

Publishing With Amazon Createspace

Chris Davies Curtis



Publishing your work can seem overwhelming. Yet this need not be the case. Chris Davies Curtis seeks to demystify self-publishing with Amazon Createspace step-by-step.

1. Create an Amazon Createspace account

Go to the Createspace website (<https://www.createspace.com>) . Put in your email address and choose a password.

2. Open up and click 'add a new title'

3. Fill in 'title', 'paperback' and 'step progress'

I format my copy but I think Amazon will do it. They'll probably charge if they do the formatting. There is NO CHARGE doing it this way. You will find help all the way along by clicking on 'what's this' by each item.

4. Carry on filling in requests

- Subtitle** if you have one.
- Primary Author**, presumably you—give your 'writing name'.
- Add contributors**; co-writers, illustrators etc.
- Put a tick in box if it is a part of a series with title.**
- Edition; language; publication date** (if known. This is not essential. I usually leave it blank.

5. IMPORTANT PART; ALLOCATION OF ISBN NUMBER

Even if you have had an ISBN for a previous publication it is best to get an Amazon one, or they don't distribute it as widespread an area.

ONCE YOU HAVE AN AMAZON ISBN YOU CAN'T CHANGE IT, BUT YOU CAN CHANGE THE TITLE ETC.

After you have clicked on this part, scroll down to the bottom and click 'save progress'.

YOU NEED TO KEEP DOING THIS AS YOU FILL IN EACH BIT OR IT DOESN'T ACTIVATE. DO NOT PRESS SUBMIT FOR REVIEW UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED!

NOTE: Even when you submit, you are sent proof copies via internet link for you to correct, so you choose when to publish.

6. Choose paper type and size of publication

American sizes are slightly different from ours, so you need to have the book formatted to suit those, or the final layout can have subtle changes. The nearest to our standard paperback size is **5.5ins x 8.5 ins** (13.97 x 21.59 cm) so choose—**remember to keep saving progress.**

7. Adding interior (or centre content)

Hopefully you will have the content of your book already stored in your documents as a PDF. That needs to be done before you start this. Browse and locate it, then add it. **Don't forget to save progress after it has downloaded.**

8. Adding the cover

You will need to have the entire cover—front and back—designed before you start as you need also to have the ISBN number and any blurb on them. Chicken and egg situation!

How do you have the ISBN first? I try to do all the first part up to the allocation of the ISBN well ahead, so I can let my Cover Designer know. You can leave the preparation for as long as you like until you submit for review. I usually choose '**Glossy**'.

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9. Synopsis and bio

Good idea to do this before you start, also your bio and store in your 'documents.' OK in 'Microsoft word.' **Keep saving progress.**

10. Book language, English (unless not!) Country of Publication; USA

Choose if **adult content** and **large print**

11. Sales Channels; i.e. where distributed

I choose all, but you can click on the various 'what's this' to choose.

12. Pricing

Initially this is in US\$ and the other rates adjust accordingly.

13. Save progress and if you are satisfied click 'Submit for review.'

If there is anything not right, Amazon will send you an email. Otherwise they will notify you in a few days that your proof is ready. There will be a link—something like: <https://tswcreatespace.com/title/5615146/review>. That link will take you to a page with other links to where you'll find a digital proof to check. The proof comes in two formats—a PDF (which gives you a good idea if the formatting is correct) and another that shows exactly what the book will look like.

If there's something in the proof you don't like, you will have to go back to your original Microsoft Word document, correct it, make a new PDF, then re-enter on the original Createspace document.

14. When you are satisfied. PUBLISH!

Your book will be distributed on all the Amazon channels you have chosen—and it hasn't cost you a penny. However if you want some copies for yourself you have to buy them and have them shipped from the US. They are at a low price, but postage costs a bit. However you will still make a profit if you sell at a realistic price.

Amazon says books will usually take six weeks to arrive. But so far the maximum time for my orders has been seventeen days total.



Chris Davies Curtis was born in England and trained as a registered nurse. She met her future husband on a pony trekking holiday. After four years of marriage, they moved to the Isle of Sark and after many years of running a guest house they decided to explore New Zealand in a Bedford van for two years before they immigrated. When the marriage broke up, Chris returned to Sark and lived with a partner for 17 years. When she was widowed, she returned to New Zealand and indulged her passion for writing. Chris has written four memoirs and now writes medical romances and historical fiction with a New Zealand setting.

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"The unread story is not a story; it is little black marks on wood pulp. The reader, reading it, makes it live: a live thing, a story."

— Ursula K. Le Guin

Firm Foundations

Allison Lane

Like many folks, my house came with a garden shed tucked into the corner of the yard. Recently I noticed that it was unusually damp inside, and its creepy-crawly population has exploded. Not nice. Investigation revealed that its aging foundation was a bare inch of concrete. Over the years, roots have pushed up, breaking one corner off and lifting the shed at that point, giving rain and wildlife easy access. As I was digging out the root, I realized that my shed's inadequate foundation was a metaphor for many of the contest entries I've judged over the years. Both sheds and books need firm foundations if they are to succeed. For books, that foundation is built from compelling characterization and a solid conflict.

So what is compelling characterization? The main characters must be three-dimensional, displaying both strengths and weaknesses. I've seen way too many cardboard cut-outs in contest entries – characters embodying a wonderful trait, but who don't engage the senses because they lack depth. It's not enough to rescue one's inheritance from ruin through sound investment strategies or to prove one's ability as a sportsman or to display snappy repartee in every encounter or to win acclaim for one's prowess in war.

To be three-dimensional, characters need more than one area of expertise, more than one talent or accomplishment, more than the ability to address the immediate conflict. They need a past full of family, friends, and enemies. They need a history of achievements, failures, and embarrassing moments. They need values, goals, talents, weaknesses, and secrets.

Many of these traits won't make it into the manuscript, but they define how the characters will interact with each other and react to the events of the story. My favourite question when writing is "Why?" Why are you doing or saying that? Knowing a character inside and out makes it easy to avoid cardboard cut-outs, too-stupid-to-live heroines, and illogical behaviours. It also makes sure that everyone's motivation is clear.

One of the most frustrating books I wrote was *The Be-leaguered Earl*. The villain of the piece kept doing things that were necessary to the plot but seemed insane. I hate using insanity as an excuse to do bad stuff. It's trite. It wasn't until a week before deadline that I finally discovered why he was acting that way. He had a perfectly sound reason that not only made his own actions logical but tied up several other loose ends at the same time. So never let your characters escape answering "Why?" Badger them until they tell you.

