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THE DYING DAYS

The park is mine in the dying days of winter's late and cloudy greys. No others come to run and play, or stroll where narrow pathways stray beneath the trees and shaded ways.

Only a breeze with a whispering sigh: only a water-coloured sky and light rain falling, soft and slow. This time alone, to recall and know how idle days have passed me by.

Days of childhood I once knew: days as a parent with children who followed adventures...soon to bring awareness of magic happening, when all seemed somehow fresh and new.

A time when the park was bright and gay with sounds of laughter and happy play – and mothers calling, where children ran in a world where fantasy began with castles of mystery... far away.

A long-ago time and lingering spark from sun-dappled memories, dim and dark in the gathering dusk, and the dying days of these late and lingering cloudy greys: this hour alone in the empty park.

Toby Wren



Brilliant Literary Quiz Questions

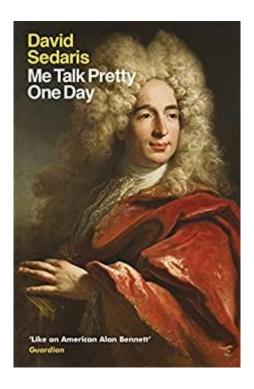
Round 2:

d) Homer Bloom

Literary Quiz, from: https://brokebybooks.com/an-epic-list-of-50-literature-trivia-quiz-questions/

11 – Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights recounts the tragic romance between which two lovers?
a) Catherine and Heathcliff
b) Eleanor and Christian
c) Isabella and Hindley
d) Anne and Gordon
12) Who is the heroine of Nathaniel Hawthorne's <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> ?
a) Anne Hutchinson
b) Emily Shelby
c) Agnes Grey
d) Hester Prynne
13 – Author Zora Neale Hurston was part of which literary movement
a) Romanticism
b) Harlem Renaissance
c) Transcendentalism
d) Beat
14 – Truman Capote's <i>In Cold Blood</i> takes its name from which Shakespeare play?
a) Macbeth
b) Timon of Athens
c) Othello
d) Hamlet
15 – Who is the protagonist of James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i> ?
a) Leopold Bloom
b) Leopold Ulysses
c) Ulysses Bloom

16 – Who wrote <i>The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test</i> ?
a) William S. Burroughs
b) Hunter S. Thompson
c) Ken Kesey
d) Tom Wolfe
17 – In J.D. Salinger's <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> , protagonist Holden Caulfield worries about how this animal survives the winter in New York.
a) Ducks
b) Pigeons
c) Cats
d) Squirrels
18 – How many volumes are in Marcel Proust's novel à La Recherche du Temps Perdu ("In Search of Lost Time")?
a) 3
b) 5
c) 6
d) 7
19 – The Girl with the Dragoon Tattoo was originally published in which language?
a) Swedish
b) Norweigian
c) Danish
d) English
20 – In what year was Gillian Flynn's domestic thriller <i>Gone Girl</i> published?
a) 2012
b) 2013
c) 2014
d) 2016



Me Talk Pretty One Day, by David Sedaris, Review by Tony Bauckham

I was recommended to read David Sedaris' work by a friend of mine who has a website called 'The Chatty Chimp.' This book is my introduction. For those of you who have not read any of his books, they come with a warning. His humour is quite dark. His early childhood, which is covered in this book was difficult and he explains why. His father, to who this book is dedicated, was a dreamer and a bit of a 'Billy Liar.' He had a passion for jazz and wanted his family to form a quintet. But, the children, although given various instruments, had absolutely no interest in learning. David was sent to a guitar teacher who happened to be a midget who explained to David who at the time was ten years old, 'You have to caress the guitar, like a woman.' This did not impress David as he had already found that he was attracted to men, not women. The book covers his early development and that of his family, the quirks, the humour, and the unfortunate death of his sister, who committed suicide. His other sister became a famous actor, and she still treads the boards. When David called his father regarding the dedication of his book to him, his father was underwhelmed and merely reminds him that he has 'a load of junk at home that he wants out.' His sister to whom 'Naked' is dedicated says, 'How wonderful David, does this mean anything to me financially?'

David goes on to explain in his introduction the reactions of various people to his novels and the fact that they recognise themselves in them, the correspondence he receives and how his book signings go, it really amusing and, as writers we will find this very funny.

The book describes in humour his early development, his relationships and finding his sexuality, his development from a janitor to a well know, in demand, top class writer.

He has authored many books since this one, his latest being 'Calypso.'

Brilliant Literary Quiz Answers

Round 1:

Literary Quiz, from: https://brokebybooks.com/an-epic-list-of-50-literature-trivia-quiz-questions/

11 – a

12 - d

13 - b

14 - b

15 – a

16 – d

17 – a

18 – d

19 – a

20 – b



Creative Writing Courses in Horsham and Crawley

Aspire Sussex:

H0968CC21 Writing A Book: For All

Start Date: 22/09/2021

13:00 – 15:00 Wednesday Horsham Library Dr C Gould

Weeks per year: 10

Fee: £130

If you would like to enrol, please follow this link: https://aspiresussex.org.uk/course/writing-a-book-

for-all-2/

H0965CC21 Writing A Book: For All

Start Date: 22/09/2021

10:00 – 12:00 Horsham Library Wednesday

Weeks per year: 10

Fee: £130 Dr C Gould

If you would like to enrol, please follow this link: https://aspiresussex.org.uk/course/writing-a-book-for-all/

If you are on a means tested benefit you are eligible up to a 45% discount, or if you are over 65 years old then you are eligible for up to a 5% discount.

