



FEB - MAY 2020

YOUNG

CHRISTIAN WRITER

Look INSIDE For:

**The Riwaka Gang!
- Author Interview**

**Fantail Fantasy Colouring
Competition!**

Poetry by Felicity Logan!

Start a Writers Group!

And more...

A magazine of NZ Christian Writers



Mission: *Connecting Christian writers in New Zealand.*

Vision: *To cultivate, encourage and inspire a vibrant community of Christian writers throughout New Zealand.*

Values: *Christian faith, God's Word, professionalism, quality and social outreach.*

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Young Christian Writer is our student magazine published three times a year by NZ Christian Writers. We also publish a bimonthly magazine, **The Christian Writer**. All members receive both magazines digitally. A printed copy of *Young Christian Writer* will be sent to all student print subscribers automatically and to adult print subscribers by request. Contributions are always welcome. Submissions should be emailed in a Word document and no more than 500 words long. If you have an item or an event of interest do send it to the editor for consideration by the 10th of the month before the next publication date.

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 a high quality of writing. Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

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Website:

Check out our website for interesting information, such as who our board members are, how to join us and view copies of past magazines.

Members with published items have a free profile page on our site to promote their work. Please encourage other Christian writers you know to join us via our website:

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Note



Welcome to the very first edition of *Young Christian Writer*. Here at NZ Christian Writers we are so excited to bring you this new magazine to help encourage your faith and inspire your writing.

Our goal is to help equip and support you on your journey as a writer.

My name is Justin St. Vincent, President for NZ Christian Writers, and I've been a Member since 2013. I've self-published four books exploring the themes of faith, music, love and forgiveness. My role together with our Board is to fulfil our mission of connecting Christian writers in New Zealand. We want to encourage and inspire Christian writers throughout New Zealand to write their best for Jesus Christ.

For those that are new to NZ Christian Writers, we are a nationwide membership of authors, bloggers, editors, lyricists, poets, publishers, songwriters, artists, storytellers and writers throughout New Zealand. Over the next few editions of *Young Christian Writer* you will see competitions, free giveaways, poetry, articles, short stories, puzzles, art, photography, book reviews and more.

We encourage young writers to join us with our special Student Membership rate for the digital or printed magazine. It's easy, just visit: www.nzchristianwriters.org/join/. Be blessed as you enjoy our new magazine, *Young Christian Writer*.

Justin St. Vincent, President, NZ Christian Writers

"Hi!" From the Editor



Welcome to *Young Christian Writer* magazine! I hope it inspires you to write, draw or create something special for Jesus!

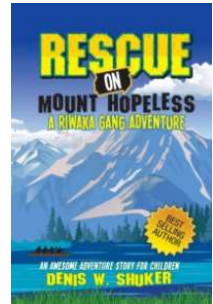
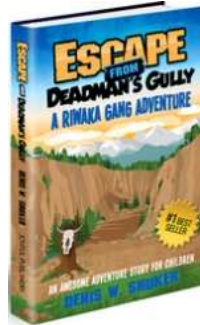
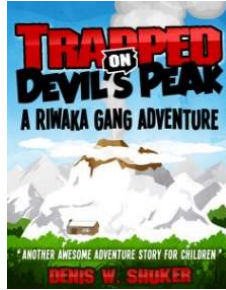
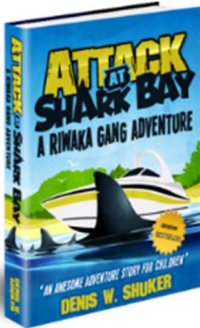
As a year ten student I was encouraged by my English teacher to be a writer. Today I am a published author, freelance writer, and magazine editor for NZ Christian Writers. I'm passionate about encouraging young people to follow their dreams and discover their God-given skills and talents. Each of us has an individual God-given purpose and often it involves creativity and communication. God loves people and He appreciates it when we communicate with others about Him and His love.

Be encouraged to produce some creative writing or art for God this year! You are welcome to send me your poems, articles, short stories, photos, letters or artwork to be considered for publishing in our magazine! It must be your own original work. Type your written work and save it in a Word document. Save artwork as a picture file. Then email as an attachment to editor@nzchristianwriters.org. I'm looking forward to it!

Blessings and Love in Jesus, Kathryn Drinkwater

Interview with Denis W. Shuker, Author of the Riwaka Gang series

by Kathryn Drinkwater



?



Well...

Recently I interviewed Denis W. Shuker, best-selling author of the *Riwaka Gang* series. Here's what he shared with *Young Christian Writer* magazine.

