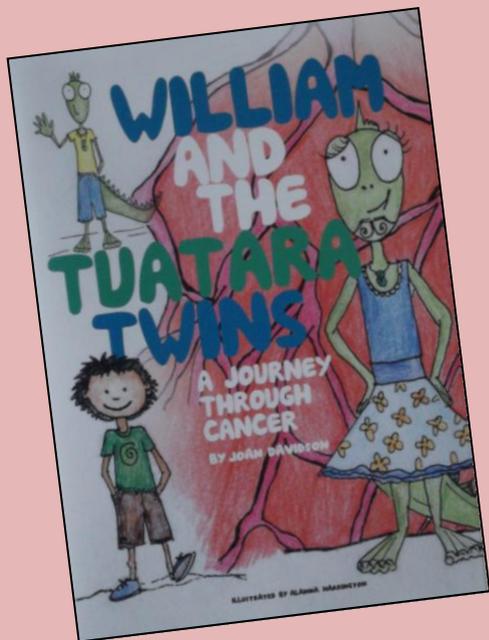


THE CHRISTIAN WRITER



MAGAZINE OF THE CHRISTIAN WRITERS
GUILD NEW ZEALAND

April – May 2013



Supporting
Members' Books
**WILLIAM
AND THE
TUATARA TWINS**

by Joan Davidson

Rightly explaining the word of truth – 2 Timothy 2:15

(New Revised Standard Version of the Bible)



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The editor reserves the right to condense and / or edit any contributions for reason of space. Ideas and opinions will not be edited, but editing of a technical nature may occur to maintain the highest quality of writing possible.

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The views and opinions of authors expressed in this magazine do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

Website:

Our new website is up and running, but still needs some content added to it. Both sites are currently accessible and provide information on the Magazine, Links, Writing Courses, Groups, Competitions, Workshops and the Library.

New: www.nzchristianwritersguild.co.nz

Old: www.freewebs.com/nzchristianwritersguild

From the President

Hello there. The 30th anniversary has come and gone and what a splendid day we had. Gordon and Nola Maskell are gracious hosts and the surroundings so beautiful. Kiwi Roast cooked a lovely meal and above all it was great to renew old friendships and make new friends.

I'm sure everyone enjoyed what our key speakers, John Sturt, Julie Belding and John Massam, shared with us. John Massam's statement is a challenge: "If I don't respond to the prompting of God, God will prompt someone else."

Awards were presented to various Guild members. Amongst these were:

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:

Denis Shuker and Rosie Boom

MOST IMPROVED WRITERS:

Lois Farrow and Diane Ross

CONTRIBUTION TO CHRISTIAN

WRITING:

Julie Belding

CONTRIBUTION TO THE GUILD:

Janice Gillgren, Jan Pendergrast and
Debbie McDermott

Congratulations to all of you.

Our next workshop is planned for the 14th September. Do remember to mark this event on your calendar. We intend holding this at Rossgrove Chapel.

Our sympathy goes to Bartha Hill on the recent loss of her husband. May you and your family know God's presence in this sad time.

Yesterday I was encouraged when speaking to 16 teens at a Christian programme in the local college. They had been presented with Gideon New Testaments on the previous day and I spoke to them on the value of God's word. May each of us treasure its pages today.

Janet Fleming



Janet and the Committee Members at the 30th Anniversary, Whenuapai

30th Anniversary Report

By Debbie McDermott

Approximately fifty members attended the Guild's 30th Anniversary celebrations, held at Cornerstone, Whenuapai in March. The gracious hospitality of the Maskells, together with the lovely gardens, facilities, weather, fellowship, and challenges delivered to us by our three key speakers, John Sturt, Julie Belding and John Massam, all contributed to a day well spent.



*Janice Gillgren & Fred Swallow
in the lovely Cornerstone gardens*

After a time of fellowshiping around lunch, we convened to the spacious lounge area to begin the day in earnest. Rosie Boom opened the first session by sharing with us how her writing has inspired a physically handicapped girl to also begin writing. She then sang one of her moving songs on how bitter and sweet both feed the soul. This was followed by John Sturt being welcomed to the platform. *(see his Photo RHS)*

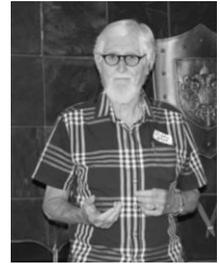
THERE IS A WRITER IN EVERYONE

Before launching into his topic, John commended the Guild's foundation members for the contribution they have made to Christian writing. He also asked all those who had published work to stand and take a bow, then went on to say there is a writer in everyone just wanting to get out—whether it be

through writing letters, journals, articles or blogs, or even using media such as Facebook.

GOD CHOSE ORDINARY PEOPLE

None of the people God chose to write the Bible had been trained as writers. They wrote as God touched them and the Holy Spirit inspired them.



Writing is a way of loving, sharing and blessing others, as well as glorifying God. It must contain the heart of the author and be an expression of who they are. Writing should be a passion, a joy—something that makes the author feel like their 'banks' are bursting. They must share what's inside them. Writers write for the same reason they breathe. It is the enthusiasm of God in them.

THE PEN OF A READY WRITER

To be like the psalmist whose tongue was like the pen of a ready writer, we need to be someone who is open to all opportunities at any time. We also need to remember we are writing for Jesus the King. He is our motive for writing. Mother Theresa said, 'We are a little pencil in the hand of God who is sending a love letter to the world.'

WHICH IS MORE POWERFUL? SPEAKING OR WRITING?

While the spoken word can have a powerful impact, it is the written word that lasts longest in the end. Consider the apostle, Paul. It is his epistles that are still with us today, not the churches he established in Asia. And it is because of his writings that Christianity did not eventually die out.

WRITE SKILFULLY

It is hard work becoming a skilful writer. Good writing and rewriting is an art we all need to learn through whatever means we have at our disposal. Whatever God shows you, write it down. You don't need to get it right first time, but keep going until you do. We know the truth. Let's share it in our writing.



Our second speaker was Julie Belding, a former President of the Guild. Having just qualified for a Gold Card, Julie aptly entitled her topic *Confessions of a Super Annuitant*. After a bit of

opening banter, she went on to give us a presentation, each point of which was based on an acronym of the word 'Confessions'.

C—COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

No matter how bad it gets, we always have something to give thanks for.

O—OLD AGE IS NOT FOR SISSIES

N—NEVER SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

F—FOCUS

We all need a focus in life. We should discover the way God has wired us and work on that. Don't get involved in too many things if you want to do things well.

E—EXERCISE

Exercise for as long as you can, for as long as you can.

S—SUGAR IS ADDICTIVE

Take care of your body. It has to last a lifetime.

S—SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Spiritual growth is a lifelong process.

I—INDULGE OCCASIONALLY

Brownies are health food if you consider mental health!

O—OPEN YOUR HEART

There is always room for growth, forgiveness, change and letting love in again.

