

# Heart to Heart

ROMANCE WRITERS  
OF NEW ZEALAND

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## The Messages We Send in Our Work

Kathy Servian



**On 19 September 1893 New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world in which women had the right to vote in parliamentary elections. In this regard New Zealanders were trail blazers as in most other democracies such as Britain and the United States women did not win the right to vote until after the First World War.**

This victory for New Zealand women was hard won and came as a result of years of effort by suffrage campaigners such as Kate Sheppard who is now immortalised on our ten dollar bill.

The movement began in the 1860s and gained momentum until a series of petitions was presented to parliament asking for the enfranchisement of women. In 1891, 9000 signatures were gathered, in 1892 almost 20,000 and finally, in 1893 nearly 32,000 signatures were obtained.

There was opposition, of course, led mainly by the liquor industry who were fearful that women would support growing demands for the prohibition of alcohol. They lobbied parliamentarians and organised their own counter-petitions.

In 1891 and 1892 the House of Representatives passed electoral bills that would have enfranchised all adult women, but these were both sabotaged by opponents in the upper house (the Legislative Council) by adding devious amendments that ensured the bills failed.

In 1893, following the third petition, another bill easily passed in the House. Now everyone waited to see if the Legislative Council would block it again. Suffragists held massive rallies and sent thousands of telegrams to the members of the council. The Prime Minister, Richard Seddon, and others used underhanded tactics to try and stop the bill, but they failed and it passed on 8 September 1893 by twenty votes to eighteen.

Anti-suffrage campaigners circulated new petitions to encourage the governor, Lord Glasgow, to withhold his consent for the law. But on 19 September he signed the

bill into law and all women who were British subjects and over the age of twenty-one could vote. This included Māori and Pakeha women, but excluded other races such as Chinese women who were not British subjects.

Supporters around the world rejoiced at the victory and sent their congratulations at New Zealand's achievement saying that it gave 'new hope and life to all women struggling for emancipation.'

Parliamentary elections were held only three months later and despite claims by opponents that 'lady voters' would be jostled and harassed at polling booths by 'boorish and half-drunken men' the election was described as the 'best conducted and most orderly' ever held. In fact, in Christchurch the streets were said to resemble 'a gay garden party.'

It's important that modern women remember the sacrifices our fore-mothers made to ensure that we are not only able to vote, but that we have the rights of ownership over our own bodies, our property and custody of our children. The themes of equality and enfranchisement not only for women, but for indigenous and working class people run strongly through my Shaking the Tree trilogy of novels set predominantly in New Zealand between 1853 and the 1890s. I deliberately included these themes because it's all too easy to become complacent, to take our freedom for granted and to forget that equality for all in western countries is a relatively new phenomenon.

Historical novels provide messages about how far we have come in a short space of time. They also remind us how easily we can slip backwards if we are not vigilant. As storytellers, we are in a unique position to share messages in a palatable form. For this reason, it's important to ensure that our novels not only tell great stories, but that they also have relevant themes and didactic messages for our readers. Most of us already do this without even realising it with our sassy female protagonists who don't take any crap from anyone no matter which era they live and love in. However, it's worth keeping the important messages front and centre in our minds when we are writing. What we say has an influence on those who read our work which puts us in a position of responsibility to share messages of female strength and equality.

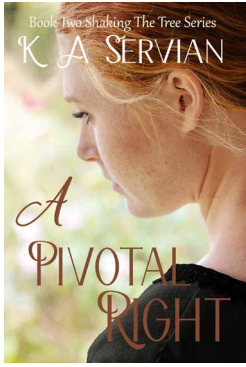
### A PIVOTAL RIGHT

*Florence struggled for breath as she stared in the face of a ghost. "Jack?"*

*Twenty years after being forced apart Jack and Florence have been offered a second chance at love. But can they find their way back to each other through all the misunderstandings, guilt and pain?*

*And what of their daughter, Viola? Her plan to become a doctor is based on the belief she has inherited her gift for medicine from Emile, the man she believed was her father. How will she reconcile*





her future with the discovery that she is Jack's child?

*A Pivotal Right* is the second book in the *Shaking the Tree* series set in colonial New Zealand. It continues the story of Jack and Florence began in *The Moral Compass*.

Buy *A Pivotal Right* on Amazon [here](#).



As a life-long creative, [Kathy](#) gained qualifications in fashion design, applied design to fabric and jewellery

making and enjoyed a twenty-year-plus career in the fashion and applied arts industries as a pattern maker, designer and owner of her own clothing and jewellery labels.

Creative writing had been an interest in her youth but was put aside for many years in favour of other creative pursuits. Kathy returned to writing about four years ago. Her first novel, 'Peak Hill' was a finalist in the Romance Writers of New Zealand Pacific Hearts Full Manuscript contest in 2016 and her short story, 'Seeing Him Again for the First Time' won the Romance Writers of New Zealand Chapter Short Story contest for 2018.

Never one to do things by half, Kathy creates her own covers and has designed and made the costumes for the covers of her 'Shaking the Tree' series of historical novels: 'The Moral Compass', 'A Pivotal right' and 'Slaves in Petticoats (due out in 2019). She has made and photographed several other costumes from various periods ranging from Regency to early twentieth century. Images are available for purchase on Shutterstock <https://www.shutterstock.com/q/kathysq>.

Kathy has completed a diploma in advanced applied writing. She works fulltime as a writer squeezing it in around teaching the occasional sewing class and being a wife and mother.

You can follow Kathy on her website or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/KAServian>.

## Strong Women

### Renée Dahlia



**Strength, particularly when related to the phrase 'strong woman', often comes with the ideals of toughness, firmness, a powerhouse who argues against the strictures of society with a solid backbone. In the cliché, a strong woman is someone terrifying, a termagant, or worse – a shrew.**

But strength also comes in quieter ways. It is courage, durability, not just brawniness and force. It is the glue holding a family together, stability in tough circumstances, or simply a woman who makes the best of her situation.

The three friends who form the basis of my *Bluestocking* series are loosely based around my great-grandmother, Josephine d'Ancona. Many would call her a strong woman – one of the first to graduate as a medical doctor in Holland,

and they'd be right. It takes a determined strength to battle the system and enforce change. Her oldest daughter, my Oma, had the advantage of growing up with the example of her mother's achievements. She also went on to higher education, gaining a qualification in social sciences, but history threw many difficulties at her.

Born in 1912, my Oma grew up in Holland under the demands of World War One. She enjoyed the Long Weekend (between the wars) as a teenager with wealthy parents who were both doctors. They even had a motor vehicle. In 1939, my Oma was twenty-seven years old and being wooed by a handsome engineer. World War Two put paid to everything, and while we don't know much about Oma's life during the war, there are rumours that she joined the underground. The only story we know with some level of certainty is that her and a friend stole a truck full of cabbages from the German Army one day. They came across a checkpoint. "Keep driving," Oma commanded her friend, or so the legend says. The cabbages were handed to people in hiding.

The engineer arrived back in Holland at the end of the war, having been an indentured worker in a German work camp, and continued to woo Oma. She eventually said yes, and they had four children (including my father). In the period following the war, the Dutch government had an emigration scheme. Together with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, they offered citizens the chance to move away from Europe to start a new life. Opa picked a job he thought sounded interesting and declared that the whole family would be moving to New Zealand. Oma's response, "I knew he'd do this when I said I'd marry him. English always was my worst language."

Opa hopped on a boat to the other side of the world alone to start his job and get things organised for the family. Oma travelled with four kids under six years old from Amsterdam to England, then onto another boat for the six-week trip to New Zealand. She spent the trip surrounded by English women who ignored her because of her accented English, although when one of the kids got sick, she said, "I wish my father was here. He would know what to do." Years later, she would roll her eyes and say, "suddenly they all wanted to know me." Her father's status transcended her foreignness in their eyes, and of course they erased her mother's achievements.

They arrived in Wellington Harbour and took the long train ride to Hamilton. Opa had purchased a section of land just outside the township and they camped there until the kitset house he'd bought in Holland arrived on another boat. They lived without electricity for years, even after he'd put the house together. Two more kids were born in New Zealand, and the shift to New Zealand must have been a massive culture shock to Oma. The stark difference between life in wealthy Amsterdam and semi-rural New Zealand in the 1950s had to be impossibly hard.

