

# HEART TO HEART

## *POST CONFERENCE COVERAGE* *by Soraya Nicholas*



When I attended my first ever RWNZ conference four years ago, I was absolutely gob-smacked. After pottering away at writing romance for a year or so, I was astounded there could be so many other like-minded people out there. Yes, it was scary turning up that first day and not knowing a soul, but everyone was so supportive and friendly that by the end of the weekend I knew I'd found a "home away from home". Each year I declare the conference just passed was the best ever, and in a way each year probably does get better. Why? The speakers and editors/agents are fantastic, but to be honest I think it's getting together with all those people I only see once a year that makes it so special. As I've developed as a writer, my understanding of the craft and my genre has strengthened, and I think it means I can take more out of each conference because of it. I also love the inspiration of our published authors and those visiting. Each year I've felt closer and closer to my goal of publication, and being surrounded by published, successful authors only makes you even more hungry to achieve your own dreams.

This year the speakers were as fantastic as ever, and the conference committee deserves a huge round of applause for their efforts to secure such a stellar line up. Christopher Vogler was fantastic, and it was wonderful to see a varied mix of attendees at the Friday workshop to listen to him. Stephanie Laurens was inspiring to say the least, and her dedication to her craft was obvious. The ever-inspirational Jane Porter was exactly that, and her talk on emotions had many in the audience tearing up. Her honesty and approach was real and touching.

This year we had editors Dianne Moggy and Alex Logan in attendance, and it was interesting to hear both ladies talk about their respective publishing houses. There are certainly plenty of exciting things happening at Harlequin Mills & Boon. Agent Laura Bradford was also enchanting, and her confident yet approachable demeanor was refreshing. I was fortunate enough to sign with Laura following the conference, and she is fantastic!

**Contd page 4**

In this issue...

1. Post Conference  
by **Soraya Nicholas**
2. RWNZ contacts  
Editors' Desk
3. **President Abby**
7. Dinner Speech  
by **Barbara Clendon**
9. Twenty Years On  
by **Jean Drew**
11. Louise Delamore  
by **Kylie Griffin**
12. Unpublished  
Author Bio
13. Voice  
by **Vonnie Hughes**
14. A Novel in Three  
Months  
by **Paula Roe**
16. RWNZ Online  
Workshop
17. Member Successes  
and Releases
18. International  
Contest News
19. RWNZ Regional  
News
20. Bits & Pieces &  
Web Surfing

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## EDITORS' DESK

It already seems like forever ago since the conference, but by the time you receive this newsletter only a month will have passed since we were all together. For those of you who didn't attend, it was a wonderful three days of learning, and a great chance to catch up with old friends. But you needn't worry about missing out, because we have some great photos and snippets of information to share with you in this issue.

We also have a range of craft articles in this newsletter, from authors Paula Roe and Vonnie Hughes, as well as the first interview in our series of Unpublished Author Bios, and an interview with new author Louise Delamore.

As usual we appreciate your feedback and contributions, and if you have an article you'd like to submit we'd love to hear from you.

Happy writing.

Until next time.

Soraya & Suzanne

### NEW MEMBERS

Kim Koning, Auckland  
Tracey Osborne, Wellington  
Flore Leota, Wellington  
Kim Thomas, Christchurch  
Nicola Davidson, Matamata  
Dorothee Guthrie, Waitakere  
Andrea Manuel, Auckland  
Fenella Nevill, Marton

## RWNZ & RWAustralia Critique Partner Scheme

To join RWNZ's critique partner register, run jointly with RWAustralia, go to <http://www.romancewriters.co.nz/members/critique-partner-register.php>. Fill out the online application form and send to [applycritpartners@romanceaustralia.com](mailto:applycritpartners@romanceaustralia.com). Alternatively, email [applycritpartners@romanceaustralia.com](mailto:applycritpartners@romanceaustralia.com) and ask for an application form.

# PRESIDENT ABBY

**RWNZ never sleeps...** No sooner have we finished conference, than we have the post-conference survey, the Strictly Single contest underway, and Bob Mayer's incredible *Warrior Writer Workshop* coming up in October.

**First up, conference.** The aptly-named *An Affair to Remember* three-day conference will linger in my memory for quite some time. The speakers were amazing, one and all. The food was great (several of the speakers told me they'd never had such good food at a conference), and the spirit of the event was warm, sharing and inspiring, just as an RWNZ conference should be. Plus, the attendance figures were excellent, which is not only good for our budget, but also means we offered a conference that members wanted to attend (the main point of the whole exercise). In fact, the event was a victim of its own popularity—we had so many delegates, the main conference room at Rydges just wasn't big enough for us. Apologies to those of you who were inconvenienced by this—we hope the fantastic talks and workshops were compensation.

Soraya has compiled some photos and comments from the conference, which you'll see in this issue. If you didn't manage to get along this year, I hope you'll be tempted to join us in 2011.

Many thanks to those of you who completed the post-conference online survey, which is a huge help to us in gauging the strengths of weaknesses of this year's event and in planning for future years. We're now in the process of running a survey for members who didn't attend the conference, and the results of all this research will be reported in the next issue of *Heart to Heart*.

Congratulations to Kirsty Cameron, who won the book vouchers offered as a prize for completing the weekend conference survey, and to Jackie McRae, who won the prize for Friday-only attendees.

## **Warrior Writer**

As mentioned last month, RWNZ is running Bob Mayer's celebrated Warrior Writer workshop online from October 11-31. You'll see more about the workshop in this newsletter, but the main thing you need to know is that RWNZ is subsidising the cost for our members, so you'll pay only \$10 to do the workshop. This class has received rave reviews all over the USA, and we believe RWNZ members at all stages of their writing career can benefit from Bob's strategies – so sign up now!

## **Membership Renewals**

Of course, you won't be able to attend the Warrior Writer workshop, or enjoy any of the other benefits of RWNZ membership, if you haven't **paid your membership renewal**. September 30 is the absolute, no excuses, no exceptions cut-off for your payment to be **received** by RWNZ. After that, you'll need to pay an extra \$5. You can download the renewal form from [www.romancewriters.co.nz](http://www.romancewriters.co.nz), or email our membership secretary Kris Pearson on [rwnz.membership@gmail.com](mailto:rwnz.membership@gmail.com) for a copy.

## **Our New Look**

The sharper-eyed among you will have noticed the new-look RWNZ logo on this newsletter (and on the banner at conference). Yes, we've had a redesign. In part, it was forced upon us because the organisation no longer possessed a high-res version of the old logo (essential for printing on conference bags, posters, etc), and the cost of getting one made was dangerously close to the cost of getting a new look. So we decided to take advantage of the opportunity to freshen up. We were aiming for a crisper, more print-friendly, contemporary look that would preserve all the things we liked about the old logo—in particular, the very Kiwi blue and green colour scheme, and the heart and fern concept. I think the result is fantastic.