A solid conflict is also an essential part of a book's foundation. In real life, we are delighted when there are no crises demanding our attention, letting us enjoy a night out with friends, or celebrate someone's latest success, or curl up with a bowl of popcorn and a good movie.

Unfortunately, nights like that make boring reading. Books need conflict. In the romance genre, heroes and heroines need flaws they must overcome or learn to accommodate if they are to build a life together. They also need at least one solid external conflict that will force them to address those flaws. These internal and external conflicts keep the plot on track, eliminating sagging middles, plots that meander into trivialities, and contrived endings.

At least every third contest I judge offers a conflict that could be resolved by a simple question. That might work for a chapter or two, but I've only seen it carry a book once – Mary Balogh's *The Famous Heroine*, where the misunderstanding was logical for those characters in that time period, and the question could not be asked. But that exception is rare...



Award-winning author Allison Lane has enjoyed a lifelong affair with books. Born in Minnesota, she earned degrees in mathematics and computer science from the University of Illinois, then embarked on careers designing computer software and teaching classical piano, before settling on writing novels. Among her many awards is the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award and being named a finalist for RWA's RITA award. Allison and her husband currently reside in California. Visit her website at <http://www.eclectics.com/allisonlane/>

Coloured. Colourless. And Colourful Word Choices

Regina Jeffers



Do you recall the dreaded '500-words' essay often assigned by your English teachers? Do you also recall the sinking feeling of coming up with 500 words on a subject for which you held no opinion? Do you also recall writing something similar to...

"In my opinion, it seems to me that Jane Austen was an overrated author. The reason why I think this is true is because I feel..."

In this age of self-publishing we find a plethora of exam-

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ples of poor writing. I am not saying some of what is published by traditional publishers is not equally as troublesome, but many self-published writers also lack the skills to edit their mistakes.

Now that I have mentioned that dreaded 500-words' essay, do you also recall the grade you received on it? Was it because you "padded" the essay to fill the word count. Notice all the underlined words above. They are fillers. Instead of stuffing your sentences with cotton balls, try to eliminate the padding. Make your sentences leaner. For example...

The average teacher in today's society must toil night and day to make ends meet in order for his own family to know comfort.

Could easily become...

Most teachers work long hours to support their families.

Rather than circling warily around what you want to say for a half page or more, one needs to illustrate the details. He must also learn not to hedge on a subject. If the person is a fool, call him one. Do not spend time with "in my opinion" or "as I see it" or "from my point of view." Say what you wish to say. Avoid euphemisms. Admittedly, in certain time periods, euphemisms are plentiful to soften subjects that are sensitive or taboo. Just think of the number of ways to say that someone has died: passed away, pushed up the daisies, met his Maker, kicked the bucket, cashed in his chips, etc.

As I write books based in the Regency era in England, I am conscious to say with child or enceinte instead of pregnant. Unfortunately, for me, euphemisms were plentiful during the Regency. Underwear was still "unmentionables" and "lying in" would be used to describe the weeks leading up to the baby's delivery. Likewise, those who write contemporary pieces cannot avoid all the modern jargon available, but writers should always avoid phrases that rob one's work of its crispness and force.

Just think what would have become of Shakespeare's "To be or not to be" speech if it had met modern politically correct jargon. It could sound something like... "To continue as a discrete constituent of a society or larger group or not to do so. That is the set of psychological traits and mechanisms affecting my personality."

Next, be conscious of "pat" expressions. They are often hard to avoid, and they appear to be necessary. No writer avoids them completely, but good writers make the attempt. Pat expressions include phrases such as "under cover of darkness," "worked his fingers to the bone," "when all is said and done," "the pure and simple truth," "took the easy way out," etc. The trouble with pat expressions is that they sometimes stand between the writer and the reader's understanding.

Discovering the right word is the author's bane. Some

words are "colourful". Instead of "She sat in the chair," why not use sprawled, lazed, lounged, etc. A heart can pound, throb, flutter, or dance. I live in the Southern part of the U. S. where the summer's heat is blistering and often muggy or steamy, and I sometimes complain that I am wilting. That being said, the "fancy" word is not always the correct choice. If the weather is "hot," state it as such.

The 19th Century in which I write prefers its prose to be rich, while the 20th Century took a leaner approach. In opposition to colorful words, we also have "colored" words. Those are words with attached associations, whether they be good or bad. The meaning of a word is the sum of the contexts in which it occurs. Liberty, patriotism, mother, etc., possess positive associations, while reactionary, mother-in-law, foolish, etc., hold negative overtones. In the Regency, a woman being called an "intellectual" was not necessarily a good thing.

Writers may also use colorless words. As a former English teacher, I despise those words found in casual conversations, such as nice, dap, cool, dude, for they add nothing to the description. There are also nouns of very general meaning, such as instances, factors, attitudes, relationships, etc. "In some circumstances you will find that those cases of writing which contain too many instances of words like these will in this and other aspects have factors leading to unsatisfactory relationships with the reader resulting in unfavorable attitudes on his part and perhaps other eventualities." Notice that "etc." means, "I'd like to make this list longer, but I can't think of any more examples." [McCuen, J. R., and A. C. Winkler. "What Do You Mean by Rhetoric?" Readings for Writers, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1974, 13.]

Choosing the precise word or phrase remains a challenge for all authors, whether they write professionally or for their own pleasure. The majority of those who make a living from writing have knowledge of words they never use in their creations. For me, contemporary words/phrases such as Google, 3D, iPhone, and mouse are replaced by acquiesce, obeisance, imprudence, and forbearance. The number of words a person uses in his writing falls short of the number of which he is familiar. Add to that fact, how quickly the English language changes, and an author/poet will find it difficult to keep up with the flexibility of the language. Yet, some basics persist. It is the writer's responsibility to use the best word(s) for a particular situation. It is important to choose the word that expresses the exact meaning one intends.

In college, I had a particular professor, who is known to send off detailed emails to authors/political analysts to point out usage errors. His influence had me recently sending a quick message to the local news station which reported on two planes nearly colliding (one in take-off and one in landing). The news anchor called the incident a "near miss." My email reminded the news group that a "near miss" means one hit something. A "near hit" means

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someone avoided the impact.

