

Heart to Heart

ROMANCE WRITERS
OF NEW ZEALAND

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The Experimental Entrepreneur

Kris Pearson



Inside this too-tubby body, and under this short silver hair, lurks a naughty experimental entrepreneur.

I didn't expect it to be the case five years ago, but indie publishing has made me fearless.

What's the worst that

can happen? I make myself look foolish for a while, then I fix the funny and everyone forgets. The flexibility is truly amazing.

I got into self-publishing quite early, and because I'd entered books into The Clendon Award year after year I had a selection of novels more-or-less ready to go. I was very, very lucky. Lucky with my timing, and lucky that I had the books ready-written. To my genuine surprise, the train began to roll down the track and kept on picking up speed.

These days, it's not so easy to break in. Everyone is whacking books up on Amazon regardless of quality. If they put enough effort into their blurb and they sound like a good read, I sometimes buy them. And then—after struggling through a chapter and snorting at typos, truly bad grammar, choppy changes of POV, and blatantly unedited work—I delete them from my Kindle. I should take my own good advice and always click the cover to read the sample before buying.

So how does an author get noticed? At the time I write this, there are more than three million books in the Amazon store. That's a daunting total to be up against. My current WIP is taking forever to write, so I've been considering the books I already have out there—and I've been playing.

A couple of years ago I had some translated into Spanish to see if I could crack a new market. I had a lovely time getting to know my chosen translator by email, and even though I stopped at four books, we're still in friendly touch. This was expensive though, and promotion proved practically impossible in a language I didn't speak. I've slowly recovered the translation costs, but not made much money. I'm interested to find they sell much better through Nook than on Amazon.

Then I heard that a company called [Fiberead](#) was looking for English-language books to translate (at their cost) for the huge Chinese market. Oh yes *please!* I queried, was accepted, sent the files off, and was annoyed to find that—although any amount of violence was welcome—people being nice to each other in bed was not allowed. Could I remove the love scenes? No! Never mind, onward and upward.

I've also been experimenting with a company called Babelcube, and you could try them too. www.babelcube.com/ Babelcube is a co-operative venture where books are translated into a number of languages. The translator

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

makes the bulk of the money to start with (so it's in their interest to put some effort into promotion or they make nothing for all their translation work.) The author's share increases with the number of copies sold. But hey-ho — the books are already written, so it's very little extra work.

Results have been mixed. You put an excerpt of your work up and translators decide whether they want to offer for the job. I was interested in Portuguese, mostly because Brazil is a vast market and just starting to explode on the e-book front. Also interested in German, French and Italian. Germany is huge for romance. I've just checked the romance section of the iBook store there. So many familiar famous names and covers. Not mine yet, unfortunately.

You do have to be careful with Babelcube. I've heard that language students, keen for money, will split a book among a team so you get various 'voices' and even pieces of Google Translate. *That* could be disastrous. You get the first ten pages to check, then the completed book. It's a bit daunting when you don't know the translator, or have no-one you trust to check it for you.

I have a Brazilian lady who *says* she's completed her book, but it keeps mysteriously not arriving. For all I know, she's published it herself under a title I'll never find. Good luck to her.

Having other people do the work is okay, but I wanted to put some effort in myself. I have a number of books set in Wellington which trundle along quite well. Two sheikhs, ditto. My three rural books have been less successful—sinking slowly down Amazon's rankings, sometimes close to the half million mark. That sounds pretty disastrous, but it's still around the top fifteen percent of sales. Not good enough though! There was also a twenty-two-year-old who said he spoke seven languages and took ten days to translate each book. *That'd* be a good product. I turned him down!

I'm currently working with an Italian lady who has a string of good references, is keeping to the timetable, and is keen to do other titles for me. I can read enough Italian to

be able to check what she sends, and it's looking fine. So we'll see what transpires. Now a German lady has approached me to do one. Having a friend who speaks German is a great safety net.

What could I do?

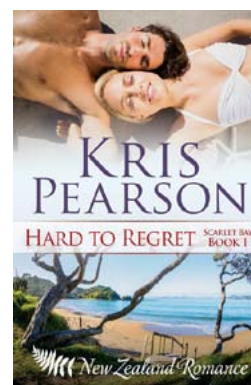
- I could change the keywords by which people search for them. I had a good think and a fiddle with those.
- I could definitely update their blurbs, and make them sound more enticing.
- I could change their covers. Diana Fraser is having great success with much happier cover shots on her Italian series. At a recent local meeting someone pointed out that my people on these rural books weren't wearing many clothes. Was I sending the wrong message? Off I went, searching for happy people wearing clothes.

What happened?

For starters, the mere fact that I did *something* (changing keywords and blurbs) shot all three up in the Amazon rankings by at least 100,000. So the moral of the story there, is: keep giving your books attention that Amazon can track.

