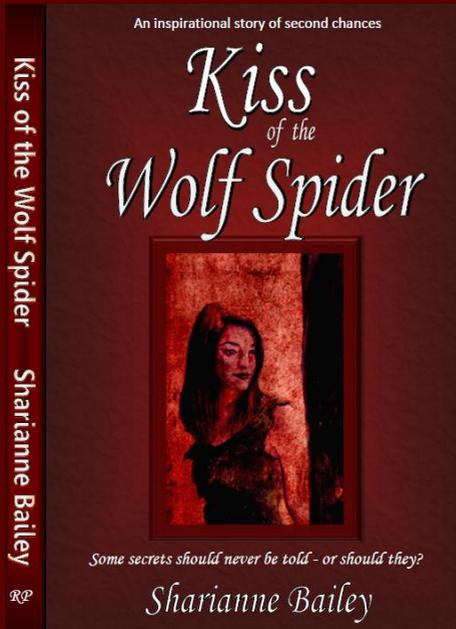


# THE CHRISTIAN WRITER



MAGAZINE OF THE CHRISTIAN WRITERS  
GUILD NEW ZEALAND

October – November 2014



Supporting  
Members' Books

Kiss  
of the  
Wolf Spider

---

By Sharianne Bailey

## *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 CHRISTIAN WRITER

Oct – Nov 2014

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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:

The site provides useful information on the Magazine, Links, Groups, Competitions, Workshops and the Library. It also has an interesting 'Current News and Views' blog site, as well as a 'Write to Us' page.

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

## From the President

Well, this week we have finally had a taste of spring and it has been wonderful. It's amazing how much water a little sunshine can evaporate. I trust it is also warming up where you live.

It has been lovely having a couple of Guild members stay on the farm recently. Ruth was even brave enough to go spearing with me and she caught her breakfast.

It was good to see a number of you at the Spring Workshop. I am sure that those who attended enjoyed the day. Thanks to Debbie and Jan for the work you both put into making the day a success and to Duncan Pardon as well.

I would like to acknowledge the passing of Guild member, Janice Aish, who recently went home to be with the Lord.

The Guild's AGM was held at the Spring Workshop. Sadly Catherine Hudson has resigned from the Committee. Catherine, we have appreciated your input into the Guild. It has been lovely having a younger, vibrant committee member at meetings. Justin St. Vincent has joined the Guild

Committee and I'm sure we will find his knowledge and enthusiasm a great blessing within the Guild.

Do remember the Retreat (5-8 February 2015) which is rapidly approaching. A number of long time members have already agreed to share some of their pearls of wisdom. Some of these include Janice Gillgren, Debbie McDermott, Julie Belding and Ruth Linton.

Since last writing we have had another grandson added to the family. Cam and Shelley had a son, Isaac, their first child, on 2nd September.

I liked what Jo Seagar said recently when she wrote '... You can master the art of writing meaningful notes even if you don't have an English degree...' and '...a personal note speaks volumes.'

The challenge in 2 Corinthians 3:2 states 'You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody.' How do I read today?

Janet Fleming



*Janet and Mike with their new grandchild*

# Spring Workshop Report

The Spring Workshop, which was held on 6th September at Ross Grove Chapel in Auckland, was enjoyed by all 16 members who attended. Janet Fleming invited John Sturt to open the event with prayer. She then gave a devotion on how important it is to read God's Word daily, and to be influenced by it as writers so that we can impact others with the Gospel.

The first speaker of the day was Duncan Pardon, a professional journalist as well as joint owner of Pohutukawa Coast Times and editor of the NZ Baptist Magazine (which has been in existence for longer than any other religious magazine in New Zealand, having first been published in 1860). His first topic was on:

## Interviewing and Writing Articles for Newspapers

Before interviewing people, it is vital to let them know you are a reporter and that what they say may be published. You should conduct the interview in a place where the person being



*Duncan Pardon*

interviewed feels comfortable. Prepare the interview questions beforehand, but bear in mind that the interviewee might say something you don't expect. Be ready.

Duncan then gave workshop delegates the opportunity to pair up and interview each other using the following interview question guidelines:

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name (spelt correctly), age, marital status, children.

2. Where the person lives and for how long.
3. Career highlights:
  - Travel stories
  - Voluntary/social activities: clubs, groups, school, etc
  - Causes/activism: mission, politics, community
  - Accomplishments
  - Sports
  - Church projects, outreach.
4. Look for the angle, the 'aha' moment. Then ask follow-up questions: Context. Background. What did you do? How did you feel? Has it changed your life?
5. Use questions that are open, not closed. Ask: how, why, what, where, when, to avoid just yes/no answers.
  - Keep the interviewee on the topic.
  - Avoid giving your own point of view or comment.
6. Ask follow-up questions and check anything you are not sure of—especially spellings.

## How to Write a News Article

Duncan highlighted a number of points in his second topic, including:

1. If you use a tape/digital recorder, ensure you make notes as well.
2. Write your article as an inverted pyramid; i.e. putting the conclusion at the beginning and working backwards.
3. Ensure your heading and opening paragraph immediately draws the reader's attention. It should be written simply and in the present tense to capture the drama and excitement of the moment, and be no longer than 25 words.

4. Content should comprise short, simple sentences pitched at a reading age of about 12 years. Avoid commas and over-punctuation.
  5. Ensure comments are attributed to the person who said them.
  6. Use indirect / direct quotes sparingly, to add colour and drama.
  7. Identify whether the article is a hard news or soft news item, and write appropriately.
  8. When there is a lot of detail, bullet point summaries can be effective.
2. Competitions with specific word counts teach us the art of writing concisely.
  3. Competitions teach us to focus and dedicate time to the assignment in order to meet the deadline.
  4. Competitions teach us to be teachable. Many competition judges provide objective critiques to all entrants. Learning from such critiques is a key to becoming a really good writer.

## Effective Methods of Improving Our Writing Skills



*Debbie McDermott*

After lunch Debbie McDermott introduced her topic by saying her education in English had been poor but her love of reading good books had taught her the basics of writing

well. Writing is an art we can learn, and we should always be seeking to improve our skills if we are to impact our readers in the best way. Learning comes from doing, but to measure our work, we need to compare it with the work of an acclaimed writer or have it judged by someone who writes better than we do.

### WRITING COMPETITIVELY CAN IMPROVE OUR SKILLS

Uncompetitive writers may find this difficult but Debbie recommended entering competitions for several reasons:

1. They teach us to be creative because they usually have a set topic and / or genre. Neither may be what we would choose, but they do give us the impetus to step out of our comfort zone.

### LEARNING TO WRITE IN ANOTHER GENRE CAN IMPROVE OUR SKILLS

1. The genre we like to read may not be the genre we can write well in. We can write in any genre when we learn how. Giving a different genre a go may reveal we actually have a talent for it.

### THE POWER OF THE POSITIVE CRITIQUE

1. It's not what we say about our writing that counts, but what others say about it.
2. We are writing primarily for the reader, not for ourselves. For this reason it is very important to ask a person or persons to read and critique our work before we publish it.
3. We are Christ's representatives, so we need to be the best we can. This means fully applying ourselves to our writing and utilising all the tools at our disposal to ensure we excel in it.
4. The positive critique is one of the most important tools we have in order to be effective.

### CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUPS

Christian writers groups are a safe and caring environment in which to develop our writing skills—through fellowship, encouraging one another in our craft, and honestly critiquing one another's work.

At the conclusion of her talk, Debbie handed out the introductory paragraph of

*A Tale of Two Cities* to each delegate and asked them to rewrite it in a different genre. The results were interesting.

## The Power of Brainstorming

Jan Pendergrast, final speaker of the day, spoke on brainstorming. A brainstorming session is when time is set aside to think deeply about a particular subject for a limited period of time.