Editing is one of the least favorite activities for writers, but it is a necessary evil. We all miss items in our writing – no matter how often one revisits the piece. The mind reads what **SHOULD** be on the page, not necessarily what **IS** on the page. These are some my favorites... ones I tend to seek out when I am writing/editing.

LAST should not be used before a period of time (week, month, or year). **Last** refers to the **final** week, month, or year. One should use **PAST** to refer to the **previous** week, month, or year.

This one is usually a spelling, rather than a meaning mistake. **PASSIBLE** refers to being sensitive or capable of feeling (Although I disagree with his politics, I find the candidate is passible.) On the other hand, **PASSABLE** refers to being able to be passed or to be barely satisfactory/adequate.

FOREGO refers to going before or preceding, while **FORGO** means to refrain or to give up.

ANY BODY, when written as two words, refers to a body such as a corpse, a body of water, etc. **ANYBODY** as a single word, refers to a group of people, but not to any particular individual.

This next one drives my “gentleman friend” a bit bonkers. He has been known to point out the mistake to more than one shopkeeper. **EVERYDAY**, refers to days in general, without emphasizing any particular day. (Winning the lottery is not an everyday experience.) **EVERY DAY** emphasizes the individual day, with the word “every” acting as an adjective to describe the noun “day.” One way to know which is correct is to substitute “each” for “every.” (Every day is a learning experience.)

Likewise, **EVERYBODY** and **EVERYONE** refer to several or many people, but not to one particular individual, while **EVERY BODY** refers to a specific body, as in a corpse, body of water, etc., and **EVERY ONE** refers to a particular individual.

PRECEDE means to go before, while **PROCEED** means to go on or to continue.

The past tense of **PLEA** should be **PLEADED**, not **PLED**. [The criminal pleaded guilty (not pled guilty).]

RESPECTFULLY is a dutiful manner. **RESPECTIVELY** means to refer to two or more people, places, or things in the order in which they are listed.

The same rule applies to both **RARELY** (or **RARELY IF EVER**) and to **SELDOM** (or **SELDOM IF EVER**). An action may occur **rarely** or **rarely if ever**, but **rarely ever** (or **seldom ever**) is inaccurate. In fact, it is best to use **rarely (seldom)** or **never**. It would be incorrect to say “Editors rarely ever make mistakes.” The sentence

should read “Editors rarely make mistakes” or “Editors never make mistakes.”

IRREGARDLESS is not standard English, **REGARDLESS** of how many times one sees it in print.

BECAUSE should be used to indicate a cause or a reason, while **SINCE** refers to time, meaning between then and now. It would be incorrect to say, “Since she knows the truth of the circumstances, the prosecutor sought the death penalty.”

NUMBER refers to a quantity of people or things which can be counted. **AMOUNT** refers to an indefinite quantity that cannot be counted.

Although I generally use this distinction correctly, for this one, I must always pause to say the rule in my head before I continue to write: **IN BEHALF OF** means for the benefit of, while **ON BEHALF OF** means in place of. (The attorney speaks on behalf of his client.)

AMONG is used when the number is three or more, while **BETWEEN** is used for two people, places, or things.

Finally, for today, this is one I often see misused in many published books: **DIFFERENT FROM** is the acceptable form, not **DIFFERENT THAN**.

If you would like a book of “how to” for editing, I would recommend the above mentioned professor’s Media Writer’s Handbook: A Guide to Common Writing and Editing Problems by George T. Arnold. https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=george+t+arnold [Note: This is a journalism textbook.]

With 30+ books to her credit, Regina Jeffers is an award-winning author of historical cozy mysteries, Austenesque sequels and retellings, and Regency era romantic suspense. Jeffers is a retired English teacher and an often-sought-after consultant for media literacy and language arts programs. Visit her online at: <http://www.rjeffers.com>

“Don’t try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say. It’s the one and only thing you have to offer.”

— Barbara Kingsolver

From The Editor



**It's been one of those months
enough is said,
that month is gone,
Thank God it's dead!**

As you can see from my dubious poetry it has been a cathartic month here in Christchurch.

On the upside I now have an office! On the downside we have been struggling here with a spate of young people either ending their lives or self-harming. Such times call me to a state of near breathlessness as I seek to tether the young ones around us to this world and hope, hope, hope, they have enough endurance to not seek a permanent solution to a series of temporary problems.

Such life and death issues I am aware are experienced by many of us. Beneath our tales of love and drama sit, well, real life tales of love and drama!

In the midst of all this there are of course the lighter moments. Moments of effervescent silliness and fathomless compassion. These moments reframe our sombre days, and remind us of life and the need for us all to know love.

On the 30th of October I hit a milestone birthday. Not quite ready for this one I decided to enter into some self-pampering and took myself off to the hairdresser. Seeking to be buoyed up I was almost called to forgo my commitment to non-violence as the hairdresser proclaimed "It's all life support now, you're over 50 % grey!"

Sitting in the memorial garden by our house later that afternoon I was joined by Victoria, a homeless visitor who enjoys sitting here and pondering life. Victoria looked at my hair – which in the end had nothing done to it, and said. "I'm a transvestite you know."

"Yes" I said "I know."

"And you don't care."

"True, you're beautiful inside and out." *This is the way our conversations go each time we meet.*

Yet this time; perhaps misinterpreting my follicle downer as a judgement of her, she asked "There's nothing you hate about me?" I was shocked, and thought for a minute. "Well Victoria, there is one thing I hate... You work heels better than me." She laughed and nodded in agreement. "You suck in heels." And then there was one of those extraordinary moments one only reads about in books where the day became brighter as Victoria spent the next hour playing with my hair on a bench trying to make it 'right'. There was no offense or judgement in her touch, no 'life support' comments. Just the desire to care and share love in a garden, one being to another. It was truly one of the most nurturing afternoons I have spent. Full of silliness and earthiness – and most impor

tantly for that day, hopefulness.

Hope is something I experience as something folk are desperate for today, hope for change, hope for endurance, hope for love, hope for a happy ending. It reminds me that as romance writers we are in the business expressing the need for hope fulfilled. To be a part of a wider metanarrative that encourages hope if you like. So we write of the people who struggle. We write of people who endure. We write of people who claim moments of singular joy and we remind people that they are allowed a happy ever after. And in my book that's no bad thing.