Oma died when I was sixteen, and I still miss her every day.

### THE HEART OF A BLUESTOCKING

*When an uncommon lawyer meets an unusual doctor, their story must be extraordinary...*

September 1888: Dr Claire Carlingford owns the bluestocking







label. Her tycoon father encouraged her to study, and with the support of her two best friends, she took it further than anyone could imagine, graduating as a doctor and running her own medical practice. But it's not enough for her father. He wants her to take over the business, so he can retire. Then his sudden arrest throws the family into chaos and his business into peril.

Mr James Ravi Howick, second son of Lord Dalhinge, wants to use his position as a lawyer to improve conditions for his mother's family in

India. When an opportunity arises to work for Carlingford Enterprises, one of the richest companies in the world, Ravi leaps at the chance to open his own legal practise. But his employment becomes personal as he spends more time with Claire and she learns the secret that could destroy his family.

Both Ravi and Claire are used to being outsiders and alone. But as they work together to save their respective families from disaster, it becomes clear that these two misfits might just fit together perfectly.

Buy *The Heart of a Bluestocking* [here](#).



[Renée Dahlia](#) is an unabashed romance reader who loves feisty women and strong, clever men. Her books reflect this, with a side-note of dark humour. Renée has a science degree in physics. When not distracted by the characters fighting for attention in her brain, she works in the horse racing industry doing data analysis. She writes for two racing publications, churning out feature articles, interviews and advertorials. When she isn't reading or writing, Renée wrangles a husband, four children, and volunteers on the local cricket club committee.

## Historical Women as Role Models for Romance Writers

Jill Darragh



**I have a particular love of New Zealand history in the period of 1880 to 1900. This has led me into a great deal of most interesting research about the way women's lives were affected by the Electoral Reform Bill in 1893. My second novel *The Case of the Distant Relative* is set in Wellington**

**over the six-month period leading up to the vote on the petition presented by the Women's Temperance Union. A murder mystery set against the background of the fight for universal suffrage it relies heavily on contemporary reports of the time.**

To get a clear picture of how women were represented, treated and generally thought of back then, I read every edition of the Wellington Evening Post from April to September. This also gave me a very good grounding in the daily lives of the residents of Wellington, the weather the politics and the domestic trivia. (Papers Past) I also make good use of the Feilding Coach House museum, which keeps records of local women and has an amazing collection of gigs, governess carts and household paraphernalia going way back to the early settlers of our region.

In writing a back-story for my heroine Sophia Holmes, I took into account the sort of careers or employment that women were allowed to do. Sophia has had a somewhat murky past in England and comes to New Zealand to start a new life. I decided that although it was quite rare at the time she would run her own secretarial business. This gave her the freedom to travel round Wellington, to be interested in politics and to work for various employers on a temporary basis. It made her independent and self-reliant unlike many of the married women of the time.

In real life the women who ran the Wellington Branch of the Temperance Union were great role models and came from all walks of life. Of course there were many men who belonged too and who supported universal suffrage because it wasn't only women who couldn't vote, there were many men who were unable to register because they were itinerants or did not work in one place. Another strong group of women in Wellington at that time belonged to the 'Tailoress' Union and they appeared to have a very powerful political lobby.

Sophia Holmes is a distant relative of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle although she denies a connection. This allowed me to give her a natural curiosity that leads her to investigate the death of a prostitute she meets at a Temperance meeting. When she reads in the Wellington Evening Post about the murder, she reports to the police that she met the woman and thus begins her involvement. Sophia has to rely very much on the evidence that she can see and find; no DNA in those times although I did use the technique of fingerprinting. However I then discovered this was not allowed in court in New Zealand at that time!

My heroine encounters difficulties that many women in New Zealand were experiencing at the time. She cannot use the reading room at the Wellington public library as it is only open to men and so she is an avid reader of the newspaper at home. Strangely I found no mention of Kate Shepherd in that six months in the Evening Post although I know that the Christchurch Press was very much against women obtaining the vote and wouldn't let her print reports or advertise in that paper. However the editor of the Post did support universal suffrage and printed long reports of the Parliamentary debates.

As we have just celebrated 125 years of universal suffrage in New Zealand, it is interesting to analyse how those women lived and can be portrayed as fictional characters. They fought against chauvinism, inequality and alcohol much as 20th century women unfortunately, still do. But I have no doubt their efforts have served to influence all of us who write about strong female characters whether in an historical setting or modern. Our women were extraordinary pioneers and offer some amazing material for the modern historical romance writer.

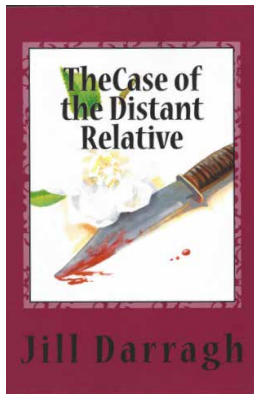




## THE CASE OF THE DISTANT RELATIVE

*Set against the 1893 New Zealand electoral reform movement, a campaign to prevent women having the vote becomes lethal. Sophia Holmes, a young businesswoman, becomes involved in murder, arson, blackmail, and kidnapping.*

*Inspired by her distant relationship to the author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, she sets out to fight for the franchise, women's rights and justice.*



[Jill Darragh](#) lives on a 33 hectare farm near Feilding in the North Island of New Zealand. She has a BA in English and Media Studies and runs [Rangitawa Publishing](#) which has helped over 100 New Zealand authors publish their work in the last five years. Jill now writes the 'Sweet Bitter' series under the pen name Carole St Aubyns. These narratives are based around Feilding in the 1888 - 1898 period, and 'The Aphrodite Club' series by Jemma Daintree, based in Wellington 1893 onwards.

## Things to Consider when Writing Medical Events and Traumas

E.L.L.Lowe & J.C. Harroway



**Geoff Symons hit the nail on the head when he stated in conference that one of the most important things a writer needs to do is get their facts right. Let's face it, there's nothing worse than reading a really intense scene and being dragged out of it with some little detail that might otherwise be insignificant, if it weren't so completely wrong.**

It might be something to do with crime scenes, which it was in the case of Geoff's examples, but it also might be in something else, say something creative like art, or in the case of this article, something medical.

This article looks at a variety of things that writers have to consider when writing a medical event or trauma, including:

- The importance of getting it right;
- The importance of using 'just' enough detail; and
- The need to understand your genre.

### GETTING IT RIGHT

Getting it right is one of the most important parts of writing. There may be nine out of ten people who don't recognise the fact that you've gotten something wrong, but for that one out of ten who do, their reading experience can potentially be ruined by the fact they're pulled out of the story.

As a lay-person with no medical experience, writing any kind of medical event comes with certain constraints. I have no experience and absolutely no training, so am dependent upon research, and the help of friends and fellow writers. This means research is essential. However, that researching needs to be tied in with your character and their experience, the knowledge which they have of that situation and how to handle it, and how that particular event moves the story forward. As a result, the following considerations are vital in the research and planning process.

*'...research is essential.  
However, that researching  
needs to be tied in  
with your character and  
their experience...'*

### Who is your character/what do they do?

If your character has had an accident, how would they respond to it? If he/she's a doctor, they'll react very differently to say an accountant, a lawyer, or a project manager. That may appear to be common sense, but often, when you're so close to your character, it is easy to miss their real-life response. Ask yourself, are their reactions coloured by a previous experience? Does their flaw affect the way they react? Why do they react that way?

### What do you need to research?

Don't guess, or make it up. You don't need to know all of the ins and outs, but having an understanding will shape the way you write so that you at least sound as though you know what you're talking about!

Use the internet. Not necessarily Google, but online resources such as NetDoctor, WebMD and the NZ Ministry of Health websites.

Use craft books written specifically for writers, such as David. W. Pages' Body Trauma and Geoff Symons' Autopsies.

### Ask an expert. Who do you know?

We're all surrounded by family, friends, fellow writers, colleagues or any number of people who have experience in other occupations. If you're not sure of how your character would react, give someone a nudge and ask. You'd be amazed at how many occupations are represented in local writing groups.





My (E.L. Lowe) first novel, *Heaven Sent for Christmas* featured a medical event in the very first scene. The chapter brought both characters together for the first time as a result of a car accident during a blizzard.