N—NEVER SAY NEVER

The way to make God laugh is to tell him your plans.

S—STRAIGHTFORWARD RULES FOR CHRISTIAN WRITERS

Jesus is the perfect model for Christian communication. The golden rules of good writing are:

- a) You cannot write too simply or clearly.
- b) Write something everyday.
- c) Write as you speak.
- d) Read, read, read.
- e) Master the basics of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- f) Never underestimate the power of the story.
- g) Don't punch people with a new idea. Shake their hands with an example.

Following afternoon tea and the cutting of the anniversary cake, which Jan Swallow kindly made for us, Rosie blessed us with a song of consecration.





John Massam was then invited to the platform. He spoke of how *Challenge Weekly* has always sought to honour God by saying what the secular media doesn't say. With a strong emphasis on

mission and evangelism, it has been an effective tool for sharing the faith with non-Christians through depicting the love Christians show their neighbours. And, because it is a newspaper, the items have a sense of immediacy that is powerful.

TO BE EFFECTIVE IT IS VITAL TO:

1. Have an inherent desire to seek and save the lost.
2. Reach out to Christian and non-Christian alike. Faith is not a method—it is a lifestyle.
3. Have the right attitude to the Bible. Do I see it as the infallible Word of God? The basis of our motivation comes by hearing God speak to us by his Spirit and through his Word.
4. Have imperatives I am passionate about. The most debilitating thing is the church's uncertainty about the Second Coming. Do I have the passion I once had for Easter?

The message to the church at Laodicia fits the Western Church more than any of the others (Revelation ch 2–3). Doing what God tells us to do is living by faith. To be a Christian is to be different. The basis of communication is one to one.

Having been well challenged by our three speakers the evening was capped off by a delicious meal prepared by Kiwi Roasts and a range of desserts made by committee members.

After dinner, certificates were awarded to various members of the Guild. It was a pity none of the anniversary anthology winners were present, as we would've liked to have given them a round of applause as well. (Please refer to the magazine's noticeboard for details on how you can obtain your own copy of this anthology of devotions—each of which is written by a Guild member.)



Jan Pendergrast & Jean Shewan

Lesley Edgeler & Debbie McDermott



We then held our celebratory concert, in which a fair number of members entertained us with songs, poems, mini-plays and stories. Of particular note were the three youngest Boom children who showed remarkable talent.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to express our warm gratitude to Jan Swallow for making the scrumptious anniversary cake and also doing so much in the background to ensure the indulgent aspects of the day were well attended to. Many thanks, also, to all those who attended. It is your being there that really made the day special.



Foundation member, Beth Walker, cutting the cake with Catherine Hudson & John Massam

Thoughts on Thirty Years

By Ruth Linton

To celebrate the Guild's 25 years of existence I wrote a poem and compared the Guild's progress to a marriage of twenty five years, a silver wedding anniversary. A silver award seemed a fitting tribute to the effort and achievements of the Guild's first twenty five years. Going for a gold award, I suggested, was a new target; fifty years of serving the Lord by our writing.

Another five years have now passed and we are well on the way to achieving our golden anniversary.

I began to meditate on the significance of thirty years which, in marriage terms, is the pearl anniversary. Here are some of my cogitations.

Pearls are formed when grit irritates the inside of an oyster shell. The shell secretes chemicals to cover the irritant and gradually transforms it into something beautiful and precious. Writing is never easy. There are many obstacles and irritants that hinder our progress. A godly attitude and perseverance will produce beautiful character in us and this will be reflected in our writing.

Matthew 13:25 likens the kingdom of heaven to a merchant finding a beautiful pearl and selling everything to be able to purchase it. Writing to expand the kingdom is a precious privilege. It is worth giving all to achieve this goal.

The gates of the New Jerusalem are described, in Revelation 21:21, as being pearls. Again this speaks to me of the difficulties of life (perhaps the rejection slips from publishers or the constant interruptions to our writing time!) being overcome by trust in the Lord, an attitude of praise and a focus on building God's Kingdom. Adding the character traits listed in 2 Peter 1:5-11 (NIV) guarantee us a rich welcome or entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God.

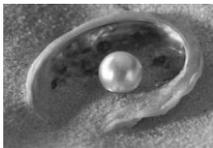
The number thirty in Bible numerics is also interesting. Some common factors of thirty are three and ten ($3 \times 10 = 30$). Three speaks of God, the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All three are actively interested in every aspect of our life, including our writing. We are dependent on the Holy Spirit's anointing and power to achieve anything of lasting value to God. Interestingly, 1 John 5:6-7 describes the Trinity as the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, demonstrating again how important words and communication are to God.

Ten, in scripture, normally refers to testing. Over the years the Guild and its members have faced tests and struggles of many kinds. Without a doubt the work of the Guild committee has helped the Guild to successfully weather these difficulties. Their work and the perseverance of Guild members to work

through these difficulties has made the Guild what it is today.

Thirty is also the number of the pieces of silver paid to Judas for the betrayal of Jesus. It was recognised as the going price for a slave. In Romans 1:1, Paul describes himself as a bondservant or slave of Jesus Christ. Such a slave willingly continued to serve his master even when he could have been set free. He made a confession of love and loyalty to his master and his family and his ear was pierced as a sign of his submission. Like Paul we are servants of Christ. We serve him because he loves us and we, in turn, love him and choose his will for our life. Our writing, therefore, should reflect our loyalty and love to him; it should minister his life to those around us.

Finally both Joseph (Genesis 41:46) and Jesus (Luke 3:23) began their public ministry at the age of 30. Over the last few years I have noticed a rise in enthusiasm within the Guild. Recently book reviews in the Christian Writer indicate many members are now successfully publishing their books. I believe the Guild is entering a new phase, a phase of increase in public ministry. As we go forward let us take courage and, leaning on our Heavenly Master, minister with wisdom and enthusiasm to the world around us.



The Sea Voyage

By Rod Hickman

*As you stand on the jetty
and look out to sea
Will you get in the boat,
will you follow after me?
Life is an adventure,
it's not meant to be bland
So, come along with me,
step away from the land.*

*You be the skipper
and I'll be the guide.
Together we'll master this,
side by side.
See, I know the course,
I know where to go.
Rocky outcrops and sandbars,
all these I know.*

*The boat that you're on is called
'Gospel of Grace'.
She's battered and bruised
but won every race.
Her anchors are strong,
I know they will hold
When the tempests of life leave you
frightened and cold.*

*We're on a journey to another shore,
A place of peace, and joy evermore.
To the shores of eternity,
and loved ones you see.
You get to meet Father,
you get to see me.
So hoist up your sails,
head out to the deep.
My advice you can trust,
my promises I keep.*

Trusting Your Fellow Writer's Critique

By Janice Gillgren

There is one very important aspect of critiquing not always considered or mentioned—and that is trust. There are two issues at stake here:

- If you as a writer do not trust that the person or people critiquing your work are doing so for your benefit, or will do so with sincerity and sensitivity, you will find it very difficult to expose your writing to them.
- If you are critiquing someone's work, and are considering writing or saying something that may be construed as harsh – do you trust the writer to take the critique with a positive and gracious attitude?