So the crappy month has finished and I am having a do over. I'm taking a couple of weeks off. I'm taking up the NaNoWriMo Challenge and I'm claiming a new birthday celebration mid-November. Victoria told me the sparrows say that's a good time to do it, and who am I to argue with a sparrow? It will be a BBQ I think, pot luck – everyone welcome. So if you're in the area message me or just turn up. The door is open and All are welcome.

Hope Floats

Megan

Metamorphosis: A year on the journey of an emerging writer

Melissa Climo



The recent RWNZ membership renewal marks my first year of being an 'emerging' writer. Though twelve months ago, I didn't even know that was what I was called. An emerging writer does sound rather poetic, like a butterfly from a cocoon. I

would love to think that emerging means, like the butterfly, I have already passed the awkward adolescent stage and am now all dressed up, and ready for romance. Or romance writing in this case.

This thing is, a year ago I didn't even know where to start my fiction writing journey. I had a pretty good inkling that I couldn't just go straight from deciding to be a writer to success. I knew it couldn't be as easy as hiding in a cocoon (or writing cave), a magical metamorphosis happens, and then I would emerge, transformed into a successful author.

For the purpose of this think-piece, I will continue the

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butterfly analogy. A butterfly lifecycle, my nine-year-old tells me, has four stages. Egg – caterpillar – chrysalis – butterfly.

I stayed in the egg for a very long time. Many years. I collected characters, devised scenes, built worlds, drew maps, and kept very poorly organised notes. It was great fun, but all very random and disconnected. Plus, I was all on my own in there. I had assumed that one-day I would have more time to write properly.

Yeah, I know. That sentence is loaded with naivety. One day, when? More time – yeah right! Properly. What does that even mean?

Last year I hatched. I made 'one-day' arrive, by doing two key things. First, I signed up to NaNoWriMo 2016. I accepted a writing goal with a deadline, and on the way discovered that, not only can I write 50,000 words in a month, but more importantly I loved doing it. Second, I joined RWNZ, and found an instant community. I had my first hint that there was a lot of information out there, and people were willing to share it.

In the past year, I went down pretty much every rabbit hole I came across. I took in anything that was about the craft and the business of writing. I joined networks, met people, signed up to newsletters, came to conference. I have binged on podcasts, joined Facebook groups, and devoured writing books and blogs.

Basically, I have been over-eating information like a very, very hungry caterpillar.

What I didn't expect, but will accept as a bonus, is that I have also been reading more fiction, more widely. I am trying to decide on my genre(s) you see, and this is me researching genre conventions and deconstructing story structures. And don't anyone tell my husband otherwise, he is sure this is just an excuse for buying more books!

I have learned a lot about characters and story structures, using tropes and dialogue. I know more about routes to market, marketing and email lists. Writing software, reviews, amazon ads and algorithms. Publishing platforms, audiobooks, getting a Bookbub, cultivating 1000 true fans. Branding, pen names, social media. A huge thank you to everyone who shares their writing experience with those of us who are emerging. It is greatly appreciated.

However, in the last few weeks I have realised that I am full. My appetite for information is declining. Yes, there is still a lot for me to learn, but my search for knowledge has now become, at least in part, productive procrastination.

It is time for the chrysalis stage of my journey.

Funnily enough, my biggest learning from this past year is that to be a writer, I must write. I didn't find any magi

cal short-cuts for getting words on the page. Sigh. So, this next year you will find me in my cocoon, writing (or in a coffee shop, or hiding with my laptop away from the kids, or in a quiet writing cave...if I can find one).

Where my first year was all about information, year two of my RWNZ membership is going to be all about word count and building my writing muscles. I will still be online, reading and networking, but writing is my priority. Funny how it took me a year of looking everywhere else, only to discover that the answer is here, within me. Here's hoping there is a butterfly in there somewhere too!

Happy writing to all, for whatever stage of writer's metamorphosis you are at.

Melissa is still deciding on her genres and a pen-name (plus, you know, 'emerging'), so she can't offer a website. But, she is in the RWNZ member's facebook group. Melissa recently moved to Christchurch (from Taupo), where writing is going to fit in alongside the day job, the distractions of exploring a new place, and the grown-up life stuff that results from reproducing.

Woos & Hoos

This month we have another bunch of fabulous woos & hoos to celebrate. Well done to everyone!



JC Harroway's first *Harlequin Dare* title, **A Week To Be Wild**, is available for pre order, releasing January 25, 2018. This is a new line and she is one of the launch month authors.

Bronwen Evans' **Christmas In Kilts** Anthology released 31 October. In November she is also releasing her self-published Small Town Contemporary Romances – **Want Me** and **Need Me**, books #3 and #4 in her Coopers Creek series. <http://amzn.to/2z057Kr>



Kris Pearson's second Scarlet Bay Romance, **Hard To Resist**, launches on 31 October. E-book only at this stage. <http://amzn.to/2l8uW55>

Barbara DeLeo has a new release in November. **Four Weddings And A Fling** which is the third book in her Weddings in Westchester series from Entangled Bliss.



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Lizzi Tremayne has published a new story, **Once Upon A Vet School**, as part of the *Christmas Babies on Main Street* series. <http://amzn.to/2lclNZp>

Jude Knight also contributed a story to the *Christmas Babies on Main Street* series - **A Family Christmas**. Also due from Jude Knight is **A Midwinter's Tale**, due November 1 and **Forged In Fire**, due November 4.



A special thanks to Jean for compiling this month's Woos and Hoos. This year Jean celebrated the release of her latest book **Honey's Greek Billionaire**. <http://amzn.to/2xYmYfN>

Lisbeth Solander and Holly Golightly: Wild Women compared and contrasted

Jill McCaw



Two books, one a modern Scandinavian crime thriller, the other a '40s era, light romance. Two women protagonists, the girl with the dragon tattoo and the girl who wanted to have breakfast at Tiffany's.

I'll preface this discussion by saying that in both incidences, I'm talking about the books, not the movies. I haven't seen either movie and don't know how faithful, or not, they are to their source material. Oh, and if you're reading this, spoilers abound. Most people would never even think of pairing these books in any context, let alone suggest what I'm about to about the characters. I doubt anyone other than me has noticed this, but Lisbeth Solander and Holly Golightly are the same character.