*Jan Pendergrast*

While there is some advantage in conducting a session alone, it is better to brainstorm in an engaging, balanced group environment in which each participant is encouraged to be open-minded and think ‘outside the box’ (i.e. beyond their creative boundary). Individual ideas and thoughts may seem a bit crazy at first, but—when combined with those of the rest of the group—they could prove to be an effective solution to a complex problem. This is because participants are drawing on each other’s knowledge, experience and expertise, rather than just their own.

Brainstorming is stimulating and highly motivating, as the contribution of each participant is considered to be important. It is fun and promotes spontaneity while being efficient and productive. There is also a kinship that develops in the group’s ownership of ideas.

To run a writers group brainstorming session effectively, follow these steps.

### PREPARE THE GROUP

Ensure the room is well-lit and that the team has everything they need (tools, information, refreshments, etc) in order to effectively brainstorm solutions to your problem. When everyone is settled, choose one person to be the scribe.

### PRESENT THE PROBLEM

Clearly define the problem you want to solve, and lay out criteria you must meet. Make it clear that the objective is to generate as many ideas as possible.

Hand out the story starters. Give the story criteria.

1. Write the first paragraph.
2. Plan the middle of your story.
3. Have an effective and satisfying conclusion.

### GUIDE THE CRITIQUE / DISCUSSION

- Encourage each person to share their story, and discourage anyone from criticising ideas.
- As group facilitator, share ideas if you have them, but spend your time and energy supporting your team and guiding the discussion. Stick to one conversation at a time. Remember to let everyone have fun while sharing.
- Welcome creativity, and encourage and compliment zany, far-out ideas in each story and writer.
- Expand on ideas if practical or possible.
- Express no negative evaluation of any story.

Jan then asked us to pair up to brainstorm and create a story out of sentence. It was a very productive exercise and a great conclusion to an interesting workshop.



*Julia Martin and Barbara McNaughton*

# The New Zealand Christian Writers Guild

## 31st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on 6th September 2014 at Rossgrove Chapel, Auckland

### Minutes

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16 people attended.

Janet Fleming chaired and Janet Pointon took the minutes.

**Apologies:** Beth Walker, Carol Soole, Janice Gillgren, Beth Roose, Beulah Wood, Rod Hickman, Catherine Hudson, Barbara Rabey, Justin St Vincent, Eion Field, Ruth Linton, Julie Belding, Nola Mickan.

**Minutes** from last year not read but approved. Janet Fleming / Jan Pendergrast

**Financial Report** read by Jan Pendergrast.

Total Funds: Balance at 31.7.14 was \$740, noting we will retrieve the \$625 deposit to Narrows Park this financial year.

107 members

Jan moved that subscriptions be increased to \$35 single (digital magazine). Double sub to be \$50 (digital magazine). Single sub with hard copy of magazine \$45 and double sub for hard copy to be \$70. Student membership to remain at \$15. All increases to be effective immediately. 2008 was the last time the subs increased.

Jan Pendergrast / Debbie McDermott

Margaret Paton suggested we have quarterly magazines to save cost but the committee has decided we need to keep in frequent contact with all members.

However they are looking into various ways of cost cutting.

Debbie McDermott suggested contacting our printer and pointing out we could get a better deal from another firm. The current printer may match the new cost.

Fred Swallow queried phoning those whose subs had lapsed. Fred to phone some and Jan to email others.

Jan moved the adoption of the Financial Report. Seconded by John Sturt.

#### President's Report

Janet Fleming read her report.

#### Committee

Fred Swallow took the chair and Janet Fleming was thanked and voted to continue as President.

Janet Pointon / Jan Pendergrast.

Catherine Hudson resigned from the committee and Justin St Vincent has agreed to stand.

#### Current committee members:

Janet Fleming (P), Jan Pendergrast (VP), Debbie McDermott (Editor), Beth Walker, Eion Field, Fred Swallow, Barbara McNaughton, Julia Martin and Justin St Vincent.

The meeting concluded at 12.50pm.

(Ed's note: Copies of the Financial Report are available from Jan Pendergrast)

# Increase to Annual Subscriptions

(due on 1st August 2014)

*Many thanks to those who have paid their subs. However the subscriptions were increased with immediate effect at the Guild's recent AGM (the minutes of which are on page 8 of the magazine). This may mean topping up your subs if you've paid them at the old rates. Details of the increase are as follows:*

## Single Membership Rates

**\$35** (incl. a digital copy of the bi-monthly mag)

**\$45** (incl. a hard copy / printout of the bi-monthly mag)

## Rates for Couples or Joint Members

(e.g. husband & wife / father & son / mother & daughter)

**\$50** (incl. a digital copy of the bi-monthly magazine)

**\$70** (incl. a hard copy / printout of the bi-monthly magazine)

## Student Rates

**\$15** (incl. a hard copy / printout of the bi-monthly magazine)

**To top up or renew your membership, please post your subscription fee to**

Jan Pendergrast, Seales Road, Oropi RD3, Tauranga

**Or pay online to:** NZ Christian Writers Guild, a/c No 12 3040 0547346 00

*(Be sure to include your name as a reference if using a business account.)*



## Congratulations

to David Lockyer

on his recently published book

## BEYOND THE SPLENDOURS OF THE SUNSET

A Biography—Observing New Zealand society as  
sails give way to steam.

For further details or to obtain your own copy on this book,  
write to David at 1A Glynne Crescent, Spreydon 8024,  
Christchurch or email [djlockya@paradise.net.nz](mailto:djlockya@paradise.net.nz)

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

# CWG Retreat

5th – 8th February 2015

The Guild will be holding its next biannual retreat at Narrows Park, Hamilton from Thursday evening 5th February 2015, through to lunchtime on Sunday 8th February.

**For those who need accommodation, you need to book your bed NOW as space is limited.**

### Total cost per person

(including catering)

\$200.00

### Deposit required in advance

\$50.00 per person by

9th January 2015

### Please send your cheque to:

Jan Pendergrast, Seales Road, Oropi  
RD3, Tauranga

### Or pay online to:

NZ Christian Writers Guild,  
a/c No 12 3040 0547346 00

*NB: There is some ground space available for motor homes or campervans should the number of members coming exceed the number of beds available.*

For further details, contact Jan Pendergrast on [jan@roads-end.co.nz](mailto:jan@roads-end.co.nz)

## Life is Living, Loving and Giving

By Ruth Linton

“I’m sorry Grandma,” wailed my granddaughter, a learner driver. “It wasn’t my fault.” We surveyed the damage—the fibre glass skirt of the campervan was cracked where she had bumped it with the car when she pressed the accelerator instead of the brake.

Just whose fault it was, if it was her foot on the accelerator, was an enigma! It was too late to repair the damage before departure so my son-in-law bolted the torn fibreglass so it would not flap and aggravate the crack and I was roadworthy again.

Sunday afternoon the family hugged and kissed me goodbye and I set off on stage one of my journey. It was a journey Noel, my late husband and I, began in December 2013 but aborted three weeks later due to his rapidly declining health.

Cambridge was my first port of call. Thankfully the campsite was metalled and I could drive right through to park which saved reversing, something I was apprehensive of. My older sister and family embraced me warmly. Cycling home from their place at night, with a torch in the bike basket to show the way, was an interesting experience.

Next stop was to be with daughter number three at Matakana, Warkworth but, by the time I reached Mercer, I was weary and pulled into the truck stop for a nap—the beauty of driving a campervan. Not so pleasing was my mobile phone ringing only fifteen minutes later, rousing me from my much-needed rest.

Navigating motorways is always interesting but again I found the South West

section the best way to reach West Auckland where I dropped off Noel's bike for my oldest daughter to use. From there I headed north via Upper Harbour Highway. Again I missed the correct lane at Westgate so had to turn off at Brighams Creek and reconnect with the Highway via Whenuapai.

