

# Heart to Heart

ROMANCE WRITERS  
OF NEW ZEALAND

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October 2016

## Do You NaNo? Carmen Does!

Help & Advice From A Seasoned NaNo Participant

***"I plan to again participate in NaNoWriMo. My first effort in 2014 nearly killed me. I was unwell, had little time for planning, and my book morphed into 81,000 words.***

*But I became chuffed with my achievement, and in 2015 began preparation early, including writing scene cards. I enjoyed when I wrote "in flow", and having a book after one month. I disliked the heavy daily writing.*

*I recommend entering – with a strong outline, stamina and grit. From NaNoWriMo I learned I can write more in a day than I thought, and that scene cards are my best friend."*

Carmen Aim

Some Practical NaNo Advice: Carmen found that having an outline helped her. If you're thinking about doing NaNo, here is a [story structure sheet](#) you might find helpful.



Carmen also mentioned scene cards, so here is a [You Tube video](#) (Part One of Three) by Ebony McKenna, on Writing With Scene Cards. It's fun, enjoyable and interesting. It was originally presented as a workshop at the Romance Writers of Australia National Conference in Melbourne in 2015.

### Membership Renewal Now Open!

The registration year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August.

New Members = \$74.00(+ bank charges)

Renewing Members = \$59.00 (+ bank charges)



KEEP CALM  
AND  
RENEW  
YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP

You can pay by credit card into the RWNZ PayPal account or (if you live in New Zealand) by Internet Banking.

**After 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016, unpaid subscriptions will be cancelled** and you'll need to pay the \$15.00 rejoining fee.

Nooo! Don't do that! You'll miss out on good stuff! Go to <http://www.romancewriters.co.nz/membership/>

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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 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior (e.g. - 20<sup>th</sup> August for September issue). Please have all articles, news, reports, and advertising to Gracie at [gracieoneil@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gracieoneil@xtra.co.nz) on or before the deadline.

## From The Editor

Well, September has gone so fast my ears are ringing. I actually heard someone mention the number of shopping days till Christmas last week. Yay. I think.

October's *Heart to Heart* is looking at tips and tricks for writing emotion. I think my favourite quote as I prepared this edition was "Stories are not plot, they are emotion." Why? Because I find plot easy. I find emotion difficult. On the up-side, it means once I can get a handle on writing emotion then my books will be better—and that's always a good thing.

Thanks to Janice Hardy and Katie Weiland who provided articles in this issue. We really appreciate your wisdom, ladies. Thanks too, to our own Carmen Aim who took the bull by the horns and shared her NaNoWrMo experience. She has some excellent advice for us come November. I also want to thank Ruth Bell for her wonderful work on *Heart to Heart*'s layout. I'm sure you'll agree she's done a great job.

I've had several wonderful experiences this month—besides getting up close with Waihi's sexy firemen! The best so far is getting the chance to read through your survey suggestions for improving *Heart to Heart*. I'm thrilled at the challenge ahead.

Until next month.

*Gracie*



# The Five Secrets Of Grabbing Your Reader's Emotions

K.M.Weiland



**Want to know the secrets of grabbing your readers' emotions?** For starters, let's pretend I'm

your reader—'cuz I'm a hard sell. I'm not a very emotional person. Even when I feel deeply about something, it takes a lot to move me to tears. I can count on my fingers the stories that have made me cry. Part of this is just my emotional makeup, but part of it is also because I realize the special power tears have.

The stories that have pulled me so far out of myself that I've closed their covers feeling emotionally scarred—those are the stories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. The comedies and the fluffy chick flicks are quickly forgotten; only the stories that have given me the gift of my own tears, that have connected with me on a primal level—that have made me feel to the utmost the pain and joy and sorrow of our crazy human lives—only these stories can claim a special place as catalysts in my life.

A saw in the advertising world proclaims, "If they cry, they buy!" Why is this? Why is it that deep emotion solidifies stories and grants them that brilliant realism? And what's the secret recipe for grabbing your readers' emotions in your own stories?