Another plus...recently we've had several members wanting to use the RWNZ logo on their websites, to promote RWNZ and provide a link to our site. Which is a great idea, but the older logo wasn't easily condensed down to a 'web button' size that remained readable. So we now have a more compact version of the logo that can be used for this purpose. Contact our publicity officer Jackie Coates, [jackiec@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jackiec@paradise.net.nz), if you're interested in adding a link to RWNZ on your website.

Big thanks to Kate Gordon for her initiative in driving the logo redesign process.

Lastly, I'm not sure if our newsletter editor Soraya Nicholas has tooted her own horn in this issue or not. If you haven't heard, just a few days after conference she made her first sale, a two-book contract to Mills & Boon. Yay, Soraya! It's always wonderful to see a writer's perseverance and commitment pay off. The great thing about being a part of RWNZ is that we get to see it over and over again.

Happy writing, everyone.  
Abby Gaines



Continued from page 1



The only disappointments I heard of during the weekend conference were in relation to the elective workshops . . . there were simply too many good choices! From swords experts to our published authors, the workshops were both varied and fresh.

This year was a slightly different experience for me, because I had volunteered to be MC for the weekend part of the conference. While I must admit to nerves that first time I stepped up, the role soon felt natural, and it was a great way to help out. Our organisation relies on the

support of volunteers, and it amazed me how many hours many of our members had put in behind the scenes to pull the conference together. All I can say is that it was a great way to get involved for me personally and to feel like an integral part of the team.

After the conference I asked a few of the attendees why they attend each year and what they loved about this one in particular, and here's what they said.



"I've attended every RWNZ conference to date because I love the concentration of knowledge and camaraderie. For me, conference this year was all about choice. Too much choice! I have a habit of being a little reclusive from time to time and conference is usually no different. However, this year I didn't want to miss a thing and I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it. Highlights for me? Christopher Vogler, without question, and hearing Laura Bradford's talk on professionalism and reputation. I just wish I had the chance to go back and do the workshops I had to miss out on as well as the fabulous speakers I did attend."

-Yvonne Lindsay, Silhouette Desire author



"The conference each year is my "Berocca". It energizes me for the year ahead and generally kicks me out of any writing ruts I might be in. The workshops are always incredibly informative with nuggets of craft-gold. The keynote speakers are a mountain of gold!

I leave with notebooks full of scribbles highlighting workshop notes and how they relate to my current WIP's - then I spend the next few weeks editing like mad.

The networking opportunity is brilliant. Especially the access to "Live" agents and editors."

-Tyree Bidgood

"I just love the amazing energy at conference - it's wonderful to be surrounded by people who are so passionate about writing."

-Nalini Singh, New York Times best-selling



author

"I loved the international speakers - Christopher Vogler, Stephanie Laurens and Jane Porter all dovetailed so amazingly - particularly in validating what we do and deliver in our romances. It was so very inspirational and affirming - and as a result, mega-motivating!"

-Natalie Anderson, USA Today bestselling author

"I go to the RWNZ conferences for the chance to spend time with like-minded souls and to get to hear seasoned professionals talk about their areas of expertise. I also appreciate the opportunity to pitch to editors and agents. This conference had a particularly good line up of speakers and I enjoyed them all, particularly Jane Porter. She spoke of how to put emotion into our work yet the emotion she was prepared to show us during her session was the greatest example of all about opening our hearts to readers. Even after many years attending, there is always something more to learn. A great big thank you to the organisers, who did an amazing job of bringing together such a big event."

-Suzanne Perazzini

So if you haven't attended before, or you didn't attend this year, start saving for 2011! It's worth every penny, and I can honestly say that because I live in Christchurch and scrimp and save for flight, accommodation and conference money each year!

Conference Awards 2010

Agent's Choice

1<sup>st</sup> – Soraya Nicholas

2<sup>nd</sup> – Viv Constable

3<sup>rd</sup> – Amanda Wilson

Clendon Award

1<sup>st</sup> – Wendy Vella

2<sup>nd</sup> – Michelle de Rooy (Readers Choice award winner!)

3<sup>rd</sup> – Soraya Nicholas



## STRICTLY SINGLE CONTEST

(Entry by electronic submission only)

\* **New closing date:** 1 October 2010

\* **Editor Judge:** Meredith Giordan, Berkley Publishing

\* **Agent Judge:** Emmanuelle Alspaugh, Judith Ehrlich Literary Management

\* **Word count:** The first 7,500 words (max) of a single title manuscript plus a synopsis of 1,250 words (max)

\* **Entry Fee:** \$NZ20

NB: The closing date is two weeks later than originally advertised.

For more information, go to [www.romancewriters.co.nz](http://www.romancewriters.co.nz)



# CONFERENCE PHOTOS

*Taken by Kylie Griffin and Peter & Barbara Clendon*



**CLENDON AWARD: AKA FINISH THE DAMN BOOK 2010**  
*Award Dinner Presentation by Barbara Clendon*

It is Peter's and my very great pleasure to organise the Clendon Award. It's a huge thrill to see RWNZ writers develop and blossom. The number of our writers being published in the last ten years is an eloquent testament to your ability to learn and grow.

Every time I stand up to present the Clendon Award I feel as if I'm saying the same things. But it is still my view, so here it is - Again.

- The standard of entries is excellent
- Our readers loved the stories
- Fully ninety percent of the stories in this year's Clendon are every bit as enjoyable as those we see on our shelves at Barbara's Books.
- As writers - you Rock.

You've heard all this before - haven't you? Do you **believe** it yet? You need to - because it's true.

That's my pep talk. Write it on an affirmation card.

This year we had a new judge for the Clendon Award: Mary-Theresa Hussey, Executive Editor at Silhouette. There were several reasons for the change: First was I wanted an acquiring editor to read your manuscripts. Secondly, as a reader I have a huge respect for Mary-Theresa's eye for story and her incredible ability to get the best out of each writer she edits. Mary-Theresa Hussey very kindly agreed to read a large box filled with printed manuscripts, without synopses, and get results back to us in a ridiculously short time frame. We all owe her. Big time.

When Peter sent the manuscripts to Matrice, she came back asking:

Do you want them ranked in order of commercial appeal? Strongest writing? Story? or Dialogue?

I was floored. The best story is the best story. Isn't it? Obviously not.

One of the things which fascinates me about working with writers is that there's always something new to learn. It had never occurred to me that there were different criteria for judging.

Like me, all contest entrants need to realise there

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are as many ways and reasons for rating stories as there are stories. Matrice says she made the 2010 Clendon Award rankings based on a combination of commercial appeal and story originality.

