



# THE NEWSLETTER

Issue No 2 - November 2020

ARE YOU UP FOR  
THE NANOWRIMO  
CHALLENGE?  
SEE PAGE 3 FOR  
DETAILS

## NEWS

### TIMING OF ZOOM MEETINGS

At our last Zoom meeting we agreed that we should make Zoom Meetings shorter than our previous meetings at Jasmine Court. The main reason for this was that as there was no refreshment break in the Zoom session, the full two and a half hours was longer than needed.

New Timings:

7.30 - 7.40: Chat, announcements, etc.

7.40 - 8.20: Combined groups - Activity /Discussions

8.20 - 9.20: Short Form and Long Form Groups

9.20 - 9.30: Combined groups - reminders for next time - goodbyes etc.

### FACEBOOK & WEBSITE

Our website was down for a while last month - but both our Facebook and Website are up and running thanks to Mathew. Mathew is putting the Newsletters on as well. Our website: [horshamwriters.co.uk](http://horshamwriters.co.uk)

### THE NEWSLETTER

We said we'd run a couple of copies of the newsletter and then decide if it's useful. Bring your thoughts (and vocalise them) at the meeting on November 19th

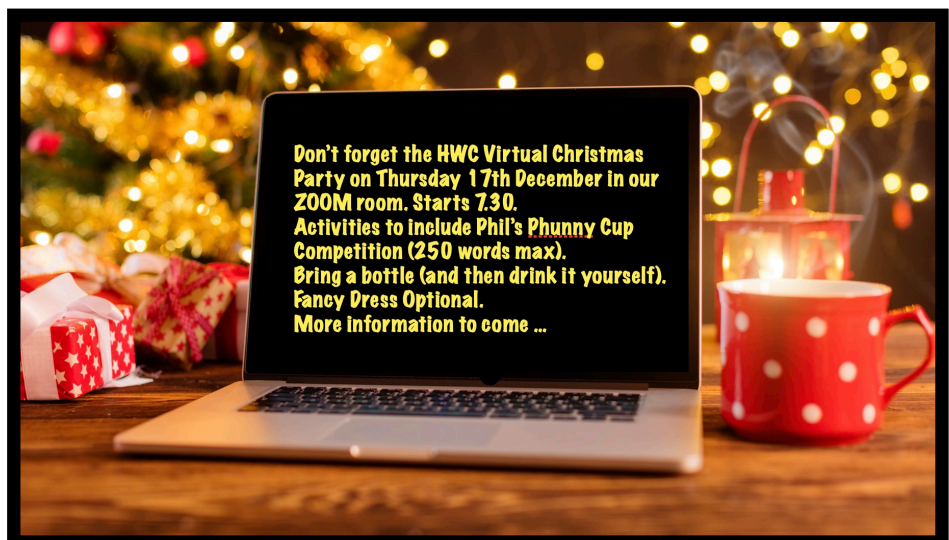
## ERNEST SHEPPARD POETRY COMPETITION

At our next meeting (Thursday 19th November) Geoff Evans (AKA Toby Wren) is going to join us (all the way from France) on Zoom to announce the winners and runners-up of the Ernest Sheppard Poetry Competition.

Geoff will also give us his thoughts on this years' entries. Whether you entered or not, you'll find lots of ideas and learn about poetic technique.



See more, including last year's winning poem on Page 2



# LAST YEAR'S WINNING POEM.

by Yvonne



*Yvonne receiving her trophy from Geoff Evans*

## AURELIA

Pompeii AD 79

The key is heavy  
The cellar door obeys its mastery  
Aurelia enters, selects the precious wine  
She knows exactly what her Marcus likes  
The very best from Caius' vines

Later she'll slowly pour it for him  
Add water, honey from the garden hives  
No slaves to wait on him tonight  
She knows just what he'll like  
To share with her alone a glass of wine

They'll eat together on their favourite couch  
Then he will choose the octopus and squid  
And when she asks him 'Garam sauce?'  
She knows exactly how he'll smile  
And say 'Of course'

She'll offer him the bowl of fruits  
Ripe apricots and pears  
And plumpest peaches picked today  
She knows he'll choose her honey cakes  
'I can't resist' he'll say