QUESTION:

1. How old were you when you discovered you liked writing?

ANSWER:

I loved writing at primary school. Later in life my work involved writing reports and surveys, but it wasn't until I retired that I came to consider writing a book.

QUESTION:

2. What inspired the content of your books?

ANSWER:

As a scout leader for many years in a small country town in Nelson I was involved in running 8-10 camps every year for our scout group of 36 boys. Our program included racing rafts down the Motueka river, camping and tramping in the mountains, building snow cave shelters and a lot of other fun. I also did some extended tramps through the mountains with three friends. Many of my illustrations come from these experiences.

QUESTION:

3. How did you come up with the characters' names and name of the gang?

ANSWER:

I wanted to include boys and girls, also Maori and Pakeha. It came together as I began writing an outline of the story. Rangi and Sam (Samantha) were from a local Maori family. Their Grandfather, Kingi, is a strong Christian man and Kamatua of the local Iwi. He had also been a NZ All Black rep. rugby player. He gives the Riwaka gang advice and prays for them. Other members are Jackson and Jessica from a local farming family. (The girls sometimes rescue the boys from extreme danger.) Enid Blyton's books; *The Famous Five* adventures, from my childhood were an inspiration too. Riwaka is a small country village close to Motueka, where we once lived.

QUESTION:

4. How long did it take you to write a book? - The series?

ANSWER:

I always prayed before starting. My first book, *Attack at Shark Bay*, took two years to write plus organising a cover design. When 'I got to know' my characters better I found ideas and stories came quicker. My last book, *Rescue on Mt Hopeless*, took six months.

QUESTION:

5. What made you decide to write children's stories? How did it come about?

ANSWER:

My wife Joan, and I managed our business in Motueka for 20 years when we felt God was calling us to become available for His special service. We sold our business and trained for three years at Bible college in Auckland then served as missionaries for 20 years. When we retired, I was looking for books for my grandchildren. It seemed they were almost all focussed on zombies, magic spells and sex. I decided to learn to write decent books for kids 7-15 years and trained with a writers training school to learn to write. Then I began to write extreme adventure stories for children, building faith and confidence for living. I prayed before writing and felt the Lord's guidance as I wrote and *The Riwaka Gang* adventure series was born. My stories are set in the top of the South Island. We published them as paperbacks and also on Amazon Kindle. *The Riwaka Gang* books are now distributed through the MANNA Christian stores chain – all profits help the Bible Society. You can see them online at www.kiwibooks.org.

QUESTION:

6. What kinds of places have you visited or been a speaker at, due to your role as an author?

ANSWER:

I have been invited to speak to school groups and also to a Christian Writers retreat.

QUESTION:

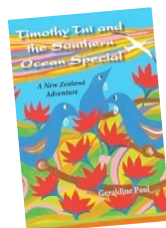
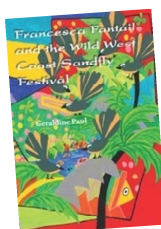
7. Is there anything else you'd like to share with Young Christian writers?

ANSWER:

Life is an adventure to be lived to the full. Step out with confidence—our Lord is alive and the Holy Spirit is working in us and through us as we make ourselves available to Him. Writing is not a gift for the chosen few. No—it's a skill to be learned. We need more Christian writers in all walks of life today—people who can write well to inspire and bless others as a service for spreading the Good News and faith in Jesus Christ.

Colouring Competition!

Win these!



This *Fantail Fantasy* picture is from an adult colouring book by author and illustrator, Geraldine Caw. Geraldine has kindly donated a gift set of a copy of *Fantail Fantasy* plus her two children's novels featuring characters, Timothy Tui and Francesca Fantail, for our prize winner.

You must be a member of NZ Christian Writers to enter. There is no age limit. If you're not a member yet we'd love to have you, so please join us!

Visit www.nzchristianwriters.org/join/ or see page two for more details.

You will need to carefully remove centre pages 8 and 9 by lifting the staples. If you received a digital copy, print both pages on one side of A4 paper. Then colour in using your best creativity, fill in your name and post your entry to us via snail mail (in an envelope with postage stamps on it) to: **NZ Christian Writers, PO Box 34400 Birkenhead, Auckland 0746.**

Entries must arrive to us on or before April 15th 2020. Entries will not be returned. The winner's entry and other great entries will be published in the June-September issue of *Young Christian Writer*. Have fun!

Name:.....

I'm an: Adult / Student member (please circle)



How to Start a Writers Group

by Kathryn Drinkwater

Writing is usually a solo activity but it can also be fun to write with others, or to share with others what we've been writing. A Christian writers group can be a fun reason to get together and a great way to give each other support and encouragement.