Placing in any contest is nice. In fact it's awesome. Not placing in a contest doesn't mean your story isn't good, or even great. It can mean it was the way the judge was ranking the stories at that particular time.

You all know that Finishing the Damn Book is a commendation in itself. The standard of storytelling in the Clendon Award manuscripts is, and always has been, exceptional. Mary-Theresa Hussey said she found the entries of a very strong calibre and that makes a contest worthwhile! Well done you. Praise from a master is praise indeed. Matrice was impressed enough with your writing, to offer to judge next year's Clendon.

We would now like to thank Maree Anderson. Maree has not only been Clendon Award coordinator for the last few years, but each year she has spent hours checking scores and setting manuscripts up at the shop. This year was especially interesting for Maree as we changed to ARC format. Many thanks to Maree for all her support.

As I said before, and in Heart 2 Heart: RWNZ members are incredibly good writers, and it is a privilege to read your work. Many of our readers really, really want to be able to buy the Clendon Award stories they've read and are very reluctant to send them back for other readers.

The best job in the world is ringing people to say they have finalled in the Clendon Award. It's a bit like handing out winning lottery tickets. Unfortunately, lottery tickets rarely come with a pot of gold; but the euphoric feeling of having made the finals stays with every Clendon Award finalist, and I'm privileged to share that. Thanks to all the finalists for sharing that joy with me over the years.

Here are the Final placings, decided by Mary-Theresa Hussey.

October 2010

**Allison Withers** - won the Emerald with this story. A lovely Scottish Historical, reminiscent of Julie Garwood.

**Shirley Wine** - a compelling Special Edition about a woman who gave up her son and now has to cope with the child's father.

**Bernice Greenham** wrote a very sexy Harlequin Presents with some fun twins and a suspicious Sheik. Bernice's manuscript has been passed to another editor for 'further consideration'. YAY!

Matrice ranked **Sharon Kelly FOURTH** - with a fresh Regency Historical which has an interesting mix of mystery and romance and a touch of paranormal.

Now we come to the top three:

They are **Soraya Nicholas, Wendy Vella** and **Michelle de Rooy**.

One of the things that has always made the Clendon Award unique is that for all the years the Award has run, manuscripts have been judged by readers, not writers. Readers [mostly] don't care about head hopping, or Point Of View, or even grammar - much. Readers care about characters, about story, and the satisfaction of being transported to another world. Because of this, and the fact that our readers get a little tetchy that editors don't always agree with their rankings, we have a Reader's Choice Trophy for the manuscript which resonated most strongly with our Readers.

The Reader's Choice Trophy for 2010 goes to **Michelle de Rooy**

**THIRD:** is **Soraya Nicholas** whose Special Edition was warm and wonderful. If my husband died [which he isn't planning on for another hundred years] I want that *Soldier On My Doorstep*.

**SECOND:** **Michelle de Rooy** - Michelle won our readers' hearts with a bright fantasy in which a lady found herself in a rather different world, filled with dark problems and some truly sexy men.

**WINNER:** **Wendy Vella**. Wendy's Historical has a woman forced to marry a Duke who'd much rather not have a wife, especially one as dowdy as Eva. She has so much humour and character you can't help but cheer as she transforms Daniel's house and his life. Great stuff.

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Peter and I would like to thank all those entrants who come a considerable distance, and those who go to some trouble, to be with us tonight. An Awards Dinner would be nothing without the presence of so many wonderful writers.

To Finish:

Do you believe that you are amazing storytellers yet? **YOU SO ARE.**

Unfortunately for you, being an amazing storyteller isn't enough to get you published. You need the kind of story that sells to an editor. One that is full of the dreaded emotional punch; bright with life and attention-grabbing characters; and, as Matrice says, commercial enough to sell in tomorrow's market.

Luck helps. So does talent, perseverance and a determination to get better and better and better.

All writers, published and unpublished, work at making their writing sharper and clearer, struggling to pack in more, and even more, emotional punch. If your story doesn't make **you** laugh - and cry - *and* make you want to go jump your partner's bones, then guess what? Why should it do that for anyone else? Read your own writing with joy. Fill your writing with that joy.

Better than most people, Peter and I know how hard you work with your writing. We know it can feel thankless. All writers sometimes wonder what on earth they are doing it for. It's a hard fact of the writing life that it needs people who care to write with emotion and depth. Caring people feel every rejection and setback. And take it personally.

This is why we have Awards Ceremonies. They aren't just for the winners - though it's pretty good for them. Awards Ceremonies remind *all* writers that there are people out there who love your work. That each person's writing appeals to different people. Awards Ceremonies reinforce to all of you that we appreciate your talent; we respect your work, and to let you know that we look forward to seeing lots more work from all the writers here.

As readers we'd be lost without it.

Thank you.

Barbara Clendon  
*Clendon Award*  
**Barbara's Books**

October 2010

8



# TWENTY YEARS ON

by Jean Drew

It seems like only yesterday....

When I was first invited to write this article, I thought it would be easy. It was, but my thoughts are a jumble. So many memories, so much of our history all jammed in together, that I can only pick out the moments that stand out clearly.

I was working at Suburban Newspapers who were running a romance-writing contest to be judged by Susan Napier. I wanted to write romance, and I wanted to find other people with the same dream so we could share our experiences, our triumphs and our disappointments. But where to find them, that was the problem.

More by luck than judgement, I had discovered there was a group in the UK called The Romantic Novelists' Association and wondered whether I could get such a group started in New Zealand. There had to be others who shared the same dream as me.

Sub News came to the party. They allowed me to place a small advertisement, free of charge, on the same page as Susan's bio. So it was fitting that Susan, our catalyst, was at the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in Auckland in early September.

Romance Writers of New Zealand was born on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1990, originally as The Romantic Novelists' Association, New Zealand. Our 20<sup>th</sup> birthday was on the very day of that meeting.

Eight people met at my house. Apart from myself, those founding members were: Dorothy Black, Tui Bendall, Vivienne Constable, Mary de Boer, Sue Edwards, Joanne Graves, Kathy Hanson of Christchurch, (became a founding member but couldn't attend), and Glenda Leader.

We got to know each other a little, shared news, views, ideas, and set the meeting day and time. For the first year we were graciously hosted by Dorothy Black.

I started a newsletter to go out each month but information was thin on the ground. To my delight, Romance Writers of Australia started a few months later, so I was able to glean some extra information from them.

Originally every envelope was handwritten, talk about writer's cramp, but I soon graduated to printed labels when numbers grew quickly. We moved from home to home each month, to whoever had a lounge big enough to accommodate us, until Pauline and Dave Bissett suggested that we use their home for a while. From memory, that lasted about two years. Pauline enjoyed the meetings, while Dave took charge of the catering, keeping us fed and watered. RWNZ will be forever in their debt.