In each case though, I selected the book whose cover people seemed to like the most ([Melting His Heart](#)) and priced it down to 99 cents from \$2.99, and did a *very* little promo to let people know about the new price. Spent \$8.50. Up it shot into the 19,000's. Spent another \$8.50, and found it had appeared in iBooks NZ's store at number 157 of their 200 contemporary top paid romances.

But in each case, without attention the books slowly sink down the rankings again, but they've still made decent gains. So this is fun! I'm going to update the keywords and blurbs on all my other novels and see what happens.



continued on page 3

continued from page 2

A few weeks ago I decided to approach a professional cover designer and get a totally new look for everything instead of playing with them myself. But *ouch*. Eighteen covers cost a bomb.

I've kept the four Spanish books as they are because I don't think the investment is worth it for them. My three books of short stories are now combined into one super-book. And I've completely unpublished one book that didn't sell a lot. These choices made the new cover exercise slightly more affordable.

I've decided my point of difference in the world is that the books are mostly set in New Zealand so (shock, horror!) I've chosen New Zealand scenery for every new cover, and even added a silver fern logo. I love the designs so far. One of the biggest surprises is that I'm now selling more short stories at \$2.99 than I was at 99 cents.

The other adventure I'm having is with South Korea. Its long-established newspaper empire is probably feeling the pinch and has decided to move into the publishing of contemporary romance e-books. They can see there's money to be made if they do it well. So I queried through an agent, invited them to visit my website, and was pleased to get a request for eleven novels for translation into Korean, plus Korean Braille.

As there are fifty-two million people in Korea, it's worth a go. The contracts mention 'war or armed conflict' being reasons publication might not proceed—but I guess with Kim Jong-Il sitting over the border that clause is understandable!

On a final note, I decided to step outside my comfort zone and have a crack at writing a bear shifter novella. Bears and billionaires are hugely popular, and I thought I'd write a bear better than a billionaire. It appeared on my [website](#) on the 'Extra! Extra!' page in instalments, but I've decided not to publish it because it's so different from anything else I've written. Ideal as a freebie for people who sign up to my newsletter though. Might get me some new readers? Might not, too!

I have to say that an indie author's work is never done. The upside, though, is the constant possibility that something might happen, and it'll be you who worked the magic.

Kris Pearson is Convener for the Wellington Chapter of RWNZ. She writes Contemporary Romance with a distinctly New Zealand flavor. Visit her at www.krispearson.com

The Welcome Mat!

Roll out the red carpet! A huge welcome to our new and returning members! It's lovely to have you with us.

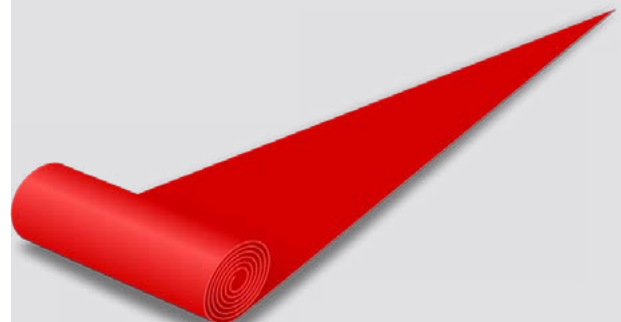
Keri Arthur - Australia

Freya Hatfield - Auckland

Lisa Rose - Auckland

Jackie Rutherford - Napier

Courtney Stove - Blenheim



From The Editor



One of the things that happens as you get older—whether you're a writer or not—is that you encounter the realities of watching someone you love fade away. For me, it's my mum. She's the most amazing, fun lady. Incredibly strong-willed and just as tender-hearted. But as a family we've realized time with her—quality time, anyway—is short.

So, every month or so, I go and stay with her for a week. Her sight's bad so she can no longer drive. Her memory glitches every so often and leaves her bewildered and frightened until it clicks back in. She bosses me around. I boss her back. We visit family, go shopping, pay bills, cook enough meals to fill the freezer until I'm back again, and generally enjoy each other's company.

Writing—and everything related to it—does not exist.

For a while I resented this. Then I realized I was missing the entire point. Writing didn't carry me for nine months, raise me, discipline me, and love me. My mother did. Books fed my mind, but my mother fed my body and taught me how to feed my soul. Here was my chance to give back some of the care she's given me.

The truth is we are not *just* writers with deadlines. We are human beings, and human life happens between heartbeats, not between pages. Life between the pages will still be there when the people you love are not. If you're a daughter with an aging parent, you only have a short period of time left with them. Forget the past, the silly quarrels, and the hurt pride. One day your mum's place will be empty and all you'll have left are the memories of how you spoke to her today, how you touched her with love, how you laughed and cried together.