While it is true that it can take a while to build up this trust, there are some things you can discuss to help the process along.

If you've been together awhile and members aren't getting on very well together, or your group is newly formed or has new members, a talk together about critique would probably help you all. Here are some possible discussion-generators:

- What is critique, and what does it mean to you?
- What value do you each place on critique?
- Talk about your expectations from critiquing. Are each member's expectations reasonable?

- How are you going to critique and why do you want to do it that way?
- Why you are critiquing, and what benefits can each of you expect?

We all benefit from assurances when we are in a situation in which our personal feelings and thoughts are revealed to others because – let's face it – writing involves showing others what is going on inside your head, and that can be scary. This is particularly the case for newer writers, but anyone can be affected by the resulting nervousness sometimes.

- Each member should be assured that nothing personal goes outside the group.
- Each member needs to assure the others of their intention to benefit everyone else in the group.
- Each member needs to assure the others that they will not get overly upset about comments they don't agree with.

We writers tend to be sensitive, and feelings can get hurt easily. While we want the benefit of the critique, we find it hard to accept anything negative that we feel is undeserved.

Critiques are the primary area negatively impacting social relationships in the writing group situation; but they are potentially the very best reason for the group to exist at all.

How to Write an Autobiographical Essay

Many scholarship applications require an autobiographical essay, which is basically a personal statement that describes who you are. It gives the judges an idea of your background, your personality, your character—details about you that you can only describe in an essay (unless you have an interview).

Oftentimes, the prompts for these personal statements are worded like this: ‘Tell us a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.’ To write a powerful and effective autobiographical essay, there are several key ideas to keep in mind.

Choose a Convincing Story and Focus on a Theme

When you choose the story to write about, think about unique experiences that make you who you are ... events throughout your life [that] have shaped how you think and act today.

Ask yourself, ‘If there’s something about me that others would not know, what would that be?’ You want your story to make sense and to capture your reader’s attention. Choose an aspect of your life that you want to focus on and shape your essay to reflect that theme. For example, if you have overcome tremendous hardship that has shaped your character, then focus on how your adversity helped build your character. Specifically, relate this event to the broader lessons of life so that the reader can better understand your development.

Capture the Reader’s Attention

The first step in writing the essay is to begin with a creative way of capturing the reader’s attention. Write in a style that you are most comfortable with. Some ways of writing your intro are by narrating a specific event from a first person point of view that reflects the theme of your essay or by describing a certain scenario from a third person point of view. Remember to end your intro with a sentence that leaves the reader excited to continue reading and learn more about you.

Strengthening the Body

After a strong intro, the body of the essay continues to tell the story of your experiences. It takes the snapshot you present in the intro and supports it with necessary and specific detail. Don’t overwrite and include information that is irrelevant or wordy. Keep it simple and straightforward. The body of the essay should show—not tell—the story, meaning you should demonstrate your own personal growth and development through relevant examples. As you write, make sure to share how you felt so the reader can really see your character development. Emotions matter. Keep organisation and logical sequence in mind as well. As you move toward your conclusion, the tone of your writing should become more positive and optimistic. It should lead right into your conclusion.

Conclusions That Circle Back

If you want a nicely balanced essay, the beginning of your conclusion should put the cap on the story portion of your essay. It should emphasise a sense of hope

in the context of your writing and demonstrate a positive change that continues into today. Following that, you might want to restate that it was ‘through this specific experience’ that you learned the specific lessons. State specifically the lessons you learned and tie them into a big picture outlook. I have found it effective to use a powerful quote that relates to your theme and content. Craft a conclusion that resonates with the reader.

To complete the essay, tie back to the opening lines / event / experience in the intro to create a more cohesive and well-rounded essay. Your last sentence should reflect the most profound lesson you have learned and give the reader a sense of empowerment and awe. It should leave them thinking about their own lives, experiences, and struggles, yet provide them with hope and optimism.

Tips to Keep in Mind

It is natural to want to use large vocabulary words to flex your intellectual muscles; but, when you’re writing a personal statement about your life, it’s best to stay simple and straightforward. Avoid using five words where three will do. If you have to use a thesaurus, chances are the reader’s not going to know exactly what the words mean so stick with simple vocab. Just be yourself. Your personal statement is an autobiography that speaks about your life, your experiences, and your reflections, so remember to tell the truth. You don’t have to make up situations or add fluff to tell a poignant story.

With acknowledgements to Scholarship Junkies Articles & Blog website

The Many Paths to Plotting Part One

With acknowledgements to Marg McAlister

As a writer, I see the similarity between my experience as a reading teacher and what writers go through with plotting. You can read six books on plotting and come up with six different methods.... DO WHAT WORKS. Your method of plotting is likely to reflect your personality, but writers have been known to use different methods. Here are three basic approaches.

Writing On The Fly

This is beloved of many writers. Some can't work any other way. They simply have a 'flash' of an idea (they 'see' a character, or imagine a situation like a car crash or a robbery) and off they go. They write while being able to see only a short way ahead and write the whole book that way.

The Advantages of this Method:

- You don't have to plot ahead.
- If you don't know what is coming next, perhaps the reader won't see it coming either.
- It can be a lot of fun—not knowing where the story and/or characters are taking you!

The Disadvantages of this Method:

- You can 'paint yourself into a corner'. By the time you decide that a certain plot direction isn't going to work, you might have a dozen wasted chapters. At this point many writers ditch the whole story and start a new ... lots of writing hours down the drain!

- You can actually end up with a plot that is too predictable (as opposed to one that 'surprises' the reader) because you tend to take the easiest route.

Mind-Mapping

Good for right-brain types. A 'mind map' is sometimes referred to as 'a cluster diagram', or 'branching', or simply 'brainstorming'. Basically, you dump lots of ideas on a page so you can see the plot at a glance. Circles, arrows, lines and scribbles tend to be representative of this method of plotting.

Lots of writers find this method works wonders. While they scribble and link ideas, they are organising the story in their minds. Although there's not a lot on the page, there's plenty going on in the grey matter. All of this 'sticks', and provides enough of a path so writers don't lose their way.

The Advantages of this Method:

- It's a good compromise. You have planned a route for your story, but you have plenty of room for side excursions if a better idea should occur.
- It feels comfortable for those who think more clearly when they use diagrams or pictures.
- It doesn't take up too much time.

The Disadvantages of this Method

- It can make some writers feel more confused than ever.
- It doesn't provide enough of a path for more organised writers.

(Watch this space for Part Two, in which Marg will be discussing Linear Plotting)

How to Write a Sonnet

With acknowledgements to John Timpane in 'Poetry for Dummies'

- It must consist of 14 lines.
- It must be written in iambic pentameter (duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH).