If you're a school student, you could consider having a regular lunch time group which anyone can attend if they enjoy Christian writing. Or perhaps you might like to run it as an after-school group at someone's home.

To get started, ask permission from a teacher or parent to start the group. Make a plan as to how often the group will meet, where and when. Decide if the group will be monthly, fortnightly, or weekly. If it's at someone's home, decide whether there will be food and drink and who will supply it.

Next, figure out ways to advertise your group. Make it clear what the group is about. Explain it is a group for Christian writers who like to write about and for God. Ensure you have permission for the venue before you advertise where it will be. You could ask permission to put an advertisement notice in the school library or on a school noticeboard. You can write a flyer and hand it out to people who might want to come. Asking people personally is often the best way to let others know.

Ensure that anyone interested is made to feel welcome. The rule of kindness needs to be kept at all times. Let new group members know that everyone needs to keep to the kindness rule, to keep a happy group. You can include artists in the group. Often there are people who enjoy writing and drawing.

Invite group members to read out a poem, short story or something else they've written. Include those who like to write songs or movie scripts. Encourage members to write what they enjoy writing and to try new things. It might be fun to have a different theme for each meeting, or a different type of writing. You can be as creative as your group wants to be. Here are some ideas to try:

- A movie theme – watch a Christian movie or part of a Christian movie then ask everyone to write a movie script for what happens next.
- A funny rhyme session – get everyone to write a funny rhyme using a timer.
- A Bible story play – get everyone writing Bible stories into plays then have fun acting them out.

If you decide to start a writers group, please tell us here at NZCW. We'd love to hear about it! Write me an email note at editor@nzchristianwriters.org.

Good King Wenceslas

Why was Wenceslas called “good”?
Yes we know the reason.
He was thoughtful of the poor,
on the festive season.
So ought we be, though we have no
snow on the ground here.
Yet we have the homeless folk, in the
doorways round - here.

Soup kitchens we have and in
magnanimity we
issue invitations to eat and watch the
TV.
They pull crackers, wear the hats,
decorations tied high.
“Surely we have done what’s right.”
smiling, we with pride - sigh.

That’s just one day of the year.
Others need a hand, too.
Look in shelters, look in jails, look in
Third World lands, too.
Health and roads and wells they
need, irrigation, power.
Benefits so great could be Poverty’s
last hour.

Felicity Logan of Feilding has changed the original lyrics of Good King Wenceslas to her own modern lyrics. Have a go at doing that with one of your favourite old songs.

Felicity also sent in this next poem, ‘Bah Humbug!’. She wrote it for a literary ‘Grinch’s Night Out’ of poetry readings. You might like to consider having a ‘Grinch’s Night Out’ of poetry with some friends. Or on a favourite theme of your own.

BAH HUMBUG!

At the end of the year all society falls
into frenzy that’s deep and prolonged:
All the eating and drinking and decking
the halls that have people like me feeling
wronged:
I’m a GRINCH!

First they cut down a tree (oh how
thoughtless a task, our environment
suffers the price). Next, they pack it so
tight into bucket or cask, then they
decorate it, say it’s NICE!
Makes me FLINCH!

All that glitter and flashing of bright
coloured lights, and the tinsel and balls
strung way up high, such consumption at
functions that reaches such heights!
What a wastage by people who I...
wanna LYNCH!

Then the piles of pressies that climb up
the wall, all the wrapping and ribbons
and bows,
And the soppy programming on TV
appals: happy endings that everyone
knows,
are a CINCH!

If you’re really desiring to celebrate what
was the best Christmas present, and
why, Some time late September the
Judaean hills rang with anthems of
angels on high - Then you’d better go
read the original book with the message
of Bethlehem’s night, Where the
shepherds so lowly (yet chosen to look)
found a baby, the bringer of light.

The reason this season is central for us,
filling days with commercialised
spending, Is the advent of Christ, full of
peace and not fuss, born to offer
salvation unending.

How to Write and Produce a Puppet Show

By Kathryn Drinkwater

Writing and producing a puppet show can be a lot of fun. You can do it large scale or keep it simple. At nine years old I wrote and performed my first show at school.

What will you need?

You will need some puppets and a type of screen for the puppeteers to hide behind. You will need a script. It is helpful if you have a sound system to amplify your voices. Cushions for kneeling on are helpful as knees can get sore. Arms can get sore too, so it pays to incorporate 'rests' for puppeteers' arms in the script.

What, Why and Who for?