There'll be no more phone calls, no more of the same stories you've heard a thousand times before. That part of your life will be empty. Cold. Forever silent. You might wish you'd done things differently, told her you loved her, shown her the patience and care she spent your childhood showing you. But it'll be too late.

Writing will wait. Time will not.

Today is all you have. Give it with joy. Live it with love.

Gracie

The Pacific Hearts Awards

You want to enter a competition but you really just want to write a book. Well, with the **Pacific Hearts Award** you can do both—and at the same time.

Because November is NaNoWriMo, and because Christmas is nearly on us (eek!)—and then there’s the holidays and summer and heaven knows what else—we’re giving you a heads-up now before March whips up behind us and bites us on the leg.

The Pacific Hearts Award opens 1 March and closes 31 March. This contest is for completed, unpublished romance manuscripts of between 45,000 and 110,000 words.

The Rules

(Please read them. It’s gutting when we have to reject an entry or an entrant.)

1. The contest is for a romance novel

This contest is for a complete romance manuscript. **All sub-genres** of the romance genre are acceptable. For the purpose of this contest, **a romance is defined** as a fictional story in which the development and resolution of a romance between two people is a primary motivation of the plot. **A happy ending is mandatory.** The romance must move from one level to the next through the course of the story. Where there is doubt about the classification of a submission, the sponsors will decide its classification, and their decision will be binding.

2. Entrants

Each entrant must be a current financial member of the Romance Writers of New Zealand. If the manuscript is a collaboration, each contributor must be a current financial member of Romance Writers of New Zealand. At the closing date for the contest, **entrants (not only the entry) must not have been published, self-published, contracted to publish, or been accepted to publish, whether**

in print or digitally, within the previous five years. The only exceptions: publication of short stories of up to 30,000 words and non-fiction works within the previous five years will not affect eligibility.

3. Entry conditions

Please ensure you have complied with all conditions in the RWNZ Contest Rules, below, in addition to the specific Pacific Heart Contest Rules. **Up to two entries** will be accepted from each entrant. Submissions must not have received a first, second, or third placing in a previous Pacific Hearts or Clendon contest. All manuscripts deemed not to be romances by the above definition will be disqualified. Entry fee is not refundable under any circumstances, and is required to finalise the online entry form. A separate entry fee is payable for each manuscript entered. Entries close at midnight on 31 March of the year of the contest. Any entries received by the contest manager after this time and date will not be accepted. Please contact us before the closing date if you do not receive email confirmation that your entry has been submitted.

You’ll find the full rules here: <http://www.romancewriters.co.nz/contests/pacific-hearts-award/>

Have a go. You can definitely do it.



From the President

Hello Everyone!

Wow, November already. Where has this year gone? I know I've been busy both personally and as President. Your Executive has been exceedingly busy since we took over in August, and I have to thank the team—especially as I had an unexpected few days in hospital in October.

Here's a quick summary.

- We have completed the survey and received amazing feedback. Thank you!
- Our top priority has been to sort out several key administration functions: to institute proper email addresses for the organisation, to make our financial function easier to maintain and track (we are now on Xero), and to effect better safeguards on our increasingly unwieldy RWNZ document and email history by moving away from Dropbox to online storage.
- We have completed a detailed functional spec for our new website, and appointed a firm in Christchurch to begin building a new Wordpress website. This, together with a friendlier feel and more appropriate copy, will mean an enhanced user experience for you. RWAustralia are about to launch their new Wordpress website. We hope to launch ours sometime in February — maybe Valentine's Day. The new site will deliver an appropriate e-commerce platform and a facility for things like webinars. It will also provide individual logins and a secure members area. We're also instituting a protected administration area so we can file documents related to the running of RWNZ, retain the institutional memory of the organization, and minimize storage costs.
- We are meeting this month and next to analyse the survey feedback to draft a strategic

plan.

- RWNZ also applied to register as a charity with the Charities Commission.

Relating to this last bullet point. When I took over as President, I soon realized that RWNZ was not registered as a charity with the Charities Commission. As I deal with the Charities Commission in my other job I know a bit about the situation for not-for-profit organisations. The law changed in 2012, and in order to continue to claim tax exemptions from the IRD, an organization had to apply to be registered with the commission. As RWNZ has not applied since the change in 2012, we have no income tax filing exemption and should have been submitting tax returns to the IRD.

We're currently working with the IRD to fix this. An accountant is going through the financial data and calculating RWNZ's liability for the years ended 31 March 2012 –2016. We're liable for tax on the profit generated from non-members, which is really only conference profit earned from non-members. This amount should not be substantial—but it will be at the IRD's discretion whether or not they charge us penalties for non-compliance and interest on any amount owing. Obviously, this is high priority for Karen, our treasurer. When we know the amount to pay, we will let you know.