It must be written in one of various standard rhyme schemes. If you're writing the most familiar kind of sonnet, the Shakespearean, you'll notice it consists of three quatrains (that is, four consecutive lines of verse that make up a stanza or division of lines in a poem) and one couplet (two consecutive rhyming lines of verse). The first and third lines of each quatrain rhymes, as do the second and fourth line of each quatrain. Likewise, the last two lines of the sonnet also rhyme.

However, there's more to a sonnet than just the structure of it. A sonnet is also an argument—it builds up in a certain way. How it builds up is related to its metaphors and how it moves from one metaphor to the next. For instance, in a Shakespearean sonnet, the argument builds up like this:

- **First quatrain:** An exposition of the main theme and main metaphor.
- **Second quatrain:** Theme and metaphor extended or complicated; often, some imaginative example is given.
- **Third quatrain:** Peripeteia (a twist or conflict), often introduced by a 'but' (very often leading off the ninth line).

- **Couplet:** Summarises and leaves the reader with a new, concluding image.

One of Shakespeare's best-known sonnets, Sonnet 18, follows this pattern:

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of
May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.*

*Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course,
untrimmed;*

*But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest,
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his
shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest.*

*So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.*

The argument of Sonnet 18 goes like this:

- **First quatrain:** Shakespeare establishes the theme of comparing 'thou' (or 'you') to a summer's day, and why to do so is a bad idea. The metaphor is made by comparing his beloved to summer itself.
- **Second quatrain:** Shakespeare extends the theme, explaining why even the sun, supposed to be so great, gets obscured sometimes, and why everything that's beautiful decays from beauty sooner or later. He has shifted the metaphor: In the first quatrain, it was 'summer' in general, and now he's comparing the sun and 'every fair', every beautiful thing, to his beloved.

- **Third quatrain:** Here the argument takes a left turn with the familiar 'But'. The reason Shakespeare won't compare his beloved to summer is that summer dies, but she won't. He refers to the first two quatrains – her 'eternal summer' won't fade, and she won't 'lose possession' of the 'fair' (beauty) she possesses. So he keeps the metaphors going, but in a different direction.

And for good measure, he throws in a negative version of all the sunshine in this poem — the 'shade' of death, which, evidently, his beloved won't have to worry about.

- **Couplet:** How is his beloved going to escape death? In Shakespeare's poetry, which will keep her alive as long as people breathe or see. This bold statement gives closure to the whole argument—it's a surprise.

So far, Shakespeare's sonnet has done what he promised it would! See how tightly this sonnet is written, how complex yet well organised it is?

Poets are attracted by the grace, concentration, and, yes, the sheer difficulty of sonnets. You may never write another sonnet in your life, but this exercise is more than just busywork. It does all the following:

- Shows you how much you can pack into a short form.
- Gives you practice with rhyme, meter, structure, metaphor, and argument.
- Connects you with one of the oldest traditions in English poetry—one still vital today.

GET CREATIVE

Many thanks to Janis Cusack for sending in this delightful piece of prose on her view of an all-weather friend.

An All-Weather Friend

By Janis Cusack

When I think back, I am almost certain that the ornament was made in the shape of a dog—a poodle perhaps? It was so long ago that I cannot remember exactly. But I do remember as a child being utterly intrigued by this small object that stayed on the mantelpiece and changed colour. From blue to pink, and back again, depending on the weather. I wondered how it worked, but I don't recall any clear explanations at the time.

Many years later I was teaching science when I came across cobalt chloride paper in the lab. It changed from blue to pink when moisture was present and then back to blue when heated in the Bunsen flame.

Aha! My mind flicked back to that little 'all-weather friend' I had wondered about as a child. Mystery solved: its skin would have been impregnated with the chemical cobalt chloride.

And now having had pet dogs for a good many years, I am sure the little ornament must have been in the shape of a dog; dogs are surely the best 'all-weather friends' that anyone could find.



The next topic will be **Look to the Ant**

(Hint: Proverbs 30:25)

Maximum 40 lines for poetry and 250 words for prose.

Include the words 'Get Creative' with your submission. Although work is not judged, the best pieces received will be considered for publication.

Email submissions to the editor no later than 10th May 2013



Centenary of the 1913 lunch hour talk that became *The Reason Why* global booklet

ROBERT A LAIDLAW, C.B.E. and Director of The Farmers, invited his staff in April 1913 to hear him tell the reason why he was a Christian. His talk was then printed as *The Reason Why* in millions of copies and some 30 languages.

In 1905, at the age of 19, he began an outstanding business career as a hardware traveller in Otago and Southland.

Moving to Auckland in 1909, he used his total savings to commence Laidlaw Leeds, a mail order business, and later The Farmers. In 1913, with his enterprise booming, he moved to

a larger building in Hobson Street. In *The Story of the Reason Why* he writes about a few of many who read the *Reason Why* and became Christians.

Ian Hunter tells Mr Laidlaw's life story in *Man for Our Time*. He spoke of his Christian faith to individuals, congregations and in London's Royal Albert Hall. Blessed by God he gave cheerfully and liberally to many Christian and needy causes in the church and in society.

In 1971, at the age of 84, Robert Laidlaw met the Lord he had honoured all his life.

Bibliography

Man for our Time, Castle. Russian *Reason Why* insert, the writer.

The Foot Washing

By Deborah McDermott

I was astonished when Pat invited me to participate in the Foot Washing ceremony. Not only was I the church's newest member, I was also struggling to shake a sinful habit.

"I'm so unworthy, Pat," I demurred.

"And you think Jesus' disciples weren't?" he asked gently.

His question put me on the spot. I thought of doubting Thomas, hot-headed James and John, fearful Peter—all followers of Christ, but so lacking in virtue. Yet the Lord had chosen them out of hundreds to be His companions. Had He seen beyond their failings to what they would one day become? Or had He looked into their hearts and seen there a yearning to draw closer to Him? The same deep yearning I had? I sighed.

"All right, Pat, I'll do it," I agreed.

He smiled and gave my hand a squeeze.

"Come on then," he said, leading me to one of the twelve chairs in front of the altar.

The others were already seated, patiently waiting for me. Together we bowed our heads as the minister girded himself with a towel and began washing our feet one by one. A lump formed in my throat when he knelt down and removed my shoe. The feel of the water on my foot, and his hands as he towelled it dry, made me want to cry. No longer did I see the humble man. I saw the glorious Lord!

In that instant, I knew I was forgiven. The years of guilt rolled away, to be replaced with unsurpassable joy and peace. At last I was free! Free to overcome sin and temptation. Free to become all God had called me to be.

Free to wash other people's feet with forgiveness, just as the Lord has washed mine.

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Library Corner

Book Review

By Debbie McDermott



**WILLIAM
AND THE
TUATARA TWINS**
By
Joan Davidson

William and the Tuatara Twins deals with the harsh realities children face when undergoing radiotherapy treatment for cancer, yet in a way that is geared towards giving the young patients hope and courage. Well written and targeted at the 5-10 year old age group, I believe this fantasy story offers a child something positive to focus on that will help allay their fears, and maybe even turn the whole process into a bit of an adventure. Its strong New Zealand ‘flavour’ also adds to its appeal.