*Continued from page 2...*

Emotional responses, like all of fiction, [are subjective](#). Due to our distinctive psychological makeups and the varied influencing factors of our individual lives, we each react differently to emotional stimuli. We can never expect to tap into the tears of every single person who reads our fiction. But if you can figure out what it is that makes one person—yourself—emotionally responsive, you can likely tap into a universal reaction.

So ask yourself, what characters, actions, and themes affect you most strongly? What are the books and movies that have left the greatest impact on you? What about them did you find particularly moving? After spending this past week making my own lists in answer to these questions and querying others about their responses, I've come to the following revelations about how you can start grabbing your readers' emotions.

### **1. Tragedy for the Tragedy's Sake Isn't Enough**

In the July 2009 issue of *The Writer*, Jill Dearman pointed out:

*One of the biggest issues I deal with from my clients is the "So what?" factor. The idea is good. Check! The form is clever or classic. Check! But so what? What the reader needs is emotional and mental engagement with the work—exactly what writers must conjure up during the writing process.*

### **2. Readers Feel Characters' Grief More Than Their Own**

[The fictional deaths](#) that have affected me most are those not only of characters I loved myself, but particularly of characters who were loved by other characters. When I asked my critters if they were affected by the death of an important character in my portal fantasy [Dreamlander](#), their almost universal response surprised me. They said they grieved most strongly for the characters who remained alive rather than for the character who died.

### **3. Conflict in Relationships Magnifies Loss**

In expanding upon the previous point, sometimes the most poignant separations, in fiction as in life, are those that are either preceded or

caused by misunderstanding. We grieve all the more for a death if the characters cared deeply about each other but were at odds and unable to put the relationship back to rights before it was torn apart forever.

### **4. Self-Sacrifice Is Extremely Powerful**

Speaking for myself, the single most gut-wrenching thematic element in any story is self-sacrifice. When characters make the "hard right choice," when they deliberately surrender their own happiness, well-being, or even their very lives for the sake of someone else or a greater cause—nothing moves me more deeply. And judging from the responses I received from others over the course of this week's research, I'm not the only one who feels this. Making characters suffer is one thing; making them choose to suffer because it's the right thing to do is another plane altogether.

### **5. Emotional Honesty Is Key**

Although I could probably go on about this subject at length without exhausting its possibilities, I will end with a final thought: in eliciting any emotion, honesty is the single greatest factor in resonating with readers. In a response to a comment I left this week on her blog [RX: Hope](#), novelist Candace Calvert said it as well as anyone:

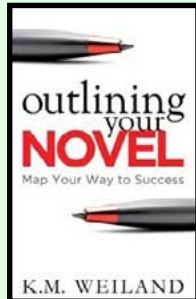
*[It] boil[s] down to having the courage to be honest. To dig deep for the emotion, risk being vulnerable: and share it with our readers. As a reader, I'm most impressed with an author who creates flawed, human, heart-on-their-sleeves characters that make me think: "Omigoodness, she's writing about me!" We all want to feel understood, connected. I think that's what we must strive for as authors, to offer that blessing as best we can.*

### **Tell me your opinion: What's your secret for grabbing your readers' emotions?**

[K.M. Weiland](#) lives in make-believe worlds, talks to imaginary friends, and survives primarily on chocolate truffles and espresso. She is the IPPY, NIEA, and Lyra Award-winning and internationally published author of [Outlining Your Novel](#) and [Structuring Your Novel](#), as well as [Jane Eyre: The Writer's Digest Annotated Classic](#).

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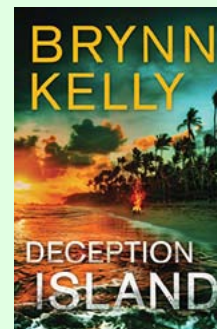
She writes historical and speculative fiction from her home in western Nebraska and mentors authors on her award-winning website [Helping Writers Become Authors](#).