If you would like to enrol for this course then please follow the links as you can enrol online. If you're having difficulty, please call us on 01293 601 6101. Likewise, if you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact us back.

Kind Regards, Katie Corrigan

Collyer's Sixth Form College - Adult Education

Creative Writing at Collyer's Adult Education: <a href="http://www.collyers.ac.uk/adult-education/adult-education-ducati

CREATIVE WRITING STUDENT

Creative Writing

Term begins:

 9^{th} November 2021 Tuesday 7pm-9pm 10 weeks £150 8^{th} March 2021 Tuesday 7pm-9pm 10 weeks £150

About the course

The aim of this course is to discover your writing voice and potential. You'll explore key techniques of creative writing and put them into practice through group and individual exercises.

You will focus on finding inspiration and making a start; writing what you know, story development and planning (with a focus on character, plot and setting); overcoming writer's block; developing your powers of observation and avoiding common mistakes.

The course is informal, collaborative and productive. All students should have an expectation of completing and constructively feeding back on each other's work on a weekly basis.

There will be opportunities to extend the learning on the course through homework.

Equipment

Please bring paper and a pen.

Delivery

We aim to deliver this course in a face to face classroom setting.

Our arrangements for course delivery will be regularly reviewed in line with the relevant government guidance. If situations change, your course may require an element of blended learning. This means some sessions may be virtual classrooms using technology such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. So, you will therefore need access to a PC, laptop, or other suitable device. These sessions may be full classes, or provide work set online to undertake during the session.

Course suitability

No experience is required.

Progression

Courses are designed to be progressive and lessons build on knowledge gained throughout the course.

Tony Bauckham writes:

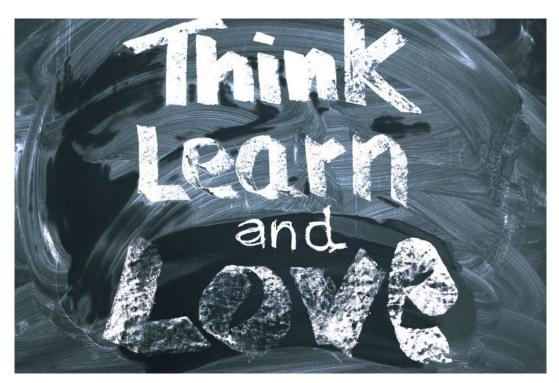
Dominic Canty a published author is writing about his creative writing course in **Crawley**.

Unfortunately I came to this later and the course has already started but, I thought our fellow HWC members might be interested in having a look at the website anyway for future pieces.

www.creative-writer.co.uk/courses.

There is another workshop coming up on November 13 2021 (Get that novel started)

His protagonist is Bristo Trabant (Dead Men Should Know Better). Which according to him continues to sell well.





Horsham Writers 2021 Ernest Sheppard Poetry Competition

It was good to see an increase in the number of entries this year, along with the feeling of fresh inspiration in many of the poems as we begin to emerge from the dark days of Covid. We know it will still be with us for a while longer, but there was a sense of optimism in many of the topics chosen for the competition.

As in previous years, poems ranged over an astonishing number of ideas and styles. Most were written in free verse, which has long-since become the preferred format for modern poetry – it is only we ancient dragons who tend towards rhyme! There was, however, an interesting use of experimentation, including syllable counting as well as a consideration of the sound of words, with the use of assonance and alliteration. It is always good to be aware that poetry is both an audible as well as visual medium of communication and this worked particularly well in some of the entries.

This also encouraged me to read them aloud when judging, much to the concern of my wife who thought I had "lost it" for a while and was taking to myself again!

It took a while to arrive at a final decision, which I think serves to underline the fact poetry is a subjective art and prone to interpretation or appreciation based on the views of the reader as well as those of the poet. Ask another person to judge the competition and the result might be quite different, although I believe that many of the same poems would gravitate to the surface.

With this in mind I begin, as usual, with poems of equal merit and worthy of an Honorary Mention, presented in no particular order as follows...

A Hermit Crab by Lesley Hart

I liked the ambience of this poem, which brought for me memories of a childhood in Cornwall and time spent beech-combing for hidden treasures along the shore. The poem had a light breezy atmosphere and the feeling of summer sunshine.

There would have been no "swish beach café" in my day, but I can well believe that the remnants of seafood meals may well be returned from whence they came and viewed as recycling, rather than pollution.

Brighton by Ted Gooda

This was a highly original description of Brighton, linking the town with images of the Italian Riviera and aspects of Greek mythology. I liked the allusion made between seagulls and Prometheus' torment by the eagle pending his rescue by Haracles, as well as a somewhat disparaging view of tourists as "belligerent, beer-swilling barbequers". The mixing of images and cultures worked well to create a unique perspective far removed from the usual description of this popular town.

In terms of construction, lines of approximately equal length were determined by "natural" pauses and when arranged in couplets gave an attractive presentation on the page. The Bridge Between

Snow and Dust by Clive Newnham

An interesting and challenging constructions of lines in ascending and descending numbers of syllables formed the framework of this poem, which was further heightened by some quite unexpected words such as "sambas gay" and "tomes of lives". Beyond this the poem also attempted to correlate the planetary ecology with that of the cosmos – a bold mission but one that worked. I felt the ending of the poem left the reader suspended – this might have been deliberate, but seemed incomplete, as if having run out of lines.