#### EXCERPT FROM HEAVEN SENT FOR CHRISTMAS

*Nick's head hurt.*

*The pounding inside his head like the entire New York Philharmonic Orchestras percussion section were rehearsing within the confines of his skull.*

*"Damn," he muttered through clenched teeth.*

*For long moments he remained motionless, composing himself.*

*Fifteen years in the field and his own mental triage came as naturally as day, despite the whirl of confusion in his mind.*

*Arms, legs, back, neck, head. All the important parts moved without issue – or at least none that caused him concern.*

*Nothing appears broken.*

*He sent a silent prayer of thanks heavenward, he'd hit the grit-covered tarseal with one hell of a thump, but to all intents and purposes he seemed okay, albeit bruised. He hoped.*

*Glancing down he noted the thin red fabric gaping open, the harsh glare of the headlamps revealing exposed bare flesh, vicious grazes across his shoulder and upper thigh, his knees raw.*

*Idiot.*

*It was a silent curse. Filled with frustration and anger.*

*This could've been so much worse.*

*He twisted himself, attempting to stand, placing flat hands on the road surface, a vicious gasp ripping through him at the icy burn.*

*You need to get warm, Nick – fast. Last thing you need is shock to kick in.*

*It was then he saw her. A small woman whose curves were outlined by the glow of headlamps. An ethereal image that made him blink once then twice, squinting as he tried to make her out.*

*Like he needed to notice a woman's curves right now.*

*"Don't move, I'm calling the paramedics...." her soft voice called, and he could hear the panic.*

*"No."*

*He caught himself, mentally chastising himself as he realised he'd snapped. Something entirely uncharacteristic.*

*"Sorry," he added. His head might hurt, but that didn't give him the right to be an asshole. "The roads are closed. They'll be run ragged tonight."*

*"But..."*

*"I'm a doctor," he interrupted. "Just help me up would you."*

*Again, it came across curt, but he realised with every second ticking by he was getting colder.*

*"Sometime today... if I don't get up soon my backside with freeze to the damned tarseal."*

*He'd shuffled onto his side by this time, every muscle in his body screaming.*

*He needed home – fast.*

*Glancing up, he realised she'd closed the distance between them and now stood beside him. Inadequately dressed in a roll neck and jeans, he could see her shiver and knew for her too it would be as much shock as the cold. The adrenalin already subsiding.*

*She leaned down and he hooked his arm in hers, biting his*

*lip at the pain that radiated through his shoulder. Reluctant to transfer too much of his weight, he could feel warmth radiating from her, and had to fight the urge to lean in closer. He pulled himself up, reaching out to lean against the hood of her vehicle, where he stood for long seconds fighting to regain his equilibrium.*

*The world swaying. Or was that him?*

This scene evolved significantly since those first days. I always knew Nick was a doctor, so the whole mental triage made sense from day dot. I didn't need a lot of information. It wasn't as though he was in a hospital, and he was with the heroine who had no medical experience whatsoever.

However, there were some fundamental failings in that his response to the concussion didn't take into consideration the way a real doctor would in the hours and days following the accident. It took a real doctor (a year later!) to point that out to me. The result of which reinforced the need to work through each of the above three steps in future.

*'Like with any detail in our writing, medical details need to be there for a reason...'*

#### JUST ENOUGH DETAIL

Like with any detail in our writing, medical details need to be there for a reason—to push the story forward, as part of character motivation or conflict or to set a scene. But when we don't know what we don't know, how do we add just enough detail to satisfy the story?

- Make sure the information is there for a reason—like every other word in our writing, medical details must have a function. Don't use medical emergencies as an external plot device.
- Make it personal to your characters. If they don't know something, leave it out, no matter how many episodes of ER you've watched.
- Ask 'does it make sense?' It's one thing to give your hero or heroine a broken leg or a collapsed lung, as long as you don't expect them to save the world or run a sexual marathon the next day!

In the following scene from my (J.C Harroway) contemporary romance, *Devoted* (Escape Publishing), the movie director hero, Tyler, finds the heroine's sister lifeless after an apparent overdose. He calls upon the CPR training he acquired after his own sister's untimely death in similar circumstances.

*Recalling his training, he reached for Bobbie's neck, his fingertips seeking a pulse. She was alive, just. A slow, weak, thrum against his fingers. He shook her shoulder, calling her name, and when there was no response he pried her mouth open, visually checking her upper airway.*

*Clear. But her colour? Skin pale with a waxy sheen—couldn't be good. Lowering his face to hers, he listened for breaths.*

*Please let her live, please let her live.*

*He might have imagined the shallow breath on his cheek, but he couldn't wait any longer. Rolling her onto her back, he covered her mouth with his and blew two deep breaths into her lungs.*





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Relief flooded him as he watched her chest inflate, just as he'd been taught at the CPR training he'd attended after Laurel's death. Checking her pulse again with one hand, he pulled his phone from his trouser pocket and dialled emergency services.

While the call connected he gave Bobbie two more breaths, pausing only to give Bobbie's situation and location to the dispatcher.

'Keep up the CPR, sir. Help is on its way.'

Tyler pressed speakerphone and dropped his cell on the floor next to him. The dispatcher's voice, calm and authoritative, soothed him, gave him courage.

The medical detail here is not only relevant to Tyler's wound—the death of his sister—and his conflict, it's just enough to be consistent with a layperson's knowledge after some CPR training. If you are writing in a genre where the medical scenes drive the plot eg medical romance, romantic suspense, crime or thriller, clearly more detail is required.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR GENRE

If you are writing in a genre where the fast paced medical scenes drive the plot, eg. medical romance, romantic suspense, crime or thriller, clearly more detail is required. But be careful about those details.

- Get specific, but remember there are many ways to give the same information. Eg. a blood pressure of 80/40 in a trauma patient makes sense, but could be easily and erroneously flipped to 40/80. Is there another way to convey the same information and thus avoid jargon? eg the patient is hypotensive/ BP falling.
- Ensure the detail fits the situation. For example, a graze may require some basic first aid—antiseptic cream and a plaster or bandage—but a knife wound will need stitches. Unless, of course, you're writing paranormal and the character has the ability to self heal!
- Remember doctors, nurses and other health professionals use anatomical and pathological terms unless they're describing something to a patient. For example, a doctor and nurse may discuss a 'myocardial infarction' or 'MI' but they would likely inform the patient he or she has had a 'heart attack'.

The following scene is taken from *Falling for Her Fake Fiancé* by Sue MacKay (Harlequin Medical romance)

*The girl was pale as sand while blue around the lips.*

*'Where's the defib?' Mac asked as he dropped to his knees on the other side of their patient. 'Have you called the ambulance?'*

*He flicked a quick look to the manager.*

*'They're on their way.'*

*The man was calming down now that he had medical help for his chef. 'So's the air ambulance.'*

*'Here's the defib,' someone yelled.*

*'Get it charging,' Mac instructed as he tore Lauren's chef Jacket down the middle. 'Wish we had some oxygen.'*

*Kelli kept up the compressions, a sweat breaking out on her forehead. 'Your wish is about to be granted. I hear a siren.'*

*'Clear the area around your patient,' intoned the defibrillator.*

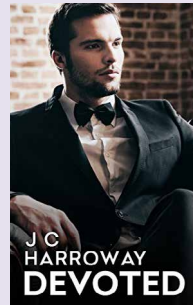
*'Everyone stand back,' Mac repeated the message as he placed the paddles on Lauren's chest. With a quick glance around to make sure those in the room had heeded his request, he shocked the chef.*

*Her body jerked upward, fell back.*

*Feeling for a pulse, Kelli shook her head.*

*'Stand back,' Mac commanded though no one had moved.*

*Another shock, another jerk off the floor and then a flicker of an eyelid, a slight rise of Lauren's chest.*



[J.C. Harroway](#) received her medical degree in the UK, cutting her teeth as a junior doctor on medical wards before embarking on her training as a pathologist. A career break, three children and one emigration to NZ later, she now finds herself writing contemporary romance, often with a sprinkling of the old medical days thrown in in homage to her roots.

Buy Devoted on Amazon [here](#).