[Outlining Your Novel: Map Your Way to Success](#) will help you choose the right type of outline for you, guide you in brainstorming plot ideas, and aid you in discovering your characters.

## Woo & Hoos!

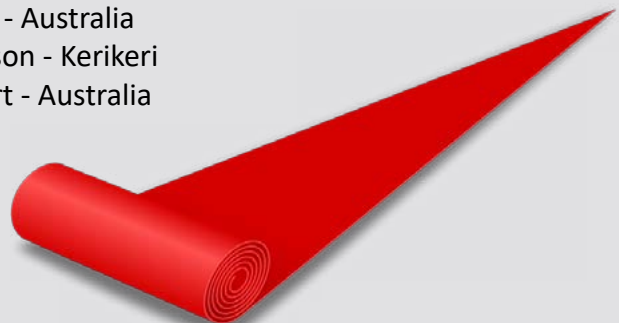
Bronwyn McEvoy w/a Brynn Kelly's **DECEPTION ISLAND** has been named one of the top 10 debut novels of the year by Booklist, and got a starred review in Library Journal. She has signed a contract with HQN Books for a third novel and novella in her *Legionnaires* series.



## 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.

Jill Batty - Te Puke  
Michelle Boston - Christchurch  
Kura Carpenter - Dunedin  
Sonia Dryden - Auckland  
Andrew Harris - Auckland  
Marija Jukich - Auckland  
Sarah Knox-Coupe - Auckland  
Shelagh Merlin - Australia  
Helen McNaught - Wellington  
Kirstine Moffatt - Cambridge  
Glenda Noetzel - Australia  
Ann Pratley - Dunedin  
Sally Rigby - Australia  
Faye Robertson - Kerikeri  
Bob van Oort - Australia







## Writing Romance in the Digital Age RWNZ Wellington 2017 Conference Call for Workshop Submissions

The theme for Romance Writers of New Zealand's 2017 Conference is *Writing Romance in the Digital Age*.

The conference will be held in Wellington from Friday 18th–Sunday 20th August, 2017, at the Amora Hotel. Conveniently located opposite the Michael Fowler Centre, the Amora is only a few minutes' walk from Te Papa.

We have the theme, the confirmed dates, and the hotel. Now, we're working to provide a programme that will inspire and meet the needs of delegates from newbie writers through to NYT Bestsellers.

We're seeking experienced local and international talent to present novel, up-to-date sessions on craft excellence, the publishing industry, career management, marketing and promotion, self-publishing, the writer's life, business planning and more.

In addition to these broad topics, we welcome submissions for panel sessions, or presentations exploring popular romance sub-genres. These subgenres include gay/lesbian romance, sci-fi/paranormal/fantasy, young adult, and crime/suspense/mystery. Sessions on business planning and management, particularly for authors operating in a global business context, are also

welcome.

Please target your proposal to a suitable audience—beginners, intermediate, or experienced, or suitable for all.

Workshops will be between one hour and one hour forty-five minutes long.

Submissions close **31st October, 2016**. Successful presenters will be notified by the **18th November, 2016** and must confirm their participation by **30th November, 2016**. The program will be announced **late February 2017**.

All Presenters are required to register and pay for the weekend conference. Presenters will receive NZ\$300 remuneration payment upon invoice. No other payments will be made.

If you have something to share—or to teach—do take this opportunity to give back to your organisation. Not only is it highly rewarding in personal terms, it's always greatly appreciated by members.

To submit your interest, please use the hyperlink provided to complete the [workshop submission form](#).



## Writing Romance in the Digital Age RWNZ Wellington 2017 Conference

### Amora Hotel Wellington Conference Room Bookings

Because there are other major events happening in Wellington on the weekend of our RWNZ Conference (August 18th -20th, 2017) the Amora Hotel, Wellington is **not holding a block booking of rooms for RWNZ.**

Therefore, if you're even *thinking* of attending we recommend you book a room now. Your credit card will not be charged until conference and you can cancel at no charge, up to 48 hours prior to conference. This secures your room and also gives you time to make up your mind.