Reliving memories was part of the reason for the trip and, travelling past the Whenuapai Air Field brought back childhood memories of seeing some of the first Air New Zealand Viscounts landing there when Whenuapai was the official Auckland Airport.

When Noel and I had first planned this trip north we aimed to visit family, friends and the places we had lived and explored together. Now I was doing it on my own, living each day fully, and enjoying the many special memories.

As family members were visited life was shared and love expressed. I played with grandchildren and admired pet calves and lambs and enjoyed bike-riding through mud puddles on the farm race. I pruned overgrown roses and grapevines for my son and enjoyed his delightful nine-month-old son, named Noel after my late husband. I wandered in the park-like grounds of my younger sister's new property at Kerikeri and enjoyed the presence of Jesus in the home group meeting in their lounge.

More love flowed as I reached Kaitaia where Noel and I had lived and loved for eleven and a half years. It was so like going home—tears flowed during the church service. How rich was our time there and how much Noel had been appreciated. My heart was knit even more closely to my friends there, including my Hindu friend who fed me (and fed me some more) on traditional Indian delicacies—a token of her regard for me.

Throughout the entire trip I was overwhelmed with people's generosity. Love lives and love gives and gives and gives. I seldom paid for parking and the potatoes I bought at the outset were sprouting on my return, a sign that most meals were provided. Amazing!

The award for giving, though, would go to one person in particular. Nothing was too much bother. Meals were generous and nutritious and prepared at all hours. Kindnesses by the community were recognised by gifts of produce—free range eggs, meat, dog bones for a local drug dealer. Time was lavishly shared with guests and family: playing Scrabble and similar games (mostly lost by me); catching flounder at night in a shallow inlet of the Whangaroa Harbour; caring for grandchildren; sharing the meat from a home-kill among family members; running Children's rallies, Bible Classes and Sunday School; and the list goes on.

Yes, life is for living, loving and giving. And our Guild President surely lives life to the full.

## CONGRATULATIONS to Lesley Edgeler



for winning the senior section of the Tokoroa Little Theatre competition, with her 25 minute play, *The Plug Keeper*.

The storyline involves the local mayor who inadvertently puts his kitchen sink plug into his trouser pocket when the phone rings just as he's about to do the

dishes. The plug gets used in loose change at the public library book sale, after which it is transferred into one of the book boxes, and so on. Meanwhile the petty cash is stolen and an elderly lady faints. A detective makes a mistake. When the plug has been returned to the mayor he loses his car keys by putting them into the recycling by mistake when the phone rings!

Well done, Lesley. We look forward to seeing the play acted out at one of our functions sometime. It sounds hilarious.

### The Cease-fire

By Julia Martin

*No water, no shelter  
With nowhere to hide  
Civilians seek refuge  
In rubble and grime  
Traumatised children  
Too frightened to cry  
Cower in the shadows  
Their innocence gone  
But wait! There's a lull  
In the conflict out there  
The bombs have stopped falling  
All gunfire has ceased  
No smoke on the skyline  
Loud silence prevails  
There's talk of a cease-fire  
This madness to end  
Can hope be awakened  
And peace be restored?  
Oh God, let this happen  
We earnestly plead.*

(Julia's inspiration comes from the appalling suffering innocent people are undergoing in many parts of the world at present.)

### There in the Midst Am 'I'

By Joy Annan

of the West Auckland Writers Group

The wind blew with  
Sweeping cold rain  
Driving us to a  
Corner of the Garden Café

The meeting was held  
Stories were told  
Prayer was prayed  
And fellowship was made

So we remembered and rejoiced  
Where two or three are gathered  
There in the midst am 'I'!

*(NB: The last meeting was held on wet and blustery October 4th, at the Auckland Botanic Gardens. Only three members attended but we had a blessed time.)*

Truly I tell you, whatever  
you bind on earth will be  
bound in heaven, and  
whatever you loose on earth  
will be loosed in heaven.

Again, truly I tell you that  
if two of you on earth  
agree about anything they  
ask for, it will be done for  
them by my Father in  
heaven. For where two or  
three gather in my name,  
there am I with them.

—Matthew 18:18-20

# GET CREATIVE

Many thanks to Pat Kerr for her lovely piece on Awakening Hope.

## Awakening Hope

By Pat Kerr

Sunrise was at 7:30am today. The valley fog melts away. The spectacular beauty of ice sculptures created by the water from overhead sprinklers in the apricot orchards is revealed.

Sprinkling waters on trees during a frost? Yes.

The theory is that heat is generated when icicles are formed on the blossoms and heat is released again when these icicles melt. This protects the blossoms and developing fruit. Later in the season the sprinklers are used for irrigation,

I am amazed that orchardists are brave enough to risk their crops to this seemingly ridiculous practice of making ice in a frost. But the science works.

Photographers love to capture the beauty of the ice-laden branches in the early sunshine.

It is not just beauty for the orchardists. There is hope. The bees will return to complete the pollination. The fruit will form. There will be another harvest this year. Another night of potential ruin is over until the next frosty night when the whole process is repeated.

This season, already, I have counted six consecutive nights of frosts capable of wiping out the whole crop. The orchardists remain vigilant and hopeful. A harvest will follow the hard work... we hope.



The next topic will be

## Breathless

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 November 2014*

# Writing the Personal Experience Article

By Janice Gillgren

---

We all have personal experiences we would like to tell. Some are very personal, and we only want to tell about them to our nearest and dearest among our friends and family. Other experiences we would like to tell to as many people as possible.

The motivation for telling your personal experience will not only determine who you will tell, but how you will tell it.

If you have some personal experiences you would like to write about, here are some guidelines:

- Scrutinise the experience. Is it likely to be of help or interest to a wide variety of people? If not, then does it really need to be told, except to your inside circle?
- Are you just writing to grizzle about something wrong? Remember that ‘Every cloud has a silver lining’. Most readers have enough complaints of their own to be interested in yours, unless you can find the silver lining—the good message—in your own story; something that will actually help them along their own journey in life.
- Consider the feelings and reputations of all other people involved in your experience. Quite apart from avoiding the risk of a libel suit against you, we all have to get on with other people in this life, and publicly belittling them is not the way to achieve this!
- Consider the potentially serious consequences of broadly publicising

an experience if it may have repercussions against a person or group. It would be far better to go directly to a person involved if you have this sort of complaint.

How, then, do you go about telling the personal experience story?

First of all, step back a bit from your own involvement, and try to look at the experience with an open mind. Detach your emotions from the experience as much as you can, while you study it.

Can you imagine yourself in the shoes of the other person or people who were also affected by the experience you suffered? This will help you to gain better perspective, which is vital to writing something that is balanced.

Can you see how God was with you in the experience? While Jesus is always with us, we sometimes don’t realise it till we look back and see the ‘footprints in the sand’ (alluding to a well-known poem in Christian circles), showing how we were carried. This insight is particularly important if you wish to share your experiences via a Christian publication.

Look for some humour in what happened. A good belly laugh is better than medicine!

What did you learn from your experience? Seeing all experiences as potential learning opportunities will help you enormously in coping with them; and will help your readers learn from their own tough times.



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## Chinese Bible written in 23 Volumes over 25 years

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**Robert Morrison** over 25 years translated and published the first Bible into Chinese in 1823 with William Milne translating the historical books. Robert, born in 1782 in Scotland, was taught Bible stories by his parents. He could repeat Psalm 119 verbatim at 12. At 19 he became a Christian. He studied Latin, Hebrew, Greek, his Bible, books like Matthew Henry's Commentary and Chinese with the help of a Chinese teacher, aiming to share the Gospel. In the British Library he translated Scripture from Chinese manuscripts. He studied medicine and helped children in need, the poor and the sick.