The inspiration for *William and the Tuatara Twins* sprang from Joan’s own personal struggle with cancer, initially in 2006-07, then again over the past several months prior to her death in October 2012. She enjoyed her brief stint as a member of CWG, and was thrilled to see her book published before she died. Having undergone radiotherapy herself, she could fully empathise with young cancer patients—and this empathy is clearly reflected in this story. *William and the Tuatara Twins* is, I believe, a book every children’s hospital with a cancer ward should have.

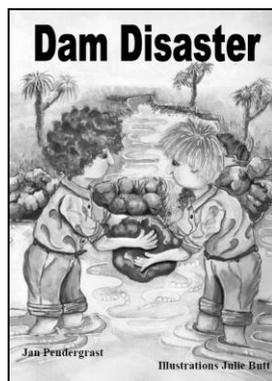
To find out more about obtaining your own copy of Joan’s book, contact Lois Farrow on: email farrows@clear.net.nz or phone (03) 339 6319

NEW BOOK LAUNCHED

Congratulations to Jan Pendergrast on the successful launch of her newly published book

Dam Disaster

by Ocean Books on 22nd March 2013—an event that was shared by several other authors and attended by approximately 100 people.



Beautifully illustrated by Julie Butt, this easy to read adventure story has been specifically written to encourage outdoor, active boys to find enjoyment in reading and would make the perfect gift.

Purchase your own copy directly from Ocean Books www.oceanbooks.co.nz or contact Jan Pendergrast on jan@roads-end.co.nz

(Librarian’s note—*Dam Disaster* will be reviewed in the next issue of the magazine.)

Notice Board

Tom Howard / John H Reid Short Story Contest

WHAT TO SUBMIT

Short stories, essays or works of prose, up to 5000 words in any style or theme. Each entry should be your own original work and may be submitted simultaneously to this contest and to others.

PRIZES AND PUBLICATION

1st prize: \$3,000

2nd prize: \$1,000

3rd prize: \$400

4th prize: \$250

There will also be six Most Highly Commended Awards of \$150 each. The top 10 entries will be published on the Winning Writers website.

ENTRY FEE

\$16 per entry

DEADLINE

April 30, 2013

(For further details go to winningwriters.com)



COMPETITION WEBSITES

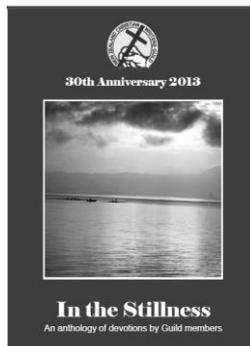
www.giftedchildren.org.nz/

<http://ititch.com/poetry-contest/>

www.takahe.org.nz/

<http://www.authors.org.nz/>

CWG 30th Anniversary Anthology



Containing 41 devotions written by Guild members and a lovely photo on each page (several of which are in colour, including the photo on the cover), this anthology costs only \$10.00 and is the perfect gift. To order, email Jan Pendergrast on jan@roads-end.co.nz



Landfall Essay Competition

Open w.e.f. 1st May 2013

The purpose of the competition is to encourage NZ writers to think aloud about New Zealand culture, and to revive the tradition of creative essay writing.

The winner will receive \$3000, as well as a year's subscription to and publication in Landfall

DEADLINE

5 pm, 31st July 2013

For further information go to www.otago.ac.nz/press/landfall/essaycompetition.html

Notice Board

Positive Words creative writing magazine

is seeking stories, poems and
articles about

MOTHERS

for its May 2013 issue

Any interpretation of the theme will be considered, but submissions must be in hard copy only.

The editor would especially like to hear from the next generation of poets and scribes.

If anyone has a MOTHER story or poem they would like to submit for consideration they can send them to:

The Editor, Sandra James
Positive Words magazine
PO Box 798, Heathcote 3523, Victoria

For further information contact Sandra at positivewordsmagazine@live.com.au or <http://positivewordsmagazine.wordpress.com/>



Montreal International Poetry Prize

Montreal International (a not-for-profit organisation) is offering a \$20,000 prize for one original, unpublished poem of no longer than 40 lines, written in any English dialect.

DEADLINE: 15 May 2013

COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

Online entries only.

Entry fees vary.

See www.montrealprize.com for details.

The SuperPower Magazine

New Zealand's newest publication, is aimed at providing news, stories and articles that will be of interest to our senior citizens—the SuperGold Card holders in our society—as well as their family, friends and all New Zealanders.

Writers who would like to contribute short stories, photo interviews, 'I remember' pieces, and articles on good health, happy living, hobbies, travel, reading and music to this worthy magazine are invited to do so.

For further information, contact Ian Macfarlane at Superpower@orcon.net.nz

Log Onto JANICE GILLGREN'S weekly blog

offering inspiration,
encouragement and useful tips for
writers at all levels.

www.wordsandscenes.co.nz

Storylines Festival

is held in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Northland and Auckland in August annually.

The festival gives children (and adults!) a chance to meet their literary heroes—authors, illustrators, storytellers or book characters.

For further details go to <http://www.storylines.org.nz>

Competition Results

Judges do not edit entries before they are reproduced in the magazine. Major weaknesses and errors are discussed in the judge's comments, and entrants also receive a more detailed critique on an individual basis.

NOTE: If you're not sure which level you're on, check the criteria on the 2013 reference sheet sent to you with the December 2012 issue of the magazine.

Level One

Judge:

Debbie McDermott

Requirement—LYRICS / POETRY: Write a rhythmic lullaby to the tune of a well known song. For judging purposes, please include the name of the song as a sub-title to your lullaby. Maximum 24 lines.

General Comments

Congratulations to all who entered this competition. Each of you met all the requirements and, apart from some errors in rhythm, your lullabies are well written and easy to sing.

When writing lyrics it is important to remember you are basically setting verse to music that has a regular tempo, just like poetry has a regular rhythm—unless, of course, it is free or blank verse, where the flow of the poetry can vary quite considerably.

Music is divided into bars, each of which is a measure of time that usually has the same number of beats in it and—in the case of a lyric or song—the same number of syllables. However, maintaining good rhythm is not just about being consistent with the number of syllables and musical notes in the corresponding lines of each verse. You also need to make certain the word structure is correct. For instance, you may have the right number of

.syllables in the first line of each stanza, but in one verse you begin with a one syllable word, in another verse a two or three syllable word, and so on. Work out which word structure best fits the music, then rework the lines that do not fit so that the rhythm or beat in the whole piece is consistent throughout.

Apart from these few pointers, all the entrants wrote worthy lullabies that I hope they will sing often. Well done!