Keep in mind the purpose of your show. Who will the audience be? How old are they? Puppet shows can be enjoyed by young and old alike. Is your purpose to entertain and make people laugh? Is it to tell people about Jesus? Is there going to be a theme or moral to the story? Is it a teaching lesson? Is it a retelling of a Bible story? There are many good reasons to produce a puppet show.

Keeping it Simple

A very simple show I did with puppets was on a church mission trip in Vanuatu. Our team only had three hand puppets (the ones with moveable mouths) and a material sarong as our screen. Two people held up the sarong to hide the puppeteers while two of us operated the puppets. Another team member stood nearby and spoke to the puppets as part of the story.

Going All-In

The most complicated show I've produced was using a large solid puppet stand with background scenery, lots of puppets and puppeteers, props, a sound system and music.

Where To Get Puppets

Over the years I've built up my puppet collection to over fifty puppets. I like to use hand puppets that have moving mouths. They are operated by placing your hand inside the puppet and using your thumb and fingers to make the puppet's mouth talk. The open-shut movement should match how a person's natural mouth would move, so the puppet looks real. Some puppets have moveable arms which you can operate with a rod using your free hand. I've had puppets made for me by kind individuals. I've also purchased some through Trade Me, gift stores, school galas and op shops. I have animal puppets and other creatures plus people puppets. If you like you can make your own puppets.

Choosing Your Characters

Once you've decided what the purpose is for your script, you need to decide who your characters are going to be. This can be influenced by the stock of puppets you have available. Think about your puppets and what kind of characters they can be in your play. I have a lot of animal puppets so one of the first shows I presented was the story of Noah and the Ark. It was a humorous story in which Noah's wife had a very screechy voice and complained a lot about all the animals coming in and messing up her 'home'. When the spider arrived, she screamed and rushed away. The performance was for children's church and the children laughed a lot at the antics of the puppets and especially at Noah's wife getting a fright. The spider puppet was made from a glove with the fingers creeping and walking as legs and a round spider head on top.

I used people puppets when I co-wrote and produced a puppet show for adult students at a YWAM missionary training base. The script was written for the level of the young adult audience on the theme of not being afraid to evangelise. We were rewarded with a lot of laughs and encouraging comments.

Writing and Using the Script

After I've written the script, I make enough copies of it so that all puppeteers can see the words. I put each character's lines in a different colour so they're easy to spot. I tape them or peg them up on the inside of the puppet stand, in front of the puppeteers at their eye level. This means puppeteers don't have to memorise all their lines and can read the script as they perform it. I write the script as I would a stage play, including giving puppeteers stage directions as necessary.

Having a few practise runs of the script is really important to help iron out any bumps along the way. Sometimes clumsy or unnatural sentences in the script will need to be adjusted, or unrealistic stage directions will need to be fixed.

To help you lay out a script, I've included an example below. First write a draft. Then copy it neatly or type it out. If you are handwriting your script use different coloured pens, colouring pencils or highlighters to help puppeteers see their own lines.

Puppet Play – Real Friends

by Kathryn Drinkwater

Characters: **Racoon**, **Nurse Helen**, **Doctor Dave**, **Jack the bird**, **Bruce the bird**

Three puppeteers are needed because all five characters are on stage at the same time.

(enter Jack, middle stage)

Jack: *(sighs)* I'm so bored! I wish I had a friend here to play with! *(sighs)*
Bored, bored, bored, bored, bored... *(repeating until Bruce speaks)*

(Enter Bruce, stage right)

Bruce: Hello, what's your name?

Jack: I'm Bored – oops, I mean my name's Jack! What's yours?

Bruce: My name's Bruce. Wanna be friends, Jack?

Jack: Cool, yeah, that would be awesome!

Bruce: What games do you like playing?

Jack: I like computer games and ball games. What about you?

Bruce: Hmm, let's see. *(He turns away to think while Helen and Dave enter stage left. Jack goes to them and ignores Bruce who is still thinking and answering) I like computer games and ball games too and I like playing with my truck and climbing on the playground... (Bruce suddenly realises Jack has moved away and isn't listening) Hey, Jack – where are you going? (Bruce goes quiet and stays in his corner looking sad to be left out).*

Jack: *(speaks to Helen and Dave)* Hi I'm Jack, watcha doing?

Doctor Dave: Hi, Jack, we're playing pretend doctors and nurses. I'm Doctor Dave and this is my friend, Nurse Helen.

Nurse Helen: Hi, Jack! Wanna play with us? You can be our patient!

Jack: Yeah, that sounds like fun! Let's say I've got Birditis-virus *(moans and groans in pain)* ohhhh, help me, Doctor Dave, my beak hurts!