I was half way through reading *The Girl Who Played With Fire*, the second book in the *Millennium* series by Steig Larsson. These books are a harrowing read and

because of the dense information and unfamiliar (to English readers) names they're not an easy read. This second book takes a long time to really pick up and get to any action. It's a murder mystery that doesn't have its murder until the middle of the book (which is a great example of non-formulaic story writing, although it does fit within Snyder's Story Arc template for screenplays, so it's not quite as 'off' as it first seems).

What the first part of the book does do, is introduce us properly to Lisbeth Solander, the side character who carried the whole title of the previous book. We get to know this probably autistic, very clever, rather sad, utterly brutal but exceptionally moral character very well. We see the world from her eyes, including learning, in tedious detail, all the contents of her grocery bags and everything she furnishes her new apartment with (from Ikea), something that many reviewers on Goodreads found completely inexplicable.

Just before reaching the middle of the book (and once I had reached the middle of the book, I couldn't put it down) I had cause to fly to Auckland. I spent my waiting time at Christchurch airport in the book shop – of course. The airport book shop had prominently displayed the latest reprints of Penguin classics, and I picked up **Breakfast at Tiffany's** by Truman Capote. I'd never read it and didn't have any idea of what it was actually about. I'm not religious at reading the 'classics' but do, occasionally, dip into something that everyone else seems to have read and I feel I should try. It was a skinny little book, only cost \$13, and a gentle romance would be a nice break from Swedish noir. Plus, it would also be good to have it, if for some reason my tablet with the Kindle app should fail.

I opened the book on the plane and settled into a much gentler world, 1940s New York, where a young woman entertaining male visitors in her apartment was scandalous and her socialite ambitions were both applauded and abhorred.

Both Steig Larsson and Truman Capote write in lovely lyrical prose with similar long sentence structure and both Lisbeth and Holly are 'wild,' unconventional women living outside of society's norms, going their own way to their own moral codes and getting by on the fringes. I was reading about Holly and it could so easily have been about Lisbeth, the two sat together so well that they blurred. I literally had a start of surprise when I realised that after days of reading about her, this wasn't Lisbeth I was reading about now. Holly's apartment could have been next door to Lisbeth's. Time and place differences and the walls between those two apartments had dissolved.

Now, outwardly, these two women are very different. Lisbeth lives alone and doles out her interaction with others in a miserly fashion, very carefully choosing who she will deign to talk with, let alone fuck. Holly on the other hand is very free with her favours. In fact, sleeping with rich

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men is the way she supports herself. She's not a whore. She fully intends to marry each one, for as long as the relationship lasts. Look at this lovely passage which gives us the book title:

"I knew damn well I'd never be a movie star. It's too hard; and if you're intelligent, it's too embarrassing. My complexes aren't inferior enough: being a movie star and having a big fat ego are supposed to go hand in hand; actually it's essential not to have any ego at all. I don't mean I'd mind being rich and famous. That's very much on my schedule, and someday I'll try to get around to it; but if it happens, I'd like to have my ego tagging along. I want to still be me when I wake up one fine morning and have breakfast at Tiffany's."

The real point of similarity between these two characters is that they have both pulled themselves up and out of very dark pasts and made a life for themselves on their own terms. Lisbeth, as we learn in **The Girl Who Played With Fire**, had a mob father who abused her mother and when Lisbeth, at age 12, tried to put a stop to it and tried to kill her father, she found that no-one would believe a young girl. She was institutionalised and labelled 'unstable' and 'psychotic'.

During the depression, Holly (actually called Lulamae) and her brother Fred were left orphaned and had to fend for themselves. They were taken in by widowed horse doctor, Doc Golightly who already had a houseful of kids, mostly older than Lulamae and Fred. His solution to the problem of finding a mother for his children was to marry Lulamae, who was "going on fourteen," and quite willing. Doc is heartbroken when, a year or so later, she runs away and he had no idea why she ran.

Lulamae reinvents herself, changes her name, her accent and starts, scandalously, sleeping her way up the social ladder. Lisbeth develops a thick shell against the world and develops her skills as a hacker, able to support herself by doing things that are either illegal or just outside of being socially acceptable. Both are determined to take on the world on their own terms and woe betide anyone who gets in their way.

In summing up Doc Golightly's mistake, Holly also sums up herself (and Lisbeth) and anyone who might come to care for them. *"Never love a wild thing ..."* Holly advised ...

'That was Doc's mistake. He was always lugging home wild things. A hawk with a hurt wing. One time it was a full-grown bobcat with a broken leg. But you can't give your heart to a wild thing: the more you do, the stronger they get. Until they're strong enough to run into the woods. Or fly into a tree. Then a taller tree. Then the sky. That's how you'll end up... If you let yourself love a wild thing. You'll end up looking at the sky.'

Unconventional, 'wild' women make great protagonists, and these two, seemingly so different characters are two

that will stay with me for a long time.

Jill finds herself in the surprising position of making her living writing about aviation. She edits and publishes SoaringNZ, the official journal of Gliding New Zealand and has regular columns in other aviation publications. She won the inaugural Heritage Week short prose award in 2015 and won a Society of Authors mentorship in 2014 to work on her novel "Because of Harry." This book is a murder mystery wrapped around a three-way love story and Jill was gutted when her mentor suggested she lose the sex scenes to make it better fit the mystery genre. "Harry" is probably, finally, in final drafts and Jill has a wealth of other ideas for her next book, including an erotic, time travel story with the core threesome.

From The President

It's nearing the end of 2017 and I can't help but go over the goals I set myself for the year, and for once I'm not panicking about getting them completed. Are you?

I promised myself that I'd write 3-4 books (a mix of long and short) in 2017 and I'm on target. I'm just starting #4 and it's a novella, so I should make it. I also hoped I'd get fitter and healthier and I've managed that by being diagnosed as gluten intolerant a few months ago—what a difference being gluten free has made to my health!

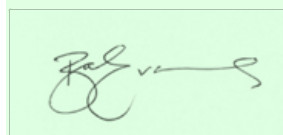
Most professions give their members reminders about health checks. So here's mine to you. If you haven't: had a blood pressure and cholesterol test, or a breast exam in a while, or if you're over fifty a colonoscopy, and as we use our screens all the time an eye exam, then maybe it's time to do so.