Watching by Jackie Parsons

There was a deliberate tension in this poem, which gathered pace as we embarked on a stressful bus ride towards East Croydon. The noise and confusion of traffic as well as the noises within the bus itself added more anxiety to the journey, destined for a train station and the fear that the train might depart before the bus arrived.

What also held the poem together was the perceptive use of modified refrain lines, which served to monitor progress as well as hidden thoughts, culminating in a palpable sense of relief when having arrived in time to catch the train. I might have been tempted to also introduce the division of stanzas at these refrain lines.

I felt this would make an excellent performance poem, although I would like to think that Jackie does not face this stressful experience on a daily basis!

Bronze Age Sister by Ted Gooda

The irregular sonnet form, known as a quatorzain, was an unusual choice of construction but worked well in this poem. There are certain places that hold a direct sense of connection and communication with history and ancestral heritage. It is often difficult to capture this emotion, yet in this poem the description and imagery, real and perceived, seemed to resonate with a direct link to ancient times. Even the approach "through green tunnel towns" seemed endowed with a sense of adventure as we ascended to the open vista. I felt also that the clever metaphor of a "defensive position" provided a succinct conclusion to the poem.

Sinking by Tony Bauckham

As a person of mature years and aging disposition, I could identify immediately with many of the concerns and other aspects mentioned in this poem! The inability to remember things must come high on any list of worries, tending as they do to emphasise a struggle to keep up with the modern world and a desire not to "miss a trick". As the poem suggests, we may find this amusing at times, although concerns run deeper. I felt the poem concluded sharply and was slightly ambiguous in suggesting perhaps a sudden ending, which would then draw into question how the poem came to be written?

+++++

Moving on to my choice of winning poems, I found myself initially hesitant in the placing of four that I particularly liked, although finally satisfied with my decision, which is presented in reverse order as follows...

Tied In 3rd Place

My Garden's a Mess by Martin Brown

The emotional impact of this poem was immediate. It spoke of family life and the priority of concerns in building treasured memories at the expense of a perfect garden. It also captured images of fantasy and adventure created by a child but shared in depth by a loving parent who, I suspect, may have readily joined in this magical journey.

On a technical level the poem was well constructed with the subtle use of assonance, especially prevalent in the first stanza, but echoed throughout in later glimpses, such as the "pallet-pirate ship whose masts casts a shadow..."

Tied In 3rd Place

Intimidation by Yvonne Warwick

Significantly, this poem achieved a sense of foreboding from something as innocuous as a butterfly! However, it was the fear of darkness and unseen movement that drew us deeper into a shared apprehension from what was

described. An economy of words and the use of short, succinct lines resulted in frequent pauses, which again worked well in building tension throughout the poem. I may never see a butterfly in quite the same way ever again!

In 2nd Place

Seasons on the Birch Plantation by Tracey Robbins

Haiku is a challenging form of construction, beyond the restrictions of syllable counting, with a necessary allusion to nature and seasons. The inevitable economy of words tends towards the suggestion of meaning as much from what remains hinted as from what is written. Essentially, the poem must include descriptive thoughts, yet with an ambiguity of meaning open to further interpretation. For this reason, the haiku should be written in lower case and devoid of punctuation, which was possibly my only minor criticism of this poem. I particularly liked the way the seasons were described in terms of cameo images and choice of birch trees as the focus throughout.

And finally, in 1st Place

End of the Day by Jackie Parsons

A brief introduction was included with the poem, although hardly necessary except perhaps mention of Sarah Davidson who is blind, when it spoke so clearly of her experience in the garden. The poem burst with sensory perceptions of touch and "musky fragrance" during an exploration of the many delights. A perceived effect arose from the fall of morning rain, which had lingered throughout the day into the evening, along with the soft warmth felt from a declining sun. The prevailing beauty of this poem included a feeling of tranquillity and relaxation: a hushed moment to be savoured and captured from a calm and gentle memory. Since reading this poem I have seen the gardening programme and would suggest that the poem is sent to the BBC and possibly read to Sarah Davidson. I have in the past referred to the test of a good poem in the way it can later dwell in the mind and this was certainly true for me with this wonderful poem – a most worthy winner!

Toby Wren
October 2021

Postscript:

As in previous years, I would like to take this opportunity to mention PAGE (Poetry Appreciation Group Experience), whose aim isto encourage and promote modern poetry. The group was formed more than eleven years ago and has a present membership of about 80 writers and artists living in the UK, France and America. An internet magazine of illustrated poetry by members and occasional famous poets is issued every month.

Membership is free and anyone interested in joining has only to send me an e-mail

geoffevans129@gmail.com

If you would like to re-read the entries alongside Geoff's commentary, please see the full volume, which I have attached to the November Newsletter email.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

Firstly, thank you for re-endorsing my role as Treasurer for our Horsham Writers Circle (HWC), which I aim to serve to the best of my ability.

Following the presentation of the Treasurer's Report at the AGM of the HWC held 15th April 2021, it was agreed that in order to maintain a reasonable and sustainable HWC bank balance membership subscription would be resumed for year April 2021 to March 2022.

As we are not paying for room hire at this time, the <u>subscription</u> amount was agreed at the reduced rate of £10 (formerly £24.00 per annum). This will hopefully cover the year's expenses, provided that our meetings can continue in the virtual world of Zoom and can be hosted free by our members who already hold Zoom subscriptions.