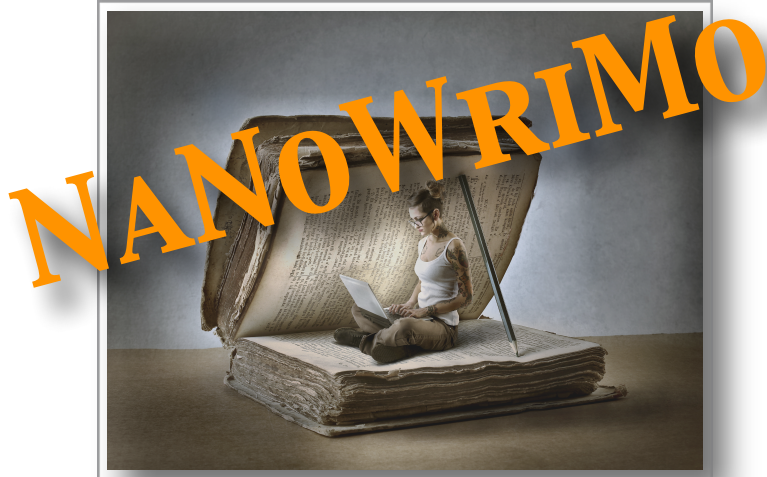
And then she'll tell him of her visit  
To Bona Dea's shrine  
To pray for the child they both desire  
He'll hold her close and stroke her hair  
'Patience, Aurelia, it'll all be fine'

She'll show him the gaudy necklace  
Amica's Good Luck gift to her  
Her slave's devotion has no end  
And Marcus surely will agree  
'Dear Amica truly is a friend'

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford 2019AD

Here among familiar Pompeii life  
Mosaics, statues, couches, bread and wine  
Lies the body of Aurelia  
With her cellar key, Amica's necklace  
A luckless talisman  
Impotent against the sacrificial gods  
Who liberated the vitriol of Mount Vesuvius  
You sleep Aurelia. But do you Rest in  
Peace?





**NaNoWriMo** is the **National Novel Writing Month** and is a challenge that runs for the month of November each year. Authors are challenged to write 50,000 words over the course of the month, which is a daily average of just under 1,700 words. But, there is lots of support to help you set your own goals, which can be higher or lower than this figure. This challenge now operates worldwide and you can easily find a support group within easy reach of your location. Horsham Writers Circle support group is in Brighton (<http://archive.nanowrimo.org/regions/europe-england-brighton>) and signing up for the challenge is relatively simple: <https://nanowrimo.org>.

You might think that writing 50,000 words in the course of a month is pretty daunting, and I must admit that I tried the challenge for the first time last year and gave up pretty quickly.

My suggestion would therefore be to use the

challenge to set your own goals. A simple goal might be: that by the time you have got to the end of the month daily writing will be something you've found the time to fit into your busy routine. Anyone who currently makes the time to write every day will agree that your writer's muscle is a genuine thing. You do become a better and more skilled at writing if you practise each day. If you set yourself a small target of say, 500 words per day – roughly an A4 sheet of paper – you will quickly find that beginning your writing will involve less procrastination and the writing itself will flow more quickly and easily.

NaNoWriMo insists that you don't do any editing to your writing for the whole of November – the challenge is simply to write. Many authors use this 'no editing' system for writing and there are a number of reasons for not editing as you write: you end up endlessly polishing your first chapter(s), editing stops you from writing, you can lose your flow by going back over your work. Here's an

article from psychological thriller writer and editor, Phoebe Morgan: <https://phoebemorganauthor.com/2018/01/10/writing-a-first-draft/>

I have been looking at support for NaNoWriMo, to ensure that I keep to my targets this year and don't fall off the writing wagon. Here are some really good resources I've found:

Prepping for NaNoWriMo (Preptober): <https://www.danyalfryer.com/how-to-best-prepare-for-nanowrimo-2020-write-a-novel-in-a-month/>

Crafting a Novel Opening: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71buyvucVDM>

During the month – motivational tips: <https://www.danyalfryer.com/top-10-nanowrimo-writing-tips/>

And: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/weekly-nanowrimo-write-ins-reedsy-live-registration-125300281515>

More great tips for success: <https://writingcooperative.com/the-ultimate-nanowrimo-survival-kit-80df5124e16e>

If you choose to join me then I've also set up a support group for the month through Author's Pen Facebook page, where you'll also find lots of daily tips and inspiration: Author's Pen – A Community of Authors

Good luck and happy writing,

**Lesley**



## SHADOWS RISING - BY MADELEINE ROUX REVIEW

This one is for the fans, by the fans. Does it matter? Not in this case. As a life-long gamer, I've played World of Warcraft since its launch; this book is written for me. It's not like a normal fantasy saga, though it is over sixteen years old, you need to know who everyone is to get the best out of this novel.