Fitness and health is something as writers in particular, we should be aware of. We spend so much time sitting writing that we forget that we need exercise and have some balance in our lives. I have Brandy and Duke, my two little Cavoodles, to remind me to get off my arse and go for my daily walk. And I do. I often use the time to talk to my characters and if I've been stuck on a scene I have the answer by the time I get home.

As we are coming into summer, it's the perfect time for us to remember to take care of ourselves. Get out and enjoy the sunshine and spend time with our family!

Happy writing!

Bronwen Evans
RWNZ President



Get To Know Our Authors



Kathy Servian (K A Servian)

<https://kaservian.com/>

After a 20 career in the fashion and applied arts industries, Kathy squeezes full-time study for an advanced diploma in applied writing around working on a historical fiction series. Her third novel and the first in the series, *The Moral Compass*, is imminent. Kathy made the costume for the cover and shot the image on Long Bay Beach.

Janet Elizabeth Henderson

<http://www.janetelizabethhenderson.com>

Janet Elizabeth Henderson writes contemporary romance and romantic suspense, with a humorous bent. She was born in Scotland, but now lives in New Zealand with about four million pets, two feral children and a husband who's obsessed with DIY (obsessed NOT skilled). Her thirteenth book, *Rage*, released at the end of September.



Shirley Wine

www.shirleywine.com

Shirley Wine is from a farming family where oral storytelling was encouraged, so writing rural romance was a natural progression. For many years, Shirley was a freelance writer with a regular "Country Comment" column in a NZ daily newspaper, and worked on local and regional newspapers. A long-time member of RWNZ, Shirley lives with her husband in a rural Waikato town.

To be featured on this free page, please email **EITHER** one cover **OR** three, **PLUS** bio, **PLUS** buy links to: heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz by the 20th of the month deadline.

Nelson Romance Writers' Short Story Competition

2017 Results

Annika Ohlson-Smith

Participating in a writing competition can be both daunting and exciting! Many of us are sensitive around sharing what is essentially an expression of ourselves. At this year's Romance Conference a panel discussion; comprising of publishers and agents, spoke of the importance of putting oneself forward in competitions. This was primarily to increase ones 'attractiveness' and 'saleability' to an agent or publisher. Yet the importance of confidence building through the sharing of work could not be underestimated. Congratulations to all those who took a risk and entered the Nelson Short Story Competition.

The Winners of the Nelson Romance Writers' Short Story Competition 2017 are:

Category 1: Published & Self-Published Writers

'Winter Wine' by Yvonne Walus, Auckland.

Final judge Angela Bissell's comment:

"A short story comprised entirely of Tweets was so unexpected and I loved it. A clever idea that made for a fast-paced and entertaining read. And, it delivered not only a romance but a wonderful scenic tour of New Zealand!"

Category 2: Unpublished Writers (18+)

'Frozen In Time' by Louise Bramley, Wairoa.

Final judge Angela Bissell's comment:

"A lovely depiction of setting in the beginning which sets the scene for romance, and an equally lovely surprise twist later in the story."

Category 3: Senior Students (under 18)

'An Unsuspecting Love' by Summer Vartan, Upper Hutt.

Final judge Angela Bissell's comment:

"It's great to see diversity in romantic fiction and this story delivers with a lovely surprise ending."

Supreme Overall Winner:

'Winter Wine' by Yvonne Walus, Auckland.



Congratulations to Yvonne!

All three winners will receive a big prize basket with lovely things from our very generous sponsors. The overall winner will also get a special certificate.

*A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.
I say it just begins
to live that day.*

— Emily Dickinson

Nelson Romance Writers' Short Story Competition

Winning Stories

For the next couple of months we take a break from our Theme Scene Challenge as we present the winning contributions from our recent short story competition. First up, we have the story from our supreme winner - Yvonne Walus.

Winter Wine Yvonne Walus

New York, 28 May



@TinaTweets: Ashton invited me to New Zealand for a month. Our summer, their winter. Thoughts? [#isthislove](#)

@LivvyOnLife: Yes!!! At last! [#this-mustbelove](#) Actually - no!!! Too early. You need time to process the past - [#rebound sucks](#). Then again - maybe?

@TinaTweets: Confused much, LOL? I'm done processing. Dealt with being dumped. Ready for [#adventure](#). Haven't seen Ashton since we were 12. [#firstcrush](#)

@LivvyOnLife: But, their winter? You want to give up our famous New York heat waves for snow storms? I've seen LOTR!

@TinaTweets: I'll pack my scarf. "Strawberries, cherries and an angel's kiss in spring / My summer wine is really made from all these things."

@LivvyOnLife: Winter wine, more like it. What is your [#winterwine](#) made of?

@TinaTweets: Ashton's kisses, of course. Two weeks to go and counting! [#nzmustdo](#)

Auckland, 10 June

@TinaTweets: Landed safely. Ashton meeting me at the airport. After 30 hours of travel, I need a shower and makeup.

@LivvyOnLife: You're procrastinating. Perfume, lipstick, then go through customs and meet the man of your dreams!

@TinaTweets: Livvy, I'm scared.

@LivvyOnLife: Go.

Auckland, 11 June

@TinaTweets: Auckland is gorgeous! Volcano cones in vivid green, slate grey of sea waves, Sky Tower reigns like a rocket over the city.

@LivvyOnLife: Stuff Auckland. Tell me about Ashton. [#isthislove](#)

@TinaTweets: I am telling you about Ashton. Rockets, volcanoes, waves. Get it?

@LivvyOnLife: Wait, what? Pull your mind out of the gutter! And – you didn't, did you? The first night? Tina!

@TinaTweets: Kidding. Separate motel rooms. Ashton's a perfect gentleman. I wish he wasn't, though! Liv, he's every bit as smart and funny as online...

@TinaTweets: ... and much better looking than at school. His photos don't do him justice. Also, he has a Kiwi accent now. Mega cute.

Rotorua, 14 June

@LivvyOnLife: Earth to Tina.

@TinaTweets: Sorry. So much to tell you. Too much.

@LivvyOnLife: !!! ☺☺☺ ???

@TinaTweets: No, nothing like that. I mean, we're very cuddly all the time, but still separate rooms. I think I like that.

@LivvyOnLife: "When it comes to love I want a man with a slow hand"?

@TinaTweets: Exactly. Anyway, saw Hobbiton at last. Got close and personal to hobbit burrows. Also, took a boat ride through some caves with a funny name and lots of glow worms.