Review of the subscription rate will be an agenda item at the next AGM in March or April 2022.

To facilitate payment of membership subscriptions, the following methods are offered:

- Online Bank Payment to
 - Bank Sort Code 776312
 - Bank Account Number 89352768
 - o Full Name of Account HORSHAM WRITERS CIRCLE
- OR by Cheque
 - o Paid to HORSHAM WRITERS CIRCLE
 - And posted to 9 Rowlands Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4LH.

Please can I request that members make the payments at the earliest opportunity (remember that membership is a pre-condition of entry to the HWC's competitions).

Many thanks to all members for your ongoing support and for agreeing the subscription. I look forward to the continued vitality of our writing circle.

Cheers,

Clive Newnham.

HWC Treasurer.

November Birthdays and Links to the Author's Books

If you're looking for new authors, or to challenge your reading, then why not pick one of our Birthday authors each month. Follow the link on their book cover to search for this and other published work.



Susanna Clarke, 1st November 1959, Susanna began *Jonathan Strange* in 1993 and worked on it during her spare time. For the next decade, she published short stories from the *Strange* universe, but it was not until 2003 that <u>Bloomsbury</u> bought her manuscript and began work on its publication. The novel became a best-seller.

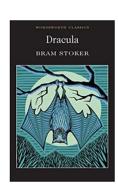
Two years later, she published a collection of her short stories, <u>The Ladies of Grace Adieu and Other Stories</u> (2006). Both Clarke's debut novel and her short stories are <u>set</u> in a magical England and written in a <u>pastiche</u> of the styles of 19th-century writers such as <u>Jane Austen</u> and <u>Charles Dickens</u>. While <u>Strange</u> focuses on the relationship of two men, Jonathan Strange and Gilbert Norrell, the stories in <u>Ladies</u> focus on the power women gain through

magic.

Clarke's second novel, <u>Piranesi</u>, was published in September 2020, winning the 2021 <u>Women's Prize for Fiction</u>. Here's an article about Susanna's battle with chronic fatigue syndrome: https://bit.ly/3jQiqD6

Bram Stoker, 8th **November 1847**, Abraham Stoker was an Irish author, best known today for his 1897 <u>Gothic</u> horror novel <u>Dracula</u>. During his lifetime, he was better known as the personal assistant of actor Sir <u>Henry Irving</u> and business manager of the <u>Lyceum Theatre</u>, which Irving owned.

Stoker was bedridden with an unknown illness until he started school at the age of seven, when he made a complete recovery. Of this time, Stoker wrote, "I was naturally thoughtful, and the leisure of long illness gave opportunity for many thoughts which were fruitful according to their kind in later years."



Stoker visited the English coastal town of Whitby in 1890, and that visit was said to be part of the inspiration for <u>Dracula</u>. He began writing novels while working as manager for Irving and secretary and director of London's Lyceum Theatre, beginning with <u>The Snake's Pass</u> in 1890 and <u>Dracula</u> in 1897.



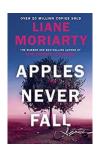
Neil Gaiman, 10th November 1960, is an English author of short fiction, novels, comic books, <u>graphic novels</u>, nonfiction, audio theatre, and films. His works include the comic book series <u>The Sandman</u> and novels <u>Stardust</u>, <u>American Gods</u>, <u>Coraline</u>, and <u>The Graveyard Book</u>. He has won numerous awards, including the <u>Hugo</u>, <u>Nebula</u>, and <u>Bram Stoker</u> awards, as well as the <u>Newbery</u> and <u>Carnegie</u> medals.

After living for a period in the nearby town of <u>Portchester</u>, Hampshire, where Neil was born in 1960, the Gaimans moved in 1965 to the <u>West Sussex</u> town of <u>East Grinstead</u>. Gaiman was able to read at the age of four. He said, "I was a reader. I loved reading. Reading things gave

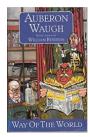
me pleasure ..." When he was about ten years old, he read his way through the works of <u>Dennis Wheatley</u>, where especially *The Ka of Gifford Hillary* and *The Haunting of Toby Jugg* made an impact on him. One work that made a particular impression on him was J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* from his school library.

Liane Moriarty, 15th November 1966, is an <u>Australian author</u>. After leaving school, Moriarty worked in advertising and marketing at a legal publishing company. She then ran her own company for a while before taking work as a freelance advertising copywriter. In 2004, after obtaining a master's degree at Macquarie University in Sydney, her first novel *Three Wishes*, written as part of the degree, was published. She has since published seven further novels.

Her novel <u>Biq Little Lies</u> was adapted into <u>a television series</u> by <u>HBO</u>, and stars <u>Reese</u> <u>Witherspoon</u>, <u>Nicole Kidman</u>, <u>Shailene Woodley</u>, <u>Laura Dern</u>, <u>Zoë Kravitz</u>, and <u>Alexander</u>



<u>Skarsgård</u>. The series premiered on 19 February 2017, with the first season concluding on 2 April 2017. A second season was announced in December 2017. Season two premiered in June 2019.



Auberon Waugh, 17th **November 1939**, was an English journalist and novelist, and eldest son of the novelist <u>Evelyn Waugh</u>. He was widely known by his nickname "Bron".

At twenty, he launched his journalism career at the <u>Telegraph Group</u>, and also wrote for many other publications including <u>Private Eye</u>, in which he presented a profile that was half Tory grandee and half cheeky rebel. As a young man, Waugh wrote five novels that were quite well received, but gave up fiction for fear of unfavourable comparisons with his father.