[E L L Lowe](#) is the author of several short stories under various pseudonyms. Her principal publications though are written academically with a focus on literature and tourism. These days, when she's not being wife, mum, chief cook and bottle washer, she finds herself in coffee shops and libraries around Christchurch with her well-recognised pink laptop, losing herself in the romance stories she writes.

Website: <https://emmajamessite.wordpress.com/>

## Into the Mist

### Susan Pace/Allison Lane

**I just finished one of those high/low weeks I always hit when writing a book. The high was finishing the first draft. The low was embarking on step one of the revision process.**

I'm what's called a seat-of-the-pants writer. All I know when I begin a new project is the life histories of a few characters, a mental image of the opening scene, and a general plot idea. At that point, I sit down to write the story, turning off my internal editor while I push forward until I hit the end. Only then do I examine what I've written and figure out what revisions are necessary to turn it into a book. Finishing that first draft usually only takes me a month or so, but this time I spent much of each day dealing with a disabled husband, so the process took far longer than usual and hasn't gone very smoothly. It's hard to crawl into a story deep enough to let the words flow when I have to deal with constant interruptions. But I managed it in the end.

So I'm now faced with revisions. My process – which is mine and doesn't work for all writers, or maybe even any other writers – goes something like this. I write that first draft as fast as possible, letting the creativity flow, with no backtracking and no editing. If I need a fact I don't know, I insert a note to find it later, then continue. I rarely think about what I've already written, though occasionally



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some huge problem does creep in that I have to deal with immediately. That was particularly true this time since interruptions interfered with that creative flow, jump-starting my internal editor. When I reach the end, I have what I call a skeleton draft. It contains the primary structure of the story, though it might be missing a limb or two or have an extra finger or toe. But that's not something I worry about while writing the skeleton.

Not until I reach the end do I search out defects. The best way I know to find them is to outline the entire book – by hand, writing VERY small so I can fit each chapter's outline on a single page. The outline makes it easy to spot repetition, plot holes, do-nothing scenes, and other weak spots, which I mark on the outline in a different color ink.

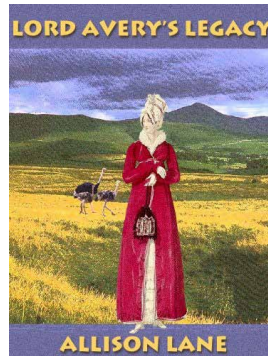
The next step is to tackle the mountain of notes I generated while drafting the story – I never back up or edit during the drafting stage, so when I notice necessary changes, I scribble them on scraps of paper. Things like *make sure we meet Sally before chapter 6* or *change antique ring to old master's painting* or *where did this dog come from?* Most notes arise from unexpected plot twists that need to be properly set up or plot changes that mean previous setups are now superfluous. I number the notes, decide where in the story they should be dealt with, then add the numbers to the outline. This is why keeping the outline one page per chapter is so important. It lets me look at the entire book as a unit.

Adding change notes to the outline is today's chore. I've already discovered that my hero and heroine held nearly identical discussions twice, so they must find something else to talk about on the second occasion. Another character is over-analyzing a situation and needs something constructive to do instead. Two confrontations are weak and should probably be combined into a single episode. Two tertiary characters are distracting so should be eliminated. Their function can better be handled by an existing secondary character. There is a jarring leap in action between chapters nine and ten that will require a bridge scene to smooth out. And, of course, half the scenes are talking heads while the other half contain little or no dialogue. Par for the course at this point in the process.

The next step will be to flesh out this skeleton into a real story. So tomorrow I start on revisions, using the marked-up outline as a guide. This pass still requires a heavy dose of creativity, but it must be tempered with an even heftier dose of logic and editorial evaluation. Fortunately, I love the process of massaging plots and polishing words. It's outlining I can't stand...



*Hi. I'm Allison Lane, an award-winning author who has enjoyed a lifelong affair with books. I was born in Minnesota, earned degrees in mathematics and computer science from the University of Illinois, then embarked on careers designing computer software and teaching classical piano before settling on writing Regency romances. Among my many awards is the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award and finaling for RWA's RITA award. I have a fabulous dog named Midas, who pinch-hits for me whenever I have to supply publicity photos - he looks so much cuter than I do. Besides writing, my favorite activity is traveling, which I indulge in as often as possible. I've lived all over the country, but currently reside in California with my husband.*



## LORD AVERY'S LEGACY

*When Lord Carrington is called in to save his ward from an unscrupulous fortune hunter, it sounds like a routine job for this dutiful head of the family. But that was before his carriage ran down Penelope Wingrave. Penelope wants only to raise her siblings in peace, but Carrington has other activities in mind. Despite her protestations of virtue, he can't leave her alone. And when they become embroiled in the mystery surrounding Lord*

*Avery's life and death, the sparks really begin to fly.*

Buy Lord Avery's Legacy on Amazon [here](#).

## Combatting Sexism Through Empowered Heroines

Lissa Carlino



**Woman Enough tells the story of an exotic dancer named Becca who faces down social stigma. Becca struggles with addiction as she fights for her right to dignity in a world that calls her a whore.**

I began writing this story in 2015. At the time, Hillary Clinton was running for president. There was a lot of empowered female energy to channel. Literary agents were asking for manuscripts with women in roles of doctors, lawyers, and scientists. All of which, are books definitely needed, but I thought of what books I like to read... stories about women who are barely getting by. **Not women who are necessarily of the elite, but women who are struggling every day yet persevering.**

Since the dawn of time, women have carried around shame for being sexual. Of course, it's fine for a woman to be objectified, but according to society, it's not okay for a woman to actually feel sexual or to want to be sexual. Because that would be liberating. And we don't want liberated women, now do we???







When I finished the first draft of this manuscript, I knew I had something powerful. Something that really spoke to my experience as a woman, and something other women could probably relate to. Then on the news, there was a scandal in New Zealand with a rugby team and an alleged sexual assault of a stripper. I was appalled at the lack of investigation. So I kept writing Becca's story. Around that same time, in the USA, there was the case of the rapist swimmer from Stanford who got a short jail sentence due to his privilege of being white, wealthy, and male.

These real-life news stories were so similar to scenes I had written that I knew I had to keep telling Rebecca's story. During my final revision this past year, allegations of rape and assault (among other things) against a Hollywood producer became public and the #metoo movement prompted more people to openly share their stories of abuses endured from men. The community of womanhood was fierce and we are now really starting to look out for one another.

I had to publish now. The timing is right.

So here it is.

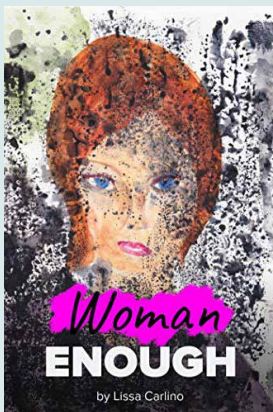
*Woman Enough* is your story. My story. Their story. Her story. While you may not agree with or relate to some of what Becca endures, I hope you might actually read it and feel like you belong.

I did.



*Lissa Carlino is an American expat who is permanent resident of New Zealand. She has been a member of Romance Writers NZ since 2015. Formally an addictions treatment counselor and sexual assault survivor's advocate, she is now a full-time mum of two boys and maintains a blog called The Knackered Truth. As a companion piece to Woman Enough, Carlino has published 12 illustrated profiles of women in America she admires on her website, [lissacarlino.com](http://lissacarlino.com). The latest piece features Teen Vogue columnist and documentary filmmaker Emily Lindin of The Unslut Project. Woman Enough is available in print from Writers Plot bookshop in Upper Hutt, and in ebook and signed paperback format from [lissacarlino.com](http://lissacarlino.com), where you can also choose to donate ten percent of proceeds to The Pōneke Aunties organisation.*

Buy *Woman Enough* on Amazon [here](#).



# News from the President

Vivienne Matthews



Hey hey!

**Another month has zoomed by. Getting closer and closer to summer, Christmas and hopefully a good break for you with friends, family and loads of good books. Exciting - but also a little scary as to just how fast time is going!**

Things are going full steam ahead in the backrooms of RWNZ – well, more correctly in people's homes and offices around the country since we're an organisation of volunteers and have no 'backrooms' as such! Massive thank you to all our volunteers who do a great job pulling things together. I know it can take a lot of your own hours to do these things and it is truly appreciated.