In 1807 Robert Morrison embarked for China via Macao with the London Missionary Society. He married Mary Morton in Macao in 1809. In China he faced many difficulties and opposition but persevered to see the complete translation of the Bible published in 23 volumes by the Anglo Chinese College in Malacca he established earlier, and which is still in operation today. Volumes of his works were translated and published in Chinese, including edifying hymns and a three volume Chinese language grammar and dictionary printed in Macao. At 52 in 1834 Robert Morrison met the one he faithfully wrote about

Bibliography:

Guang Dong Assn. China Christian Church. Pray for China. Google ©

## Tauranga Christian Writers Winter Retreat

Five enthusiastic scribes headed for Oropi, in the Bay of Plenty hills, for their annual Short-Day Weekend Winter Retreat; this to spend a weekend writing and fellowshiping with others of like mind.

Carys Edwards, Dorothy Finlay and George Bryant joined Ruth Linton, Ruth Jamieson, Belinda McCallion, Carol Oliver and Jeanette Knudsen at Jan Pendergrast's place on Saturday—which began with a power cut!

Friday evening started with a mixed blessing meal—always the best—followed by the sharing of intentions and goals for the weekend and beyond. A strict-ish timetable designed to keep the group on task and productive was set.

The projects were all different.

Jeanette commandeered Hans' office (just as well he was out) to commit her travels to her laptop; Ruth Jamieson found the library to work on her family history; Carol hid in her room finding inspiration from the view for devotions; Ruth Linton worked on her poetry in her motorhome in the paddock; Belinda found a spot by the fire in the family room to work on her commissioned weekly children's lessons about the Torah; and Jan, in her office, continued working on her NZ Christian historical fiction novella.

Carys, Dot and George made the best of the short time they were at the Retreat. After lunch George filled the group in on DayStar news, his latest project and asked what others were up to. Dot continued writing daily articles about the 2013 trip she led to Israel, and helped Belinda understand various Hebrew words in the Torah. Carys shared her excitement over her progress and completion of her poetry course with Whitirea.

In the evening, after a wonderful beef pot roast meal prepared by Ruth J and assistant, Carol, the group watched *The Book Thief*.

Sunday's programme began with an hour plus of hymn singing and sharing, followed by two hours of quiet time for more writing. Ruth and Jeanette had a problem as their computers 'went on the blink'.

The weekend ended with everyone departing for home mid-afternoon.

See you next year; same time, same place.



*Tauranga Group members at lunch*

## The Guild Welcomes NEW MEMBER

**Brian Taylor**

of Linfield, Auckland

## CONDOLENCES

Our sincere sympathy goes to the  
family and friends of long time  
Guild Member

**Janice Aish**

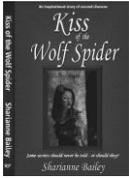


who passed away after a long  
illness on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014

## Library Corner

### Book Review

By Debbie McDermott



### Kiss of the Wolf Spider

by Sharianne Bailey

*Kiss of the Wolf Spider* is a heart-wrenching story about Jane, a 12-year-old girl who is sexually abused by her father time and again. Confused and frightened of what he will do to her if she seeks help, all she can do is pray to the God she does not yet know and pour out her heart in the pages of her diary.

The abuse continues right into Jane's mid teens before she plucks up the courage to tell a friend whose mother is a social worker. A court case follows and her father is sent to prison, but this does little to appease the anger, shame and sense of worthlessness Jane feels. Self-harm seems to be the only way to ease her pain and she does this often until the light of God's love breaks through in a way she least expects. Emotional and spiritual healing slowly begin to take place as she chooses to forgive her father, her mother and all who have hurt her in one way or another.

The author has taken care to use candid and contemporary language that is consistent with Jane's age as she progresses from a teen to adulthood. This adds credibility to the story and also makes it intensely personal. In addition, there are wonderful insights on forgiveness and how innocence can be stolen, but purity cannot because it is an inner virtue.

Overall, *Kiss of the Wolf Spider* is a well-written and enlightening book that I highly recommend to all older teens and adults.

*If you would like to obtain your own copy, please contact Sharianne Bailey direct on [sharib@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:sharib@slingshot.co.nz)*

## Christmas Ideas

Bookmarks and Copies of

### *In the Stillness*

CWG 30th Anniversary Anthology

(see Notice Board on page 31 for further details)

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# Competition Results

## Under 30s

**Judge:**

**Vicki Nogaj**

**Requirements:** Bad guys / girls of the Bible. Pick one and tell their side of the story. 500 words. Include your age with your entry.

### General Comments

*This was tough again as the entries are very imaginative and great stories. I read them all to my children and they loved them. They all had their own favourites from the batch and were impressed at the standard for the ages. Sadly I could only choose three. I had to be picky about format, grammar and sticking to the word count.*

## First Place



**Bonnie Smithies**

of Christchurch  
(16 Years Old)

### What Really Happened

**The following is an excerpt from Volume 27 of The Official Annals of Philistine History.**

*1019 BC At war with the Israelites*

We gathered our forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. We pitched camp at Ephes Dammim. Saul and the Israelites camped in the Valley of Elah. The battle lines were drawn up. We were on one hill and the Israelites on the other. There was a valley between us.

This was during the time of the Great Plague. Thousands of the valuable

fighting men from our mighty army had been stricken and were lying weak and sick, with many already dead. They were not in any condition to fight. Many of the King's sages and nobles had advised him against going out to battle, but the King was obstinate and refused their advice. We would fight and conquer the Isrealites, no matter the cost.

Goliath of Gath was our army champion at that time. He was an extremely imposing figure, standing over six cubits tall and arrayed in full battle armour made of bronze. He had not been afflicted with the ravaging illness, so the King ordered him to go out and have one-on-one combat with the Israelite champion. The King knew that Goliath would defeat the Israelite contestant and they would win an easy victory over the Israelites.

For forty days Goliath proclaimed his challenge to the Israelites, with no Israelite brave enough to come out and do battle with our champion. During this time, our army was steadily decreasing in number and eventually Goliath himself fell under the influence of the terrible plague.

On the fortieth day he was so weak he could barely stand. Yet in obedience to his King (and because he knew that no Israelite would answer his challenge, because they hadn't for the previous thirty-nine days) he proclaimed his challenge to the Israelite army once again.

Surprisingly, this time the Israelites sent out a challenger. We weren't too worried

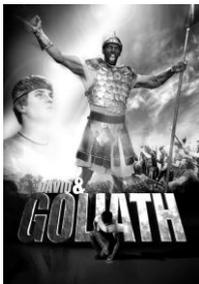
about Goliath's chances, for was he not the mighty Goliath, champion of the Philistine army? Besides, the Israelite contestant was small in stature and did not look much of a threat.

Goliath provoked him and his God with insulting words. Our champion prepared himself for the Israelite to come and oppose him, yet while the Israelite was still too far away for a fair fight, his opponent let loose a slingstone which hit our champion's forehead. Goliath fell down and before he had the chance to recover, the Israelite had severed his gallant head.

Note: The Israelites have authored their own exceedingly popular version of this story. However, we know that the reason for our defeat lies entirely with the effects of the illness Goliath was suffering at the time, and not with the aid of the Israelite's God. How else could our noble, great, invincible and indestructible Philistine army have been defeated?

### Judge's Comments

*I was intrigued with the title and it drew me into the story. I found myself getting upset by the almost blasphemous account and was relieved by reading the note at the end. I thought this was a necessary touch for readers who are unfamiliar with the 'True' account! Overall it was cleverly written, good length and well delivered. The only part I would change if I was being picky is drop the 'up' in 'The battle lines were drawn up.' Well done.*



## Second Place



**Danella  
Smithies**  
of Christchurch  
(14 years old)

### A Selection of Diary Entries from the Diary of Haman

The 18th of the first month of the twelfth year of King Xerxes

I'm so excited! This morning the King honoured me in front of all the other people in the palace. He has given me a place higher than all the other nobles, a place only the King is superior to.