It was at about this time we ran our first short story contest, and we changed our name to Romance Writers of New Zealand. Leslie Marshall, editor to Robyn Donald and Daphne Clair, agreed to be the judge. We also started Liaisons, an in-house magazine that published the winning six short stories.

In fact there are so many people who helped us in the early years and they all deserve a mention. Thanks go to all of them, but time and memory precludes mention of all the names.

Four years later, we decided to hold our first conference. Together with Viv Constable, Sue Edwards and Marie Stuttard, we met Daphne Claire and Robyn Donald, Don Kingston and Tamsin, who gave the conference virgins expert guidance. We set the date, June 11th, 1994. We set the cost, in those days a mere \$75 for a one-day event, put an ad in the local papers, and prayed. We were not disappointed. We had 120 bookings.

Special mention must be made of Viv Constable, the first vice president who sweated blood with me over that first conference. We would phone each other every night with news of new bookings and heaved a joint sigh of relief to realise we had covered our costs.

The list of speakers was impressive: Daphne Clair, Robyn Donald, Rosalie Henaghan, Susan Napier, Barbara Clendon, Leslie Marshall, Marie Stuttard, and Lance Amos, the then representative for Mills & Boon in New Zealand. Lance was generous to a fault, giving us all the help he could with the blessing of M&B.

We were honoured by a visit from Gloria Bevan, a well-loved M&B author, and we even had a letter of

good wishes from the great Essie Summers who, unfortunately, was unable to attend.

Thanks also to Don Kingston and Tamsin, who were there from the beginning and ever since have taken your money with a cheery smile selling conference raffle tickets.

It was a resounding success.

I've been to all 16 conferences since the beginning, and will likely attend the next 16. I don't like to choose in situations like this, but I have to say the last one was the best so far. But then I say that every year

When Viv resigned two years after that to follow a different path, Joanne Graves took up the challenge, followed by Yvonne Lindsay, the then secretary. They both put in a substantial number of hours to help keep things rolling along.

Since that first conference we've hosted many authors from the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia: Emma Darcy, Kate Walker, Penny Jordan, Stephanie Laurens, Jennifer Crusie—the list goes on. Not to mention the wonderful guests who have shared their amazing knowledge and insights, such as Christopher Vogler. Agents of the calibre of Donald Maass, as well as a host of other editors and agents, all happy to take our pitches.

September 14, 1998, our email loop was born, started by one-time Dunedin member, Frances Grattan, who has long since left the group. No matter what the level of experience or success, in the writer's quest, we have found the sisterhood of words a warm and welcoming place to be. Knowledge and tips are shared openly, the hand of friendship offered freely.

Eventually, we grew too big and unwieldy for one person to run. On May 17, 2002, we broke new ground, and became an incorporated society, thanks largely to Peta Mobberley and Nalini Singh. Peta and Nalini did a huge amount of the work, although the entire committee of the time helped. It comprised: Yvonne Lindsay, Sharyn Barratt, Nicky Bailey, as well as Peta and Nalini. Incorporation led to a full committee being appointed, with Yvonne as president.

Let's not forget our home grown authors, Daphne Clair, Robyn Donald and Susan Napier, without whose generous support and guidance, we might never have got this off the ground.

And of course Barbara and Peter Clendon gave us the fabulous Clendon Award that helped launch

many of our authors to publication. Some of the authors who have won or finalised in the Clendon and are now published, though not necessarily because of the award, are: Annie Featherston, Frances Housden, Lisa Chaplin, Loren Teague, Pat Snellgrove, Jean Drew, Bronwyn Jameson, Nalini Singh, Sandra Hyde, Shelley Munro, Yvonne Lindsay, Liz Heywood, Maxine Sullivan, Helen Kirkman, Tessa Radley, Trish Morey, Karina Bliss, Melanie Scott, Jan Colley, Abby Gaines, Sandra Hyatt, Anne Oh, Emily Gee, Maree Anderson, Paula Roe, Zana Bell, Natalie Anderson, Soraya Nicholas, Sue MacKay.

Barbara and Peter also regularly donate books for our conferences and raffles.

We were all very excited when Fiona Brand was published, the first member of the fledgling group to be accepted, because it told us we could all do it if we were serious about following our dream. Some months later I was accepted, followed a few days later by Frances Housden. We knew then that RWNZ had cracked it.

And since then, it seems, there is always good news on the loop. So, let's keep it coming, ladies.

Special thanks must go to Frances for the fantastic fundraising garden parties she and Keith hosted, and for taking over as convener of the Auckland chapter meetings.

In researching this article I found the original membership register and many of the faces came flooding back, not, I might add, without shedding a tear or two. Who can forget the wonderful summer meetings we had in Marie Stuttard's beautiful garden in Taupaki? Marie became one of my dearest friends. Sadly, she was lost to us several years ago, as were Miriam Arden, Kathy Hanson, Pauline Mayhew and Loren Teague.

Romance writers are the best. I'm not sure if writers in other genres help each other in quite the same way, but the email loop literally zings when someone gets "the call", or a contract. The messages of congratulations for a fellow author are thrilling and heart-warming

Here's to the next twenty years of Romance Writers of New Zealand, and the next crop of wonderful authors accepted for publication.

Please forgive me if I have inadvertently left any names out of this article.

Jean Drew  
Founder, RWNZ

# NEWBIE AUTHOR

*Louise Delamore (Wild Rose Press)*

*interviewed by Kylie Griffin*



## Share a little bit about yourself and your writing.

I live in Auckland, working full-time (which is good for the bank balance, bad for the time it leaves for writing). When I do find time I write paranormals and futuristics. My dad used to read me THE HOBBIT as a child before I started school, making anything outside the norm perfect fodder for my imagination. Stories have always lived in my head and getting them down on paper seemed a natural progression.

## Our readers love a good story - please tell us how you received THE CALL.

I'd started and not finished so many books, and I was getting sick of myself. Then I came across the RWNZ Clendon Award, and I was inspired to 'finish the damn book'. I got it done in time and entered it. Well, I say I got it done... it was mostly done. I'd typed 'the end' but my editing was far from complete. Nonetheless I pitched it, took the great feedback from the contest and the learning from the conference, polished it up, and sent it off. My call (or more accurately email) came from The Wild Rose Press for 'Human with a Twist'. The editor said she LOVED it (the caps were hers) and her senior editor agreed to buy it. Was I still interested? Was I? Of course I was. ☺

## Can you tell us about your debut/current book up for release?

After the back and forth of editing, my novel finally came out in July. HUMAN WITH A TWIST is about Zaralyn who, after betrayal and a broken heart, is determined to avoid romance at all costs. Until a chance rescue outside a nightclub by the mysterious Gideon Nite challenges her resolution and her heart. Gideon is attracted to Zaralyn from the moment he sees her, but how can he prove he's worth trusting when he has so much to hide? What starts out as simple attraction spirals out of control when it becomes clear their lives are in danger. Because nothing is simple – even Gideon isn't what he seems. He is a human with a twist – one of those who for centuries have been misunderstood and labelled 'Vampyre'. How can she love a man who isn't a man at all, especially when a killer is marking them for death?