There are contests underway with entrants to the Great Beginning eagerly waiting for the outcome as the judges do their thing. First Kiss opens 1 November and we need judges for this – so if you're keen to jump on board for judging log into the RWNZ website and sign up. And hopefully people are working away on their Pacific Hearts entries for February. We've got teams working on both the 2019 and 2020 conferences to bring you fantastic speakers and an amazing chance to network with your tribe. Start saving now so you can come. And of course, our amazing regional convenors who bring us together each month and keep us in touch with each other and what's happening in the organisation.

To all of those getting in to NaNoWriMo this month, all the very best. May your words be many and your interruptions be few. Have fun and enjoy the interactions with other writers in the different spaces and to those going away for retreats or weekends with mates to write, have a complete blast!

Have a brilliant month one and all. See you next month!!

Cheers,

*Vivienne*



# Heart to Heart Survey Results

RWNZ members, summarized by Gillian St. Kevern

Way back in July, we launched the Heart to Heart survey. These results have been a long time coming, thanks (if thanks is the right word), to some technical difficulties and your editor's erratic schedule. Thanks for your patience, and I hope you'll find the results of the survey interesting! I definitely found this useful. I feel like I have a much better grip on what members want from Heart to Heart, and have a lot of ideas for upcoming issues.

Due to the sheer volume of responses, especially in the questions that asked for comments, I had to condense quite drastically to keep this article from turning into Godzilla. I did read every response, and will be taking them on board, even if I don't specifically cite them during this article.

## Q1: How often do you read Heart to Heart?

*Every Issue: 64.63%/53 members*

*Most Issues: 20.73/17 members*

*Occasionally: 14.63/12 members*

*Never: 0/0 members*

Obviously we have a bit of a self-selection problem here! Of the 83 members who participated in the survey, all are Heart to Heart readers. While the survey didn't offer any insight into members who don't read Heart to Heart, those who did take part obviously care a lot about our magazine.

## Q2: Please help us understand why you selected the answer above.

Of the members who frequently read Heart to Heart, the main reason for reading was staying informed of other members' news. The woo hoos and regional reports received frequent mention. Others cited useful and up to date info, the feeling of being connected to a community of writers, interesting articles, craft and writing hints, writing advice. Two members mentioned they enjoyed that Heart to Heart offers a different perspectives.

To the surprise of no one, I'm sure, the number one reason for not reading Heart to Heart regularly was business, or as one member put it, 'time-scarcity.' Other members cited difficulty reading the PDF format on their phone, and feelings of info-overload. One member mentioned finding the content repetitive and articles prone to self-promotion, which will be something for me to watch out for. On a similar note, two others mentioned that when an issue has a theme, they find it repetitive, and would prefer more of a variety. I've got mixed feelings about this. From my experience as an editor so far, I find the issues with a strong theme are a lot easier to put together, with more members volunteering content, and me spending less time chasing people for contributions. That said, more variety is not a bad thing!

## Q3: How happy are you with Heart to Heart's current publishing schedule?

*I want more issues: 0%/0 members*

*I'm happy with the monthly schedule: 90.36%/ 75 members*

*I want less issues: 9.64%/ 8 members.*

Despite the busy lives of our members, an overwhelming majority prefers our current publishing schedule. This is very good to know! However, in the comments to this question, there was strong support for bi-monthly or quarterly issues. Reasons included concern for the schedules of the magazine team (very kind of you, thank you!), and as a means to avoid issues/articles feeling repetitive. Shorter issues were also suggested as an alternative to changing the schedule.

## Q4: How happy are you with the format Heart to Heart is delivered in (pdf)?

*Very happy with a PDF—it's my preferred format given print is too expensive: 49.40% / 41 members*

*Content with PDF—PDF works okay for me but I'm open to other options: 37.35%/31 members*

*Unhappy with a PDF—PDF is difficult for me: 3.61 / 3 members*

*Happy to look at other options as long as PDF is still an option: 9.64/ 8 members*

In the comments to this section, we had a few interesting suggestions, such as the Heart to Heart e-mail having links to individual articles, offering a spiral bound print out of the entire year's issues, and a kindle-friendly version. One member noted that the two column format was harder to read on a phone screen, something which had been brought up earlier in the comments to question two.

## Q5: If you'd like to see Heart to Heart offered in a different format, please share it below.

We got a good mix of responses to this question. 3 members said they were happy with PDF, but would like to see the 2-column format scrapped in favour of something more suited for the digital format. Three members requested online delivery, which I'll admit, has confused me—I'd describe our current format as online! If this was you, please let me know what you mean! Another 3 members suggested a blog format for our articles and linking to them from the e-mail, while another suggested putting the articles on the website behind the members only paywall. To the member who requested a podcast format, that is definitely beyond my capabilities, sorry! Maybe our next editor will be up to the challenge? Other suggestions included printed format, using an app to deliver the magazine to multiple devices, and putting the entire magazine in the body of an e-mail. Accessibility is going to be something we





keep in mind, as one member pointed out how hard it is to zoom in and enlarge the current PDF.

**Q6. The formats we can offer H2H in depends on members with relevant experience volunteering their time and expertise. If you answered question five, are you able to contribute to seeing H2H published in your preferred format? Please share any ways in which you can help below.**

Of the 23 members who replied to this question, most either didn't have the necessary expertise or time to contribute. One member did reply, listing experience with blogs and RSS newsletters. If this was you, please get in touch! I'd like to learn more about what's involved in these, as it sounds like a really good option for Heart to Heart to explore.

**Q7. What do you consider the role of H2H?**

*RWNZ newsletter 87.80% /72 members*

*RWNZ magazine: 57.32%/47 members*

*Sharing industry news/trends: 86.59/71 members*

*Sharing RWNZ news: 90.24 / 74 members*

*Sharing articles about craft: 87.80%/72 members*

*Sharing articles about marketing: 85.37%/70 members*

*Book Reviews: 39.02%/32 members*

*Resources: 78.05%/64 members*

*Member news/celebrating member success: 90.24%/74 members*

I'm really glad I asked this question! Heart to Heart was first introduced to me as a magazine, so learning that the majority of members see it as a newsletter was eye-opening. The importance placed on RWNZ/ member news reflects what we've seen previously about members enjoying the community aspects of Heart to Heart.

Most of the comments to this question reflected these results, but there were a couple of suggestions for content, such as an author spotlight and including opportunities for NZ writers. There was one commenter who was very specific about what content they'd like to see. To the new writer who asked such good questions: thank you! I'm not sharing your queries here, because I plan to use them as the basis for future Heart to Heart articles!

**Q8. What would you like to see more of?**

55 members answered this questions. I managed to sort the answers into 38 different categories, but for the sake of your patience/our formatter, I'm not going to list them here! Just know that there were some really good suggestions, and that reading through them, I started feeling very excited for next years Heart to Heart. Thanks for the suggestions!

**Q9. What would you like to see less of?**

Of the thirty-four members who answered this question, seventeen answered to say how happy they

were with Heart to Heart's current content. Thank you- that means a lot!

Overly long content, book reviews and themed issues were each mentioned three times as things members would like to see less of, with advertisement/self-promotion next with two votes. Two members said they found content aimed at beginning authors less helpful for them, while another wondered if Woo Hoos could be condensed or appear every second issue. Clearly, we are a hard crowd to please!

**Q10: H2H needs content to continue. There is currently a shortage of member content. Please select any ways in which you are willing to contribute to H2H:**

*Writing an article: 43.06%/ 31 members*

*Writing a book review: 27.78/ 20 members*

*Writing another feature: 6.94%/5 members*

*I already contribute my time to RWNZ in a volunteer capacity: 19.44%/14 members*

*I feel unable to contribute: 34.72/25 members*

Given that there is an obvious desire for more member-generated content in Heart to Heart, it is great to see so many people willing to write articles! Many commenters volunteered in the comments to this question, but didn't include their e-mail address. Please get in touch! Especially the member who has written about book cover design, etc. I want to know more!