To book a room at the conference cost of \$199 (including GST)—room only (this means breakfast and other meals are extra, but the wifi is free!), read the following:

The Hotel Group Code is **ROMANCE17**

Please use this code when making bookings to get the following rates.

**Check In anytime from:** Thursday August 17th, 2017

**Check Out:** Monday August 21st, 2017

Request either Deluxe King or Twin room

NZD \$199.00 (Including GST) per room per night—Room Only

**Availability of Rate:** This rate is available up until 30 days prior to conference. After that, it will be booked subject to hotel availability.

#### Details to Provide when making booking request:

- Names of guests
- Dates of Stay
- Group Code
- Valid credit card details (card type, number, and expiry date)

**Reservations:** Bookings can be made via email (confadmin@wellington.amorahotels.com) or telephone (+64 4 473 3900). The group code must be quoted at the time of booking in order to obtain the group rate. So keep this info handy.

**No Show/Cancellation Policy:** Rooms can be cancelled at no charge up until 2pm, 48 hours prior to arrival. Any Room night cancelled after this time will incur a Late Cancellation Fee of the 1 nights' accommodation per room night. Should a guest not show up to the hotel, the Cancellation Fee of 1 nights' accommodation per room night will also apply. Any amendments or cancellations must be communicated in writing via email. Cancellations and amendments cannot be confirmed by telephone.

As conference is still so far away you might find you can get a room slightly cheaper if you book online now. You may also find a cheap rate that includes breakfast—but it won't be under the RWNZ conference booking code above!

And while we're talking about minimising costs, why not book your airfares now, too?

The conference programme is shaping up nicely and once we have all speakers confirmed we will let you know the lineup. We look forward to sharing the excitement.

Here's the link to book:

<http://www.wellington.amorahotels.com/>

## From the President

Hello everyone! I am standing in for Bronwen who had a medical emergency (as I'm writing this, she is still in hospital, but okay and hoping to be let out today!)

Our first month in office as the new RWNZ Executive has been super busy and exciting. First, thanks to everyone who completed the survey. We received over 150 responses, which were thoughtful, thorough, and full of ideas.

This organisation has such committed and enthusiastic members that it makes our job both easier and harder. Easier because we know exactly what you want. Harder because there were so many great ideas that we'll have to prioritise. As a team, we will review all the responses over the next three weeks and come back to you with a report. Thanks again for taking the time.

And **congratulations to Bronwyn McEvoy** whose survey number was drawn from Waihi Fireman Aaron's hat by Fireman Dean. Bronwyn **wins a free Sat/Sun registration** to our 2017 Conference!

What else have we been doing?

**The RWNZ website:** we don't need to tell you that it needs an overhaul. Based on your feedback and our own functional review, we have written a full spec document for a meeting with a local web developer (our current one lives in Germany). In the meantime, we've fixed the bugs in the forms and payment plug-ins. Rachel's taking the lead on this, with help from Gracie (and Gracie's husband!). Rachel and I are sharing the responsibility for our social media presence.

**Heart2Heart:** Gracie is doing a fantastic job with H2H. Thanks to everyone who's helping her and contributing articles. Your survey feedback will shape future issues—stay tuned!

**Finances:** we have shifted to Xero, which means we can almost eliminate external accounting fees. As a not-for-profit, we got an excellent discount. We're busy producing more detailed budgets, expenses policies and P+L's.

Thanks to Karen for all her hard work here.

**Policies, manuals, etc:** we've reviewed everything and are planning how to create a clearly written and easily accessed repository of all the information any Executive needs to be efficient and productive. We want to ensure streamlined handovers and no loss of institutional knowledge. Kendra as our Secretary is leading this.

**Conference:** we're liaising with the 2017 Conference committee, who are doing a stellar job—thanks team, we're excited! We'll soon be putting out a call for volunteers for the 2018 Conference committee, and already have some fantastic leads for guest speakers.