## Writers' tend to have strengths and weaknesses. Can you identify them? What's the most challenging thing about writing process for you and how do you strive to overcome it?

For me finding time to write is one of the hardest things. I'm not one of the most organized or motivated people on the planet, and I'm skilled at procrastination. Writing my own story (no matter how much I love it, or enjoy writing) when I could be reading someone else's story is a constant battle. A battle I don't win nearly as often as I'd like.

## Is it fair to say getting published takes you on a steep learning curve in the next stage of your career as a writer? What's something you've learnt since getting THE CALL?

I've learnt the publishing process doesn't move fast ☺. Time from submission to print doesn't happen overnight. Other than that, I'm not under contract, so writing is still very much at my own discretion (ie. no deadlines), so that part hasn't changed. What has changed is knowing someone liked my book enough to publish, presumably that means I'm not complete rubbish and when I'm tempted to give up I have that to urge me on.

## Is there any other advice, "lightbulb" moments or comments you'd like to share about getting/being published?

Learning to write well is an ongoing journey. Every book I write I learn more, every book is better than the last. I don't think I've had a single lightbulb moment, more like a series of them, but I guess the key is to keep on trying. Everyone says, don't give up, everyone is right. It's not always easy, it's not always fun, but it's worth it ☺ .

You can find out what's going on in my writing world at: <http://LouiseD.weebly.com>





# BIO OF AN UNPUBLISHED AUTHOR

## Barb Jeffcott Geris

For the rest of the year we are going to profile an unpublished author working hard toward their goal of publication. This month we are excited to introduce Barb Jeffcott Geris!

### Hi Barb. First of all, tell us about yourself and how long you've been writing for.

Hi Soraya and thanks for having me! I live in Blenheim and have been writing seriously for about five years. I gave up work as a high school English teacher to have my four children who are now six and nine (two sets of twins) ) but have recently gone back teaching part time.

### What publisher/genre/series are you targeting?

I'm writing my fifth category romance at the moment and I also have a romantic suspense buried somewhere. I was originally targeting Harlequin Romance in London but kept getting told my plot lines were too busy so I'm now targeting Harlequin Superromance.

### Do you have an agent?

No, but I've started looking for one. While I know it's not essential in category I'd like to have someone else on my side in this tough business.

### What is your writing routine? Do you write every day?

I try to write five days a week around family life and my job. When I'm in the middle of a book I aim to write about 1200 words a day but that could be divided up into a few sessions depending on my teaching load. When I'm editing or researching those daily totals go out the window! I have three critique partners who I'll read work for in between times.

### And finally, what material do you have submitted at present? Are you waiting to hear back from any publishers/editors?


I've been seriously targeting Harlequin Superromance for the last little while and am currently working on revisions to a full manuscript for them. They also have partial manuscripts of two of my other stories from Romance Writers of America contest finals. I figured that getting my work in front of the editors I really wanted would be quicker if I could final in some contests and I'm lucky that it's worked out that way.

Thanks Barb! Fingers crossed that next time we hear from you it will be with your call story ☺

Thanks, Soraya. I hope so too!

*the IMAGING centre ltd*

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# VOICE

*By Vonnie Hughes*



We constantly hear about ‘voice.’ Your voice is the way you say things, what you say, the way you present things to the reader. Many readers can tell an author by the way the book reads e.g. J D Robb’s Eve responds to adversity in quite a different way from say a Gayle Wilson heroine. Whereas Eve punches her way through problems, solving them by putting herself in the perpetrator’s shoes, Gayle Wilson’s Susan (Wednesday’s Child) or Sarah (Victim) are more covertly intellectual. They have waited and agonised and wondered and eventually, when a clue is discovered, take action. Eve is more likely to discover the clues herself and roar into action.

There are as many different ways to say something as there are writers. The education and socio-economic background of a writer influences the way they pose a question or solve a problem. The geographical background of an author influences their writing mightily e.g. the voice of a writer from the Bronx who never made it to college, or even one who managed to get to college later in life, will write differently from an author with a double degree from Harvard. And of course someone born and raised in England will sound much different from that writer from the Bronx.

And that is why a writer need never be afraid of someone stealing his/her ideas. Every person sees a scene or event a different way, and those different ways are what make for individuality in writing (and in its interpretation—reading). We could all write Red Riding Hood at least ten different ways, and when you multiply that by authors willing to try the exercise, you’d have hundreds of different versions just for starters.

The voice is what appeals to readers. It is why people say, “Oh, I couldn’t stand her. She waffles on and on about the scenery until I lose track of the story” or “He gets so deep into forensics I don’t understand a word the guy writes.” On the other hand, these same readers will enthuse “Loved it. Loved the whole series. Easy to understand but with just enough mystery to keep me interested.” In other words, each to his own.

Some writers have tried to change their voice to suit various publications. Sometimes it works, mostly it doesn’t. A writer I admire who changes her settings greatly yet stays true to her voice, is Jayne Ann Krentz. Futuristic, historical, contemporary, paranormal, whatever, you can tell a Jayne Ann Krentz (a.k.a. Amanda Quick) novel because of her quirky characters and her voice. You can pick up one of her books and say, “Oh, that’s JAK.”

As a writer, the problem with trying to alter your voice to suit someone else is that every word must be agonised over, every phrase re-thought and in the end, it is very difficult not to become stilted. Trying to fit into a particular publisher’s pigeon-hole can be draining and in the end, pointless.

There are publishers (paper and e-publishers) out there who WILL like your voice so why bother with those who don’t? Yes, breaking into publishing is way harder than finding the philosopher’s stone, but find your niche and stick with it for a while before you expand. Perhaps after doing your research you can then carry your voice to another genre i.e. you can move from cozies to romantic suspense or from adventure to sci-fi.

Whatever you do, your voice will follow. It’s part of you. Understand it. Nurture it. Good luck.

# A NOVEL IN THREE MONTHS

By Paula Roe



In January, *Silhouette Desire* author Paula Roe decided to tackle writing a novel in three months and document the progress on her blog. The following article is one of many posts she made on her journey to 50,000 words.