The King has ordered that everyone in the entire kingdom respect the high position I have received. They all have to fall on their knees in homage to me. To me, Haman the Esteemed-Above-All-Nobles! I love that title.

This promotion has been a long time in the making. I look back on all the meetings with the King discussing matters, all the private words with his secretaries, all the sleepless nights rehearsing how best to answer his questions but it has been so worth it.

My wife Hestia is so thrilled. She has already announced it to all her friends at the Persian Ladies' Meeting and they were so impressed. Next meeting she is going to challenge the president for the lead position, as of course she deserves the highest place.

The 25th of the first month

A group of the King's officials approached me today and said, "One particular Jewish official has been refusing to bow before

you, oh Haman. For days we have been reasoning with him but it seems that nothing can be said to make him change his mind.”

My position has been challenged. I know it has. As I left the King’s Court today I saw that the officials were right - one of their number at the gate was refusing to bow down. How dare he!

As I drove my new royal silver-lined chariot home all I could think about was revenge. When I told Hestia about the shocking lack of respect I have received, she too was enraged. We are both trying to devise the best way to pay back such behaviour. Believe me, my revenge isn’t going to be small. Soon the whole kingdom will know what happens to those who incur the wrath of Haman the Esteemed-Above-All-Nobles.

The 27th of the first month

I have made up my mind. I have settled on the best plan of punishment. This man is a Jew and I have never liked Jews. They are so troublesome, so uncooperative and now so disrespectful.

The events of the last few days will be a perfect excuse to annihilate the entire race of Jews! I will get rid of that troublesome man by the name of Mordecai and I will get rid of all the other troublemakers at the same time. It’s perfect! I’m so excited. Hestia is terribly excited as she thinks surely such a display of power will win her the approval of the whole Persian Ladies’ Society - she is certain to become president now.

In my diary entry tomorrow I will record in great detail how my plan has come together, as I know it will work out so wonderfully.

## Judge’s Comments

*Firstly the title is a little long and could be a bit more creative. I gave this second as I like the creativity of writing it in diary format and also the freedom to get a little personal insight and depth that other formats wouldn’t allow. I enjoyed your inclusion of the wife and the humour of a 'society' type context even though this may not be realistic for the time period so be careful. It was original and very different from the other entries which made it stand out. The ending was a little sudden and I realise this was due to word count. Great job.*

## Third Place



**Benjamin Smithies**

of Christchurch  
(12 years old)

## Herod’s Surprise

Just as I was pulling a few strands of out of control hair out of the way, an advisor came blustering in muttering intolerably. “My lord the king, some wealthy people from a far off land have come and are wishing to give rich presents to the prince who has supposedly been born.”

I said, “But how can this be, I have no newborn son. Tell them to go away and see Pharaoh, he has just had a son.” My servant hurried off.

A little later I was surprised and a little annoyed when my servant trotted back. I said angrily, “Go and plant your ugly face in the mud somewhere else.”

“But my lord, they say that they have come to see the king of the Jews.”

“I shall not see them.”

“But they have rich presents.”

“Bring them in.” As they walked in I was stirred up to anger by the sight of none of them holding presents. “Where are the presents?”

The leaders said, “The presents are for the king of the Jews and no other.”

I leapt to my feet, extremely angered by their words and roared out, “I, the great and powerful me, am king of the Jews.”

“No, their real and lawful king,” one of their number said. “We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

“Go stay in one of the new villas while I consult my royal advisors.” I told a servant to summon all the chief priests, teachers of the law, advisors and officials to the palace immediately.

As soon as they arrived, I quizzed them intensely on all they knew from the Prophets. Upon learning that it was something to do with Bethlehem I dismissed them and sent for the Magi to meet me secretly in one of the cellars. I questioned them thoroughly and learned the time the star had appeared. I said to them, “Go search for the child and after you find him, come back and tell me so that I too may worship him.” When they left I cackled nastily and went off to bed.

### Judge’s Comments

*I like the catchy title of this entry and it brought a different perspective to the event. I liked the animation of Herod’s character and the dialogue ran very naturally with good sentence structure. I love the humour that comes through but it doesn’t get too silly which is important. Try and take time to do a final edit as there were two spelling errors (Bethlehem and advisers). You are on a roll Ben!*

## Level One

### Judge:

**Debbie McDermott**

**Requirement:** NATURE: Excluding poetry, you may write about any aspect of this topic in your preferred genre (i.e. a devotional, or a creative fictional story, etc). 500 words maximum, 300 words minimum.

### General Comments

*All five entries to this competition were excellent and a pleasure to read. Well done to those who gave it a go. The outstanding quality of your writing made it difficult to award the winning places. I finally made my decision based on:*

- *How well the piece reflected the competition topic as defined by the Oxford dictionary.*
- *How much of the piece was the author’s own writing and how much was from external sources; i.e. Bible verses.*

*Once again, congratulations to all entrants to this competition. Your writing is of an excellent standard and I particularly encourage those who weren’t awarded a place to seek publication if you can. You deserve to be in print.*

## First Place



**Lily Coles**  
of Hastings

### THE TREE AND ME

You wear only parched leaves, pinned loosely to your boughs. The sap has run down your twisted branches, through your thick trunk and into your roots. The grass on which you stand bursts forth beneath me and days pass, months, and you change

with time on the clock. Your leaves tighten and colour up like paint spilled across a canvas, a kaleidoscopic of orange and red. Then the wind grows cold, and the hairs on my skin bristle.

The pages of my notebook flap to the rhythm of the wind, as do your parched leaves. The wind howls and the days grow colder. Your coloured leaves detach from your branches, fluttering like feathers to the ground. They fall, swimming, plunging, deep down until they meet and touch the ground, then whip up again to glide along in the breeze, fragments breaking off and dancing away.

The nights lengthen, your leaves vanish like paper to a crackling flame. Ice pricks through at the ground beneath you, but you do not wither. As my layers of clothes grow thicker, yours get thinner and yet you stand so tall.

As I mark the days from the calendar, the clouds part, the snow melts and vanishes into the earth, turning the grass a lush shade of emerald green. Teardrops of amber now sparkle through your branches as the sun finds its way into view behind the clouds.

Your buds burst open into bloom, like fingers curling out from a closed fist and layers of petals form flowers, encased by small leaves as delicate jewels of pale pink pinned to your branches.

The sun seeps through the gaps between your boughs, illuminating you and me. And with the grass again up to my ankles, the warm sun on my back, your presence calms my mind.

### Judge's Comments

*When I first read Lily's entry, the word that sprang to my mind was 'exquisite'. While talking to a tree is somewhat unusual, I feel*

*this somehow set her piece apart from the other four. She also avoided becoming too 'flowery' by providing just the right amount of information to evoke the imagination of the reader. Minimising flowery language would have been difficult to achieve with a descriptive piece such as this, but I think Lily nailed it. Her creativity also shines through in phrases such as, 'Your leaves tighten and colour up like paint spilled across...'*

*Lily's grammar, sentence structure and punctuation is very good overall. The only corrections that need to be made are:*

- *Para 1—3rd sentence: Replace the first 'and' with a full stop. Then rewrite 'Days pass, months, and you change...' as a new sentence.*
- *Para 3—'whither' should be spelt 'wither'.*
- *Para 5—This sentence is far too long. Replace the 'and' with a full stop. Then rewrite 'Layers of petals form flowers...' as a new sentence.*

*Once again, thank you for an excellent piece of writing, Lily. Do keep up the good work.*

## Second Place



**Ruth  
Jamieson**  
of Whakatane

### Blackie

“What’s up with our early bird?” Mum asked as she drew back the curtains. “It’s not like my girl to be still in bed when the sun is up.”

Nine-year-old Amy blinked and looked out the window.

“Something’s happened to Blackie. He didn’t wake me up.”

“Maybe you were so tired that you didn’t hear him this morning,” Mum suggested.