There was also a lot of feedback about why people didn't feel able to contribute, with lots of people citing their lack of sales, experience, or a perceived lack of interest in the experiences of their generation. My personal take on it is that RWNZ is a member driven organization. Our conferences are so positive because we care about each other and our different experiences. I did not feel at all experienced to manage Heart to Heart (sometimes, I still don't), but despite my newness to writing, the fact that I'm an expat slowly readjusting to NZ life, and that my writing focus is not what you'd call mainstream, I'm finding editing Heart to Heart an incredibly rewarding experience. Give it a shot and see what happens! I'm only an e-mail away if you'd like to bounce ideas around or get some suggestions.

**Q11: If you feel unable to contribute to Heart to Heart, why is that?**

*1. I'm a novice, and don't have any experience to share: 45.45%/20 members*

*2. I'm a veteran, and don't know how to relate to novices: 2.27%/1 member*

*3. I'm not based in NZ: 13.64%/6 members*

*4. I don't consider myself a romance writer: 18.18%/8 members*

*5. I don't know what to write about: 18.18%/8 members*

*6. I'm really busy with other commitments: 47.73%/21 members*

What was interesting that in the comments to this question three members spoke of their previous volunteering, and the need for new members to get







involved. This has been a bit of a theme throughout the survey, with a member stating in a comment to a previous question that they'd contributed thousands of volunteer hours to RWNZ and wanted to devote their time to their writing, while another said they wanted to see more from our newer members.

We're a small organisation, and I think we need to make sure that our volunteers don't end up getting burned out. I know this isn't a problem unique to Heart to Heart, with contest managers having trouble recruiting enough judges, and still no publicity officer! I'm not sure what the solution is, but I think it's important to make sure our new members feel welcome and to give our volunteers our support.

**Q12: Are there any features or types of articles you would love to see in H2H? Please share your wishlist below.**

Thank you very much to the thirty-four members who answered this question, especially those who named names or gave specifics of authors and types of articles they wanted to see. I've taken notes and will do what I can to deliver!

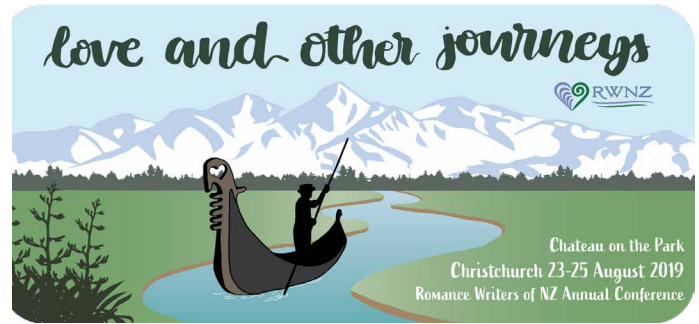
As a note, I'm always open to suggestions so if you've thought of something since this survey, feel free to drop me a line on FB or at the Heart to Heart e-mail.

**Q13: What other comparable blogs/magazines/etc. do you read?**

Of the fifty-eight members who answered this question, thirteen each subscribe to the RWA newsletter and/or the RWAustralia newsletter! Eight members read authors blogs, seven read the NZSA magazine, five listen to podcasts, and the rest gave me a really varied list of resources—thank you! I look forward to checking these out.

**Q14: Any other feedback you'd care to share?**

Most of the comments to this question were thanks to the volunteers who contribute to Heart to Heart and members sharing how much they appreciate the magazine—which made me feel very appreciated, and I hope that our contributors and formatters feel the same! There was one very thoughtful response, questioning the need for a newsletter when so much of our news is shared promptly and immediately via the Facebook group. The comment also had suggestions of ways we can ensure we get useful information to our members in the future. I think the survey responses show there is still a need for Heart to Heart, but I'm going to forward this comment to the Executive Committee for future consideration, should these circumstances change. Thank you for the thoughtful response, commenter—and actually, thank you everyone who responded, with special thanks going to the member who was unable to fill out the survey online and had to e-mail me her responses. That's really going the extra mile—thank you!



## 2019 Conference Update

**Hello and welcome to your friendly RWNZ 2019 conference update!**

**What's with the boat?**

You have hopefully seen our 2019 conference graphic on its journey out into the world, popping up on the members Facebook page and the RWNZ website. For those who are not familiar with Christchurch, yes, you can go punting on the Avon River. Our punts are very much like their famously romantic Venice gondola cousins, complete with gondoliers, though ours are dressed in Edwardian attire. But a tip from a local: don't ask for directions to the Christchurch Gondola, as that will take you on a ride up Mt. Cavendish in the Port Hills.

**Another International Guest**

We will be welcoming Melissa Storm to our line-up for next year's conference. Melissa is a USA bestselling author who also operates several businesses for authors - Sweet Promise Press, Your Author Engine, LitRing, Novel Publicity and The Author Site.

**Thursday Evening: Bonus Workshop**

Note that, as well as sessions during the conference, Melissa Storm will be presenting a special two-hour session on the evening of Thursday 22 August 2019, free for those people registered for both the Friday Workshop and Weekend Conference.

Make sure to book your flights accordingly!

**REMINDER: Expressions of Interest for 2019 Workshops**

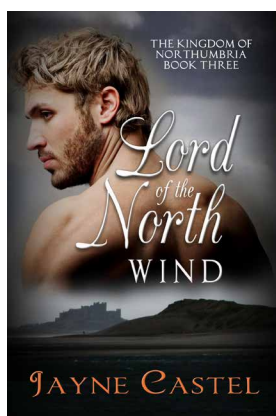
You should have all received an email calling for expressions of interest to present a workshop at the 2019 RWNZ conference. If not, check your email please. Submissions close 16th November 2018.

**Accommodation**

For the super planners out there, the hotel is already taking bookings for conference (and I know some of you are already making your bookings). There is conference pricing information and a booking link coming soon to the RWNZ website.

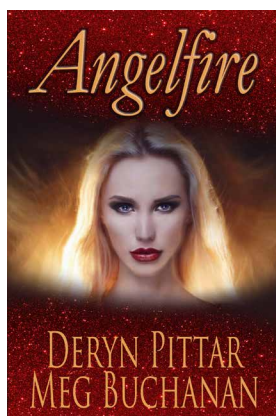
*Mel Climo  
2019 Conference Convener  
On behalf of the fabulous committee*

# Woos and Hoos



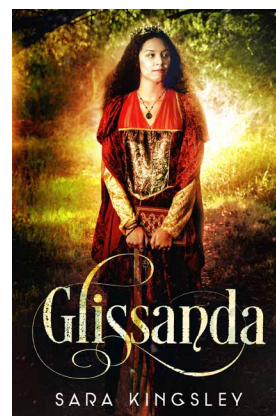
Samantha Burton (w/a Jayne Castel) released the final novel in her KINGDOM OF NORTHUMBRIA series on 10 October 2018. LORD OF THE NORTH WIND is an Historical Romance set in 7th Century Dark Ages Britain: a king who has forsaken passion for reason—and the widow who tempts him. It marks the end of a 9 book arc (The Kingdom of the East Angles, The Kingdom of Mercia, and the Kingdom of Northumbria) all set in 7th Century Anglo-Saxon England!

Buy *Lord of the North Wind* on Amazon [here](#)



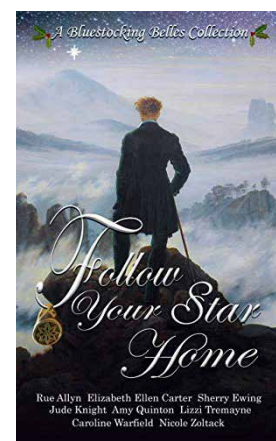
Sheryl Buchanan and Deryn Pittar have a new release coming out on 30th October. Angelfire pits a Major suffering from PTSD and an angel chosen to be the devil's bride against kidnappers, fallen angels, and a fire truck. All's fair in love and war, especially if you're falling in love with an angel.

Buy *Angelfire* on Amazon [here](#)



Sara Johnson (writing as Sara Kingsley) released Glissanda, the third book in her YA fantasy romance trilogy "The Woman King" in September. The book is available in ebook and print at all major online booksellers.

Buy *Glissanda* [here](#)

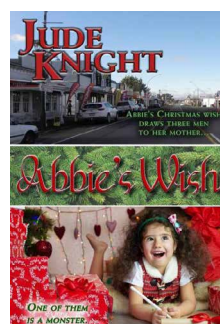


Jude Knight and Lizzi Tremayne have books coming out in November!