## A NOVEL IN THREE MONTHS – WEEK 8 – BECAUSE I CAN'T WAIT TO EDIT

When I return to my WIP, I have to read the last scene or chapter to centre myself, to get myself back into the characters and the story. And because I can't help it, I tend to edit as I read. Some writers like to get the whole draft down then do the editing. Most of the time I just can't NOT fiddle. If I see something that needs to be fixed, I have to fix it... unless I can't think of a solution, then I'll bookmark that passage and come back to it later. Of course, I always do another sweeping edit after the book's written because I end up picking up other bits and pieces that need to be fixed. So here's a few things that I always look at when I approach the editing.

### The Time Line

Because I tend to have a lot of in-depth back story, including birthdays, public holidays, first meetings, divorces, accidents and tragedies, pregnancies, deaths, marriages, changes of season etc etc., when I prepare events and important dates (both past and present) for a story, I need to plot them on a calendar – if I don't, I end up confusing myself (and my editor!) and the story flow suffers. Because I'm a visual learner, I use an A4 perpetual calendar, complete with days and little squares for typing details. I made one up in Publisher but you can download printable calendar templates from [www.printablecalendar.ca](http://www.printablecalendar.ca) or <http://www.wincalendar.com/word-calendar-templates.htm> I also made a 'past events' calendar and posted it (and an explanation of how to use it!) on my blog at <http://bit.ly/cehKxi>

This calendar is either on my pin board or in my WIP folder for quick reference. For example: one of the major turning points in my June release, *The Billionaire Baby Bombshell*, was the death of the hero's father. I wanted it on a significant night – Christmas Eve. I also wanted to set the present-day story around August, which is not too hot for the Outback. So, all the rest of the events (the heroine's pregnancy, the age of her daughter in the present day, the h/h past history, etc) had to flow logically around that one important day. There was a lot of math going on in this story, for reasons you'll discover when you read the book.

### Repetitions

Each writer will be different and have their own list of overused words. If you don't I suggest you start one. It's a smart way of weeding out those words you tend to fall back on, plus it gets you thinking about alternatives that could do the job better. Mine so far are:

- flood
- etch
- thick
- anger
- narrow
- aggravate
- throat (when talking about breath)
- breath
- rush
- swamp
- swoosh
- danger
- pound
- exasperate
- groan/ed





- whisper/ed
- murmur/ed

I do a word search to find out where it occurs within the story and if I can use something different. If I can't, I read the sentence to see if I can reword that. An excellent tool I've used is Wordle, ([www.wordle.com](http://www.wordle.com)) which lists those words most commonly occurring within your story and puts them in a cool word cloud. I tend to remove locations and characters' names, plus 'said' and 'the' when fiddling with this tool.

### Point of View

Another of my 'problem areas' which gets a heavy edit. Because my books have dual POV, there will be some switching within a scene, so obviously I don't advocate the one-scene-one-POV rule (in fact, you'll find most writing 'rules' aren't rules at all – some are house guidelines, some a reader expectations. Most should be taken with a grain of salt). It really does depend on what you're trying to achieve in the scene and whether you have single, dual or switching POV.

I've heard it said that you should work out whichever character has the most to lose in that scene, and then to stick with their POV. So, for example, if you have a scene where your hero is about to tell your heroine that her father's just died, then stay in your heroine's head. However, a caveat. In a high-stakes story with lots of sudden revelations, it can get tiring as a writer to effectively write how that character is feeling without repeating yourself. And if you're in the hero's head, seeing your heroine through his eyes, taking note of how she handles (or doesn't!) major life-changing news, and how he reacts to HER reaction, can be a powerful scene indeed.

Throughout my years as a contest judge, I've seen the gamut of head hopping – a terrible affliction that takes the reader from one character's thoughts to the other character then back again multiple times. The worst I've encountered was literally every paragraph, where each paragraph consisted of two sentences... and this went on for ten pages!

So how do you spot change of POV? Here's an example:

**"You're gorgeous, Abby." Greg reached for his wine glass and took a sip, eying her over the rim as she flushed prettily before her gaze went to her plate. His blue eyes widened and he shoved back his black hair with one tanned hand. Surely she'd heard that before?**

**"Thanks," she said, the blush still staining her cheeks. Why was he flirting with her? She wondered curiously. What could he possibly want that he hadn't already taken from her family?**

Here's what I'd do.

a) Either stick with one or the other's VP. The more changes you have the more risk you run of confusing the reader and stopping the story's natural flow. You want them invested in the story, not thinking, "whose head are we in now? Who's speaking?"

b) edit it like this:

**"You're gorgeous, Abby." Greg reached for his wine glass and took a sip, eying her over the rim as she flushed prettily before her gaze went to her plate. He frowned. ~~His blue eyes widened and he shoved back his black hair with one tanned hand.~~ Surely she'd heard that before?**

**"Thanks," ~~she~~ Abigail said, the blush still staining her cheeks still warm. Why was ~~is~~ he flirting with me ~~her~~? ~~She wondered curiously.~~ What could he possibly want that he hadn't already taken from her family?**

In the first paragraph, we're in Greg's VP, so he cannot see his 'blue eyes', 'his black hair' and would not think 'tanned hand'. When was the last time you scratched your head and thought "my fingers ran through my long blonde hair?" I also took creative license and made him frown, which added weight to the last sentence.

In the second paragraph, let your readers know who's POV you're in by stating their name (I got that little tip from Stephanie Laurens!). And because we're in her POV, she cannot see the 'blush staining her cheeks'. She can, however, feel the warmth on her skin. I made the next sentence deep POV, which makes 'She wondered curiously' doubly redundant: 1) you're already in her viewpoint and 2) by her deep POV question, the implication is she's 'wondering curiously'. You could also make the last sentence deep POV too, so it would then read "What could he possibly want that he hadn't already stolen from my family?"

Okay, so I did a bit of editing with that example too <g>. If you haven't already, check out the Show v's Tell article I wrote for RWA's Hearts Talk magazine on my website.

*Paula's most recent release is The Billionaire Baby Bombshell (Silhouette Desire) and her next, Promoted to Wife (April 2011), was a result of "A Novel in Three Months." Read her entire series of blog posts via [www.paularoe.com](http://www.paularoe.com), and check out her other articles while you're there.*

## RWNZ ONLINE WORKSHOP OCT 11-31

### *The Warrior Writer – Instructor: Bob Mayer*

Bob Mayer, former special forces agent (Green Beret) and author of more than 40 books, including the *New York Times*-bestselling romantic suspense novels co-written with Jennifer Crusie *Don't Look Down* and *Agnes and the Hitman*, will present his *Warrior Writer* workshop for RWNZ, online October 11-31. The workshop will run in a Yahoo email group, to which you will be invited to subscribe after you have paid your course fee.