I'd also like to thank the 2017 RWNZ Conference Team who are working extremely hard to bring you an amazing 2017 conference. I'm so excited about the programme they are developing. So start saving your pennies, book your accommodation and airfares when a deal comes up, and mark your calendars.

AND if you'd like to help organize the 2018

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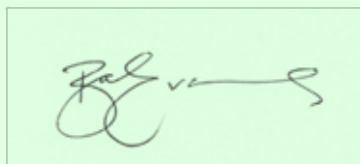
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conference, please complete the [online form!](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdBZH4_uqZ4B9uVoBWnrSX-Zl6d5L9QVB0aPuQ5m6r0mMT7wvg/viewform?c=0&w=1) (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdBZH4_uqZ4B9uVoBWnrSX-Zl6d5L9QVB0aPuQ5m6r0mMT7wvg/viewform?c=0&w=1) It's hard work but a lot of fun! PLUS you'll love one headline speaker we already have lined up.

Have a great month! I'm looking forward to hearing what you're all doing on the RWNZ FB page.

If you have any concerns regarding RWNZ, please feel free to email me president@romancewriters.co.nz

Take care and productive writing!



Bronwen Evans
President RWNZ



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Heart to Heart will be published in the first week of each month except January.

The deadline for every issue is the 20th of the month prior (e.g. - 20th August for September issue). Please have all articles, news, reports, and advertising to Gracie at gracioneil@xtra.co.nz on or before the deadline.

Woo & Hoos!



Karina Bliss's second *Rock Solid* series romance **PLAY** published in the holiday anthology **YOU HAD ME AT CHRISTMAS**, launched 17 October, with fellow contemporary authors Molly O'Keefe, Laura Florand, Jennifer Lohrmann and Stephanie Doyle. The anthology is priced at 99 cents until 22 November. Visit www.karinabliss.com for excerpts and buy links.

Shirley Wine's **GIVE ME SOME ANSWERS** was published by Harlequin Escape on 15 October.



Bronwen Evans's 15th book **A NIGHT OF FOREVER** - the 6th book in her *Disgraced Lords*-series - came out on 25 October.

Allison Withers's (w/a Alison Butler) second book in her *Highland Brides* series **THE ROGUE** will be released on 5 December.



Kris Pearson's **HARD TO REGRET**, the first book in her *Scarlet Bay* series, launches 4 November and is up for pre-order. Available in ebook or paperback.

From WTF? To OMG! Crafting A Killer Book With Early Action Elements

Gracie O'Neil

Using the analogy of constructing a building, let's assume you've laid the story's foundation and move on to look at the reinforcing it needs to make it strong.

In a building, the reinforcement is seated in the foundations, and placed for stabilizing effect and protection. The foundations prevent the building from sinking. The reinforcement stops the building falling over. This is simplistic, but accurate enough.

In a novel, the structural reinforcement is known as the **Problem/Decision Arc**. A Problem/Decision Arc is, essentially, a sequence of events and actions (**problems**) that moves your heroine through an escalating series of exterior obstacles and interior conflicts to her goal, and the changes that dealing with those obstacles and conflicts (**decisions**) work in her.

Here's what the generic skeleton of the Problem/Decision Arc looks like:

- Early Action Elements —a.k.a. The Normal Life (from the start of Act One to the Inciting Incident)
- Inciting Incident **Problem** followed by the Inciting Incident **Decision**
- First Turning Point **Problem** followed by the First Turning Point **Decision**
- Midpoint **Problem** followed by the Midpoint **Decision**
- Second Turning Point **Problem** followed by the Second Turning Point **Decision**
- Crisis **Problem** followed by the Crisis **Decision**

As you can see, **every element has two parts**—a **Problem** and a **Decision**. Why? Because **making an active decision to deal with a problem**—any problem at all—is the **only way to develop solid character**.

Life can't just happen to our heroine. She must have a goal, a desire, and she **has to make things happen in order to accomplish that goal**—it's part of being a heroic. When life hands her a **problem**—or she does something to create a problem—she then has to make an **active decision** about how to deal with it. If she doesn't make a decision she remains a stunted person, unheroic. Every time she makes an active, positive decision she grows. Every time she screws up, she learns. The next decision and its consequences create the next positive or negative event. That event then provides another problem, which—you've got it—requires another decision.

If she doesn't make a decision, then all you have is three hundred pages of stuff happening to a gutless wimp who shows no growth in character, and doesn't accomplish her goal in any realistic form by the end of the book.

The first step in preparing to write your book faster begins with creating the ideal Problem/Decision Arc for your story.

Generic is easy, but how do you create a fabulous, innovative, gripping Problem/Decision Arc **specific to your story**? You do it by mining the guts and emotion out of your Early Action Elements.