They have both contributed new novellas to each of two different boxed sets:

Christmas Wishes is the title for the Authors of Main Street boxed set, to be launched on 01 November, 2018, and Follow Your Star Home is the Bluestocking Belles' title, which launches 04 November 2018.

Buy *Follow Your Star Home* [here](#)

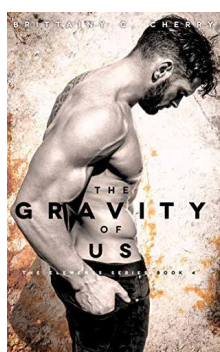




# The Bookshelf

## Book Review: The Gravity of Us by Brittainy Cherry

Reviewed by Paula Phillips



*Graham Russell and I weren't made for one another.*

*I was driven by emotion; he was apathetic. I dreamed while he lived in nightmares. I cried when he had no tears to shed.*

*Despite his frozen heart and my readiness to run, we sometimes shared seconds. Seconds when our eyes locked and we saw each other's secrets. Seconds when his lips tasted my fears, and I breathed in his pains. Seconds when we both imagined what it would be like*

*to love one another.*

*Those seconds left us floating, but when reality knocked us sideways, gravity forced us to descend.*

*Graham Russell wasn't a man who knew how to love, and I wasn't a woman who knew how to either. Yet if I had the chance to fall again, I'd fall with him forever.*

*Even if we were destined to crash against solid ground.*

Buy *The Gravity of Us* on Amazon [here](#)

### REVIEW

You know how some books just stick in your mind and you find the story going through your head on repeat. For me, that was how I found *The Elements* series by Brittainy C. Cherry including Book #4 *The Gravity of Us*. I have been so busy with life that this review has taken me three weeks to get around to write and the

story is still fresh in my head. From the first moment where we have Graham and Lucy meeting to the discovery that Graham happened to be married to Lucy's sister - someone whom she hasn't seen in years. Even more, so that she was pregnant. The pair goes their separate ways until Lucy discovers that Graham has been left behind to raise Talon - her new niece all by himself. Graham isn't exactly the warmest of people but he's trying, and it seems that Lucy may be the one person in the world who can break through his icy exterior and enter the inner core of his heart. I loved the chemistry between the characters of Graham and Lucy and could see why they worked. What I hated was the way Lucy's sisters treated her, this freaking frustrated me as couldn't they see that Lucy was trying to

do right by them all and Jane/Lyric was just a stuck-up cow from the get-go. I have loved this series as all of the books leave you thinking and having the story roll around your head for a few days or in my case a few weeks.

If you love edgy stories, angst, family sagas, and second chance romances, then check out *The Gravity of Us* by Brittainy C. Cherry today.



*Paula Phillips lives in Tauranga. She works by day as a Children and Teens Programme Specialist at the local library and by night she is The Phantom Paragrapher – a book review blog. She has also had two short stories published and a third being released at the end of August.*

Website: <http://thephantomparagrapher.blogspot.com/>

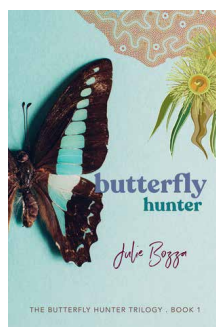
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pparagrapher7/>

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/beau\\_angelnz](http://www.twitter.com/beau_angelnz)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/nzgeekchic](http://www.instagram.com/nzgeekchic)

## Book Review: The Butterfly Hunter by Julie Bozza

Reviewed by Anne Barwell



*It started as a simple assignment for Aussie bush guide Dave Taylor – escort a lone Englishman in quest of an unknown species of butterfly.*

*However Nicholas Goring is no ordinary tourist, his search is far from straightforward, and it's starting to look as if the butterflies don't want to be found.*

*As Dave teaches Nicholas everything he needs to survive in the Outback he discovers that he too has quite a bit to learn*

*– and that very often the best way to locate something really important is just not to want to find it...*

Buy *The Butterfly Hunter* on Amazon [here](#)

### REVIEW

This is the first book I've read by Julie Bozza, and I couldn't put it down to the point that I've just added this and the rest of the trilogy to my wish list on Book Depository. The characters grabbed me right from the beginning and I found Nicholas, in particular, very endearing. I also got hooked into the story immediately and needed to keep reading to find out what happened next. I enjoy

reading about 'fish out of water,' and the meeting of different cultures, and I particularly loved the Australian references and how





the story connects to the Aboriginal Dreamtime. It added a surreal, beautiful, and in some places eerie, touch to the story.

I also enjoyed how the imagery of the butterflies reflected Dave and Nicholas' story, and I thought the author did a great job in showing the growth of their easy friendship, and I appreciated that she took the time to do that first. Dave's friends felt very much like an extended family and I think the feeling of community is real strength in this story. I love Charlie, and his friendship with both Dave and Nicholas, and Denny who knew Dave better than he knew himself. Denial is a wonderful thing.

The landscape, which is a big part of the story, is very well described, and easy to visualise. The butterflies were also characters in their own right, and beautifully described. The author captured the feeling of why Nicholas was drawn to them perfectly, and although I guessed the foreshadowing that was hinted in various parts of the story, it didn't detract from the reveal.

I'd recommend Butterfly Hunter to readers who enjoy feel-good stories with likeable characters, an interesting, different plot, and fabulous imagery. 5 out of 5 stars.



Anne Barwell lives in Wellington, New Zealand. She shares her home with two cats who are convinced that the house is run to suit them; this is an ongoing "discussion," and to date it appears as though the cats may be winning. She works in a library, is an avid reader and watcher of a wide range of genres, and is constantly on the look out for more hours in her day. Anne likes to write in series and even so called one shots seem to breed more plot bunnies. Her writing is like her reading - across a range of genres, although her favourites are fantasy, SF, and historical. Anne also plays piano and violin, so often music plays a part in her stories and/or her characters are musicians.

Website: <http://annebarwell.wordpress.com/>

## From the Editor

Gillian St. Kevern



**Our November issue is all about girl-power. Yes, I know, this really should have been timed for September to coincide with all the celebrations surrounding 125 years of women's suffrage in New Zealand. To me, the connection is obvious. Empowered women and romance go hand in hand.**

After all, in the most famous opening lines of a novel ever, Jane Austen takes ladylike aim at social conventions forcing women into financial dependence on men: 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.' Charlotte Bronte took this further when, in Jane Eyre, she suggested that women wanted self-determination and were capable of passion. More recently, romance writers have dared to suggest that hero and heroines of colour, neuro-divergent or gender/sexual minorities might just be entitled to their own happily ever after.

If only it was happily ever after! In recent months, we've seen political scheming in the States undermine the rights not only of women, but of minorities. There's even recently been burning of books containing LGBT content. It's so bad, that I actually dread opening Facebook.

I've just finished reading *A Different Kind of Daughter: The Girl who Hid from the Taliban in Plain Sight*, Maria Toorpakai's of growing up in Pakhistan as a member of the very conservative Pashtun tribe. Maria knew from aged four that she could not live confined within the four walls of her house, burning all her dresses and cutting her hair in an act of survival. Her family accepted her choice and kept her secret, and Maria lived as a boy, roaming the streets in her brother's clothes, playing sports and scrapping with the local youths, and pursuing an interest in sport. Once puberty hit, Maria continued to play squash as a girl. As if this wasn't bad enough, she dared to be good at it--something that the Taliban was not prepared to allow. Maria received death threats, survived a suicide bombing, and spent years secluded in her room, playing squash on the four walls of her room, until she was granted a visa to the States. Now she lives in Canada, where she continues to play squash and encourage other Pakhistani women and girls to challenge social conventions and choose freedom.

It's not an easy read, but as I continue to dwell on it, the thing that stands out most is Maria's love for her country and her culture, despite her experiences. She emphasizes the power of education and shared ideas to combat extremism and hate which flourish in ignorance. As writers, we literally open our readers to ideas and experiences they might never have otherwise. With every story we write, we have the power to change hearts, minds, lives and our world with our work.

Let's write the change we want to see in the world.