**Connections:** Bron has had some great productive talks with the President of RWAus, and we've identified lots of mutual opportunities to explore.

We're looking forward to reporting on the survey. Thanks again for all your enthusiasm!

Best wishes

Catherine Robertson

Vice-President

<http://www.catherinerobertson.net/>



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*"I can't write to please everyone, but someone, somewhere will be touched if I put my heart into it."*

- Sara Winters

# Do You Feel It?

## Writing With Emotional Layers

Janice Hardy

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**Nobody feels one way all the time, or even one emotion at a time.** There are a myriad of emotions floating around in our heads at any given moment. We might be happy for a friend who just got a promotion, but also jealous because we were passed over for one. Or thrilled for a sister marrying the man of her dreams, but worried because he's been married four times already.

Characters are no different. When you approach a scene, try thinking about the different emotions they might be feeling. Just like plot layers, think about the emotional layers of your story and how you can use those to deepen the scene and connect with the reader.

Ask yourself:

**What is the protagonist's primary emotion for this scene?**

There's often one feeling or mood that takes precedence—the emotion that's driving the protagonist to act in that scene. This will typically determine the kind of scene it is. Fear = a suspenseful scene, lust = a love scene, sad = a reflective scene (but not limited to these of course). If you have a dangerous chase scene and no one is scared or excited, the scene will likely lack tension. A touching family moment without love can feel hollow or even like the characters are simply going through the motions.

**Conflict tip:** To add more conflict or tension to the scene, look for ways to make the protagonist feel the opposite emotion of the primary mood.

**Stakes tip:** To raise the stakes of the scene, look for ways to add fear, worry, or apprehension about something in the scene.

**Character tip:** To flesh out the character, look for ways to add in inappropriate emotion that shows another side of the character.

Take a look at this [article](#) on emotions and how they can affect character.

**What are the protagonist's secondary emotions?**

No matter what major emotion is driving the character, odds are there's more going on under the surface. What are the other issues are they struggling with? Is there anything keeping them from fully experiencing the primary emotion, such as fear keeping them from falling for the right person?

**Conflict tip:** How might this secondary emotion cause a problem with the goal or the scene?

**Stakes tip:** How might this secondary emotion cause the protagonist to make a mistake?

**Character tip:** How might this secondary emotion reveal an aspect of the character?

Take a look at this [article](#) about providing emotional clarity.

**What are the protagonist's conflicting emotions?**

Stories are about conflict, so there's a good chance your characters are feeling conflicted over something in any given scene. Where are their feelings ambivalent? Where do they emotionally disagree with other characters in the scene? What shouldn't they be feeling, but do anyway?



*Continued from page 6...*

**Conflict tip:** How might this emotion deepen the protagonist's internal conflict?

**Stakes tip:** How might this emotion cause the protagonist to fail?

**Character tip:** How might this emotional conflict cause the protagonist to make the wrong choice?

Take a look at this article about how [character moods](#) can help create a better scene.

### **What are the protagonist's hidden emotions?**

People feel things they'd rather not all the time. We try to suppress envy or anger or even love. Sometimes we don't even know we're doing it. Is there anything your characters are trying to hide? Anything they're trying not to feel? This is a good spot for those unconscious goals or feelings to leak in.

**Conflict tip:** How might the hidden emotions foreshadow later events or problems?

**Stakes tip:** How might the hidden emotions cause the protagonist to react in a way that adversely affects her?

**Character tip:** How might the hidden emotions hint at or show what the protagonist's character arc or emotional journey will be?

Take a look at this article about [conveying emotion](#) in a scene.

### **What are the other characters in the scene feeling?**

Your protagonist isn't the only one who gets to show a little emotion. If there are other people in the scene, what are they feeling? What are they trying to hide or pretending to feel? This is a great way to drop subtle hints or add tension to a scene if there's clearly an issue no one is talking about.