What are Early Action Elements?

For me, discovering Early Action Elements was winning the writing lottery. I knew you were supposed to establish a heroine's normal life upfront so you could show it changing with the Inciting Incident blah blah blah. But it never occurred to me that there could be any other reason for the first ten percent of the book other than, hey, look, normal person.

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And then I read Stephen J. Carter's [Story Crisis, Story Climax 2: Build a Problem/Decision Arc in Your Novel](#), and discovered Early Action Elements. After that, instead of struggling with where I wanted the story to go—other than a happy ending, of course—I had the keys for the entire book in my hands.

According to Carter, Early Action Elements are:

*"... several elements of the hero's life and world which **represent the attitude, values, and desires** in the rest of his life. The story's early action is intended to: ... **depict establishing events** to clearly lay out [the hero's normal] world: [his] **life, job, circumstances, preferences, desires, and values.**"*

It sounds basic and straightforward. But it's full of creative insight, because once you know what the heroine's past is **then you know what her concept of normal is**. Once you know that, **then you know what she is going to fight like the devil for in order to maintain**. You also **know the things that she needs to let go in order to become a true heroine**, not just an average person.

In real life, we all have backstory; things in our past that have made us what we are—or what we think we are. Ideals we believe in. We all have secrets and fears. Goals we aim for. Desires we want to achieve. We all have areas where we won't compromise. In real life, our past—the problems we have already faced and the decisions we have already made—is the foundation on which we're building our current lives. We build our future in the present, one problem, one decision, at a time.

In real life, it's not the problems we encounter in our lives that make us grow. **Our growth comes from the decisions we make about those problems, and the way we deal with them.**

Same in the story world. **Our heroine comes into the story already fully formed**. She has a **past, ideals** she believes in, **crap she won't put up with, lines in the sand** she won't compromise on. She has **secrets and fears**. **Goals** she's aiming for. **Desires** she's desperate

to achieve.

These are the things we need to discover about her, the past life events that make her tick the way she does, the gut-wrenching things, the human things, the relatable things. And not because we need thirty pages of normal life to happen before we can get into the real action.

We need to discover these things because **every problem that comes up in the Problem /Decision Arc** from Inciting Incident through to Crisis **needs to challenge those established**—and often engraved in stone—**assumptions, attitudes, values, and desires that she has built her life on**. The reason? **Because some of them are destroying her**, and unless we create an intervention **she's going to wreck her life**.

These Engraved-In-Stone Beliefs are weapons we can use to stab our heroine to the heart at every Turning Point and Crisis in the book. They're the demons she has to face. The decisions she has to make. The personal epiphanies she has to experience.

They're what make her relatable, and the reader becomes desperate for her to get her happy ending, because she deserves it.

The easiest way to show you how it works is to give an example. Here's the backstory setup for my heroine's Early Action Elements in BLOOD SHADOW (a Rom Suspense with paranormal elements).

It's England, 1899. Abigail St. James is a woman ahead of her time. She loves her husband dearly, but wants a marriage where she's considered an equal partner. She married Thomas in Egypt, without parental permission, and without telling him the truth about her wealthy family and her psychic heritage.

She is the Seventh Daughter in a female-only line of psychically gifted women—the result of a gypsy blessing that created the Legend of the Seventh Daughter of the Seventh Daughter—and, as the first Seventh Daughter—is expected to be the pinnacle of them all. But Abigail has spent most of her life without any apparent psychic gifts. Worse, she's the first of her bloodline in seven generations to produce a

continued on page 10

continued from page 9

male descendant. In fact, she has (OMG!) triplet sons.

Her husband loves her, but he hates the paranormal because its fascination destroyed his mother, and sent his father slightly mad. Abigail feels she can't be honest about who and what she is or she'll risk losing her sons.

Abigail's also hiding secrets. In her late teens, she was raped. During her pregnancy, she gained the ability of telethedia or travelling clairvoyance—now known as remote viewing. This gift comes with a cost, making her physically weak and emotionally volatile. She also bore a daughter.

She hides her gift and the daughter she dares not acknowledge not only from her husband, but also from her father and great aunt—who still see her as a pawn in their power games and want her to make a more socially advantageous marriage. Abigail fears her great-aunt's power and the threat she held over Abigail for many years—incarceration in an insane asylum unless she married where she was told. This threat and the rape caused Abigail to run away from England to Egypt and hide there.

Now, thanks to her husband's misunderstanding, her father and great aunt have found her and are about to descend on the family. The only way she'll be able to feel secure is by using her gift to watch those she loves, or those she feels are a threat to her happiness. This now includes the man her great aunt wanted her to marry; an old friend of her husband's—who also happens to be the man who raped her.