#### **About the Workshop:**

#### **WHY WARRIOR-WRITER?**

*Stephen King: "I'm convinced fear is at the root of most bad writing."*

Warrior-Writer is a one-of-a-kind Workshop focusing on you, the author. In the Warrior-Writer Workshop, Bob Mayer applies the battle-tested strategies of the Green Berets to the world of being a *New York Times* bestselling author. Bob has taught thousands of writers over the years, but this new and innovative program probes deeper than words on the page. It is designed to teach you, the writer, how to think, plan, and become the future best sellers in the new age of publishing. The benefits you'll gain from this workshop will extend far beyond your writing and reach into all areas of your life making dreams a reality. Behaviors become habits. Habits become character. Character becomes destiny. What is your destiny?

During the Warrior Writer Workshop, you will progress through two levels of Who Dares Wins:

1. An overall strategy for change and success.
2. Specific tactics you can apply immediately.

During the course of the workshop, Bob will help you:

- Clearly define your writing goals and help you understand why you want to achieve them.
- Examine your surroundings and discover those assets that will aid you in achieving desired goals.
- Identify potential threats and help guide you around those barriers.
- Locate your blind spot, the part of your character that hinders you from being as creative as you can be.
- Discover what you fear and how that fear could be sabotaging you from turning your dreams into realities.
- And that is just the tip of the iceberg!

The Warrior-Writer Workshop will help you develop personal strategies to:

1. Overcome procrastination.
2. Finish what you start.
3. Be consistent in your work.
4. Set boundaries for work space and time
5. Achieve more than you ever thought possible.

#### **Cost:**

RWNZ members: NZ\$10    Non-RWNZ members:US\$20

#### **How to register:**

Pay via Paypal on the RWNZ website, [www.romancewriters.co.nz](http://www.romancewriters.co.nz) , or by internet banking (from NZ bank accounts only) into bank account No: **12-3070-0099767-00**. Please code your payment with Mayer Workshop and Your Name. After you have paid, please email the course moderator Joanne Graves on [rwnzworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:rwnzworkshop@gmail.com) and tell her you have paid (include your Paypal receipt number if paying by Paypal).

## OFFICIAL RELEASES & MEMBER SUCCESSES

### Official October Releases

The Marry-Me-Wish by Alison Roberts

Stand-in Bride's Seduction by Yvonne Lindsay

Beauty and the Scarred Hero by Emily May



### Member Successes - Competitions and Accolades

#### Awards and Competitions

**Iona Jones** has finalised in the Historical category of the **Lone Star Contest** (North West Houston RWA).

**Leeann Morgan** has finalised in the **Golden Gateway Competition** with her superromance CINDERELLA IN HIGH HEELS.

#### Sold

**Soraya Nicholas** has signed a two book deal with **Harlequin Romance** - check out her "The Call" story on the loop - it's great! Soraya has also signed with literary agent **Laura Bradford** of the **Bradford Literary Agency**.

**Jean Drew** Has sold YESTERDAY'S DREAMS as Jean Adams, to **The Wild Rose Press**. Release date to be advised.

Do you have fantastic news to share? Competitions, sales, contracts?? We all love to hear the successes of our fellow writers. Share it by emailing Tyree and announce it on the loop or post it on the Romance Writers of New Zealand Inc Facebook page. We love to share the cyber-champagne.

Email Tyree at [rocker.t@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rocker.t@xtra.co.nz) with you successes.

#### THE KARA SCHOOL OF WRITING

The Kara School of Writing is thrilled to be offering weekend romance writing courses again! The Kara School of Writing has been instrumental in the success of many published authors. A dozen past students are now writing for Harlequin, and other world-wide and New Zealand publishers.

Two places are available for an Advanced Course on the 12-14th November - please email Daphne [daphne@daphneclair.com](mailto:daphne@daphneclair.com) or write to Kara School of Writing, PO Box 105, Maungatapere, Northland 0152.



## INTERNATIONAL CONTEST NEWS

*Compiled by Lisa Elkind-Gardiner*

### **Romance Writers of Australia The Emerald Award for the Best Unpublished Manuscript 2011**

**Deadline:** 12 November 2010 **Enter:** The first three chapters of your unpublished manuscript aimed at a category or single title publisher. **Eligibility:** Unpublished RWAus members only **Fee:** AUS\$38.50 **Prizes:** 1st prize in each section - \$500, 2nd - \$250 3rd prize - \$150

<http://www.romanceaustralia.com/emerald.html>

### **Silicon Valley RWA GOTCHA Contest**

**Deadline:** October 31 2010 **Enter:** 1st 15 pg of manuscript **Eligibility:** Unpublished in category entered **Fee:** \$25 US

<http://www.svrwa.com/gotcha>

### **Smoky Mountain Romance Writers – Sweet, Spicy and Spooky Contest**

**Deadline:** Oct 31 2010 **Enter:** Fiction short story or novella **Eligibility:** Unpublished writers. **Fee:** \$17 **Prize:** 1st place \$50.00 and published in the Sweet, Spicy and Spooky anthology.

<http://www.smrw.org/contest.htm>

### **Hudson Valley Chapter RWA - Hook, Line and Sinker Contest**

**Deadline:** November 1st 2010 **Enter:** 1st 3 pgs of ms. **Eligibility:** Romance Writers of American paid up members ONLY published or unpublished. **Fee:** \$10

**Prize:** 1<sup>st</sup> Prize \$50 US

<http://www.hudsonvalleyrwa.com/contest>

### **Dunes & Dreams Long Island RWA Picture Perfect Cover Contest**

**Deadline:** December 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 **Enter:** Proud of your beautiful cover and book blurb? Submit book cover and blurb to this great contest! **Eligibility:** Open to all 2009-2010 covers for full-length romance novels (60,000 words min), traditional or electronic, from non-vanity publishers **Fee:** \$10 **Prize:** Engraved plaque

<http://dunesanddreams.org/picture-perfect/>

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

*Compiled by PDR Lindsay-Salmon, aka Patrika Salmon*

### **Varsity Prints, USA.**

Publishes YA (Young Adult) novels. Especially interested in romance stories that: 'make you swoon, erotica that sizzles.' Authors must be 18+ years of age. Seeking 20,000 word novellas.

<http://varsityprints.com>

**Guidelines:** [http://varsityprints.com/For\\_Authors.html](http://varsityprints.com/For_Authors.html)

### **'More Scary Kisses' Anthology**

This is Australian. Seeking submissions with romantic and paranormal or speculative elements. These can be humorous, scary, sexy or thought-provoking, but the primary focus should be romance. 1,000 to 8,500 words.

