developmental editor to help authors shape and develop their work. As an editor and publisher she worked on popular and award-winning titles, many of which are still in print.



Guest Speaker

We lived on a coral atoll once...

Jan Conway

Ever dream of living on a Pacific island? Jan Conway and her family lived that dream. Using memory, journals, diaries, letters and her children's school 'News' books, Jan is writing of her families' experience living as expatriates on the remote Pacific nation of Kiribati. Initially her intention was simply to reproduce their stories for her grandchildren. In 2009 she completed a short course lead by Barbara Brooks entitled: 'Women Telling Stories: handing on to the next generation'. From day one Jan was hooked, and her book of transcribed children's stories morphed into her own writing journey. Thirty-five years later she returned to the islands with her daughter. Jan's goal for 2017 is to have her memoir *Skimming the Surface* ready to go to a structural editor by the middle of the year. Jan is a member of Willoughby Writers, now under the mentorship of Robyn McWilliam. She also belongs to a memoir group in Gordon. Her short story 'Spirit bilong Billy' was published in 2011 in the Willoughby Writers anthology, *Reflections*.



A reminder about SWW Membership Terms and Conditions

The membership renewal fee for new members who join after 1 March will be due on 1 July of the following year. Similarly, members who renew from 1 March, will have their fees due on 1 July the following year.

There is also the option to become a Life Member for the one off payment of \$435.00

- Regular member: \$55.00
- Concessional member: \$45.00 (Pension/Student)
- New member (regular): \$70
- New member (concession): \$60.00

Keynote Speaker

Animating the Archive

Alana Valentine

Every day, all over the world, a small army of librarians and archivists are painstakingly organizing and storing the history of human lives. The riches of their meticulous work should be met by writers, artists and others when they access the archives to tell the stories of our past. Alana will discuss the methods she developed as a Harold White Fellow at the National Library of Australia and a Prime Minister's Centre Fellow at the Museum of Australian Democracy, which resulted in her stage plays *Letters to Lindy* and *Crossing the King*. They will be of interest to any writer who plans to use research in their own writing work.

Alana Valentine is an Australian playwright with a growing international reputation, having won both national and international awards. In 2016 she had productions in Maryland, USA, Hobart Tasmania, Wollongong, Canberra and her hometown of Sydney. In March 2017 *Cold Light*, adapted from Frank Moorhouse's novel, will be performed in Canberra. *Barbara and the camp dogs*, co-written with Ursula Yovich will be performed at Belvoir. The NLA will publish *Dear Lindy* and Currency Press will publish four works including a writing memoir called *Bowerbird* and the stage play *Letters to Lindy*.



Member News

• **Libby Hathorn** The online compendium www.heartquake.org was an idea developed after the terrible earthquake devastation in Nepal in April 2015. I work with the Mitratta Foundation there to help educate girls and women there and was asked to help with some poetry writing. I am delighted I was able to help bring HEARTQUAKE to fruition, two years on.

• **Susan Ramage**, gave an Anzac Day address to Wahroonga Rotary club and another at St Swithun's Church, Pymble.

Coming Events

The Historical Novels Society of Australasia (HNSA) conference is to be held in Melbourne in September 2017 (<http://hnsa.org.au>).

For information about the star-studded line up of authors, plus information on booking (o to the conference website: <http://hnsa.org.au>).

Satellite events in Sydney:

Monday 29 May: 'Follow that Horse! All you ever wanted to know about researching, writing and publishing historical fiction', with Elisabeth Storrs, Isolde Martyn, Julianne Miles-Brown and Debbie Robson. Sutherland Library, 6.30-8.30 pm. Booking: tel: 9710 0351 or book on line:

www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Community/LibraryServices. Free event.

Wednesday 26 July: 'Wings into History: how the past inspires historical fiction' with Justin Sheedy, Winton Higgins, Michelle Morgan and Kim Kelly. Gordon Library 6-8 pm. Bookings: kmc.nsw.gov.au. Enquiries 9424 0120. Cost \$5.

Felicity Pulman, Conference Committee

STAY CONNECTED!

Keep up with what's happening at the SWW NSW on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIN.
Just search for 'The Society of Women Writers NSW Inc.'





If you wish to contribute any member notice, please email your text and image as a JPEG file to: swal1@bigpond.net.au

With 'ATTN: SWW E-Newsletter editor' in subject heading.

The deadline for e-Newsletter submission is the 20th of each month.

Any late submissions will be held for the following month.

The Society of Women Writers NSW Committee and Team for 2016-2017

Committee: Dr Susan Steggall – President,
Yvonne Jarman – Vice-President,
Amanda Mark – Treasurer,
Charo Devery – Secretary, Maria
McDougall – Membership Secretary,
Gwen Bitti, Vivienne Foster, Libby Hathorn, Lindsay
Lewis, Mary Ann Napper, Wendy Searle
E-Newsletter team – Dr Susan Steggall (Editor) &
Lindsay Lewis

Website Manager – Lindsay Lewis

LinkedIN Group Manager – Dr Maria Hill

SWW Face Book Manager – Susanne Gervay

Front Desk – Lynda Calder

Workshop Convenor – Robyn McWilliam.