First Place



**Susan
Flanagan**

GOD ABOVE

(to the tune of Edelweiss)

God above, Lord of love,
Thank You Father for listening.
Help me sleep, give me peace,
Hold me safe in Your keeping.
Jesus my King, it's to You I sing,
To You I sing, each evening.
God above, Lord of love,
Watch over me til the morning.

Judge's Comments

I thoroughly enjoyed Susan's gentle lullaby from start to finish. Each line is thoughtfully and beautifully written, and the music is an excellent choice. What I found particularly appealing is that this song is as much of a personal prayer as it is a lullaby. I think this is an important aspect when writing this sort of lyric from a Christian viewpoint.

While it is not necessary for all lines in lyrics to rhyme, it is important to ensure you are consistent. For instance, if lines 1 and 3 rhyme, then lines 5 and 7 should also rhyme. However, with Susan's lullaby, irregularity with rhyming is hardly noticeable because—apart from line 6 where there is one syllable too many for the music—the rhythm is consistent. This one glitch can easily be addressed by changing line 6 to, 'Yes, I sing each ev'ning'.

Apostrophes should also be inserted into the words 'list'ning' and 'ev'ning' in lines 2 and 6, to indicate that not all the syllables are pronounced.

In the last line, put an apostrophe before the word 'til to indicate it is short for until, or write it as till.

Apart from the above recommendations, this is an excellent lullaby. Well done, Susan. I believe you have a talent for writing poetry, so do keep it up.



Second Place



**Elaine
Given**

Sleepy Time Bytes

(Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

All day long you've had such fun
Running, playing in the sun.
Then you played computer games
Yelling, shouting, all the names.
Now it's time you sleepy head
To close your eyes and say your prayers.

Go to sleep my 'puter whizz.
It is time to have some zizzzz.
Mummy's switched off all the games,
Daddy's gigabytes are done.
It is time for sleepy byes
God bless you. Now close your eyes.

Judge's Comments

I really enjoyed the modern aspect to Elaine's lullaby. It is fun and easy to sing to her choice of music, as well as creative and original. However, I do feel it has a rather limited theme in that it can only be sung after a child has been playing computer games.

As to the rhythmical aspects of the lullaby, the last line in the first stanza has one syllable too many, meaning the first two words have to be quickly sung to a single musical note in order to fit. I suggest ending the previous line with a

long em dash and writing the final line as 'Close your eyes'

Rhyming is also inconsistent. In the first stanza, the last word of each of the first four lines rhymes, whereas the last two lines don't. In the second stanza, the first two and last two lines rhyme, whereas the third and fourth lines don't. Rework these lines so they all rhyme, or allow for some variation on the same lines in both stanzas.

Apart from the above recommendations, this is a good lyric. Well done, Elaine. I look forward to receiving further entries from you.

Third Place Equal



**Ruth
Jamieson**

Hush Little Baby

(to the tune of 'Hush Little Baby don't say a word')

Hush little baby don't you cry,
Mama's gonna sing you a lullaby.
Close your eyes and dream sweet
dreams,
'Till night is past and morning beams.

Rest my child, safe in the arms,
Of One who'll keep you from all harm.
God has said he'll watch over you,
Love and guide you all life through.

So snuggle down and cuddle Ted,
While Mama gently rocks your little bed.
The moon is out, the stars do shine,
Sleep on now 'till it's morning time.

Judge's Comments

Ruth's lullaby is fun to sing and would be enjoyed by most young children. Although based on an existing lullaby, it is written in a creative manner and has a strong Christian message which I find appealing.

Rhyming is good but there is a problem with rhythm because the number of syllables in many of the lines are either too many or too little for the music. The first three lines of stanza one are correct in that they follow the typical 7, 10, 7 syllable structure. However, the fourth line only has 8 syllables. This can be corrected by changing that line to read, 'Till night is past and the morning sun beams'. It would also be easier to sing.

In the second stanza, there are 7, 8, 8, 7 syllables, while in the third stanza there are 8, 10, 8, 8 syllables, meaning not all the lines fit the music.

When writing a lyric to a familiar tune, it is helpful to obtain a copy of the sheet music to see how many syllables fit into each bar of the music, and what sort of word structure has been used (refer to my general comments). This is consistent throughout the music score of a song, so it is important to ensure each line sticks to the set pattern. This often means having to rework the lines until this is achieved.

Apart from the above recommendations, this lyric has a lot of potential. Well done, Ruth. I look forward to receiving further entries from you.

Third Place Equal



**Judith
Powell**

Lullaby

Tune: 'Jesus Loves Me'

Baby sleep within my arms
Safe from any worldly harm
Angels guard you from above
Precious gift from God to love.

Sleep my baby sleep
Sleep my baby sleep
Sleep my baby sleep
With love our watch we keep.

Judge's Comments

Judith's lullaby has the same lovely gentle qualities Susan's has. It is also original, uncomplicated and easy to sing to her choice of music. However, for judging purposes, I would have liked her to have written two stanzas followed by the refrain, rather than just one.

With regards to punctuation, although it is no longer required in modern poetry, most music scores still have it, so it should've been included.

There is a problem with rhythm in the first three repeated lines of the refrain. In the music score for 'Jesus Loves Me', the word 'Jesus' is in the first musical bar while 'loves me' is in the second. In this lullaby, the word 'my' is causing the word 'baby' to have one syllable in

the first bar of music while the second syllable is in the next bar of music. This doesn't sound right and can be easily corrected by removing 'my' from the repeated line and writing it as, 'Sleep baby / sleep'. The word 'sleep' can be sung quite naturally over the last two notes of that line.

Apart from the above, this is a good lullaby that I hope will be sung often. Well done, Judith. Do keep writing.

Level Two

**Judge:
Janice Gillgren**

Requirement

POETRY: MONEY MANAGEMENT—Write a serious or humorous poem giving advice to newly-wed couples on how to manage their money. This should be suitable for a secular publication. 20-30 lines. Any style poem.

General Comments

There was a good variety in the poems, though not so much in the titles. A good title is well worth constructing. Most entrants had kept within the word count. I think most of those who entered this competition aren't very comfortable with writing poetry—so commendations for giving it a go!

The biggest problem encountered was inconsistent rhythm. Where poems rhymed, as most did, this was done well. However, even with the best of rhymes, if the rhythm doesn't quite sound right, the poem won't work as well.

Even if you don't have musical knowledge, tapping out the beats formed by the strongest sounding syllables will

help you. There should be a discernable pattern, even in what is called 'free verse.'

Apart from that, the advice given was great in most poems. Shirley's poem gained first place not only because of her better rhythm, but also because of a consistent theme and sensible advice, announced by a great title.

First Place



**Shirley
Jamieson**

Cents Ability

Planning a budget is an important part
Of working together, so here's how you
start,

List those expenses each month always
brings

Like power and rent and insurance for
things

Shopping for groceries and transport to
work,

These are essential, but add a small perk,

Write down your phone bill and costs
for your car,

Now how much is left of your earnings
so far?