Margaret Atwood, 18th November 1939, is a Canadian poet, novelist, <u>literary critic</u>, essayist, <u>teacher</u>, <u>environmental activist</u>, and inventor. Since 1961, she has published 18 books of poetry, 18 novels, 11 books of <u>non-fiction</u>, nine collections of short fiction, eight children's books, and two <u>graphic novels</u>, and a number of <u>small press</u> editions of both poetry and fiction. Atwood has won numerous awards and honors for her writing, including two <u>Booker Prizes</u>, the <u>Arthur C. Clarke Award</u>, the <u>Governor General's Award</u>, the <u>Franz Kafka Prize</u>, <u>Princess of Asturias Awards</u>, and the <u>National Book Critics</u> and <u>PEN Center USA</u> Lifetime Achievement Awards. A number of her works have been adapted for film and television.



She did not attend school full-time until she was 12 years old. She became a voracious reader of literature. Atwood began writing plays and poems at the age of 6. Atwood realized she wanted to write professionally when she was 16.



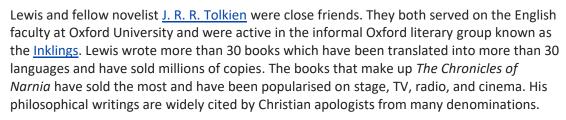
Louisa May Alcott, 29th November 1832, was an American novelist, short story writer, and poet best known as the author of the novel <u>Little Women</u> (1868) and its sequels <u>Little Men</u> (1871) and <u>Jo's Boys</u> (1886). Raised in New England by her <u>transcendentalist</u> parents, <u>Abigail</u> May and <u>Amos Bronson Alcott</u>, she grew up among many well-known intellectuals of the day, such as <u>Ralph Waldo Emerson</u>, <u>Nathaniel Hawthorne</u>, <u>Henry David Thoreau</u>, and <u>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</u>.

Alcott's family suffered from financial difficulties, and while she worked to help support the family from an early age, she also sought an outlet in writing. She began to receive critical success for her writing in the 1860s. Early in her career, she sometimes used pen names such as **A. M. Barnard**, under which she wrote lurid short stories and sensation novels for adults that focused

on passion and revenge.

Published in 1868, <u>Little Women</u> is set in the Alcott family home, Orchard House, in <u>Concord, Massachusetts</u>, and is loosely based on Alcott's childhood experiences with her three sisters, <u>Abigail May Alcott Nieriker</u>, <u>Elizabeth Sewall Alcott</u>, and <u>Anna Alcott Pratt</u>.

C. S. Lewis, 29th November 1898, held academic positions in English literature at both Oxford University (Magdalen College, 1925–1954) and Cambridge University (Magdalene College, 1954–1963). He is best known for his works of fiction, especially <u>The Screwtape Letters</u>, <u>The Chronicles of Narnia</u>, and <u>The Space Trilogy</u>, and for his non-fiction Christian apologetics, such as <u>Mere Christianity</u>, <u>Miracles</u>, and <u>The Problem of Pain</u>.





SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT

horshamwriters.freeforums.net



AND HOW WE ARE OR AREN'T USING IT

from Bryan



- Q. Is our forum being used as much as it should be?
- A. I don't think so.
- Q. If not, then why not?
- A. Could it be that some of us don't feel comfortable with its little ways?
- Q. Most importantly, is it helping us to keep engaged with the Group and stay active with our writing between meetings? Is it, for most of us, achieving its purposes of sharing ideas, presenting drafts of writing to discuss and to comment on, and of supporting each other with our efforts?

A. I don't think it is.

I also think that even if you're not inspired to write something you're ready for others to see, it's still worth using. You can dip in as and when you like and see what's been posted. You can jot down a comment if you want. If you went there NOW, for example, you'd find quite a few short stories - from Tracey, Judy, Sandra, Tony, Mathew, and my good self, as well as some great poems from Ted and Maggie and Martin. It might trigger you to write something yourself or simply have your two pennyworths with a comment on what they've written.

So, go on, why not just take a quick look?

Anyway, in case the problem is that you're someone who's not quite sure about how to use it, here are some reminders:

To get on the site simply go to <u>horshamwriters.freeforums.net</u> and register or log in.

Then you can do one of the following ...

- A. ... post your work onto your Board directly so it's immediately visible:
- 1) Click the **Board** that has your name in the **Boards Section** of the screen.
- 2) Click the **Create Thread** button it's on the right of the screen, just above the search box.
- 3) Add a subject in the white **Subject** box (you can call it what you want a short story title, chapter title etc).

- 4) Copy your work from your word processor and paste it into the main blue section below the white subject box.
- 5) Click the **Create Thread** button on the bottom right of the screen.

(Recommended only for short pieces)

B. ... add your work to a post as an attachment:

- 1) Click on the Board that has your name in the Members' Boards section.
- 2) Click on the Create Thread button it's on the right of the screen, just above the search box.
- 3) Add a subject in the white **Subject box** (e.g. a title or chapter number).
- 4) Click the Add Attachment button it's on the right of the white Subject box.
- 5) Click the **+Add files...** button and select the attachment you would like to upload (it takes Word docs as well as PDFs)
- 6) When the **upload bar** turns green click the **Insert** button. Drop your file in. You'll see when it's dowloaded and then you simply click the **Done** button.
- 7) You can add your own thoughts to the post, above or below your attachment. For example, you can say what you're pleased with, what you tried to achieve, what you struggled with, what you'd like your readers to focus and comment on, etc.
- 9) Finally, click the **Create Thread** button on the bottom right of the screen and Bob's your metaphorical uncle.

