

WORDSMITHS NEWSLETTER

8.1 February, 2008

Dear Wordsmiths,

A blessed and happy New Year to you all! And many thanks to all who sent me Christmas cards. I did appreciate them. I have been thoroughly enjoying taking time in the holiday period to do some much needed sorting up of computer and other files. I have also done some relaxing reading. I have been encouraged by *The Journey of Desire* by John Eldredge. This is a book which encourages an honest appraisal of what we are really looking for in life. *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling is a grand yarn, giving a colourful picture of India, a glimpse of what was involved in the British Secret Service and a taste of Tibetan philosophy. I'm now reading *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown, an Indian story of the treatment of how the West was won.

Our **first meeting** for the year will be on Saturday **9th of February** at 493 Elgar Rd, Mont Albert North from 2pm - 5pm. When you come please try to bring 10 copies of your poem for workshopping as our numbers have been growing lately and people need to be able to see as well as hear the poem. Our last meeting, in December, was attended by 21 people, a record number of people for our group.

POETRY WEEKEND

Our Poetry Retreat in November 2007 was a blessed time for those who made the journey up to Pallotti College at Millgrove (about a dozen of us.) In this wonderful setting among high mountains and tall trees we all enjoyed the fellowship and were equally inspired to write by the Quiet Day led by Cathy Altmann, and the Workshop on the Sunday led by Kathryn Hamann. It is great to have such a wealth of talent in our group that we did not need to look beyond for these leaders. We

suggest you now **mark November 8th & 9th on your calendar for this year's Poetry Retreat.**



L to R: Janette Fernando, Maree Nikalaou, Kathryn Hamann, Cameron Semmens

POETICA CHRISTI PRESS

The Melbourne Book

I hope you all have your skating boots on because this is going to be a busy year. The Poetry & Art book *Melbourne Reflections* is going to be a huge task so we will be seeking your help, wherever you can make a contribution.

Competition results - We have the poems back from the judge Peter Steele and have pleasure in announcing that the winning poem "Parousial" is by **Aileen Kelly**. The Runner-up poem "The Piper on Princes Bridge" is by Tom Hadfield.

Apart from another 22 poems selected by the judge (including Wordsmiths Marlene Marburg and Jean S-D) we have also chosen some more poems for inclusion from those submitted. There is some lovely poetry in this collection and more poetry coming in as we have asked a number Melbourne poets known to us, and some of the better-known poets, if they would like to contribute. This has produced encouraging results. We have a new poem from Tom Shapcott and permission to reprint one from Chris Wallace-

Crabbe and I have permission to select something from a forthcoming book by Kevin Hart. So it is beginning to be exciting, but our pressing need is finance for the printing costs.

Right now we want you to start thinking of any persons or companies you know of, who we could invite to be part of this project by making a financial gift to sponsor a page of poetry or art. Included with this newsletter is our appeal letter for yourself and any other sponsors. **Please photocopy it for as many people/organisations as you can and give/send it to them.** I don't know whether you have noticed, but one thing in Obama Barak's favour is his grass roots support. We hope to have the same for this book.

If you haven't yet **submitted poems for the book**, you still have a chance to do that (and this includes poems on Melbourne that have already been published.) Please email them to poetica@iprimus.com.au or post to me at 493 Elgar Rd, Mont Albert Nth, 3129, **by the end of February.**

Our hopes for getting the *Huggle* and *Stick Your Neck* out last year were delayed by circumstances beyond our control. But I now have the disc of *The Huggle* ready to go to the printer so we should have some action soon.

You are also invited to **submit poems on the theme of Healing** for our first chap-book in a series of prayer-poems booklets.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to **Cameron Semmens**, our most prolific poet, who hopes to launch yet another new book *Through the Lover's Windows*

Valentine's Day Recovery Gig

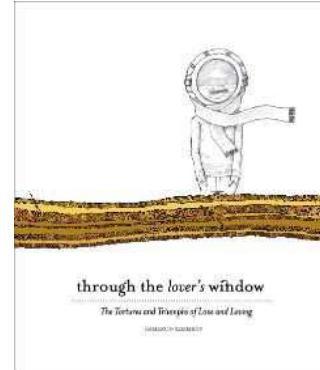
*drunk of your sweet martini eyes
I stagger legless through romance
sculling kisses
and vomiting pretty verse*

Friday Night **Feb 15**, 8pm and/or 930pm
at Caz Reitop's **Dirty Secrets**, 80 Smith St,
Collingwood, Vic

Not just the launch of a book,
the launch of a whole new expression of heartache
and hope!

Come and revel in the dispatch of Cameron
Semmens' magnum opus:

Through The Lover's Windows – The Trials and Treasures of Love and Loving



Written by Cameron Semmens
Illustrated by Hamish McWilliam
Published by Searching For Oscar (SFO)
49 dog years in the making.
Launched by Stuart Davey of SFO

The night will feature two sets by **Chevalet** performing pieces from the official sonic, song-ed, CD-ed version of *Through The Lover's Window*, namely:

A Souvenir of Sadness and A Bottle of Bliss

Chevalet includes: Rod Gear – double-bassist

Cameron Semmens – double talker

Mike Carney – double-handed, double
trouble pianist

Gather together the shards of your broken heart
and make your way down to
at Caz Reitop's *Dirty Secrets*, 80 Smith St,
Collingwood

8pm – 1st Chevalet set, launch and chat with
author

9.30pm – 2nd Chevalet set, another chat with
author.