Buying some furniture and things for
your place

Saves money on Trade Me, there isn't a
race

Having the latest new gear you can get
All bought on your credit card piles up
your debt

Growing your own vegies reduces
expense

And bring lunch from home saves many
more cents;

Buy food on special that you like to eat
So you can freeze meals you just need to
heat

Going to movies and sports that you do,
These all are important but budget them
too,

Mismanaging money makes lots of strife
Causing division between husband and
wife

Setting up home takes thoughtful
planning you see

So work out priorities and you both agree
To keep to budgeting, make both ends
meet,

That way it's quicker to land on your feet

Judge's Comments

Hi Shirley, I really enjoyed the rhyme and rhythm of this poem, (particularly in the first three stanzas), together with the good sense it suggests to young couples. I think you've kept to the requirements of the assignment very well, and I've awarded you first place.

Your title is great—simple, appropriate, and a good attention-getter. Your advice is sensitively given, rather than being preachy.

The suggestions for improvement are to do with rhythm. When we read our poems

to ourselves, it is easy to gloss over cluttered rhythm. However, good poetry involves hunting for just the right word, which has the right meaning, but fits well. It is particularly important to try and maintain the rhythm established in the beginning of the poem, because it sets the tone, and thus the reader's expectations.

My suggestions might not suit you – poetry tends to be very subjective after all – but try them and see what you think.

For example, stanza 4 has a difficult rhythm. The first two lines could be better as: 'Grow your own veges to lessen expense, and bring lunch from home to save yet more cents.'

In the 5th stanza, 'a shorter word such as 'vital' would be better than 'important' which is too long.

In the last stanza, 'thoughtful' is not necessary; then:

'Work out priorities, and commit to agree, to keep to your budget; make both ends meet...'

I hope you find these comments helpful.



Second Place



**Vicki
Nogaj**

Money Matters 'aft 'I Do'

One plus one most times makes two
Vis-a'-vis when lovers say "I do!"
Defying child's numerical sum
One and one (that's two) are one
When those two invite the Lord
One, one plus one: A threefold cord

Despite the state of matrimonial 'One'
Sometimes the 'One' can come undone
'Tis wise before the cord unwind
To seek advice and keep in mind;
One key to glowing marital health
Is how to manage their joint wealth

Thus before the house divide
These few things you must decide:
The one who has a head for numbers
And no major credit blunders
Be the one who keeps the books
Free from pouts and dirty looks

Having a joint account is fine
Claiming what's yours is mine
To cover all the main expenses
Accessible to both, no pretenses
To prevent each one feeling stifled
Their sense of privacy being trifled

Each spouse needs their own account
It needn't be a large amount
Enough to buy a gift or surprise
Free from any prying eyes
To pursue a hobby or to save
Indulge in a treat they may crave

A final source of great distress
A usurper of all wedded bliss
Often waiting upon your return
From the pleasant honeymoon
Jump on it, first chance you get
Start to clear all your DEBT!

Judge's Comments

Hi Vicki, I've awarded you 2nd place. Well done. Your rhyme is consistent, though I find the pattern of every two rows rhyming to be rather constrained. However, poetry's beauty is in the mind of the listener or reader, so it may appeal to others.

The first 6 lines don't add anything of value to the poem, and are actually a bit confusing. They would be particularly so to secular readers, for whom this poem should be suitable. Eliminating the first six lines would also bring your line count into the correct range!

Keep your pronouns consistent. For example, 'your' would be better than 'their' (regarding joint wealth); and 'you' rather than 'they' (regarding a craved treat), because other pronouns are in second person.

Your rhythm is reasonably clear and consistent. The stanza starting 'Having a joint account...' is a noticeable exception though, and I found the 2nd line's pacing doesn't work well at all,

because it doesn't have the same number of beats as the 2nd line in the other stanzas. The last three lines of that stanza also don't have a good beat.

I've heard some people say that reading backwards, line by line, can help you pick up mistakes in the beat, and it would probably work for you.

While I can see what you mean by your title, the whole word 'After' would probably be much better, and drop the words 'Money Matters', e.g: 'After you say: "I do".'

Third Place



**Jean
Shewan**

MONEY MATTERS,

Our ancestors worked hard for their living,
grew their own, made do and mended
were thankful for food, clothing and shelter;
bartered, shared with neighbour and friend.

Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.

One tenth to God, then one third for the rent,
one third to spend, the rest to save.
don't borrow, don't lend, stay out of debt,
this was the advice my parents gave.

Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.

But this generation has a different agenda,
you want, rather than need, everything new.
bankcards and EFTPOS, shares for the trading,
overseas trips and vacations for two.

Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.

Take Mr McCawber's advice if you will,
on it your happiness may depend.
whatever you do and whatever you buy
make sure you earn more than you spend.

Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.



Judge's Comments

Hi Jean. Well done. I've awarded you 3rd place. The repeated ends of the stanzas make this poem seem more like a song, though there isn't anything wrong with that, as many songs are poems as well.

I had some trouble with the rhythm. The 2nd line of the first and last stanzas each appear to have three beats, whereas the rest of the poem fits better into four beats per line. This creates something like a musical off-beat, which is distracting to read.

I don't think many young people today would know of Mr McCawber from Dickens' 'David Copperfield'. If you start the third line with 'so', or use quotation marks if these last two lines are an exact quote, that will indicate the last two lines are his and would help those unfamiliar with him to make sense of the advice.

Level Three

Judge:
Julie Belding

Requirement

BOOK REVIEW—Critically review a Christian book published in the last five years. (300 words max.)

General Comments

Most magazine publishers welcome critical book reviews, so writing them is a skill worth honing. In the above instruction, the operative word was critically. This means your review needed to point out the book's weaknesses as well as its strengths. Of course, when we've just read a brilliant book it can be hard to find anything negative to mention. So why the big deal about finding a fault or two? Mainly for the sake of credibility. No book is perfect, and readers like to have confidence that the reviewer is independent and objective, and not just a promotional writer for the publisher. We take their positive comments more seriously if we've read their negative ones as well.

Do note that there is a conventional way to give bibliographic information at the top of your review. Details should include Title, Author, Place, Publisher, Date, Page count, and RRP (if known.) The ISBN is optional.

First Place



**Lois
Farrow**

Unstoppable, by Nick Vujicic

Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2012

240pp RRP 19.95

ISBN 978-0-307-73153-1

Despite having no limbs, Nick Vujicic (pronounced *Voy-u-chich*) lives up to the title of this, his second book.

Running a business to support himself while constantly travelling the world as a motivational speaker keeps Nick moving at a hectic pace.

The sub-title of *Unstoppable* is *The Incredible Power of Faith in Action*. By telling anecdotes and lessons from his own life, and powerful stories of people he has met around the world, Nick demonstrates God's power and shows how he puts his faith into action.

When asked how he stays positive and finds strength to overcome his disabilities and sustain his gruelling travel schedule Nick replies 'I pray for God's help, and then I put my faith into action. I believe God created me for a purpose, and I put myself in a position for God's blessings.'