C. ... look at a piece of writing from someone else:

- 1) Click on the name of the person whose piece you're interested in reading.
- 2) Under the title Subject you'll see the titles of the pieces that that person has posted.
- 3) Click on the one you want to look at.
- 4) If it's a file, you should see in the box where the writer has put its title/file name (in blue). Tap it. It will go into a 'Downloads' file on your computer. Open it in your computer.

D. ... comment on someone's piece of writing:

- 1) Go back to the **Board** of the person whose piece you have read and tap on the **Subject** (see stages 1, 2 and 3 above).
- 2) Below the box in which the person has placed the file and, perhaps, written some thoughts about it, you'll see a box which says 'Quick Reply'.
- 3) Type your comments and then tap 'Post Quick Reply' at the bottom left hand of the box.
- 4) Back on the main Board your name and the title of the piece you've commented on, as well as the date you made the comment, will automatically show in the right hand column which says **'Last Post'**. This lets others know (including the writer) that you've commented.

E. ... or, you might like to share some thoughts about what's going on and what's to come in the Circle:

Below all the members' names in the **Members' Boards** section, there's a **General Board** with sections labelled **Long Form, Short Form** and **General**. Here you can post your thoughts or suggest things to do with our groups and our meetings.

F. ... OR, what about trying all of the above in one sitting?

If you have problems, you can always give me a ring and I can take you through the procedures on the phone.



HORSHAM WRITERS CIRCLE COMPETITIONS

THE ERNEST SHEPPARD POETRY COMPETITION

This competition is held in September and honours the memory of Ernest Sheppard, poet extraordinaire, who was a founder Member of the Circle. Ernest wrote poetry in various styles and on many topics. Born in Switzerland, his first language was German and one of his achievements was to translate Shakespeare's sonnets into German. He wrote frequently on classical subjects, nature, the beauty of Sussex, and made us laugh with his comic verse.

When Ernest died in 2008 (in his early 90's) a fellow-Member, James Corbett, donated the large, splendiferous silver cup in memory of his friend.

THE ERIC WILLIAMS SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Eric Williams joined Horsham Writers' Circle soon after it was founded in the mid 1980's. He was a man with many interests including art, classical music, astronomy and science fiction. Earlier in his life he had had several of his sci fi novels published in hardback. He was always willing to help struggling writers and, when he died in 2010 (in his early 90's) Danny Gilmartin, a young Circle Member, organized the making of a trophy in memory of his mentor. This trophy is unique – made of Perspex with an engraving of a younger Eric with a rather large telescope he'd just built in his garden. This trophy is presented to the winner of the Eric Williams Story Competition which is held in March.

PHIL'S PHUNNY CUP

There was great sadness when Phil Hollis, our Chairman, died on 1st January 2013. He was in his 60's. He was a modest, laid-back guy with several 'loves' in his life. The theatre was one. He would go to productions in London and in Chichester and then entertain us with lively accounts. His language. grammar and descriptions were always impeccable and we'd feel as though we'd been to the show or to the play and experienced it ourselves. Another great 'love' was Olivia Newton-John! He was her No. 1 fan. He'd been to the States to see her in concert. Years later, Katherine Jenkins appeared in the limelight and he loved and admired her and her sublime singing.

But his Real True Love was his wife, Gaynor, who wanted to give the Circle 'something different, something quirky' to commemorate him. It was decided that this should be a glass tankard called Phil's Phunny Cup. And if a bottle of bubbly could be included, so much the better. Phil would have approved. As one of Phil's loves was Definitely Not Poetry, it was decided that the Phunny Cup should be for a short, funny story to be read at the Circle's Christmas 'do'.



Horsham Writers Circle - Phil's Phunny Cup - Christmas Party Competition Rules

For the December Christmas party competition, which is really aimed at having a little fun during our annual Christmas party, we have Phil's Phunny Cup.

Phil's Phunny Cup was donated in memory of Phil Hollis who was secretary and member of the HWC for many years and tragically passed away far too soon. Phil had a warm heart (and Clive remembers how welcoming he was when he first joined the group), and he had a penchant for humorous stories and anecdotes. He is remembered fondly by those who knew him.

The prize is the Phunny Cup and a bottle of Sparkling Wine.

The rules of the competition are as follows:

Entry to the competition is free.

The entrant must be a paid-up or honorary member of HWC.

The entrant may present one story only, 250 words maximum.

The entrant must read out their entry to the attendees of the meeting.

The entry must be a comedy, or at least humorous in some respect.

The entry must not be a limerick, nor be poetic, in anyway whatsoever.

The entrant must not vote for their own entry – it would be churlish to do so.

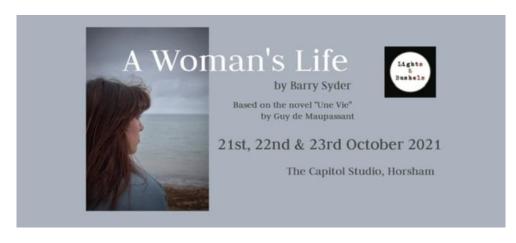
When all the entrants have read their story, the attendees will vote for the story they liked best - hopefully the one that amused them the most. There can be no tied vote. Voting is usually done on strips of paper, but as we're on Zoom I would be grateful if each member would send me a personal message on the Zoom chat function. I will run through that at the meeting.