<http://ticonderogapublications.com/2010/05/more-scary-kisses>

**Guidelines:** <http://ticonderogapublications.com/news/page/2/>

### **Rebel ePublishers.**

This is a new e-publisher based in South Africa.

Seeking light romance and chick lit. novels

[www.rebelepublishers.com](http://www.rebelepublishers.com)

[www.romancewriters.co.nz](http://www.romancewriters.co.nz)

October 2010

18

# RWNZ NEWS AROUND THE REGIONS

## Regional convenor contacts

AUCKLAND – Frances Housden  
email: [fhousden@xtra.co.nz](mailto:fhousden@xtra.co.nz)

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HAWKE'S BAY – Ginny Suckling  
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[rainbowpt@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:rainbowpt@vodafone.co.nz)

OTAGO - Viv Adams, email:

[whitecliffodge@xtra.co.nz](mailto:whitecliffodge@xtra.co.nz)

WELLINGTON – Giovanna Lee

Email: [giovanna@xtra.co.nz](mailto:giovanna@xtra.co.nz)



## AUCKLAND

Our next meeting is on the 2nd of October at the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion at the corner of Mt Eden and Mt Albert Roads at 12.30 pm. Please bring a small plate for a shared lunch and any questions you might have on Writing the Historical Novel - Short, or Long. This workshop will be taken by both Sophia James and Frances Housden.

## WELLINGTON

September saw us welcome new member Florence, and Shirley who was visiting from Auckland. Leeann had great news – she's a finalist in the Golden Gate contest. The conference was discussed - almost all of us travelled to Auckland and felt we'd had our money's worth. Then Rachel presented a workshop on document mapping so we could keep track of our WIPs and plot them more precisely. The laptops were kept busy, and there were plenty of pleased exclamations.

**NOTE:** Our next meeting has been brought forward to Saturday September 25<sup>th</sup> for Gracie's workshop 'Finding Your Voice'. Venue: Meryl's. Reminder email will be sent.

## CHRISTCHURCH

This month in Canterbury we reluctantly postponed our Sept meeting due to the travel logistics around the area so a different update for this month:

On behalf of all Canterbury RWNZ members, I'd like to thank our friends locally and in other areas who have sent their messages of kindness in light of the earthquakes. They were very much appreciated, and I'll certainly pass them on next meeting. It was a double-blow as we had a number of members lining up for their first (or first in a while) meeting. Our message in romance is one of hope, optimism, and conquering against all odds. Let this remain our latest challenge. I hope you're all still keen!

If you're in ChCh, please gather up your writing Conquests, Confessions, Commitments & Curiosity, and see you next meeting: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> Oct, 7pm. Let's make it the best ever, just because we can!

## NELSON

This month we have been very busy organizing our Winter Warmer Romance Short Story Competition. The deadline was Monday 6/9 and last Wednesday night we all gathered to read all the thirty-three submitted stories. We started with homemade pizzas, then shortlisted eleven stories before taking a break with coffee, tea, chocolates and Shirley's lovely cake. After that we read and scrutinized the shortlisted eleven again and after a lot more chocolates we managed to make a decision of the final top four stories. They are now on their way to our final judge Emily May.

Of the thirty-three there were eighteen who wanted written assessments and those stories will be assessed as soon as possible. We all fully enjoyed reading the stories entered including the ones from writers who hadn't understood the true meaning of the word 'Romance'. The love of horses or house-trucks was not quite what we were looking for!

Our next meeting will be Saturday 9 October 2pm at Annika's place as usual.

## OTAGO

This month our thoughts are with our CHCH members who suffered the massive earthquake and who now endure ongoing aftershocks. You have our support through this rebuilding phase so please do let us know how we can help. Writing-wise we push on with WIP and plan to meet in October, though as we have yet to confirm the date please contact Viv for details. Phone 034822685, or email [whitecliffodge@xtra.co.nz](mailto:whitecliffodge@xtra.co.nz).

## WEB SURFING

Compiled by Nalini Singh

Agent **Rachelle Gardner** gives us a glimpse "Behind the Scenes" of two possible scenarios at an acquisitions meeting at a publishing house: <http://tinyurl.com/298nrjm>

**Sherrilyn Kenyon** recently released a "Vook". According the Vook.Com website: "A vook is a new innovation in reading that blends a well-written book, high-quality video and the power of the Internet into a single, complete story. You can read your book, watch videos that enhance the story and connect with authors and your friends through social media all on one screen, without switching between platforms."

**Bob Mayer** talks about "Self-Publishing Realities" at Genreality: <http://tinyurl.com/24s8228>  
Ever wanted to experience Shakespeare "in the original Klingon"? Well now you can!  
<http://tinyurl.com/39f3ou2>

## BITS AND PIECES

Compiled by Soraya Nicholas

**Samhain is consolidating with the online bookstore My Bookstore and More to bring readers more coupons, pre-ordering for upcoming releases and a better book buying experience.**

The popular online publisher, Samhain, primarily publishes books in e-book format. The company has been rapidly expanding since it launched 2005. Now they are evolving in a new direction by consolidating their publishing house with the online bookstore that currently distributes Samhain's e-books, My Bookstore and More. In the past, Samhain has sold their books online via the MBaM bookstore. The online bookstore has been a destination for readers searching for e-books published by a wide range of publishing houses both large and small. But soon MBaM will sell Samhain e-books exclusively. To read the full article head to <http://www.rtbookreviews.com/rt-daily-blog/changes-e-book-buying-landscape>

**Former Editorial Director for Dorchester Publishing, Leah Hultenschmidt is now Senior Editor at Sourcebooks.**

Sourcebooks Casablanca is now building on this success with the addition of Leah Hultenschmidt as Senior Editor. Leah will acquire romance and YA projects for Sourcebooks' Casablanca and Fire imprints, and she is the newest addition to the Sourcebooks New York office. For the full report and comments, go to <http://www.smartbitchestrashybooks.com/index.php/weblog/comments/leah-hultenschmidt-moves-to-sourcebooks/>

Leah blogs about what she's looking for in the YA genre for Sourcebooks . . . sounds like she's hungry for a few new books!  
<http://romanticreading.net/2010/09/12/what-im-looking-for-in-ya/>

**Romance is Not Dead – New Voices competition**

The entries are up over at [www.romanceisnotdead.com](http://www.romanceisnotdead.com)! If you haven't already been to the site, register and read some of the first chapters posted by many brave authors all over the world. Harlequin Mills & Boon are actively looking for "new voices".

Editor on-line pitch at eharlequin with Carina Press editor Angela James!  
<http://community.eharlequin.com/forums/write-stuff/editor-pitch-carina-press>