**Conflict tip:** What clues might the protagonist pick up on (or not) that show another character doesn't agree with her—and that this might be a problem?

**Stakes tip:** Where might an emotional non-protagonist character cause a problem or make

a problem worse?

**Character tip:** Where might added emotions show a deeper side to a secondary character?

Take a look at this article about [describing emotions](#).

### **Are there any forced emotions?**

Sometimes a character is trying hard to pretend to feel a certain way, even when they feel nothing. It might be out of compassion (little white lies to spare someone's feelings) or life-saving (pretending to still be the friend of the person you just discovered betrayed you). Is this a scene where your characters are faking it in any way?

**Conflict tip:** How might this faked emotion spark the opposite effect than intended?

**Stakes tip:** How might this faked emotion make things more personal for the protagonist?

**Character tip:** How might this faked emotion become real, either in this scene or later in the story (bonus conflict if this causes unforeseen troubles)?

Take a look at this article about [alternative ways to describe emotion](#).

Emotional layers are also a useful way to weave in subplots or character arcs. Even if the plot portion of the scene isn't related to a subplot, the emotion layer can braid it in and give that scene multiple layers of complexity.

A character who's struggling with a black-mailer might act suspicious or distracted during a critical meeting at work and lose an important client (and maybe the job). Happiness or love might make someone oblivious to dangers they'd normally spot right away.

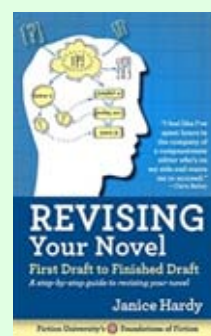
How a character feels determines how they act, and how they act helps drive the plot. So don't just think external when crafting your novel. Think about what's going on internally as well.

Do you think about your character's emotional state when you start a scene? How much do the emotional layers drive your plot?

Continued from page 7...

Do you know going in how they feel or do you discover that as the scene unfolds?

**Janice Hardy** is the award-winning author of *The Healing Wars* trilogy and the *Foundations of Fiction* series. She's also the founder of the writing site, *Fiction University*. For more advice and helpful writing tips, visit her at <http://www.fiction-university.com/> or @Janice\_Hardy.

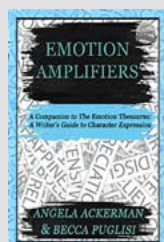
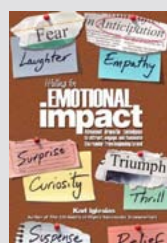
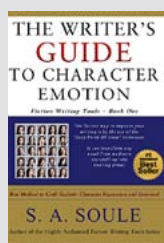
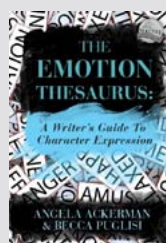
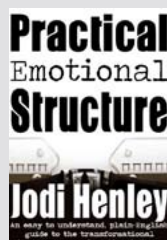
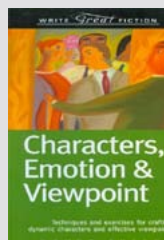


Janice's latest release **Revising Your Novel: First Draft to Finished Draft** offers eleven self-guided workshops that target some of the toughest aspects of writing.

*"The moment we cry in a film is not when things are sad but when they turn out to be more beautiful than we expected them to be."*

- Alain de Botton

## The Book Shelf



## Further Resources For Writing Emotion...

Check out these great websites for more useful tools and practical tips for writing emotion and make your novels more emotionally powerful.