The Competition Secretary tallies the votes and presents the prize to the winner. Once we know our winner than we can message to work out whether I drop your prize to you, or whether you would like to collect it from me.

If you've got any queries then please don't hesitate to email me: lesleyhart007@gmail.com.

Kind regards,

Lesley Hart Competitions Secretary



A Woman's Life By Barry Syder (based on the novel

"Une Vie" by Guy de Maupassant), reviewed by Lesley Hart, Tony Bauckham and Maggie Weir-Wilson

On Friday 22nd October, members of Horsham Writers Circle had their first face-to-face social event since lockdowns began in March 2020. Many of our members had requested that we meet more informally and we were aware that we had a number of new disembodied members – we had all been looking at heads and shoulders for far too long!

Sarah Nuttall told us about Lights & Bushels latest performance, which has been adapted for the stage by Barry Syder, and as a result our members took up much of rows J and H. We met at the Capitol Theatre and had a great catch-up before the show.

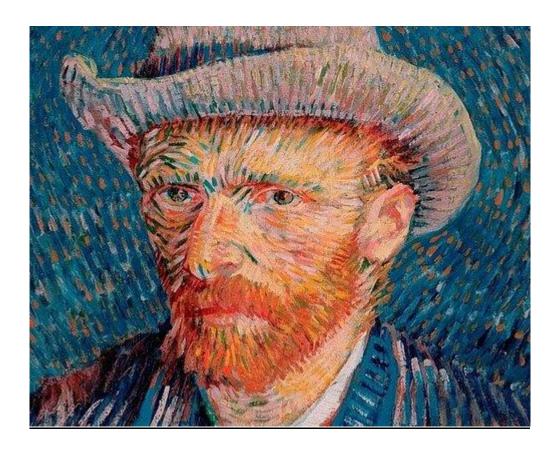
We'd seen amateur productions at the Capitol in the past, although none by Lights and Bushels. The show was performed in the studio and I was immediately impressed by the Capitol Theatre's cosy atmosphere and well-designed Studio. The stage was small and therefore it was unable to handle a great deal of props, this was artfully dealt with through the simple inclusion of a revolving window, which was effective in seeming to move the location of the play.

The show opened with the young lead actress, Alicia Marson, who played the young Jeanne le Perthuis des Vauds returning from years of study at a convent. Jeanne comes home and is thrilled to finally be able to have the freedom from the nuns to go out at will. Her enjoyment at life comes in part from knowing she's had an education denied to the majority of her age and she sees no reason to kowtow to the restrictions placed by Victorian society.

Her expectations are turned on their head when Julien, Vicomte de Lamere, is introduced to the family and immediately writes to Jeanne's father asking for her hand in marriage. She is outraged not to have been approached directly and even more so when it appears she is to be married off without having been given the opportunity to fall in love and for a personal proposal. Julien, is cruel, dismissive of Jeanne and her family and has a lack of empathy both for the lower classes and for women's life ambitions, which was ably demonstrated in the dialogue and which came out in his character. Regardless of her treatment then and following her discovery that Julien has been spreading his affections widely across the local community, she is expected to accept his behaviour without protest.

The story follows her pregnancy and Julien's death at the hands of the husband of one of his lovers and Jeanne's discovery that her education hasn't provided her with the tools for independent living. Alone and with her family home about to be seized to pay her debts, her estranged sister tries to rebuild their relationship and to help Jeanne to see that bailing her son, Paul Vicomte de Lamere, out of his gambling debts isn't helping either of them. Jeanne reluctantly agrees and learns that Paul's had his throat cut by his creditors. His wife asks her to raise their child and it's clear that Jeanne was wrong to blame her for Paul's behaviour. The story ends with Jeanne being given a second chance to raise a child.

The script was seamlessly adapted from Guy de Maupassant's original story with dialogue which felt fitting of the time and which was engaging throughout. All of the actors performed their roles naturally and were thoroughly believable. It was an excellent play and HWC members have since commented on how much they enjoyed it and with catching up with so many members. We will be looking out for future performances from Lights and Bushels.



Vincent Van Gogh Exhibition and Don Maclean, by Tony Bauckham

I recently attended an exhibition depicting the life and times of Vincent Van Gogh and his deterioration into insanity and the final taking of his own life. It was an 'Immersive Experience' complete with virtual reality goggles, in which you became part of the village of Arles, where he lived. The exhibition consisted of copies of his best loved paintings, the history behind them and his thought processes. There was also a fantastic portion where his paintings were exhibited with commentary on the walls and ceilings of a huge warehouse in Commercial Street, London. It was wonderful.

So, I researched some old pieces to do with Vincent Van Gogh and discovered a more recent associated piece of poetry, the lyrics to 'Vincent' by Don Maclean which some of you might remember? Though a commercial number, the descriptions in these lyrics I think are quite emotionally moving.

I hope that you enjoy them.

https://vangoghexpo.com/london/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxHnRfhDmrk

Tony









Learn how to write ghost stories

Just in time for Halloween, seasoned short story writer and creative writing tutor Helen M Walters will help you get writing ghost stories with this webinar masterclass.

You'll learn how to develop spooky ideas into spinechilling stories, keep readers guessing and on tenterhooks, and techniques for conveying creepy atmospheres and scares in print.