“Maybe,” Amy echoed, “but what if he is sick...or hurt. Can a bird get laryngitis?” Amy was remembering the time she had a sore throat and lost her voice.

Mum smiled. “I’m not sure honey. Let’s see if he shows up tomorrow morning.”

Amy tossed all that night, determined to be awake to hear Blackie’s solo performance.

“Something has happened. I know it,” Amy said as she hurried through her breakfast.

“Of course,” Amy’s older brother, James, proceeded to tease her. “Maybe he flew away or got frosted.”

Amy gave him ‘the look’ as she headed to the door.

“No Fluffy. You’re not coming.” Amy picked up her cat and gave him to Mum.

“Fluffy wasn’t hungry the other night,” James teased.

Amy pulled a face at her brother. He could be so annoying.

“Okay James. That’s enough.” Mum turned to Amy. “You’ll need a hat and coat on honey. There’s still a nip in the air.”

‘What if James was right.’ Amy shuddered at the thought. Fluffy didn’t understand her distress at seeing the dead birds he brought home.

She walked quietly around to her bedroom window and looked up into the barren cherry tree where Blackie perched and sang each morning. ‘What has happened Blackie?’ Tears clouded her vision. She swiped at them with her sleeve as she walked down the path past the orange tree. ‘Strange,’ she thought, ‘all those oranges scattered on the ground. It must have been

the storm the other night.’ It was then she noticed a small green-blue egg. She picked it up carefully. It was cold. Looking around she noticed two similar eggs splattered on the ground and a disheveled nest. ‘This must be Blackie’s nest. He must be sad. Maybe that’s why he isn’t singing.’ She knew that when she was sad she couldn’t sing.

Just then, Amy noticed movement and slipped away behind the woodshed. She watched as the blackbird pair flew into the orange tree with their beaks full of materials.

An idea suddenly came to her. Softly she sang a song she had learnt to play on the piano. When she stopped, all was silent. Then the birds started chattering. Singing had helped to lift her sad feelings.

Amy was relieved her Blackie was still alive, but thrilled the next morning when his song greeted the dawn. She ran to the curtained window and softly sang her song – ‘Morning has broken, like the first morning, blackbird has spoken like the first bird...’

### **Judge’s Comments**

*Ruth’s exceptionally well-written entry held my attention from start to finish. Her dialogue is excellent and she has used it to good effect throughout the piece. Other aspects I enjoyed in her lovely story were the sparring between brother and sister, and the appropriate conclusion, reminding us of how precious God’s creation is.*

*Ruth’s grammar and punctuation is also good overall, with only a few corrections that need to be made. They are:*

- Para 15—Delete the quote marks and put a question mark after What if James was right? Also change ‘was’ to ‘were’.

- *Para 16—‘dishevelled’ has been incorrectly spelt.*
- *Para 16—I recommend removing the quote marks and expressing Amy’s thought in Italics instead.*

*Apart from the above, this is an excellent piece of writing. Well done, Ruth. Keep it up.*

## Third Place



**Melanie  
Mason**

of Kaitaia, Northland

### **Rocks, Monkeys, or God?**

Slamming hard against the window pane, raindrops sounded like a monster from one of Osheya’s Saturday morning cartoons. The rain battered the window and the wind howled like an angry wolf. Thunder and lightning boomed and flashed across the sky putting on a show better than any fireworks Osheya had seen. Nope, nothing can beat watching the drama of nature from a warm, dry house on a stormy winter morning. Osheya was right where he wanted to be.

His mother brought him a hot mug of milo for him and one for herself. Sitting on the window seat beside him she pulled her knees up to a comfortable position and relaxed in the moment. Osheya smiled his thank you up at his mum and meditated on the wonder of God’s amazing creation.

Osheya had heard adults talk about rocks banging together to create the world, but he had slammed so many rocks together and nothing ever came from it but dust, dirt, and occasionally pain. Just yesterday morning it had been a bright sunshiny day with spider webs glistening and sparkling like jewels. He had gone for a walk and

stopped to admire them, pondering whether rocks could create such a thing. He had been taught in Sunday school that God had created the world and that made so much sense. It just didn’t seem logical for anybody to believe that something dead like a rock could crash into another dead thing like a rock to create something as amazing as life.

How could rocks create teeny little spiders that know how to spin intricate and delicate webs that catch delicious flies and bugs for their tea? How could rocks create weather patterns like sunshine one day and fascinating thunderstorms the next? How could rocks create tiny babies that grow into Grandmas or mummy’s? “That is the stuff of fairy tales” thought Osheya.

One big boom and brilliant blue flash jolted him back to the present. He looked up at his mother, wondering where she thought thunderstorms came from. Looking back to the skies he quoted his memory verse from Sunday school. “Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him, John chapter one verse three.”\* Sneaking a peek at his mother he saw her eyes grow wide with surprise, but taking a second look at the skies her expression grew thoughtful. Osheya was glad he came from God and not from some dirty old rocks or smelly, nit infested monkeys. Giving thanks to God he drank his milo and watched the show. (\*GNT)

### **Judge’s Comments**

*I really enjoyed Mel’s entry. It is well-written, interesting and passionate. Challenging the theory of evolution through the eyes of a child is also very effective, particularly in the final paragraph. However, the conclusion would have had even more impact had she inserted a paragraph break after ‘her*

*expression grew thoughtful' and made 'Osheya was glad he came from God...' as the beginning of the final paragraph.*

*Grammar, punctuation and sentence structure are good, and only a few corrections need to be made. They are:*

- *Paras 1, 2, 3, 5—'Milo' should begin with a capital M because it is a trademark. 'School' should begin with a capital as Sunday School is an organisation.*
- *Para 1—insert a comma in 'flashed across the sky, putting on...'*
- *Para 2—Delete the first 'him'.*
- *Para 4—mummy's should be written as 'mummies' because it is plural. However, because Osheya seems to be older than a pre-schooler, I recommend changing it to 'mums' or 'mothers'.*
- *Para 4—Put 'grandmas' in lower case. Words like mum, dad, grandma and grandpa only begin with a capital letter when speaking directly to the person.*
- *Para 5—First sentence: insert the word 'a' so it reads 'One big boom and a brilliant blue flash.'*

*Apart from the above recommendations, this is an excellent entry, Mel. I commend you for writing so forthrightly on what is thought by many to be too hot a topic to address.*

## Level Two

Judge:

**Jan Pendergrast**

**Requirement:** Write a 125-word story, using eight prescribed words, with a surprise ending.

### General Comments

*Only four entries reached me for this competition. I do hope there were no more, as it would be a pity if you missed out.*

*The entrants approached this topic imaginatively, so I was well entertained. Everyone used the eight words and all but*

*one kept to the 125 words required. I gave third place to Prue, in spite of her being one word short, because she wrote a great surprise ending. In fact, for all three place-getters I didn't see the end coming.*

*Remember to check your punctuation carefully. The computer's squiggly lines are an indication something isn't correct—word spacing, spelling, capitals.*

*I have been 'picky' judging these entries as they are short and should leave little room for errors. A great website to run your piece of writing past is <http://prowritingaid.com/>.*

*Please adhere to the presentation requirements (font, line spacing, etc) on the back of the magazine, above the Competition notices. This saves the judges and editor time. Shirley was the only entrant who did this.*

## First Place



**Shirley  
Jamieson**  
of Featherston

## Rhyme or Reason

"He's late." Abby nudged her friend Olivia concentrating on surfing the internet.

"What're you doing?"

"Reading nursery rhymes."

"What?" Abby laughed.

"No one says them nowadays. Like, do you remember any?"

"Umm, Oranges and lemons, the bells of Saint Clement's."

"Yeah, and Hickory dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock," Olivia chanted.

"Hey diddle diddle the cat and the fiddle." She stopped, noticing Abby's swollen hand. "What happened?"