Valentine's Day is not great for everyone and The
Day After can be worse,

but not this year – with the Valentine Day
Recovery Gig

everything can be redeemed!

don't wipe your tears away

don't smother them with tissues

let them streak and splash and soak in...

wear them like jewels

Any questions, call or email Cameron:

0438 72 5588, cam@webcameron.com

For BOOK and CD orders, go to

www.webcameron.com

If you haven't been to one of Cameron's launches you'd better make sure you don't miss this one. You will be sure of a night of good entertainment. His last launch at the Australian Poetry Centre was a terrific night with fabulous food.

We're also looking forward to another book by **Kathryn Hamann**, *The Threshold of Light*, which she hopes to launch on April 20th at The Common Room, Yarra Theological College, 98 Albion Road, Box Hill. 3.30pm for 4pm To add to the pleasure of enjoying Kathryn's poetry, we hope to be privileged to hear her son Will and daughter Judith play music at the launch – not to be missed!

Congratulations to **Jody Ploegsma**, who has finally finished her Master's Degree. She has completed much of this standing up, as she has a chronic ailment precluding her from sitting for long periods. Well done Jody!

Cathy Altmann has had a poem chosen for the Moving Galleries Spring exhibition, so keep an eye out for it on the tram or train.

Phil Ilton has had a poem published in Poetry Monash and has been accepted into Monash Uni to do a Postgraduate Diploma in Research (Arts), a preliminary to taking on a Masters next year. His thesis topic, which he'll commence this year, is one I think Wordsmiths will be particularly interested in: "The Significance of Symbolism in the Poetry of James McAuley".

Congratulations to our Tasmanian Wordsmith **David Bloomfield** and his wife Tam on the birth of Evan Dell, just in time for Christmas!

COMPETITIONS

Woorilla Annual Poetry Prize Open section \$1000, Youth section \$100. Max, 50 lines, \$5 per poem (\$3 youth) or \$20(\$10) for 5. Send to Woorilla Magazine, 255 Macclesfield Rd, Macclesfield, 3782. By **March 31st**.

Freexpression Literary Competition. Closing Feb.28th Trad. rhyming poetry, open theme to 80 lines. Free verse, open theme to 80 lines. Haiku, open theme, 4 poems per entry. \$5 per entry or 6 for \$25. For info email frexprsn@tpg.com.au

Henry Kendall Poetry Competition. Closing date March 10th. To 32 lines, any style or theme. 1st prize \$500, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$100. \$7 entry fee. www.fusionarts.org.au

The Inverawe Nature Poetry Competition. Closing date March 27th. Poems to 28 lines, on a Nature theme. 1st prize \$500, 2nd \$200. \$5 per entry. Entry forms from www.inverawe.com.au

Blue Giraffe 7 Submissions invited for unpublished poems. Email petermacrow@hotmail.com

COMING EVENTS

So that you do not forget, we suggest you pencil or biro in the Wordsmiths meetings for every second Saturday in the year except January.

Saturday, February 9th: Wordsmiths meeting 2-5pm. at 493 Elgar Rd, Mont Albert Nth.

Wednesday, Feb 13th: Reading at 157 Union Rd, Surrey Hills with John West as special guest reading from his verse novel about his mother, titled *Edna*. 2-4pm. (\$5 entry)

Friday, Feb 15th: Launch of Cameron Semmens' latest book, *Through the Lover's Windows* at Caz Reitop's Dirty Secrets, 80 Smith St Collingwood at 8pm &/or 9.30 pm.

Saturday, March 8th: Wordsmiths meeting, 2-5pm. (in spite of it being a long weekend.)

Wednesday, March 12th: Reading at 157 Union Rd, Surrey Hills, with Cameron Semmens as special guest. (\$5 entry)

Wednesday, April 9th: Reading at Surrey Hills with Phil Ilton as special guest. (\$5 entry)

Saturday, April 12th: (thus nicely avoiding Easter) Wordsmiths meeting, 2-5pm.

Sunday, April 20th: Launch of Kathryn Hamann's book *The Threshold of Light*. The Common Room, Yarra Theological College 98 Albion Road, Box Hill. 3.30pm for 4pm

Tuesday, May 6th: Poetry Seminar "Threads and Patterns" with Barbara Rautman at Wellspring, 10 Y St. Ashburton. 10am-3pm. \$20 entry. To book phone Wellspring 9885 0277

If your membership fees (\$25) are due, please send them in now. Cheques to Poetica Christi Press, 42 Hawkins Rd, Montrose, 3765

Newsletter prepared by Janette Fernando & Jean Sietzema