@LivvyOnLife: [#romantic](#)

@TinaTweets: You have no idea. [#romantic](#) [#dreamy](#) [#notsteamyet](#)

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Rotorua, 15 June

@TinaTweets: Long soaks in natural hot springs with the guy who might just be The One...

@TinaTweets: ... Mock mud fights in geothermal mud pools...

@TinaTweets: ... Life is good.

@LivvyOnLife: [#winterwine](#) ?

@TinaTweets: You bet.

Napier, 17 June

@TinaTweets: Love Napier's Art Deco architecture. Sad to learn it's the result of tragedy. 1931 earthquake, at least 256 people died...

@TinaTweets: ... Pensive today. Life is short...

@TinaTweets: ... Carpe diem. Right?

@LivvyOnLife: Um. Yes in principle. But what are you actually asking?

@TinaTweets: Feels like I've been given an opportunity with this trip – to do something different with my time. Something worthwhile. What do you think?

@LivvyOnLife: I think time's a funny thing. You say it's the 17th. Still the 16th back home. So did you lose a day? Did we? ...

@LivvyOnLife: ... But what's the opportunity you mentioned? I Googled Napier and it's definitely rebuilt, so it can't be that? [#TinaWantsToChangeTheWorld](#)

@TinaTweets: Later. Our tour bus awaits. We're visiting five wine estates today. [#winterwine](#)

@TinaTweets: PS Yeah. Tina definitely wants to change the world.

Napier, 17 June

@TinaTweets: Thank goodness for the door-to-door service on the wine tour. Ashton is a superb driver but we've had A LOT of wine. Bed now. [#NZwinerocks](#)

@LivvyOnLife: Bed? What do you mean? As in together? One bed?

@LivvyOnLife: Tina?

Napier, 18 June

@TinaTweets: Headache. A tiny one. [#winterwine](#) well worth it...

@TinaTweets: ... One of the wines we've tasted grows on an old riverbed which diverted its course during the flood the 1860s...

@LivvyOnLife: Fascinating. So? What happened after "bed now"?

@TinaTweets: We went to bed.

@LivvyOnLife: OMG! The same bed?

@TinaTweets: The same.

@LivvyOnLife: Tell.

@TinaTweets: We fell asleep straight away. Too much wine. But hey, at least we slept together...

@TinaTweets: ... Also, this morning Ashton picked me up fireman-style and started running around the room. When I asked him why, he said...

@TinaTweets: ... "I want to make sure I can save you in case there's another earthquake."

Palmerston North, 19 June

@TinaTweets: Absolutely nothing to do in this town. Will try to seduce Ashton tonight.

@LivvyOnLife: What about wanting a man with a slow hand?

@TinaTweets: It's plenty slow. Any tips on how to seduce a guy who's already into you but wants to give you time to shed your emotional baggage?

@LivvyOnLife: Wine?

@TinaTweets: Been there, done that, and the T-shirt doesn't fit. ☺

@LivvyOnLife: Google says: tease, talk dirty, write dirty, surprise him, show up naked (bring beer), suggest something new.

@TinaTweets: Like, let's do more than kiss? [#melting](#) [#hesureknowshowtokiss](#)

@LivvyOnLife: How about telling him you've shed your emotional baggage?

Wellington, 20 June

@TinaTweets: This is indeed the cutest capital city ever.

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Ashton is friends with an ice cream shop owner, so we made chocolate ice cream. [#oompaloompas](#)

@LivvyOnLife: I take it nothing happened in Palmerston North?

@TinaTweets: Nothing ever happens in Palmerston North. No, that's not true. We did play never-have-I-ever.

@LivvyOnLife: And?

@TinaTweets: And now I truly know him. [#ithinkthisis-love](#)

Wellington, 21 June

@TinaTweets: Tonight is the longest night of the year. Ashton asked me to pack an overnight bag – we'll leave the suitcases in the car. [#adventure](#)

Ferry to Picton, 23 June

@TinaTweets: The longest night of the year felt surprisingly short, even though we didn't sleep a wink. [#thisis-love](#) [#heistheone](#)

@LivvyOnLife: Dare I hope you've finally done the deed? Danced the horizontal tango? Rode the broomstick?

@TinaTweets: To heaven and back, girlfriend.

@LivvyOnLife: Phew! I might actually need a cigarette. Now, all the details, quick.

@TinaTweets: Not all the details. But the PG-rated ones include: helicopter ride, secluded lodge, outdoor bubble bath, views of ...

@TinaTweets: ... snow-capped mountains, craggy coastline, dolphins playing in the shipping lane. We may have heard wild horses...

@TinaTweets: ... The Pinot Noir was from a region called Glistening Waters. Tasted of maraschino cherries and vanilla. The best ever [#winterwine](#) ...

@TinaTweets: ... Anyway, we're crossing the Cook Strait and we have a private cabin on the ferry. Double bed. Bye! Definitely won't BRB!

Picton, 24 June

@TinaTweets: Wine tasting in an underground cellar – legendary! We're on a honey farm now. When I grow up, I want to be a bee keeper.

Greymouth, 26 June

@TinaTweets: Coastal rocks shaped like stacks of pancakes. Who would have thought? [#nzscenery](#) [#bucketlist](#)

Franz Josef Glacier, 27 June

@TinaTweets: [#speechless](#)

Nelson, 28 June

@TinaTweets: We're home. Ashton has – actually has – a teeny vineyard. And beehives. And sheep. [#inlove](#)

@LivvyOnLife: Wait. Are you in love with the guy or with his new country?

@TinaTweets: Ashton. He completes me. We laugh and get lost in conversations for hours.

Nelson, 30 June

@TinaTweets: Ashton asked me to stay in NZ.

@LivvyOnLife: Tina! If you tell me you didn't say ----

@TinaTweets: I said: "What took you so long?"



Yvonne Eve Walus, a novelist and poet, is a member of generation X. Born in the communist Poland, she grew up in the apartheid-time South Africa and now lives in New Zealand with her family. Although writing has always been a big part of her identity, Yvonne obtained a PhD in Mathematics and supplements her income working as a project manager, business analyst and trouble-shooter.

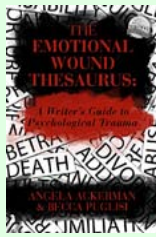
An Author who writes in several languages Yvonne is determined to make it to the New York Times Top Ten. She is a full member of Crime Writers' Association (CWA UK) and Romance Writers of New Zealand (RWNZ). Her books include: MURDER @ PLAY, MURDER @ WORK, and OPERATION: GENOCIDE are set in South Africa and published in USA.