### [Creating Emotional Frustration](http://www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/there-are-no-rules/creating-emotional-frustration-in-your-characters)

<http://www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/there-are-no-rules/creating-emotional-frustration-in-your-characters>

### [The Feelings Wheel](http://erinsinsidejob.com/2016/02/8-ways-to-identify-and-express-feelings/)

<http://erinsinsidejob.com/2016/02/8-ways-to-identify-and-express-feelings/>

### [Stories Are Not Plot. They Are Emotion.](http://www.fanpop.com/clubs/writing/videos/38882927/title/stories-not-plot-emotions-cecilia-najar)

<http://www.fanpop.com/clubs/writing/videos/38882927/title/stories-not-plot-emotions-cecilia-najar>

### [Writing The Emotional Manipulator](http://www.heartless-bitches.com/rants/manipulator/eighteasyways.shtml)

<http://www.heartless-bitches.com/rants/manipulator/eighteasyways.shtml>

*"True Love is not a hide and seek game: in true love, both lovers seek each other."*

- Michael Bassey Johnson

## 2015-2016 RWNZ Contests Results

Congratulations to all finalists and placegetters in the 2015-2016 RWNZ Contest season! A brand new season starts again on 1<sup>st</sup> September with the Great Beginnings Contest - so get your entries ready folks!

### Great Beginnings 2015 Editor Placings

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Taming the Earl* - Elizabeth King  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Stitched* - Jo Harris  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *Shared with Me* - Emma Lowe  
**Finalist:** *Hard Pressed To Love* - Susan Frame

### Great Beginnings 2015 Agent Placings

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Taming the Earl* - Elizabeth King  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Shared with Me* - Emma Lowe  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *Stitched* - Jo Harris  
**Finalist:** *Hard Pressed to Love* - Susan Frame

### Chapter Short Story 2016

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Jessica Briggs* - Rex Fausett  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Never Have I Ever* - Yvonne Walus  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *Call Anytime* - Pamela Swain  
**Finalist:** *Bus Guy* - Emma Cameron  
**Finalist:** *Best Eaten Cold* - Yvonne Walus  
**Finalist:** *Everything's Coming Up Roses* - Susan Frame

### Pacific Hearts 2016

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *In the Blood* - Rebekah Orr  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Reluctant Partners* - Jennifer Raines  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *Battle Dress* - Anna Klein  
**Finalist:** *Looking for Love* - Jennifer Raines  
**Finalist:** *Peak Farm Hill* - Kathryn Servian  
**Finalist:** *Peak Farm Hill* - Kathryn Servian  
**Finalist:** *The Neighbourhood Project* - Raewynne Harford  
**Finalist:** *Creeps and the Conductor* - Mariana Jackson

### Koru Awards 2016

#### Koru Long Romance

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *All of Me* - Leeanna Morgan  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Empty Nests* - Ada Maria Soto  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Bowerbirds* - Ada Maria Soto  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *Act Like It* - Lucy Parker  
**Finalist:** *A Whisper of Desire* - Bronwen Evans  
**Finalist:** *Loving You* - Leeanna Morgan

#### Koru Short & Sexy

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Tempted by Her Italian Surgeon* - Louisa George  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Burned By Blackmail* - Michele de Winton  
**3<sup>rd</sup>:** *I Choose You* - Kristina O'Grady  
**Finalist:** *Because of You* - Kristina O'Grady

#### Koru Short & Sweet

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Currents of Change* - Darian Smith  
**Finalist:** *Reunited...in Paris!* - Sue MacKay

#### Koru Best 1<sup>st</sup> Book

**1<sup>st</sup>:** *Currents of Change* - Darian Smith  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Song for Jess* - Ben Onslow



# Regional Round-Up Reports

## Auckland

Convenor: Pamela Gervai ([pamelagervai.com](http://pamelagervai.com))

We were privileged to have [Ada Soto](#) present a most informative history of fan fiction at our 3 September meeting. She went to an enormous amount of trouble to give us a Power-Point presentation, and her delivery was pure academia accompanied by her witty humour. We're grateful to Camilla Urdahl who came to the rescue when the computer became sulky. Ann Russell brought her projector and has generously offered its use for future speakers if required. Thirty attended the meeting, including three potential new members.