Okay, so **the Early Action Elements I've selected to develop Abigail's Problem/Decision Arc are:**

- Abigail adores her husband but is afraid to trust him, believing he won't love her any more if he learns she isn't who he thinks she is.
- She believes the only way to be safe, happy and live a full and satisfying life is to hide her psychic gift and destiny.
- She considers her psychic gift of telethedia and heritage as the Seventh Daughter to be worthless and is certain they'll only bring her grief.
- She fears the consequences should her great aunt (Lady Winifred) and Jasper Gainsford-Lyt-

10

ton discover she has lied to them

- The side effects of Abigail's use of her gift—physical weakness and emotional volatility—leave her open to the very thing she fears the most; a diagnosis of hysteria and incarceration in an asylum.

- She is convinced if he discovers the truth about her gifts and his daughter then power-hungry Jasper Gainsford-Lytton will destroy her husband and sons in order to force her into marriage with him .

So, let's craft the Inciting Incident.

Inciting Incident: The event that kicks off Abigail's journey

Problem—Challenge to Early Action Elements:

Abigail accidentally draws her husband's attention to a psychically-discerned message in the painting he's just received from his dead father's lawyer: a painting that Abigail senses is dark and metaphysically dangerous.

Elements challenged:

- Abigail adores her husband but is afraid to trust him, believing he won't love her any more if he learns she isn't who he thinks she is.
- Abigail believes the only way to be safe, happy and live a full and satisfying life is to hide her psychic gift and destiny.
- Abigail considers her psychic gift of telethedia and heritage as the Seventh Daughter to be worthless and is certain they'll only bring her grief.

Decision:

Fearing her cynical husband's rejection, Abigail first denies her vision and then, when exposed, plays down any psychic power as not being much at all.

See how it works?

The problem has forced Abigail to **make a decision** about how to handle the situation. She

continued on page 11

continued from page 10

makes that decision out of her fears, beliefs, desires, attitudes, and values. The result of her decision puts her under pressure, causes ripples in her family and relationships and ultimately **catapults her into more problems that challenge her Early Action Elements.**

Your turn.

Revisit your current Work In Progress. Take your heroine first. Pick six elements of her life and world that **represent** the **attitude, values,** and **desires** in her life—things she wants, fears, or loves. Write them down. Now look at the Turning Points and Crisis Points in your story. Have you maximized the conflict at those points by exploiting your heroine’s Early Action Elements? If not, how can you tweak what you already have to make the story deeper? Are there places it would be better to rework, rather than tweak?

Do the same for your hero.



Gracie O'Neil writes *Romantic Suspense*, lives in the Waikato, and is part of RWNZ’s C2C group. You can find out more about her work at

www.gracieoneil.com

“In order to write the book you want to write, in the end you have to become the person you need to become to write that book.”

Junto Diaz



Membership Survey Report

We’ve circulated the report on the responses from our member survey—so if you missed it, check your Spam folder. If it’s not there, email us for another copy.

Thanks again to everyone who responded—151 of you, which is terrific. We used this survey to ask: what do you want from RWNZ—what’s important and what’s not? What could we do better? What else could we be doing? We want to be sure we’re using your membership fees wisely, as well as everyone’s time and effort—hugely important when RWNZ depends entirely on volunteers with busy lives.

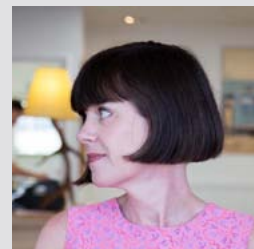
Our job now as Executive is to work out what RWNZ can achieve in the short, medium—and long-term. We will most likely prioritise improving what we do now over adding new services and resources, but we will aim to capture all the suggestions/ideas that were supported by other members. We will also look at how the proposed actions support the overall goals of RWNZ—we need to make sure we’re being true to our vision and purpose, and that we’re steering RWNZ in the right direction.

What you’ll see next from us is a draft plan with proposed actions, timings, and any estimated costs. We aim to have this completed by Christmas, and will circulate to members late Jan/early February next year, when the holiday madness has died down.

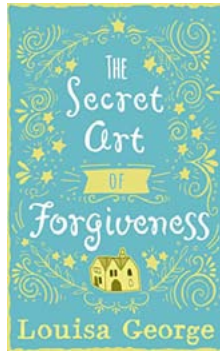
You will then have three to four weeks in which send us your thoughts and suggestions. We’ll review and incorporate those, and send out the revised plan for final approval.