(Doctor Dave and Nurse Helen pretend to fuss over him)

Doctor Dave: Where do you think you caught the Birditus-virus, Jack?

(enter Racoon, stage left, Jack sees him)

Jack: Ohhhh, from my friend, Racoon! There he is!

Racoon: *(husky laugh)* Heh heh, sure, Jack, is that why my beak hurts too?

Nurse Helen: Here, let me check it for you, Racoon. *(she looks hard at his face and gasps)* Oh, no! He's got it real bad – his beak's all gone!

Doctor Dave: A bad case for sure. *(shakes his head, clicks his tongue in concern)*

Racoon: Heh heh, you fellas seem like you're having lots of fun. But who's that bird over there? *(He looks toward lonely Bruce)*

Jack: Oh, him? That's Bruce.

Doctor Dave: I didn't realise you had another friend here, Jack.

Jack: I only just met him. Come on, let's play!

Racoon: I think you're forgetting something, Jack. Like how to be a good friend?

Nurse Helen: Yeah, Jack. Real friends don't ignore each other, they try to include everyone.

Doctor Dave: Real friends are loyal, even when you've just met.

Nurse Helen: You like it when your friends are kind and show they care about you, don't you, Jack?

Jack: Yeah, I do. But you guys are my friends now.

Doctor Dave: Just because we are your friends, doesn't mean you can't keep all your other friends too.

Racoon: *(nodding)* We can all be friends together. That's more fun!

Jack: You're right. I wasn't being a real friend at all, was I? *(he turns to Bruce)* Bruce! Hey, Bruce! Come over here!

Bruce: (moving closer) Yes, Jack?

Jack: I need to say sorry to you, Bruce. I left you out of our game and I wasn't being a real friend.

Bruce: I was feeling a bit sad – we had just met and then you left me so suddenly!

Jack: Yeah – real friends are kinder than that. Sorry, Bruce.

Bruce: That's okay, thanks for saying sorry. I can be a real friend too and forgive you.

Nurse Helen: Real friends are loyal and forgiving.

Doctor Dave: They are kind and sharing.

Jack: Real friends are considerate and helpful.

Bruce: And always gentle and honest.

Racoon: I read in the Bible that if you give up your own life for your friend then that's the greatest love of all. That's the kind of love Jesus has for us. Hang on, I feel a song coming on...

(music starts and all the puppets sing the song 'Friends' by Petra)

How to Operate Hand Puppets

Puppeteers need to learn how to operate their puppets' mouths effectively to make the puppet look as if it's talking and is real. The puppet's entrance and exit should be as if bouncing up or down some stairs, not zooming up and down as if on an elevator. Puppeteers also need to be aware of the direction of their puppet's face – usually alternating between looking at the audience and looking at the other character/s they are speaking to. The puppet shouldn't be staring at the ceiling or down at the ground. Puppeteers can have a lot of fun creating different 'voices' appropriate for their puppet's character.

Performing to an Audience

Have several practise runs to smooth out the words, actions and stage directions. Once you and your puppeteers are satisfied, it's a good idea to have a trial run with a practise audience like a parent or a friend. Ask for their feedback and take note of what they found funny and what they didn't, or if they couldn't hear or understand something. Make any needed changes. Practise some more until your team feels ready. Then you can perform the show for your intended audience! Don't worry if someone makes a mistake, just keep going. Mistakes usually work in your favour and keep the audience laughing. Often, they think it was meant to happen that way! I once lost my voice in the middle of a show and had to make my puppet say croakily, 'I've lost my voice.' The audience laughed and thought it was part of the script! A family came forward afterwards and recommitted their lives to Jesus in response to the show's message. The lesson I learned is Jesus can use us whether we get things perfect or not. So, don't worry too much, just do your best to prepare and have fun!

We trust you've enjoyed this first issue of the magazine. The next issue is due out in June 2020. In future issues we hope to offer writing competitions and opportunities for young writers to be mentored by experienced writers. Keep writing and stay tuned! Love in Jesus, Kathryn Drinkwater - Editor



NZ CHRISTIAN WRITERS is a nationwide collective of authors, bloggers, editors, lyricists, poets, publishers, songwriters, storytellers and writers throughout New Zealand. Along with our bi-monthly magazines and competitions we offer inspiring seminars and writers retreats to encourage, inspire and upskill people in their writing.

NZ Christian Writers' vision is to cultivate a vibrant community of Christian writers by connecting them to other like-minded writers in New Zealand. We welcome both beginner and experienced writers.