# Write With Love

Sarah Williams



G'day, I'm Sarah Williams Romance Author and host of Write with Love, a weekly podcast for writers and readers of love stories. Haven't heard of it? Well then here are four good reasons to tune in!



Marie Force is a hybrid author who has sold over 6.5 million books! She's a very busy lady with an amazing story!

Fellow Rural Romance author Cathryn Hein joined me on Episode 41 where I fangirled big time.

We talk about fair dinkum Aussies and going hybrid.

Elizabeth Ellen Carter loves historical romance. We talk all things corsairs and pirates on episode 42.



Episode 43 had fantasy author Bernadette Rowley told us more about her swashbuckling sexiness novels set in her fictional world of Thorius.



The big names keep coming in October including regency bestseller Anna Campbell and NZ's own, Brynn Kelly.



Check out all the episodes [here](#)

Join in on the fun, including regular competitions at [www.facebook.com/WritewithLovePodcast/](http://www.facebook.com/WritewithLovePodcast/)

If you are an author who would like a shout out, email me [sarah@serenadepublishing.com](mailto:sarah@serenadepublishing.com) or become a sponsor on Patreon!

*Sarah Williams*

**NOW OPEN!**

## Daphne Clair de Jong First Kiss Contest

### OPENING DATE

01 November, 2018. Entries via website only

### CLOSING DATE

Midnight New Zealand time, 30 November, 2018

### ENTRY SPECIFICATIONS

The contest is for a First Kiss scene of 1500 words, by computer count, including any chapter headings or section divisions, etc. PLUS a 250 word introduction of the scene. Both pieces will be judged.

Entries must be in size 12 Times New Roman or Courier, double spaced and justified. The set-up is up to 250 words and should be at the beginning of the entry. The scene, which can't exceed 1500 words, should follow, starting on a new page.

The title, subgenre, and page numbers should be in the header.

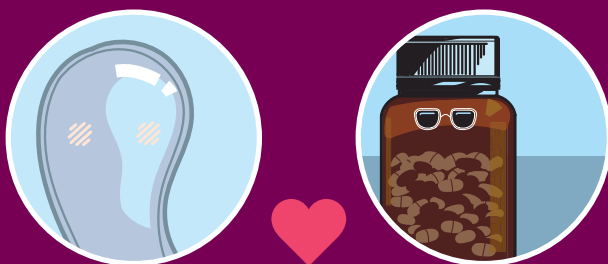
### JUDGES

If you've never judged an RWNZ contest before, this is a great place to start! First Kiss entries are short, fun, and make great light reading over the holiday period. If you want to build your confidence to enter next year or sharpen your editorial skills, sign up to judge on the RWNZ website: <https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/contests/judging-first-kiss-contest/>

**ENTER [HERE](#)**

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## The Welcome Mat

Another red carpet roll-out this month for new members:



Amanda Blyth-Cowman

Carole Brungar



Great to have you with us.

Don't forget to read the information for new members page on our website: <https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/membership/information-new-members/>

Of course, you'll need to login before you can access the members' area, but you'll find information there about how to join the [RWNZ Members-Only Facebook page](#).

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Heart to Heart will be published in the first week of each month except January. The deadline for every issue is the 20th of the month prior (e.g. 20th October for November issue). Please have all articles, news, reports, and advertising to Gillian at [heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz) on or before the deadline.

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To submit a woo hoo, e-mail Gillian or use the form on the website: <https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/membership/member-woo-hoos/>



To join the RWNZ Members-Only Facebook page, click [here](#).

# Regional Round-Up Reports

## AUCKLAND

Convenor: [Ruth Clough](#)

This month's meeting took place on Saturday 6 October at the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion. Twenty nine members attended the meeting this month - it was lovely to see all of you.

Our speaker this month was Jackie Ashenden and presented a very thorough workshop on tension - the different types of tension, how to use them and why every story must have it. Tension is linked to emotion - to backstory and the internal journey of the character. But it can also be external. Jackie was very knowledgeable about this topic and provided plenty of examples from her own work as well as from other romance novels. Thank you Jackie for your presentation - it was very interesting and informative!

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday 3 November at the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. This will be our last official Chapter meeting for the year. In December we will meet up for the Christmas Party before taking a break until February 2019. As usual, please bring a donation for Chapter, change for the raffles and a plate to share. There is no speaker for the month of November - we will be having an open forum discussion session and also talking about our writing goals for 2019. This is a great opportunity to share information, ask all those questions you need answers to and set your writing goals for the coming year.

## HAWKES BAY

Convenor: [Kendra Delugar](#)

Our October meeting was held at Jackie's, where we caught up on what we'd been up to. And then we talked through and watched Sarra Cannon's 'Do, Doing, Done' whiteboard organisation technique thanks to Jackie's recommendation. And it was a fabulous one. As it's an organisational tool it's something all of us could follow despite our varied writing techniques.

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 1pm, and new members are always welcome. For our next meeting, November the 3rd, we'll be meeting at Kate's.

## WELLINGTON/KAPITI COAST

Convenor: [Jane Ashurst](#)

We had 14 attendees for our October meeting, held at Tracey & Fred's lovely house in Island Bay, Wellington. After admiring their fantastic new kitchen, we settled down to a lively meeting. We paired up for a Build-A-Blurb exercise, which involved drawing random names, nouns and verbs from an envelope, and creating a blurb in 10 minutes. Then we talked a little more about back-matter in our books, and what changes we've made since we first talked about this a couple of meetings ago.

We had one of our ever-popular Cold Reads sessions, where we read aloud 2 pages of our current manuscript. This time we focused on the Black (or equally dark!) Moment, and kudos goes to Susan for her rivetingly horrifying excerpt. I've never heard so many *ohhhhhhhh!* and *noooooooo!* at a cold read before ☺

Our 3 November meeting is to be hosted by Jeanette in Levin, and will feature a presentation from Janet Elizabeth Henderson. We're all very excited about this ☺

## NELSON

Convenor: [LaVerne Clark](#)

Saturday the 6th October was a special meeting for our group. We've decided to change our procedures so that 'the heavy burden' of the convenor becomes evenly shared between us. Thus, Donna was this month's facilitator, and she made a great job of it. Lorna, who is also our treasurer, took the minutes. The subject was 'Critiquing'. First, we all introduced ourselves to a new prospective member - Mark. This was exciting, as we don't have any male members. Hopefully, he'll dare to make the plunge and join us. We're looking forward to receiving first hand insights into how a man feels and reacts in different situations, to create believable heroes and villains. Our next meeting is Saturday 10th November, 2pm, at Nick Smith's Head Office, cnr of Waimea/Quarantine Roads. Facilitator is Lorna. The subject is 'What makes a good story?' Please bring any resources you have about the subject.

## CHRISTCHURCH

Convenor: [Lyssa Randolph](#)

Christchurch chapter meeting for October was held in the Sydenham Room of the South Library.

Our speaker, Jo Harris has published several books with Harlequin Mills and Boon. Jo gave a very rich and stimulating presentation on the subject of plotting. With close discussion of the structure of her latest book to be published in the Dare series as an example, Jo talked about how she draws upon the four-part structure and 'beats' of the romance arc outlined in Gwen Hayes's book, *Romancing the Beat*, in developing her own plots. Discussion and questions followed on resources and methods for creating romance and other plots.

The 2019 conference committee has been busy organising; we expect planning and activities to step up in the New Year, with plenty for local members to assist with.

We planned our evening out: all chapter members will be welcome for dinner and drinks at 7pm in Madame Kwong's restaurant for our last meet-up of the year on 5 December.

The next meeting is on Sunday 11 November from 2-4pm at the South Library.

## OTAGO

Convenor: [Samantha Burton](#)

The Otago/Southland chapter didn't have an October meeting.

## COAST TO COAST

Convenor: [Vivienne Matthews](#)

In October our Coast to Coast group met up in Tauranga and had a fun afternoon reading different people's work with a cold read session. We covered a mass of genres from sci-fi to fantasy to contemporary to historical and others. It was a great chance to hear each other's work and also to hear the different thoughts amongst the group with the varied feedback and suggestions. Great fun and great learnings! Thanks team for another amazing meeting! November we're back in Tauranga doing a writing exercise so if you're interested in coming along, drop me a line.

## BLenheim AREA

Contact: [Iona Jones](#)