Catherine Robertson

Email: vicepresident@romancewriters.co.nz



Get To Know Our Authors



Louise Groarke

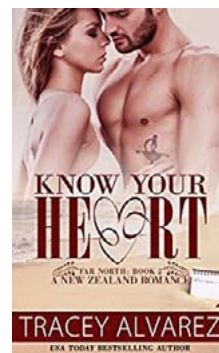
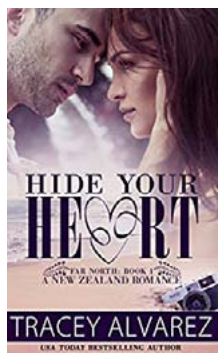
www.louisageorge.com

Louise is a member of our Auckland Chapter. She writes medical romance, contemporary romance, and women's fiction. When not writing or reading, she likes to travel, drink mojitos and do Zumba®. Preferably all at the same time.

Tracey Alvarez

www.traceyaltvarez.com

Fuelled by copious amounts of coffee, Wellington Chapter member Tracey writes steamy but heart-warming contemporary romances set in New Zealand. Her focus is on small coastal towns, close communities, and family.



Faye Robertson

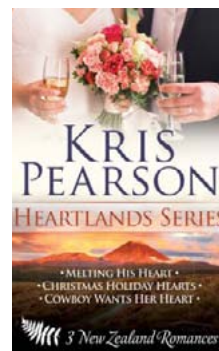
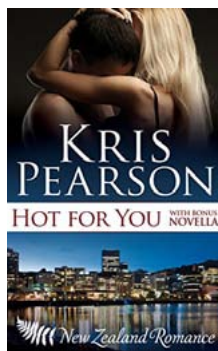
www.serenitywoodsromance.com

Auckland Chapter member Faye writes hot and sultry contemporary romances set in New Zealand. Her new series is a trio of sexy billionaire Christmas romances.

Kris Pearson

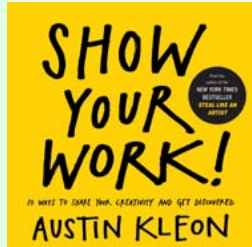
www.krispearson.com

Kris writes sexy New Zealand romance. She is convener of our Wellington/Kapiti Chapter and has been writing fiction for ten years. She's currently working on her second Scarlet Bay novel.



To have your cover/s on this free page, please email either EITHER one OR three covers PLUS bio PLUS buy links preferably via your website to heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz. First in, first featured.

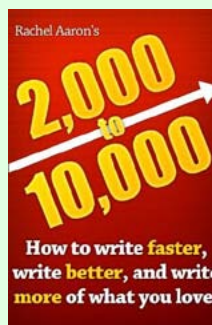
The Bookshelf



Show Your Work!
Austin Kleon

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00GU2RGGI>

“Human beings are interested in other human beings and what other human beings do. Audiences today not only want to stumble across great work, they, too, long to be part of the creative process. By showing people your ‘behind-the-scenes footage” [i.e. portions of incomplete and imperfect work], they can see the person behind the products, and they can better form a relationship with you and your work.” Austin Kleon



2,000 to 10,000
Rachel Aaron

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B009NKXAWS>

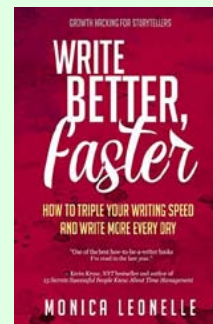
“I loved this book! So helpful!”
Courtney Milan, New York Times Best Selling author of *The Governess Affair*



Romancing The Beat
Gwen Hayes

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01DSJSURY/>

“This book changed the way I write romance novels. I am forever indebted to the author. I now outline and write books faster. I also sell a lot more copies.” Amazon Reviewer



Write Better, Faster
Monica Leonelle

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00TUEN7IO>

“Monica does a fantastic job of showing her process and explaining how to transition from outline to beats to full-blown novel. Even though I’d been aware of how beats work, I didn’t fully get it until this book, and then went on to churn out a novel in 5 weeks instead of my usual 12 - 18 months.”

Sable Jordan, author of the *Kizzie Baldwin* thriller series

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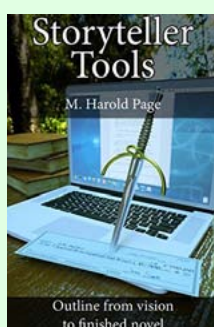


Take Off Your Pants!
Libbie Hawker

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UKCOGHA>

“This book changed not only my process but my understanding of a number of aspects of storytelling. I could almost hear the clicks in my head as things that I had kind-of-sort-of-maybe grasped before dropped solidly into place.”

Amazon Reviewer



Storyteller Tools
M. Harold Page

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00K6PBXY6/>

“The guide starts with some thoughts on the creative urge. It then proceeds as an easy explanation of the six tools the author uses to wrangle a set of intense but vague story ideas into consistent and interesting outlines and finally into a finished novel.” Amazon Reviewer

“There’s always room for a story that can transport people to another place.”