There is none of the expected character building, there is some, but they do not live long enough for it to come to fruition. The story takes place between the current Battle for Azeroth and game expansion and the forthcoming Shadowlands (mine's on pre-order). Whilst I enjoyed the book, I knew nothing was going to be fully resolved, more of a positioning of pieces on the board waiting for the dice to roll. The story centres around Queen Talanji and the fight to protect the loa of death, Bwonsamdi, from the plans of Sylvanas Windrunner.

The story is simple enough, if not predictable. I only say this because, as a player, I know what is coming and therefore what must happen. In some ways this makes the storytelling follow a predetermined path. Much like following a questline in the game.

The book is enjoyable, in-keeping with the lore tied to its characters and previous events. If you are not familiar with this, you will struggle to get the most out of it. I would have preferred something deeper and soul searching. Something exploring the heart of the characters as every great fantasy does. The close ties to World of Warcraft limit this. After all, it is essentially fan fiction, and there are moments of this, which I enjoyed. Because of this, I am unable to recommend the book to anyone who does not play the game. It is not a standard novel, but still a good one, with the aforementioned caveats.

It's a short solid read, sadly. But as I said at the start, for fans only.

Mathew

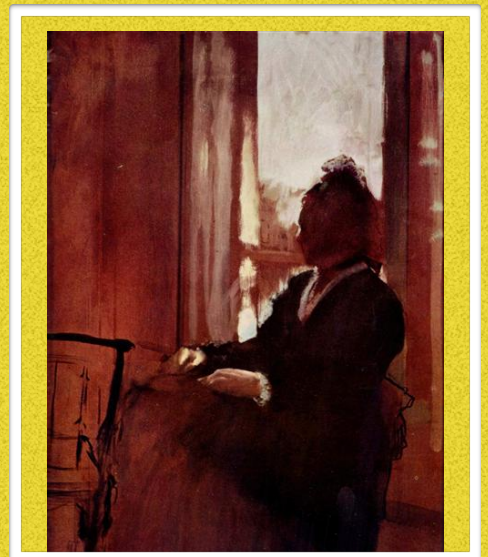
## SHORT FORM GROUP: NOVEMBER TASK

Following discussion about writers' block we agreed that we would have a go at the following task (including, of course, any Short Form members who weren't there, but who are coming along to the November meeting).

**Task:** Respond (story, description, poem, song ...)  
to the painting of *Woman at a Window*, by Edgar Degas.

**Rules:** Maximum of 500 words.  
Complete in one sitting.  
Present (finished or unfinished) at next meeting.

Bryan



*Degas: Woman at a Window*



## A COUPLE OF LINKS FROM JANE

BBC Four - The Secret History of Writing, Series 1, Words on a ...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000n18t>

Presenter Lydia Wilson and calligrapher Brody Neuenschwander set out to explore history's most important technology - the technology of putting words on a ..

Sara Cox on her new BBC2 book club Between The Covers

<https://www.whatsontv.co.uk/news/sara-cox-between-the-covers-bbc2-636313/>

## AND A COUPLE OF LINKS – FROM SARAH

NaNoWriMo <https://nanowrimo.org/> - write a novel in November - excellent

(see Lesley's article on Page 3)

<https://hastingswritersroom.org/competitions/> first 1,000 words of a novel entry fee £7  
deadline 30th November

This annual prize, generously funded by Nicholas Allan, author of *The Queen's Knickers*, is awarded to an outstanding children's original illustrated book for ages 0-7 Free entry  
deadline 30th November.

<https://societyofauthors.org/Prizes/Society-of-Authors-Awards/The-Queens-Knickers-Award>

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## MEMBERS' MUSINGS

We don't have any this month ...