His first book, *Life Without Limits*, told his life story, how he came to terms with his limitations, and how he lives 'a ridiculously good life'. *Unstoppable* expands on those themes. Chapter

topics include overcoming adversity, fighting the battles within, sowing into the lives of others, and living in balance.

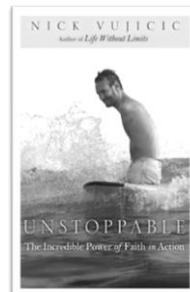
Australian born Nick acknowledges he needs more balance in his life, and in this he will be helped by his marriage last year to Kanae Miyahara and the prospect of imminent fatherhood. Now living in the United States, and writing this book in collaboration with Wes Smith, we learn how Nick proved God's faithfulness as he learned lessons the hard way.

'I learned to focus on solutions rather than problems,' writes Nick, 'on doing instead of stewing.'

Despite being at times preachy and repetitive as he hammers home his points, this is a very readable book with wide appeal from an inspiring man with an irrepressible sense of humour.

Judge's Comments

A superb review, Lois. You've presented just enough detail that I can't wait to order this book for myself. You do mention a downside to the book (Nick's preachiness and repetitiveness) which makes this a critical review in the best sense of the word. I like the way you have included a couple of direct quotes.



Second Place



**Deborah
McDermott**

Compelled by Love: How to change the world through the simple power of love in action by Heidi Baker, with Shara Pradhan. Charisma House, 2008. 154 pp. 4.6 star rating.

In 1995, Rolland and Heidi Baker transferred IRIS Ministries—an organisation established by them in 1980 to serve the poor—from Asia to Mozambique where they have been based ever since. Using the beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt.5:3-10) as her book's theme, Heidi tells how God has multiplied their resources to feed, clothe and shelter thousands of abandoned children in this war-torn African nation. However, *Compelled by Love* is not just about trusting in God for miracles. It is also about revealing his love in the midst of death, trauma and extreme poverty. As Heidi says, 'The more difficult it gets ... the more tenacious we become to fix our eyes on the beautiful perfect prize: Christ Jesus. He is worth it all'. (Paragraph two, page 114.)

With the beatitudes as the plumbline for their mission work, the Bakers live with and share the suffering of those who are poor, grief-stricken, hungry, thirsty and persecuted in order to reveal God's hands-on mercy and compassion. They believe this is the gospel as Jesus taught it and the results speak for themselves.

Not only are children getting saved everyday, they are remaining faithful and becoming worthy citizens.

Although *Compelled by Love* is written in war-torn Africa, its aim is to raise the awareness of first world Christians to their own spiritual poverty. This would have been better achieved had the stories been more detailed. Medical verification of the particularly remarkable healings would have also added credibility. Otherwise, this well written, inspiring book is a must for Christians who want to be more Christlike.

Judge's Comments

Another quality review. Note that the bibliographic details at the top should include the place of publication as well as the date. Probably the 4.6 star rating is superfluous, since we are not told who awarded the stars, or how this particular rating system works. (Out of 5? Out of 10?) It is good that you have quoted directly from the book, but your citation of 'Paragraph two, page 114' is too detailed for a short review. Just 'p114' would be sufficient. Well done.

Third Place



**Julia
Martin**

The Wonder of Heaven - a biblical tour of our eternal home, by Ron Rhodes. Harvest House Publishers, 2009

If heaven's going to be our eternal destination, then Christians ought to be curious about this amazing place God's prepared for us. For this reason Ron Rhodes, a notable Bible teacher, author, and president of Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries, has written *The Wonder of Heaven*.

Humans have always wondered about life after death and so Ron Rhodes takes us to the Bible to dispel false ideas and beliefs and to teach what God has revealed about heaven in the Scriptures.

Starting with the certainty and universality of death, the author describes the transition from this life to the next for believers and non-believers. Each chapter deals with a different aspect of heaven and is broken down into smaller sections for easy reference.

Some chapters cover frequently asked questions such as: Will our resurrected bodies be physical and what age will we be? Will we wear clothes and eat food in heaven? Will aborted and miscarried babies be there? Will pets be there?

Rhodes writes with passion and enthusiasm in an easy-to-read style. He is never dogmatic in his views but always draws on the teaching of Scripture. He quotes the viewpoints of other Bible experts and includes an extensive bibliography and footnotes for each chapter.

In a postscript the author outlines clearly God's way to heaven so no reader is left in doubt. I recommend his practical chapter on helping those who grieve, and in one of three appendixes he deals with the controversial topic of near-death experiences.

Throughout the book the author challenges his readers to see heaven as more than a final destination but as an impetus for living here and now with an eternal perspective.

I recommend this book to everyone as it's easy to read and its subject matter will fascinate and inform Christians and non-Christians alike.

Judge's Comments

What a fascinating book! Your review is written clearly and with sufficient detail to whet our appetites. Remember to include the place of publication and the page count among your details at the top. Also I would have liked some mention of the book's weaknesses. Otherwise, a good, thoughtful commentary. You should write more book reviews.

IMPORTANT NOTICE for Level One Competition Entrants

Please note that Debbie McDermott will be on leave in May 2013.

Therefore, would all those who wish to enter the June 2013 Level One Competition (entries due by 10th May) please send your entries to Jan Pendergrast at jan@roads-end.co.nz instead.

Many thanks.

Competitions for June 2013

Due May 10th

EMAIL YOUR ENTRY AS AN ATTACHMENT, COMPLETE WITH WORD COUNT.
Font: Times New Roman, 11 points. **Line spacing:** single
Spaces between Paragraphs: 6 points **Paragraph Indentation:** None
To determine which level you're on, check the criteria on the 2013 reference sheet sent to you in December 2012 or email Jan on jan@roads-end.co.nz

Level One

Email entry to



Jan Pendergrast

jan@roads-end.co.nz

Level Two

Email entry to



Janice Gillgren

mj_gillgren@ubernet.co.nz

Level Three

Email entry to



Julie Belding

julie@belding.co.nz

Requirement:

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—
Write a short account of your life, with a primary focus on what has inspired you along your life journey to become a writer. Try to highlight no more than two to three milestones that have had a significant impact on you. 500 words maximum.

Requirement:

IN A NUTSHELL—
Using exactly 150 words (excluding title), briefly explain a Biblical doctrine and tell why it is important. Do not use 1st person Point of View (POV) at all.

Requirement:

POETRY —
Write a sonnet on a winter theme. It must consist of 14 lines. It must be written in iambic pentameter (duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH-duh-DUH). It must be written in one of various standard rhyme schemes. (For further tips, Google 'Writing a Sonnet – for Dummies')

Note to Entrants

If you have not yet had any of your work published through the CW competitions, please email a **HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTO** of yourself with your entry in the event you are awarded a place.

*First place entries are uploaded to the Guild Website.
Commended entries, while not published, are acknowledged in the CW.*