J. K. Rowling

Further Resources For Writers

1. Mark Edwards Interview Podcast

Don’t miss these great insights that will show you how to keep the readers you work so hard for. He’s the bestselling author of crime and psychological thrillers including *What You Wish For* and *Because She Loves Me*. His novel *The Magpies* topped the Amazon UK chart at #1 and has sold more than 250,000 copies alone. A transcript of the podcast is also available.

<http://bookmarketingtools.com/blog/keeping-the-readers-you-get/>

2. Battling Depression For Writers

Sometimes life is easy and fun. Sometimes you just want to crawl into a hole and die. If you’ve never experienced depression, then that might sound weird. If you have, you know what I mean. Here’s an encouraging article on battling depression as a writer. <http://www.shesnovel.com/blog/writing-when-depressed>

3. Self-Care For Writers

Here are some tips from author Jami Gold on Self Care for Writers. <http://jamigold.com/2016/03/self-care-for-writers/>

4. Work-Outs For Writers

Okay, I put the phrase “workouts for writers” into a search engine. One of the things I got back was this writing prompt: An all-female crew is picked for the first Mars mission. They all come back pregnant. Ummmm. That wasn’t exactly the kind of workout I was thinking of, Google. But thanks. This one is much more what I had in mind. <http://thewealthhealth.blogspot.co.nz/2013/08/fast-office-exercise-routine.html>

5. Help With Scrivener

Here’s a nice tutorial dealing with the differences between files and folders, and the distinctions when compiling. <http://www.writersterritory.com/2016/04/the-difference-between-files-and-folders-in-scrivener/>

Regional Round-Up Reports

Auckland

Convenor: Pamela Gervai (pamelagervai.com)

There were twenty-seven of us at our Auckland Chapter meeting. Daphne Clair de Jong was our speaker. She shared her valuable writing expertise regarding the use of sub-text.

Our next meeting on November 5th will feature Judge Barrie Travis, QSO. Barrie is a raconteur extraordinaire—if we can make him feel at home. He can be most entertaining and amusing. He is particularly knowledgeable about NZ soldiers at war and has done considerable research on the Battle of the Somme.

As usual our meeting venue is the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion from 12.30 until 3.00 p.m. Please bring a gold coin donation, change for the raffles, and a plate to share. Happy writing everyone.

Coast to Coast

Convenor: Sheryl Buchanan
(sheryl@rangeroadpress.co.nz)

The C2C October meeting was held in Tauranga at Grant Bayley's home. This meeting was planned as a 'coldread' session. We asked that people send in 500 words of a story they were working on. Sixteen members took part and most had writing samples to share.

After lunch, we read the manuscripts and commented on them. The writing was varied and interesting. Some pieces were fully realized. Others, a work in progress. It was absolutely brilliant hearing other people's work, and their feedback. In each sample you could hear the story's potential and the author's style. Everyone agreed this type of meeting was valuable and helpful.

Hawkes Bay

Convenor: Kendra Delugar
(kendraonthemove@hotmail.com)

Our October meeting was a small one with so many people away, so we had it at No. 5 Café & Larder—which was very nice.

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 1pm, and new (or visiting) members are always welcome. The November meeting will be held at Ginny's house, and we'll be bringing along the first two pages of current WIP to read out.

Wellington

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

Our October meeting took place at Kris's—a smaller gathering than usual, which meant everyone had time to talk and ask questions. Tracey told us about the promotion she had planned for her *Due South* boxed set—and a few days later she made the USA Today best-sellers list with it. Kris has just launched her first translation in Italian—through the Babelcube system. Scary and fun! Bonnie is off to the USA again and will be in Washington DC on election day. That should be amazing. Gudrun now has new knees, and Ellie is almost due for a new grandchild. We're all writing well and making progress of many kinds.

Next meeting will be at 1pm on Saturday November 5th, again at Kris's home in Ngaio. And Ellie has invited us all for Christmas lunch (provided we bring the food!) We've canvassed suitable dates, and an email will be sent to confirm the favourite.

Nelson

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

There were only a few of us at the October meeting, but we worked hard. We agreed to get our proposed workshop confirmed asap so we can book the venue for the end of February. Also decided to launch our Short Story Competition in May, with deadline of September 2017.

As we will be busy with that, we will only invite speakers for June, July, and August, and will approach three Nelson published writers to speak. We also agreed that our Xmas lunch will be our December meeting this year—a picnic potluck somewhere around the Tahuna Beach.

We brainstormed ideas to get 'fairies' for the Xmas tree we'll create at our November meeting. Next meeting is Saturday 12th November at 2 pm.

Blenheim

Contact: Iona Jones (ionajones@xtra.co.nz)

Christchurch

Contact: Jane Madison-Jones (maddiejane@xtra.co.nz)

Otago

Contact: Samantha Charlton (samanthacharlton@hotmail.com)