Women's INK! Team – Margaret Zanardo (Editor),
Dr Susan Steggall (Sub-Editor), Sandra Davis, Judith
O'Connor (Book Editor), Joy Williams.

Correspondence:

**Secretary, Society of Women Writers NSW
Inc**

GPO Box 1388 Sydney NSW 2001

www.womenwritersnsw.org

WELCOME to New Members

who have joined SWW in 2017 and who bring a rich mix of writing experiences.

- Kerry Anderson (Editing, Proofreading, Indexing)
- Carol Chandler (short stories)
- Gillian Downie (MA Creative Writing)
- Margaret Drew (poetry)
- Lucienne Maxwell (psychological thriller)
- Dr Susan Read (memoir, poetry)
- Anne Smith (historian)
- Elisabeth Storrs (historical fiction)
- Helen Thurloe (fiction/politics)
- Dr Katrina Watson (short stories)



SWW Retreat: Presenter Snapshots

- **Libby Hathorn** is an award-winning author whose work has won honours in Australia and overseas. Her YA novel *Thunderwith* is a film (Hallmark Hall of Fame); her libretto *Grandma's Shoes* (Opera Australia) won her an AWGIE. Her most recent novel is *Eventual Poppy Day* and picture books, *A Soldier a Dog and a Boy* and *Outside*, which is soon to be a children's opera with music by Elena Katz Chernin.
- **Emily Maguire** is the author of five novels and two non-fiction books and has twice been named as a Sydney Morning Herald Young Novelist of the Year. She was the recipient of the 2011 NSW Writers' Fellowship. Her articles and essays on sex, culture and literature have been published widely, including in *The Age*, *The Australian* and *The Monthly*. Emily has an MA in literature and works as a teacher and mentor to young and emerging writers. Her latest book is the novel, *An Isolated Incident*.
- **Catherine Milne** has worked in publishing for many years and has been a publisher with HarperCollins since 2012 across an eclectic range of fiction and nonfiction. Among her favourites are Rosie Batty's *A Mother's Story*; Steve Bisley's memoir *Stillways*; *In the Quiet*, a novel by new author Eliza Henry Jones and *The Anchoreess*, by Robyn Cadwallader. She has a strong literary sensibility and, above all, is looking for stories that make her heart sing.

Society of Women Writers Retreat

‘Spinning Straw to Story Gold’

[Thank you Libby Hathorn for the title]

15 – 17 September 2017

Brahma Kumaris Centre for Spiritual Learning
150 Macarthur Drive
Wilton NSW

What you will enjoy in a tranquil bush setting:

- 2 x nights twin-share accommodation, meals – 2 x breakfasts, 2 x dinners, 2 x lunches, 2 x morning teas and 1 x afternoon tea
- Guided meditative bushwalks
- Attendance at all program sessions

Opportunity:

1. Have your first ten (10) pages critiqued by publisher, **Catherine Milne** (*bookings essential. * Ring or email Gwen or Jan for cost – limited places*)
2. Your first page critiqued by **Susanne Gervay**
3. Open Mic - Read 300 words in any genre.

Friday 15 September

- 4.00 – 6.00pm Registration
6.30 – 7.50pm Dinner
8.00 – 8.15pm Welcome and Housekeeping
8.15 – 9.15pm **KEYNOTE – 13 Lessons from 13 years as a published writer with Emily Maguire**

Saturday 16 September

- 09.30 – 10.30am **KEYNOTE – In the Flow with Libby Hathorn**
10.45 – 12.15pm **WORKSHOP** (choose one)
(a) Haiku, with Beverley George
(b) Writing from within, with Libby Sommer
(c) The essential pitch, with Susanne Gervay
1.45 – 2.15pm **OPEN MIC** (*booking essential*)
2.15 – 3.15pm **WORKSHOP – Your first page with Susanne Gervay**
3.45 – 5.00pm Personal writing time/reflection
5.00 – 6.30pm **PRESENTATION – What publishers want.** with publisher **Catherine Milne, Harper Collins** followed by Q & A panel
8.00 – 9.00pm Shared writing/networking (*form own groups*)
9.00 – 9.30pm **Guided Deep Relaxation with Gwen Bitti**

Sunday 17 September

- 09.30 – 10.30am **WORKSHOP – Spinning Straw to Story Gold – Ideas to Stories** with **Libby Hathorn**
10.45 – 11.45am **IN CONVERSATION** with **Kathryn Heyman**
12.15 – 1.30pm Lunch
1.30 – 2.00pm Official Farewell from Brahma Kumaris Co-ordinator
2.00pm Departure

Retreat Director: Gwen Bitti, email: gwen.swwretreat@bigpond.com or mobile: 0403 165 925

Retreat Secretary: Jan Conway email: (as for Gwen) or mobile: 0402 755 768