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TRY SOMETHING NEW



Write a middle grade book for children - Saturday 13th

November

Join author and writer Amy Sparkes for a two-hour live webinar covering the basics of writing a middle grade book for 8-12-year-olds



Write a Short Story in a weekend

- Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th December

Over two sessions in two days, this webinar with tutor and short story pro Helen M Walters will get you started in short story writing, with ideas to get you started, help you structure your story, and polish it to perfection.



Dark Beginnings: How to write horror - Saturday 8th January 2022

This session with Alex Davis will look at the fundamentals of horror writing, including building the right atmosphere, pacing, getting the 'reveal' right, exploring the many subgenres of horror and more!



Exploring spaces: How to write Science Fiction - Saturday 19th February

This webinar with Alex Davis we'll explore how you can develop new ideas for science-fiction, zoom in on key elements of worldbuilding, examine just how much 'science' you really need, plus lots more.



Magical Territories: How to write fantasy - Saturday 19th March

Fantasy fiction is big business these days, with an exciting wave of new authors emerging alongside long-established bestsellers. But there's far more to the genre than Game of Thrones, and Alex Davis will help you explore it in this session.

IMPROVE YOUR TECHNIQUE



Advanced novel writing - Sunday 21st November

Aimed at writers with some understanding and experience of prose storytelling, this webinar will introduce and explain some of the techniques that help bestsellers and seasoned novelists achieve their prose mastery and literary goals.



How to take your manuscript from draft to polished - Saturday 12th February

In this session, Helen M Walters will show you how to trim the fat, spot your prose tics and kill your darlings, and ensure that your manuscript works its very hardest to keep readers turning the pages.



How to Edit your novel - Sunday 20th February

James McCreet will explain how to ensure your novel maintains pace throughout, keeps readers interested and reaches a satisfying conclusion, essential for authors looking to reach a wider audience, whether through mainstream or self-publishing.

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or call us on **01778 392492**

If you decide to book several webinars give us a call so that we can give you a discount.

Writers Online events were shared by Sarah Nuttall.

NaNoWriMo 2021, by Lesley Hart



I have just signed up for the 2021 NaNoWriMo challenge – National Novel Writing Month. The 50,000-word challenge begins officially from 1st November and runs until the end of the month. If you are thinking of drafting a novel then there has never been a better time. The challenge is to write around 1,700 words per day and the support this year from NaNoWriMo is phenomenal. NaNoWriMo website includes preptober writing support workshops, together with a wealth of support and daily writing tips once you are signed up.

If you are only just thinking about starting your novel then the preptober workshops might be a useful starting point: their first workshop is on idea generation.

Don't forget to tot up your wordcount from the minute you begin planning and writing. One of the tools I

found to be hugely motivational last year was the stats counter, you can keep track of your daily wordcount – or whenever you're able to write – and add these to the stats counter for a total wordcount.



Additionally, use the NaNoWriMo banners to tell your friends that you've taken the challenge – you can see my banner to the top-right of this blog. The banners are under writer's resources and camp NaNoWriMo. There's also this one on the preptober page – see link above.

Share your username on your social media platforms etc to link up with friends and other NaNoWriMo writers and support each other. Let's face it, unless you're wearing a t shirt which says 'I'm taking 2021 NaNoWriMo' then it might not come up in conversation. You can even buy a t shirt which says something along those lines – just type: NaNoWriMo t shirt into your favourite search engine. Crazy, eh?

Anyway, back to buddies ... there are NaNoWriMo forums where you can buddy up with other NaNoWriMos and local area groups where you can link up for support.

This will be my second year of NaNoWriMo: and last year I reached a total of 30,473 words at around halfway through the month ... and then I stopped. It wasn't that the task had become insurmountable but work and life interfered and I allowed them to. Let's face it, we often have a choice or there's a way around our obstacles. It wasn't as if I'd fallen behind – I was ahead of the game – but a day went by when I wasn't able to write and then another and before I knew it 1st December was here and my challenge was over.

So, this year I'm just going to write something every day and if necessary, I will block out the time in my diary – even if it's just half-an-hour each day. The important challenge for me has always been to build in a daily writing habit. It's my advice as an editor and creative writing teacher and

particularly for NaNoWriMo. You might do the bulk of your writing in the evening or at the weekend, but alongside this try and do a little each day. I believe that if you've managed to do a little writing every day then regardless of your end of the month wordcount, you've nailed it.

To support your daily writing habit, the lovely people at Reedsy have written a blog about the 2021 challenge and a pop-up quiz which aims to tell you your best writing schedule is attached to their blog – please don't leave me just yet!

Talking of wordcount, always ensure you're supportive of other NaNoWriMo buddies and don't let anyone get into any playground jibes. If anyone calls you out over your wordcount then call them out and then block them if necessary.

NaNoWriMo have also produced pep talks and will be adding daily writing tips to help support and motivate authors.

Going back to Reedsy, their online support was something I found incredibly useful last year. Reedsy run writing sprint groups online and then the sprints are posted on YouTube, so you can use them as a remote buddy support at any time. Scroll down from this YouTube video to find other sprints and support for your writing. Writing sprints are incredibly useful and you will be amazed at the number of words you're able to produce with the stopwatch on. I run a free writing sprints group every two weeks and this has built a support network for regular writing. Try the Reedsy group and see if it's a tool that works for you.

Finally, don't forget to look at my blogs for support and inspiration.

Happy NaNoWriMo,

Lesley