"Believe it or not, a bee in Mum's handbag. It stung as I grabbed our holiday photographs."

"Poor thing! To cheer you, here's a riddle: what's the difference between a barometer and a pair of gloves?"

"Don't know."

"Well, if you really can't tell the difference," their lecturer said behind them, "should you be studying law?"

### **Judge's Comments**

*Shirley's story starts well then tracks off into general chatter so we forget the first statement until we read the last sentence—the surprise ending, which ties us back to the beginning. Shirley's presentation was clear, neat and easy to read. Her title is interesting and she gave her piece attribution (author). Word count can be at the beginning or end. Besides the need for commas in Hickory, dickory, dock, and Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle, the punctuation was correct. A great entry, Shirley.*

## **Second Place**



**Carole Sarsfield**  
of Papakura

### **Mirror Image**

I was meeting my sister today. We had been separated as children and I didn't know about her until she contacted me recently. I was waiting in an eccentric little café with unusual décor and interesting clientele. The upside-down clock hung near a swarm of plastic bees suspended above a woman. She was adding lemon to

her coffee, while her cat slept in her handbag discreetly tucked under the table. My internal barometer was off this morning when I dressed for the winter chill, I now discarded my hat and gloves to enjoy the balmy spring day. My excitement was growing as I checked the time again. I wished for a photograph but instantly knew why I didn't need one. My identical twin walked in.

### **Judge's Comments**

*Carole's title didn't give the show away! I was surprised when I read the end. The lady in the café was an added distraction. Great. Carole's word count was exact, but some paragraphing is required to make her piece interesting and less 'blocky'; I suggest at sentence three, six and seven. Add a period after 'chill'. The line spacing was 1.5, reduced to 'single' for the magazine. Note the sentence starts are repetitive: I, We, I, The, She, My, I, My, I, My. A little more variety would 'spark up' her piece. Keep up your imaginative writing, Carole.*

## **Third Place**



**Prue Francis**  
of New Plymouth

### **Partners.**

Bridie sipped her lemon tea and glanced at the clock. The barometer indicated a sunny day, perfect for photographs. This was an exciting venture and one that augured happiness.

"All commitments are fragile," her father said. "You need to trust but know when to liberate."

He had three different marriages during his life and understood how to ‘let go’.

It was time to leave. She slung her handbag over her shoulders, out of habit. Outside, her cat, Panther, chased bees across the lavender bed, making her smile.

“Be calm,” she told herself firmly.

On arrival, everyone was waiting.

“Are you ready to take him?” asked the trainer.

Bridie pulled on her glove in assent. A big falcon landed gracefully on her hand.

### Judge’s Comments

*Prue’s surprise ending was wonderful. I had no idea what the ‘venture’ might be and I was miffed by her father’s comments, so didn’t see the surprise coming—or the falcon! Prue forgot to add her attribution. I suggest she has used her/she too often in so few words. I have reduced the big gaps between paragraphs for magazine purposes. Two line spacing (enter) is sufficient to indicate time differences. Well done, Prue.*

## Level Three

### Judge:

**Ruth Linton**

**Requirement:** DEVOTIONAL—Pain, grief, and disappointment are part of most people’s lives. Prepare a devotional to help people cope with such situations. Finish it with four lines of poetry. Maximum 300 words.

### General Comments

*Would anyone like to judge the Level Three entries? I wondered as I read through the devotions submitted. These Level Three*

*writers have mastered the art of writing devotions: begin with a story, develop your theme, summarise and conclude with a short poem. The content of all the devotions was fantastic.*

*Unfortunately, most entries contained small errors and the use of different tenses made others less natural to read. Finally I decided to award places to those whose devotions flowed most naturally and possessed a spark of life rather than just being a discourse of theology.*

*All of them were encouraging and most demonstrated a strong empathy with those suffering in a similar way. Well done.*

## First Place Equal



**Pat  
Kerr**  
of Roxburgh

## Be Still and Know That I am God

Nothing had really changed and yet everything had. . . a routine check of a lump. The diagnosis was positive which in itself is a negative. Feelings had changed. Fear at finding the lump, relief at the result of the x-ray, and now terror at the test biopsy results.

I should be shattered. Indeed I know that telling some family and friends would immediately result in tears and gloom. . . dead and buried already. But for too long now, I have been telling others and practising myself, to cast all my cares on the Lord. Instead of all the “what if” scenarios, I sit still and KNOW that God is God, and He is still on His Throne. So my question (just one) to God is: What now Lord?

Firstly I relish the calm feelings.

Next I sit quietly in His Presence. I would achieve nothing rushing to and fro in a frenzy of activity. I feel no different physically. The lump may be growing but I feel nothing new. Psychologically and spiritually things are different. My hands are “off the wheel” and I am experiencing that cliché/advice/command: “Trust in the Lord”.

Psalms 27 is called “A Song of Trust in God”. Verse 14 in three translations (The Message :TM; New King James Version “NKJV; and New Century Version: NCV) state:

TM: Stay with God! Take heart. Don't quit. I'll say it again: Stay with God.

MKJV: Wait on the Lord: Be of good courage. And He shall strengthen your heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord.

CEV: Wait for the Lord's help. Be strong and brave, and wait for the Lord's help.

In YOUR distress pray thus:

I'm waiting Lord.  
I know you know my heart.  
I am waiting Lord,  
For the next exciting part!

### Judge's Comments

*I found this real-life testimony absolutely captivating and thoroughly encouraging. It clearly portrays how to trust in God in difficult circumstances. Well done, Pat.*

*The tense used is slightly unusual—it sounds as if Pat is doing it as she writes yet there is a sense of her reporting her past actions. This is a difficult approach which she has managed well. However, I would delete the word 'would' in the second sentence of paragraph four to keep the tense consistent.*

*In the last sentence of paragraph four also, it would be best to choose which of*

*the three words—cliché, advice, command—fits the context best. I would probably choose 'command'.*

*There are two small unnecessary errors from paragraph five onward. The final word before the colon and the scripture quotations should have an 's' added making it 'states'. For the second scripture translation the initials should be NKJV, not MKJV.*

*The concluding poem fits the devotion well. To make the rhythm consistent change the first word, 'I'm' to 'I am'. I have also removed the spacing between the lines so it appears as a poem (and also takes less room in the magazine).*

## First Place Equal



**Janet Fleming**  
of Kaeo, Northland

### Near to the Heart of God

*He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40:11*

I was walking up the hill on an uneven path towards my henhouse when my granddaughter said, “please Grandma, will you hold my hand?” I took her hand and we walked along in happy companionship. Later, as we climbed through gorse and scrub she asked, “Grandma, will you carry me?” With that I gathered her up into my arms.

What hard times are you experiencing today? It may be the pain of bereavement, illness, a marriage breakdown or redundancy. It could simply be that you

are feeling discouraged. Whatever the problem, you can trust God today. As David said, “I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.” (Psalm 57:1b)

Some years ago a friend suffered a terrible tragedy when she lost two young children under horrific circumstances. Someone asked her if she felt bitter towards God. Her reply was, “who else could I turn to at such a time as this?”

How wonderful it is to know that we can take refuge in our God and that we are held in the arms of the Almighty God. When times become too difficult, He will carry you if you allow Him to do so. Why not trust Him today?

Fear not, the path ahead is rough but let me take your hand,  
You may not see the way to go, you may not understand.  
Just take my hand and trust in me for I am always near,  
And I will lead you through the dark and lonely days you fear.