Our speaker for October will be Daphne de Jong, who also writes as Daphne Clair. Daphne has been a romance writer well known on the New Zealand scene since 1977. She has written more than seventy-five romance novels and a variety of other works under pseudonyms. She holds classes in the writing craft and together with Robyn Donald ran the Kara School in the Whangarei rural area. I was a fortunate attendee one year. Daphne's topic for our meeting on Saturday 1 October will be Subtext.

Kathy Servian has kindly offered her house in Coatesville for the venue for our End of Year luncheon on Saturday 10 December from midday until 4.00 p.m. I'll give more details in November but in the meantime, save the date.

Many thanks to Amanda Wilson, who often stands in for Lynette Leong who takes care of the tea and coffee supplies for us. Lynette has just had an appendectomy and Amanda took over for her—on her birthday.

## Coast to Coast

Convenors: Sheryl Buchanan ([sheryl@rangepress.co.nz](mailto:sheryl@rangepress.co.nz)) and Sandra Toornstra

The October meeting will be at Grant Bayley's home, 532 Devonport Road, Tauranga on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> starting at midday. After a shared lunch, we're planning to do Cold Reads (maximum of 500 words) of our own work. Here's the chance to hear and comment on what other members of the group are doing.

## Hawkes Bay

Convenor: Kendra Duglar ([kendraonthemove@hotmail.com](mailto:kendraonthemove@hotmail.com))

Our September meeting took place at Bron's and was a great post-Conference catch-up. We talked about what sessions people had gone to, and what they got out of them. We also talked about our individual writing processes and our targets per day/week, and organised what we'd be doing for the next three meetings.

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 1pm, and new members (or visiting members) are always welcome. The October meeting will be at No.5 Café & Larder as we'll be a small group, with several of our members on holiday, here and overseas, one of whom will be at the InDScribe Author Reader Conference in California as she's a finalist in their Rone Awards. Good luck, Kate!

## Wellington

Convenors: Kris Pearson ([kris.p@paradise.net.nz](mailto:kris.p@paradise.net.nz)) and Leeanna Morgan

Our September meeting took place at Ellie's lovely home - a smaller gathering than usual, which meant everyone had time to talk and ask questions.

Jane's latest book—PERFECT STRANGER—has just been launched. Our newest member, Helen, was eagerly encouraged onto the Conference Committee. We talked about promo sites and promo ideas generally. Good author newsletters are of huge importance and we're all trying to increase our subscriber lists. Kris displayed her latest cover. Branding came in for some attention.

Then we discussed Leeann—the great presentation she did at Conference, and the amazing success she's making of her writing. If we were all willing to put in the same incredible hours and effort, we'd all be giving up our day jobs and touring the USA with her! We wish.

Next meeting will be at 1pm on Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup> at Kris's home in Ngaio. A reminder will be emailed to local members.

## Nelson

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

A lot of sickness among the group meant only six of us could participate at our September meeting on Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup>. This was a real pity, as we had the most interesting speaker—Dr. Kyle Neeley—talking to us about his American Indian (Apache) ancestry, his extraordinary education, and spiritual gift as a shaman. Our questions were endless, and no one wanted to go home.

Writing-wise, Annika told us we've had a request for a copy of our Anthology 'Ripples' from the Hocken Library, via the University Book Shop in Dunedin. Sheree offered to post the book and send them the invoice. We also decided we should actively submit more stories and novels to writing contests. Our own Raewynne recently became a finalist in the Pacific Hearts competition. We're very proud and happy over her achievement. A big thanks to Heather, who brought a huge tin full of chocolates, and to Jacque—for baking the yummiest carrot cake for our cuppa.

## Christchurch

Convenor: Jane Madison-Jones ([maddiejane@xtra.co.nz](mailto:maddiejane@xtra.co.nz))

## Otago

Convenor: Samantha Charlton ([samanthacharlton@hotmail.com](mailto:samanthacharlton@hotmail.com))

Nothing huge to report for the Otago Chapter - although I have organised a member for the afternoon of Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October at Maria King's house in Wanaka. We usually hold our meetings in Dunedin, so this will be a chance for our Central Otago members to meet up and talk romance.