To learn more about Yvonne visit: <http://www.yvonnevalus.com>

"A wounded deer leaps the highest."

— Emily Dickinson

The Bookshelf



The Emotional Wound Thesaurus

Angela Ackerman & Becca Puglisi

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B076KFRFNF/>

Readers connect to characters with depth, ones who have experienced life's ups and downs. To deliver key players that are both realistic and compelling, writers must know them intimately—not only who they are in the present story, but also what made them that way. Of all the formative experiences in a character's past, none are more destructive than emotional wounds. The aftershocks of trauma can change who they are, alter what they believe, and sabotage their ability to achieve meaningful goals, all of which will affect the trajectory of your story. *The Emotional Wound Thesaurus* will give you all the tools you need to create characters with more depth and more complex and realistic emotion.



Write Like A Boss

Honoree Corder & Ben Hale

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0765MGBHF/>

It's a new era for writers—one in which the gatekeepers are gone, and anyone with the passion and the talent can write and publish their story for the world to discover. But becoming a full-time author takes more than talent. It takes approaching the work as a discipline and as a business. *Write Like a Boss: From a Whisper to a Roar!* is the guide you've been searching for to answer your questions and put you on the path to writing and publishing full time. Learn how to take your passion and talent and channel them into a business that can inspire readers worldwide!



How To Relaunch Your Book

Sam Kerns

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0721GX342/>

The book provides authors with a seven step plan to help them revitalise and relaunch old books that are no longer selling or which have never seen a lot of success. Don't keep writing new books to replace the ones that have slipped down the rankings - use this guide to get success from your existing ones!



Naked Good Reads

Gisela Hausmann

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B075R4VPNB/>

All authors know that Goodreads is the social media platform where 55 million readers and authors meet. The only issue is "how to introduce your book to these millions of readers?" In her latest #naked book Gisela Hausmann reveals strategic tricks how to find out you can get the most out of your Goodreads profile.



Ten Tips For Topping The Romance Charts

Mark Dawson

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B075XG1T47/TenTips>

Romance author Serenity Woods and best selling author Mark Dawson provide ten short tips to help the eager beginner interested in turning their hobby of writing romance stories into a way to earn a living.

Regional Round-Up Reports

Auckland

Convenor: Pamela Gervai
(pamelagervai.com)

Thank you to Ruth Bell who took the meeting for me as I was out of Auckland. She has written the following report. Twenty eight members attended the October Auckland Chapter meeting. It was a wonderful session and a lot of really good information about writing craft, editing, book covers and more was discussed by our panel and members alike. I'm sure that everyone left the meeting armed with some nugget of wisdom that will help them on their writing journey.

A huge thank you to Yvonne Lindsay, Nalini Singh and Karina Bliss for volunteering to be our wonderful panelists and for sharing your time, knowledge and expertise about all things writing and publishing. It was also really nice to see a few new members at the meeting this month - welcome and thanks for coming along, mucking in and participating! I hope to see you again at our next meeting. Lastly, thanks to Amanda and Lynette for your assistance with running the Chapter meeting.

Our next meeting will be on 4th November - our last formal one for the year, and Jackie Ashenden is our speaker. She lives in Auckland, New Zealand with her husband, the inimitable Dr Jax, two kids, two cats and a couple of curious rats. When she's not torturing alpha males and their stropky heroines, she can be found drinking chocolate martinis, reading anything she can lay her hands on, posting random crap on Twitter, or being forced to go mountain biking with her husband.

As usual, it will be held at the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion from 12:30 - 3:00pm.

Hawke's Bay

Convenor: Kendra Delugar
(kendraonthemove@hotmail.com)

Our October meeting was a lovely event that took place at No.5 Cafe and Larder. Since we hadn't had a September meeting there was quite a bit to catch up on, including who'd gotten what requests from their pitches at conference. Then we all just talked about what we were doing (we had several on deadlines, both book, competition and writing festival) and what we planned to achieve over the next month.

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 1pm, and new members are always welcome. Our next meeting will be held on the 4th of November at Jackie's - and we'll be bringing our blurbs to be read out and discussed/critiqued/tweaked.

Wellington/Kapiti Coast

Convenor: Kris Pearson (kris.p@paradise.net.nz)
with Jane Ashurst

We were back at Anna's in October, and welcomed new member Sara. The Americans are taking over! After a round table catch-up, Anna read part of a synopsis for comments, and several of us read out 250-character short blurbs – the kind of thing needed for promotion sites. We talked about how we could best support each other with marketing – maybe by including each other's new releases in our newsletters, and providing reviews, too. Kris received some unexpected publicity on the HEA Blog (USA Today) for a book that's not quite finished, so she's on rocket fuel.

Our next meeting venue will be advised by email, and will include information from Peter about his LITKIWIS social marketing app. Date and time: November 4th, 1 pm.

Nelson

Convenor: Annika Ohlson-Smith
(nelsonromancewriters@xtra.co.nz)

First of all, a Big Thank you to all in our group for a great job with the short story competition this year too, to our very generous sponsors, to Angela Bissell, our final judge and last but not least all clever romance writers out there, who submitted to our competition. Today, Wednesday 18 October, we couriered the prize baskets to the First prize-winners of each category (see elsewhere in H2H). Congratulations all three!

At our meeting last Saturday, we learnt a lot about 'Show & Tell' thanks to a very constructive workshop by Lorna. Heaps of thanks, Lorna! We decided we probably need to have a replay next year, as it was a lot to take in. The November meeting will be extra heartfelt, as we will create hearts en masse for the Christmas Tree Festival. Our theme this year is 'Open Your Heart'. If there's time, we might have a last writing exercise as well, before the summer holiday sets in. Anyone interested in joining us, is welcome to contact Annika at nelsonromancewriters@xtra.co.nz

Coast to Coast Convenor: Vivienne Matthews (vivienmatthewswriter@gmail.com)

Blenheim Convenor: Iona Jones (ionajones@xtra.co.nz)

Christchurch Convenor: Jane Madison-Jones (mad-diejane@xtra.co.nz)

Otago Convenor: Samantha Charlton (samanthacharlton@hotmail.com)