### Judge’s Comments

*This is a simple yet profound devotion. Grandchildren can teach us so much—their simple faith is very appealing.*

*I would suggest rewording the first sentence (following the scripture) as ‘I was walking uphill on an uneven path towards my henhouse...’. It makes the sentence crisp and eliminates unnecessary words. In paragraph two the word ‘today’ appears twice in quick succession. I would delete the second use so that sentence concludes with ‘... you can always trust God’.*

*Using direct speech inside a sentence can be difficult. In neither paragraph one nor*

*paragraph three is a new paragraph needed. However, the first word that is actually spoken should begin with a capital letter thus:*

*‘... my granddaughter said, “Please Grandma, will you hold my hand?” Likewise the last sentence of paragraph three should be ‘Her reply was, “Who else could I turn to ...”?’*

*A pleasant poem and a good entry! Thank you, Janet*

## Third Place



**Deborah  
McDermott**  
of Waiuku

### Casting Your Care

*...casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you—1 Peter 5:7*

Have you ever felt sad, joyful, at peace and extremely relieved at the same time? That’s how it was for me when my dear husband, Sean, departed this life for heaven. He’d miraculously recovered from cancer ten years prior, so we prayed for a similar outcome this time round but were disappointed. Although my heart ached at becoming a widow, the wonderful promise God gave us in the last few minutes of Sean’s earthly life softened the grief.

The assurance came as I sat with my husband, singing choruses he loved and reading to him from the Bible. Sometime during that long final hour, I became aware that the words coming out of my mouth were proclamations of God’s amazing love. I also sensed the Lord’s

inexpressible peace filling the room as I read and sang, and knew I was ready to let go. I could see Sean was ready too, but only up to a point.

Suddenly the words ‘cast your cares on Him, for He cares for you—and He will care for those you love’ filled my mind. When I spoke them out, Sean’s face relaxed completely and he slipped away peacefully soon after. Waves of relief swept over me. My husband was at last safe in the arms of Jesus and would suffer no more.

Although I found widowhood very painful at first, God’s joy and bountiful blessings have far outweighed the sorrow as He continues to keep His promise to take care of me. And this promise isn’t just for me. It’s for everyone who loves and trusts Jesus.

*Have the cares of your life  
Become too heavy to hold?  
Then cast them onto Jesus  
And receive rest for your soul*

### Judge’s Comments

*The strength of this devotion is that Debbie has walked this path of sorrow and is able to share deeply. Her writing is also very accurate. Well done.*

*I would suggest reordering the word of the final sentence of paragraph three as I believe it makes the words flow more naturally. To do this, reword the sentence as ‘My husband was safe in the arms of Jesus at last and would suffer no more.’*

*The concluding poem is a great summary. However, the rhythm needs a little adjusting. To achieve this add ‘all’ into line three so it reads, ‘Then cast them all onto Jesus’. In line four add the word ‘his’ so the line reads ‘And receive his rest for your soul.’*

## The Surprising Origins of English Phrases

Acknowledgements to Luke Lewis

- Fag end**  
Meaning: The dregs.  
Origin: In the textiles trade, the last part of the piece of cloth was made of coarser material than the rest and left hanging loose. It came to be known as the fag end, possibly as a corruption of ‘flag’, meaning ‘hang down’.
- Flash in the pan**  
Meaning: Short-lived.  
Origin: There was an old type of gun that had a ‘pan’ on which a trail of powder led from the charge to the flint. Sometimes the powder ignited, but the gun didn’t go off. Hence it was merely a flash in the pan.
- Get one’s goat**  
Meaning: Irritate.  
Origin: It’s a horse racing term. Nervous horses could be calmed down by placing a goat in the stall with them. Dastardly rival horse owners would sometimes steal, or ‘get’, these goats, thereby upsetting the horse and making it likely to lose the race.
- Gone haywire**  
Meaning: In a mess.  
Origin: In frontier towns of the United States, wire would be taken from hay bales and used for domestic jobs, such as hanging clothes or binding the stove together. A ‘haywire’ camp was one that was poor, backward, or slovenly.
- Hell for leather**  
Meaning: At top speed.  
Origin: A horse that had been ridden fast used to be called ‘all of a lather’. Over time this got intensified to the more potent-sounding ‘hell for leather’.

# Notice Board

## NZSA Janet Frame Memorial Award

**Biennial grant of \$3,000**

offered to authors of literary or imaginative fiction or poetry, who are members of the New Zealand Society of Authors (NZSA). The purpose of the award is to support a mid-career or established writer to further a literary career.

**Deadline:** 31 October 2014

*For further information go to*

<http://www.authors.org.nz/wa.asp?idWebPage=38553&idDetails=185>



## Kathleen Grattan Award

for an original collection of poems, or one long poem, by a New Zealand or Pacific permanent resident or citizen. Individual poems in the collection can have been previously published, but the collection as a whole should be unpublished.

The winner will receive \$10,000 and a year's subscription to Landfall.

**Closing Date:** 31 July 2015

Entries welcome any time before this date.

*For further details go to*

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/press/landfall/grattanaward.html>



## Caselberg International Poetry Prize, 2015

**Deadline:** 31 October 2014

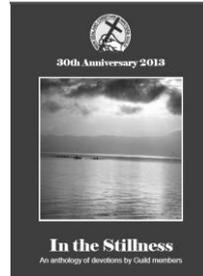
**First Prize \$500—Second Prize \$250**

Judge **Michael Harlow** of Central Otago, has published eight collections of poetry

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.caselbergtrust.org/>

## 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](mailto:jan@roads-end.co.nz)



## Bookmarks

Giving someone a book for Christmas? Why not get a couple of attractive and full colour bookmarks on the lives of Christians of today and yesteryear to go with it. If you are interested, contact Fred Swallow on [rise@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rise@xtra.co.nz)



## Log Onto JANICE GILLGREN'S weekly blog

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

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

# Competitions for December 2014

## Due November 10th

EMAIL YOUR ENTRY AS AN ATTACHMENT, COMPLETE WITH WORD COUNT AND YOUR NAME.

**Font:** Times New Roman, 11 points. **Line spacing:** single.

**Spaces between Paragraphs:** 6 points **Paragraph Indentation:** None.

**Please send a high resolution photo** of yourself in the event you are awarded a place.

### **Level One**—no age restrictions Open to beginner writers or new members

**REQUIREMENT: RESEARCH:** This Christmas Day 200 years ago, Samuel Marsden brought the Gospel to New Zealand for the first time. Research this memorable occasion, and the events leading up to it. Then imagine you are one of the characters involved in one of these events and write about it in the first person point of view. 500 words.

**One entry only. Email to:** Debbie McDermott at : [sddp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sddp@xtra.co.nz)



*Debbie  
McDermott*

### **Level Two**—no age restrictions Only members promoted from Level One are eligible to enter

**REQUIREMENT:** Find a photo of any person who is completely unknown to you and create a character description of that person. There should be no plot, but the character should be thoroughly described as if for a fiction story. You can include a scanned copy of the person if you wish. 400 words.

**One entry only. Email to:** Julia Martin at: [pemburyestate@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:pemburyestate@slingshot.co.nz)



*Julia  
Martin*

### **Level Three**—no age restrictions Only members promoted from Level Two are eligible to enter

**REQUIREMENT: SETTING THE SCENE:** You are in a long queue at the reception desk of a local WINZ office. Staff and clients are working methodically at the office desks and the security person sits, bored, at a front desk. Describe the scene in two ways using appropriate words, sentence lengths and dialogue: 1. As it is, quiet and orderly / 2. When the security officer is called to restrain an unruly client. Maximum of 200 words for each of the two scenes.

**One entry only. Email to:** Ruth Linton at : [noru@woosh.co.nz](mailto:noru@woosh.co.nz)



*Ruth  
Linton*

### **Under 30s**—11-30 year age group

**All members within this age group are eligible to enter, provided they do not enter at another level in the same month**

**REQUIREMENT:** Bad guys / girls of the Bible. Pick one and tell their side of the story. 500 words. Include your age with your entry.

**One entry only. Email to:** Vicki Nogaj at: [nogaj@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:nogaj@vodafone.co.nz)



*Vicki  
Nogaj*